

19th October
2019

Reunion Edition

Small Beginnings

This Newsletter is published for the benefit of former pupils, staff and friends of the old Barling School

CONTENTS

Ron Bennewith
from Vancouver
visits Foulness
Island

Childhood
Memories of the
Early Days of
Great Wakering
Royal British
Legion Clubhouse

The Smeeton
Family (circa
1914)

The Church
Magazine June
1926

Potton Island &
the Philpot
Family

Old Ted's Model
of St. Mary's
Church

Old Ted's Holy
Well

Mock-up
Atlantic Wall on
Foulness Island

Website
Statistics

Summary

Reaching Old
Age

Hymns

Thoughts

Contacts

Old Barling School Reunion Saturday 19th October 2019

3:00 PM onwards

The Venue this Year is

**The Community Centre, The Old School,
High Street, Great Wakering, SS3 0EJ**

Anybody interested in our School or Area

WILL RECEIVE A VERY WARM WELCOME

Welcome to Our Reunion



We extend a very warm welcome to all former pupils, staff and friends of the old Barling School.

The last time that we met was 3 years ago on the 1st October 2016 and before that 6 years ago on the 5th October 2013.

Ron Bennewith from Vancouver visits Foulness Island

Article by Richard Kirton

Tuesday 21 May 2019



Ron & Leslie Bennewith outside the, now closed, George & Dragon in 2019

On Tuesday 21 May 2019, Roger Burroughs and I had the privilege of escorting Ron Bennewith and his wife Leslie on a trip to Churchend and Courtsend on Foulness Island. They currently live in a city called "Pitt Meadows" in south-western British Columbia, Canada, which is about 24 miles from Vancouver and has a population of approximately 19,000.

This trip came about as a result of Ron Bennewith contacting Bob Stephen of the Rochford District Community Archive, who then contacted me to see if I could assist Ron in his family history research.

I spoke to Roger Burroughs and he was more than willing to invite Ron and his wife to see the now closed George & Dragon and how it came to be one of the focal points of community life on Foulness Island. Ron Bennewith is the 7th Generation of James Bennewith and his then wife Amelia, once landlords of the George & Dragon P.H. on Foulness Island in the 18th Century.

Ron and Leslie decided to take a trip of a lifetime and fly to Fort Lauderdale in Florida and then take a cruise to Copenhagen. They then flew to Scotland which is where Leslie's heritage lies and then took the train to York and then on to London, staying in Bethnal Green.

One of Ron's ambitions of the trip was to visit the George & Dragon on Foulness island, which up until 2007, was the only surviving Public House on Foulness. Ron was also

keen to visit the churchyard of "St Mary the Virgin" parish church and look for graves of his ancestors. Regrettably most of the older headstones were not legible.

Peter Carr, Chairman and Trustee of the Foulness Conservation & Archaeological Society kindly opened the Heritage Centre and gave a brief resume of the history of the island. Of valuable significance, Peter took us in to the research room where Ron and Leslie were free to peruse the known facts about the Bennewith family.

A very brief history of John Bennewith follows with more information available at the Foulness Heritage Centre, along with many other artefacts and facts about life on this unique island. The centre is open to members of the public from 12 pm to 4 pm on the first Sunday of each month from April to October.

"After the death of his wife Jane on 25 September 1780, James Bennewith was left with 3 children, James 7, Mary 5, and William 3. Near the end of 1780, James moved to the George & Dragon on Foulness Island and met up with Amelia Bowls, who already had two illegitimate children before she met James. They married, however, by license on 4 June 1782, eight days before their first son Edward Bennewith was baptised on 17 June 1782. Amelia proceeded to have more children, Henry in 1784, Jane in 1786 and John in 1789, who went on to be known as the infamous bare-fist fighter.

Perhaps all these children were too much for James because he died in September 1789. Amelia then met Thomas Howgego and had another two children, but Thomas died in 1797. Amelia then met Isaac Easter and had yet another son. Amelia ran the George & Dragon herself, until 1796 when she gave up the license. She died on 13 August 1825.

John Bennewith became known as the "Foulness Champion", amongst the bare-fist fighters of that period. He was said to have been a "Giant of a Man", some 6' 2" tall, with some reports of 6' 6". In the early 19th century he undertook many of his bare-fist fights in the garden of the George & Dragon. Two of his most outstanding bouts were against "Bullock Bones" from Suffolk and "Rippengale" who was described as a "Marsh Waller".

In 1811 John was acquitted of larceny but in 1824, he was imprisoned for 7 years for stealing wheat and sent to a Prison hulk in Portsmouth. Prison hulks were decommissioned ships that authorities used as floating prisons in the 18th and 19th centuries."



Childhood Memories of the Early Days of Great Wakering Royal British Legion Clubhouse

Article compiled by Dave Lee and Vic Lee

22 November 2018



One question we are often asked is "How did we end-up living at the Great Wakering British Legion Clubhouse during our childhood years?" Well, the Wakering Branch of the Royal British Legion (founded in 1922) decided they needed a clubhouse and in 1951 they had the opportunity to purchase the local vicarage at number 204, High Street for £2,500.

The photograph [left] was taken on the day of mum and dad's wedding.

However, according to a quote from the late Life Vice-President Bill Stow "Many of the committee members had little idea of running such a property and ex-Navy stewards, Reg and Nancy Lee, stepped in and were an absolute godsend in organisational terms, especially in running a bar."

Mum (Nancy) joined the junior ranks of the Women's Royal Navy Service at the beginning of World War 2 and ended up as a Chief Petty Officer. At the age of 28 years, she was honoured to be awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for 'meritorious service', which was presented to her by King George VI.

Dad (Reg) played a supporting role to mum who was involved in the lion's share of activities at the clubhouse. His main employment was running his barbershop located in Smith Street, Shoeburyness and sometimes he would cut members and their children's hair at the clubhouse.

The photograph [right] was taken of our dad in his barbershop in Smith Street, Shoeburyness.

We remember moving to the old vicarage building in 1951, whilst it was being converted into a clubhouse. Major ground and structural work had to be carried out over a six-month period before the clubhouse could be opened to members. Work included the outhouse buildings which had to be converted into gents and ladies toilets for the members. Ground floor rooms had to be converted into two bar lounge areas, one at the front and one at the rear of the building. Between them was a small bar serving area. Initially drinks from the bar could only be served to each lounge via small serving hatches which were 2 feet square, approximately. The front of the building's 1st floor was converted into the 'assembly room' and one of the back rooms was made into a 'snooker room'.



We (Dave and Vic) were 4 and 3 years old respectively at the time and too young to start school.

It must have been a nightmare for mum, keeping us out of harm's way with outside open trenches for sewage pipe work and throughout the building floorboards were up for plumbing and electrical installation work. Prior to moving to the clubhouse we had lived in a bungalow and falling down stairs from our attic bedroom on the 2nd floor

was a new experience for us. Fortunately no injuries occurred during these experiences.

When the clubhouse initially opened to members, the two lounge bar floors were well worn wooden floor boards and the only heating in the winter was provided by paraffin heaters. Eventually, heavy duty brown coloured lino was purchased for the lounge floors, main entrance hall and assembly room. Also gas fires were installed in both lounges which made them feel cosier in the cold winter months. Talking about feeling cold, our attic bedroom often felt like sleeping in a freezer in the winter months. A few years later our hot water bottles became redundant with the advent of the electric blanket, but like so many households in those days we would wake-up to ice on the inside of our single glazed bedroom window.

The photograph [right] was taken of us sitting on the floor in the rear bar lounge.

The clubhouse became a popular venue for holding village wedding receptions and parties in the assembly room and we would help (on reflection, more likely hinder) setting-up the wooden trestle tables and chairs. It was on one of those occasions when a party of guests started dancing to 'knees-up mother brown' that the floor of the room started to collapse into the downstairs main entrance hall. Hence, the dancing stopped and the following morning the main entrance hall ceiling had to be supported by pit-props until an RSJ support beam could be fitted.



Most of the club's members had served in World War 2 and a few in World War 1 and they had many a tale to tell us of their exploits. Lieutenant Colonel Kent, who lived in the High Street at Lee Lotts House, after retiring from the army ran a small holding with the help of Bill, one of his sons. Lee Lotts House was eventually sold to enable the development of the current Lee Lotts housing estate. Lieutenant Colonel Kent could always tell a good tale, one of them being when he was serving in World War 1. He was sent to the front line to sort out a situation where a group of soldiers were refusing to take orders from their sergeant, who was threatening to shoot them on the spot. When he arrived on the scene it was total chaos. Gun crews and their horse drawn gun carriages were bogged down in thick mud and their sergeant was insisting they kept the gun carriages, horses and their tack clean and polished to parade ground inspection standards. The colonel immediately relieved the sergeant from his duties who was possibly suffering from 'shell shock' and the gun carriage crews moved on through the thick muddy landscape to take-up their positions on the battlefield.

As children living at the clubhouse, it gave us and our friends, great opportunities for adventure, such as making camps in the loft spaces of the outbuildings and the large garden with a mature mulberry tree, which we would climb. Now the garden is totally covered in tarmac to provide member's car parking. In 1951 only 1 or 2 members owned a motor car.



The photograph [right] shows us children in the garden with some of our relatives and 'Jock' our pet dog.

This gave us plenty of opportunities to run wild, camp out over night during the school summer holidays. Not to mention in our early teen years the use of the snooker table, table tennis and darts facilities.

The Smeeton Family (circa 1914)

Article by Tony Alps

27 January 2019



*Standing, from left to right: Edward, Lillie, Ruth
Seated, Katherine (Mum) on Lizzie's knee, Edward Algernon in uniform*

Last year I visited my brother, John, in Tasmania. He has recently moved to a smaller property following the death of his wife three years ago. During the usual clean out associated with moving, John came across two medals. He asked me if I knew anything about them. I could only vaguely recall my mother once telling me that she had inherited them on the death of her father in 1945. She thought they were awarded to her grandfather (my great grandfather, or great uncle) by his Lodge.

She only remembers being told that he was a great singer who had sung for Royalty and others in the aristocracy. As a result of the prestige that this brought to his Lodge, he was given the title "Sir"; Sir John Smeeton.

I have them now and undertaken to find out more about John Smeeton and the Smeeton family. It was only when I seriously started looking for details that I realised that I knew practically nothing about my grandparents, Edward Algernon and Lizzie (Haywood) Smeeton, let alone my great grandparents.

Edward and Lizzie had four children; Lillie (the eldest) Edward, Ruth and Katherine (my mother). There are only five living descendants of this family (grandchildren not included). Jill Smeeton (Edward's daughter) Alan Sutton and Margaret-Myles Hook (Ruth's children) and Tony and John Alps (Katherine). I do not know if either Edward or Lizzie had any siblings. If there had been any they would have been our great uncles and aunts. Any descendants would be directly related to us and could possibly fill in a few gaps in the family tree. Tony is seeking assistance with his research of this family, in particular, his maternal grandparents.

Please reply using my email address: Tony Alps tony.cool@bigpond.com.au

The Church Magazine

June 1926

Church Magazine provided by John Pavelin

John Pavelin has kindly made available the June 1926 edition of The Church Magazine for our members to view on our website. The magazine was a joint publication between the churches of:

St Nicholas, Great Wakering

St Mary, Little Wakering

St Mary the Virgin, North Shoebury

Reproduced in PDF format, it makes for a very interesting read and is full of local retail advertisements of the time, some 92 years ago.

NB. If you are viewing this article online, you can see the PDF version of the Church Magazine by "Left-Clicking" on the Front Cover, below.



Potton Island & the Philpot Family



Interview with
Peter John Harold Philpot
By Richard Kirton
At Barleylands, Billericay
06 March 2018



Peter John Harold Philpot's grandfather, Algernon Philpot, started his career filling inkwells for a shipping forwarding company in London, called C. Shaw & Lovell. Algernon married and had 2 sons and 2 daughters, his eldest son Harold Ross Philpot, being Peter's father. Harold went to Wye and studied agriculture and in 1937 he started farming 1000 acres on Potton Island. He purchased the island which included 10 acres of arable land with some marshland and paid £4.00 per acre. As the family had no money, he had to borrow £4,000 from an aunt and a further £4,000 from another aunt to buy cattle from Herbert May from North Devon.

During this time, Peter's grandparents lived in Muswell Hill and after his uncle left Mill Hill School in 1936-1937 he went to Kirkcudbright to learn about the drying of milk. At that time there was no thought of testing the powder for bacteria but in 1937 Unilever's Stork margarine plant at Purfleet, who were one of our larger customers, began to talk about testing for bacteria. He was then sent off to Ayr to see how to test the powder, going by bus to Auchincruive where the Hannah Dairy Research had their establishment. Also, once a week he went by train to Glasgow to follow a course in Bacteriology at Glasgow Polytechnic and the West of Scotland Agricultural College.



Harold Ross Philpot, Peter's father, standing outside Potton Island Farmhouse

It so happened that Hannah Dairy Research had just begun a review of bacteria in milk powders, getting samples of powder from all the U.K. producers. Thus, when he left Ayr to establish a bacterial laboratory at Kirkcudbright he had a full knowledge of the other makers of milk powder.

One incident whilst at Kirkcudbright illustrated the need for a laboratory on site. They were getting E. coli in some of the powder; this was serious as the Stork manufacturer did not want any E. coli in their powder. After the normal cleaning of the plant the procedure was to circulate a chemically treated water and then rinse the plant with tap water. After many swabs of various parts of the plant, it was found that the tap water had E. coli in it. Surprised at this, he went to the Council's health officer to complain, only to be told that the water came direct from a loch in the hills, with no filtering and that he saw nothing wrong with the water. When they stopped rinsing the plant, the problem stopped.

All men in those days were required to register for National Service, the idea was for the conscripted men to have six months in the services, so he registered at Dumfries. Hannah recruited a girl to take his place in the lab. He left on 15th July 1939 to join the Kings Own Scottish Borderers at Berwick-on-Tweed with 149 conscripts, all Scots. Much to the disgust of the Scottish conscripts they were all sent south to join the Battalion Durham Light infantry.

Harold, on leaving school, went to London University for a while before going to Wye Agricultural College when he took his B.Sc.(Ag.) after which he worked in the Fish Meal company. He realised that the production of fish meal at Stratford was limited by

the raw material and because of its source the fish meal was of poor quality compared with fish meal made in Hull and Grimsby from whole fish not sold at auction. Harold thought up the name SeaMeal to cover a range of concentrated meal for farmers made up of fish meal and various vegetable proteins. The word SeaMeal is still used today.



Peter John Harold Philpot (on the right) with his uncle, Peter Gordon Philpot who was sadly buried on 07 March 2018. He would have been 100 years old in June 2018.

In 1936, Herbert May, a fellow director of both the Fish Meal and Milk Power companies, suddenly died. One of his interests to complement his farming in North Devon was sending fattening beef cattle to a farm he owned in South East Essex - Potton Island. His largest customer was the London Co-op. and their meat buyer would go to Potton Island to select cattle for slaughter.

On the death of her husband, Mrs May tried to sell Potton Island but no-one wanted to buy. In order to help her out, my grandfather offered to buy the Island for half as much again as the Agricultural Mortgage Company valued the farm for loan

purposes (they valued farms at 66% of what they thought they could sell for), so in 1937 Potton Island became the first farm bought by the Philpot family. Initially, Mr. Manton was appointed manager of the

farm which then consisted of all grass except one 10-acre field of arable. Mr. Manton was on the Army Reserve List and was called up on the outbreak of war. Harold then left the British Fish Meal company and went to live on Potton Island, where he took Margaret after their wedding in March 1941. Along with his sister Ann, Peter was born whilst their parents lived on Potton Island. The island is protected by six miles of sea wall and the only access to it was by rowing boat or a large raft which was used for heavier goods.

The rowing boat or barge had a cable for pulling it across by rope. When my mother and father moved in, they got stuck in the mud with the wagon and had to unload their household goods as the tide came up. In those days there was no electricity and only a small water pipe, a farmhouse, 2 farm cottages and some old buildings.

Both of Peter's parents worked very hard and his mother would also drive the tractors. When they first purchased the cattle from Devon, they were bought up by train and unloaded at Shoebury Station and driven along the road. His father would follow behind the cattle, paying out half-pennies and pennies if the cattle wandered in people's gardens and caused damage. They were then driven across Bentall's land and assembled ready for crossing to Potton Island.



Potton Island Farmhouse

Obviously, this could only be done by swimming them across at high tide with one boat upstream and one downstream to keep them in a narrow funnel. Obviously, if done at low tide all the animals would have been stuck in the mud.



Farming on Potton Island with a cableless Tractor

On the Potton side of the creek, there was a jetty where his father used to load wheat onto barges and send hay to London and bring back horse muck. Times were certainly not easy during those first years of farming on Potton with no electricity, paraffin lamps and water that used to freeze up.

When aeroplanes were attacking London in the war, Peter was hidden under the stairs and on one occasion his mother and father found a dead German pilot with his parachute, in the creek. During the war there were hundreds of bombs dropped on Potton Island.



Harvest on Potton Island 1943

When the German aeroplanes came over, the army from Shoebury Barracks used anti-aircraft artillery ("ack-ack") to attack. Some of the German pilots, experiencing this, decided to head back to Germany dropping bombs on Foulness, Potton and Wallsea in the process. The fields were covered with plenty of shrapnel and holes.

After the war, Peter's uncle, Peter Gordon Philpot, was demobbed with just a suit and a pay packet of £45.00 from which he purchased a set of Encyclopaedia Britannica. He came to help Peter's father, Harold Ross Philpot, on Potton with the farming and became quite interested in sheep.

Between them they put in a concrete hard (road) over to the Island with pipes underneath, allowing a certain amount of time to cross at low tide. Peter can remember once going across with his father who was wearing his waders and was giving him a piggy back, but they were both washed away. Peter's mother was not a happy bunny and his father was more worried about losing his walking stick than him!

There were several other incidents on the hard, one being when a Matthew's grain lorry with approximately 12 tons of load, broke its half shaft. They could not pull it out with the crawler because it just skidded on the concrete. His father rang Matthews and asked them to send another lorry to pull it out before the tide came up. On a different occasion a chalk lorry came off the road and they could not get it out before the tide came up, so it was under water for one whole tide.

In 1946, Peter's father took on a tenancy for 350 acres from Lord Petre at Writtle Park and the family moved to Writtle Park in 1947. The family moved into one of the houses and Peter's grandfather Algernon, Uncle Peter and Aunt Elizabeth moved to the main house at Writtle Park with Sister Jean. It was a good job since they had the tenancy that enabled his Uncle to concentrate on Potton Island and his father on Writtle Park. He became Chairman of the Essex County National Farmers Union in 1956/1957.



Potton Island 'The Hard'

The devastating floods of 1953 completely covered Potton Island for six weeks with sea water and nearly



Potton Island 'The Raft'

finished the family off. There were seven breaches on Potton to the sea wall and they lost a lot of sheep and cattle. The force of the water was so great near the farmhouse that it washed half of it away and on one of the breaches a sailing boat was going up the river but ended up through the breach onto Potton. During the flood, the army only supplied them with WW1 landing craft which were not in very good shape. They loaded up this boat with sheep and Uncle and father and someone else were paddling/rowing to the sea wall when it hit a

stake that was under the water and sunk. Father, Uncle and the other person had to swim for it, but they lost some of the sheep. It was a very hard time for those concerned because in places only the tops of the fencing posts could be seen therefore the cattle had to be manoeuvred through the gateways and swim them all to the sea wall. using the boat.

At the time, there were about 250 ewes close to lambing at Potton. The remaining

cattle were taken off the island and taken to the farm of Mr Carter of Harlow (Richard Carter's father). The ewes who could be persuaded to swim to the sea wall were taken to Writtle Park where we lambed them on about 15 acres. Later the sheep were taken to Hylands Park just outside Chelmsford and a friend of fathers, farmer Allison from Ongar.

Peter's father and uncle led parties of farmers who worked 24 hours non-stop to build temporary barricades and repair the sea walls to keep out the sea whilst naval pumps pumped water over the wall. The pumps were lifted in by helicopters and worked 24 seven for a very long time. The family were forever thankful and appreciative of the efforts of those farmers because without their help, Potton Island would have been lost for good. If the walls had not been raised to the height they are today, all the local areas would have flooded many times. A lot of land was taken to reconstruct the walls at this larger height and 5 bigger sluices put in to drain the water off, in case of flood. Today, only 3 sluices are working and the Ministry of Defence are undecided with what to do with the fourth. Peter is very much of the opinion that they should ensure that the fourth sluice works because if there was another flood it would be necessary to get as much water out of the sluices as quickly as possible.



Soldiers with Recovered Bombs



Potton Island Swing Bridge - Built 1955

When Potton was eventually dried out, millions of worms ended up on the surface and thousands of seagulls and birds were feeding on them. During this time, Peter was a student at the Junior School, Mill Hill, Belmont. He can remember the head master, Mr Roberts coming to get him out of bed, take him to his office to reassure him that his mother, father and uncle were all okay but learning that the whole farm, 1,000 acres were flooded. When the land was dry, the Government supplied gypsum, a very dusty material.

The family spread thousands of tons on Potton Island. On one occasion the wind was going the same way as the tractor and spreader, the driver did not realise he was at the end of the field and drove straight into the Rainbow Fleet. It was only when the water was around his ankles, did he grasp he was in trouble.

Summary by Richard Kirton

Today, Peter and his sons Christopher, Andrew and Stuart, farm a total of 12,800 acres through 27 farms in Essex and Suffolk and owns one of South-East England's most popular educational farming and craft centre attractions, 'Barleylands' near Billericay.

With careful strategic planning, land management and business diversification, the family continue to take their business ever forward. I was shown around the Barleylands museum and farming complex by Sandra Williams, Personal Assistant to Peter. The museum houses farming equipment from the past and in 2018, Barleylands



was host to some 18,000 school students, 2000 teachers and 2000 parents. I was introduced to Peter's Education Officer, Karen Watson who is always keen to speak to Head Teachers with a view to arranging educational visits for their students, where they can learn about the intricacies of past and present farming techniques whilst sharing hands-on experience with farm animals. Sylvia Kent, a Freelance Author and Journalist posted an article on her Blog covering the Essex Country Fair at Barleylands near Billericay during the weekend of 10th and 11th September 2011.

The photograph above, shows the Philpot family with some of the grandchildren, anticipating a great weekend at their 25th Show at the farm.

Old Ted's Model of St. Mary's Church

Article by Richard Kirton

Photographs supplied by Roy Deeks - October 2017

Addendum by Ted's Granddaughter, Lynn Butler [née Watson] - Jan 2018



Sadly Ted Truss is no longer with us, but his skills as a builder and bricklayer can still be appreciated today. On 4th April 1971, Ted finished building a three feet high model of St. Mary's Church, from stone taken from the House of Commons, which was bombed during World War Two. He shaped an exact stone replica of the church and as you can see, has created a small marvel. The roof lifts off to display the interior details including the font, pulpit, altar and rows of pews, all in exactly the same position as those in the 12th century church.

On 11th September 1980, two photographs were presented to Roy Deeks' son Ben Deeks, by Olive and Ted Truss. The text on reverse of the photograph to the left reads "To

Benjamin with love from Auntie Olive & Uncle Ted".

The model stood for several years in Ted's front garden as shown in the photograph on the left. His model is in the foreground with Ted Truss in the middle ground with St. Mary's Church in the background.

The photograph to the right shows a proud Ted Truss, kneeling behind his model. As a matter of interest, over 40 years ago, Ted used to live next door to where Olive and Bernard Cooper live today, in Little Wakering.

The whereabouts of the Church Model is unknown although the same, but watermarked copy of the photograph can also be seen on a website called "Alamy". The site offers "115 million stock images, vectors and videos" and is well worth a look. Perhaps one of our readers knows where the model is now.



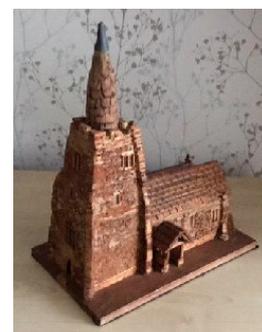
Ted also built a copy of Mary's Well in Nazareth over the dangerous old well in St Mary's churchyard in Little Wakering churchyard and it still stands today, east of the South Porch. My article covering this can be seen here. If it were not for a newspaper cutting highlighting this other achievement of Ted Truss, this article about the church model would not have been possible. One thing led to another and I would like to thank Lesley Marshall for lending the newspaper cutting to Dawn Bailey.

Addendum



I am pleased to say that on 11th January 2018, Lynn Butler [née Watson] sent me an email message which read as follows:

'I was interested to see your recent articles on Old Ted. Old Ted was my maternal grandfather, my mother is Joy Truss who married Reg Watson, I am pleased to say they are both very well. Ted sadly passed away in 1989 Aged 87. The model church resided in our garden for many years until sadly the elements got the better of it. I do however still have a smaller wooden model that Ted made before the stone version, pictures of both attached.'



Old Ted's Holy Well

Article by Richard Kirton

Newspaper Cutting supplied by Lesley Marshall - October 2017

Transcription of Newspaper Article

Old Ted Truss has turned a dangerous well into a beauty spot at a Wakering churchyard.

The well, at St. Mary's the Virgin, Little Wakering Road, was covered in a piece of scrap iron, surrounded by rubble. The vicar, the Rev. Howard Sanderson, was frightened that children could fall down the well.

Now Ted, 69, of Little Wakering Road, has solved all the vicar's problems. He is building a copy of Mary's Well in Nazareth, over the old well. Ted, a retired bricklayer, said: "Since I retired I have had great fun building things of stone and it keeps me occupied".

So when Mr. Sanderson came and asked me for some help I was willing to give a hand. He has just returned from the Holy Lands and bought a postcard of Mary's well.

For those wishing to see the Holy Well, it still stands in St Mary's churchyard, east of the South Porch.

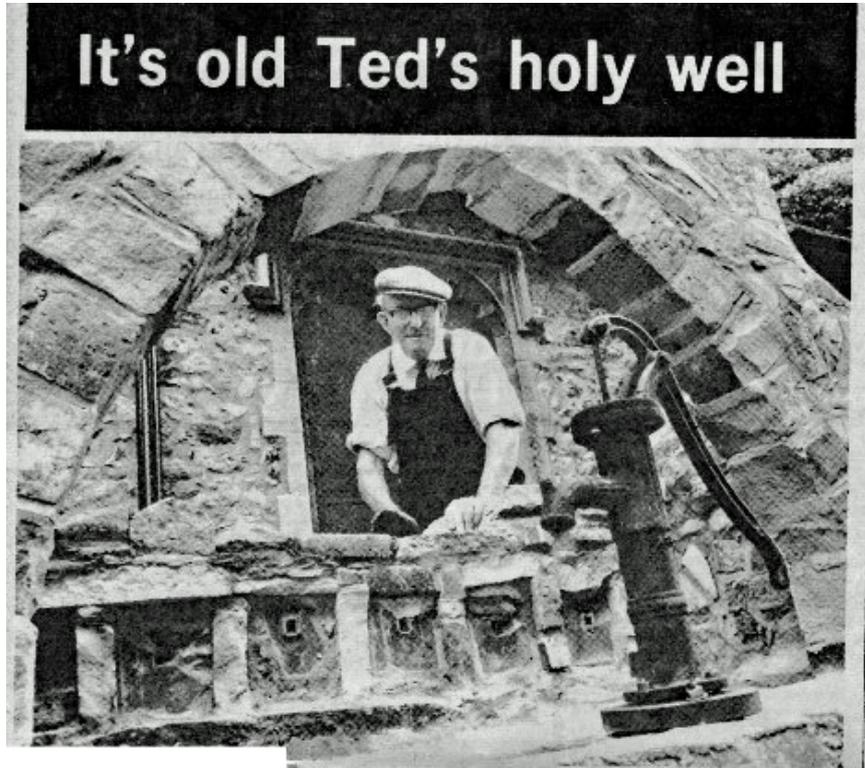


As a matter of interest, over 40 years ago, Ted Truss used to live next door to Olive and Bernard Cooper in Little Wakering.

The previous article highlights Ted's model of St Mary's

Church in Little Wakering. It was three feet high and built from stone taken from the House of Commons which was bombed during World War Two. The model stood for several years in Ted's front garden.

I wish to thank Lynn Butler [née Watson] for submitting the last two photographs in my previous article. Ted's carpentry skills obviously matched his stone mason skills, since his wooden model looks extremely well made.



OLD TED Truss has turned a dangerous well into a beauty spot at a Wakering churchyard.

The well, at St. Mary's the Virgin, Little Wakering Road, was covered in a piece of scrap iron, surrounded by rubble. The vicar, the Rev. Howard Sanderson, was frightened that children could fall down the well.



Now Ted, 69, of Little Wakering Road, has solved all the vicar's problems. He is building a copy of Mary's Well in Nazareth, over the old well.

Ted, a retired bricklayer, said: "Since I retired I have had great fun building things of stone and it keeps me occupied.

"So when Mr. Sanderson came and asked me for some help I was willing to give a hand. He has just returned from the Holy Lands and brought a postcard of Mary's well.

Mock-up Atlantic Wall on Foulness Island

*Article by Richard Kirton
Sunday 23 December 2018*



A section of the Mock-up Atlantic Wall on Foulness Island

The real Atlantic Wall of World War II was a coastal defensive structure built on Hitler's orders that stretched from Norway, along the Belgium and French coastline to the Spanish border. The wall covered a distance of 1,670 miles and was built between 1942 and 1944 with the purpose of fending off an attack on Nazi-occupied Europe by the UK. The wall formed the main part of Hitler's 'Fortress Europe' and was one of the most impressive engineering feats of the day.

Hitler issued the order to build this wall on March 23, 1942 in his now famous 'Directive 40'. The plan called for the construction of 15,000 separate concrete emplacements to be manned by 300,000 soldiers. The wall absorbed a huge amount of German resources and more than 260,000 workers were used to build it, using over 17 million cubic metres of concrete and 1.2 million tons of steel.

However, British, American and Canadian troops breached the seemingly impregnable Nazi defences along an 80-mile stretch of the French coastline at Normandy in a single day, the 6th June 1944. This would not have been possible without the co-operation of the French Resistance. British Military Intelligence had asked them to secure valuable information including aerial photographs and documents about the German Atlantic Wall, which showed its size, structure and materials that it was made of.

In order to achieve a successful seaborne invasion into occupied France, the Allied Forces knew that they would have to break through these German defences. A great deal of effort was therefore put into developing the technology to achieve this, including specialised tanks – known as "Hobart's Funnies" which were developed by Major-General Percy Hobart. This enabled accurate mock-ups of the Atlantic Wall to be built in various locations in the UK. These were used for military training and testing prior to D-Day in June 1944.



Location and extent of the Mock-up Atlantic Wall on Foulness Island

Not many people that I have spoken to were aware of the existence of this local mock-up wall which is approximately 1210 feet in length, but Phillip Mobbs, a young man from Bristol is in the process of researching all five of the UK locations. He found National Archive documents showing that such a site was constructed on Foulness island and Roger Burroughs confirmed that this particular mock-up Atlantic Wall actually flanks a small section of his farmland on the east coast, south of Fisherman's Head. Phil made a four-hour trip from Bristol to meet up with Roger and myself to confirm legitimacy of the wall's existence. The wall can clearly be seen approaching Fisherman's Head from the public footpath along the Riverbank which runs parallel to 'The Broomway'.

After the war, the French were embarrassed by the abandoned defences and decided to start demolishing them, but this took a long time. However, many years later, the public began to preserve sections of the Atlantic Wall and some of the fortifications still stand today, drawing thousands of tourists annually. In Holland and Denmark also, the remains of the 'Atlantic Wall' defences are being used to lure tourists.

Website Statistics

The sample report below, shows a trend towards fewer Returning Visits each week. This is obviously due to the fact that I have not posted many new articles for some time now and have not needed to notify all of our online members. The trend is that most visitors to the site are Unique and First Time. The Website Statistics Report is free and still a valuable tool, since it is automatically generated on a weekly basis.

Summary: 17 June 2019 - 23 June 2019

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total	Average
Page Views	5	11	23	24	10	10	31	114	16
Unique Visits	5	7	18	24	9	10	18	91	13
First Time Visits	5	7	17	23	9	10	18	89	13
Returning Visits	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0

Summary

In advance, I would like to thank you all for coming along to our latest Reunion and hope that you enjoyed your visit. Please do not forget that we meet regularly, every 3 months at The Castle Inn in Little Wakering (pictured below). Details of our next meeting can be found on our villages website:

<http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/plus/index.html>



Reaching Old Age

*It's no surprise that the older people get,
the longer they think it takes for a
person to reach old age:*

*On average, adults between the ages of
30 and 49 think old age begins at 69.*

*People who are currently 50-64 believe
old age starts at 72.*

*People who are over 65 say old age begins
at 74.*

Hymns

*Precious Lord, Take
My Hand, And Help
Me Up.*

*Guide Me O Thou
Great Lord God,
I've Forgotten
Where I've Left my
Car.*

Thoughts

*I have to exercise early in
the morning before my brain
figures out what I'm doing.*

*I have flabby thighs, but
fortunately my stomach
covers them.*

*The easiest way to find
something that's lost around
the house is to buy a
replacement.*

Contacts

Dawn and David Bailey Email: danddbailey@btinternet.com Tel: 01702-217489

Peter Griffiths Email: p-pgriffiths01@tiscali.co.uk Tel: 020-8769-6799

Richard Kirton (Editor) Email: r.kirton@talktalk.net Tel: 01702 216407