

THE PARISH PUMP

The occasional Newsletter of
Trimley St Martin Parish Council
www.trimley-st-martin.org.uk

December 2005

I often wonder what Trimley St Martin would be like if it had had a different geographical location along the Suffolk coast. It would probably share several of the attributes that the larger villages on route to our seaside resorts further north do today. In turn Felixstowe would have remained predominately a seaside town possibly being another Aldeburgh or Southwold.

As we all know the events of the last fifty years have dealt a different reality to this peninsular. Quiet country lanes and holiday cottages are not a major part of our village in the same way that largely weekend homes and extremely expensive (just expensive) beach huts are not the reality in Felixstowe. Our reality is having the largest port in Britain and a rapidly expanding County town as our immediate neighbours. This has obviously given opportunity and prosperity to the area and many more people enjoy living here than did a few years ago, but therein lies the problem balancing opportunity and standard of living with environment and quality of life. As your Council this is a dichotomy we are fully aware of and many of the issues that arise have to be judged with this balance in mind. In past months we have asked for your opinions on the way forward and it is obvious that this balance is uppermost in your thoughts as well.

Turning to the most recent issues that need this thinking applied to:

Dualling of the railway.

You may have already received a letter from the POF by the time you read this. I apologise if there is repetition, however we have had several meetings with POF management about dualling, the shorter route from west of Trimley station to east of Nacton station is to be the option taken up. We had been clearly told that dualling would negate the need for standing trains and were extremely concerned to hear recently that this may not be the case. We have until now largely supported the dualling on the basis that more trains means less lorries but will object to the whole scheme if a solution can't be found to completely banning standing trains and their accompanying noise and pollution. The quality of life of residents should not be compromised and on no account would we prepared to accept Trimley St Martin becoming a railway siding; thankfully recent discussions are more hopeful that this can be overcome although we will seek assurances that standing trains cannot occur at a later date either once the POF have paid for the work and Network Rail are in full control. I am sure the 'Treacle Miner' will have something to say about this point in his column.

Public rights of way across the railway are another issue that we are looking at closely in particular the Suffolk Coast and Heath path that crosses the railway via footpath No 1 opposite Seamark Nunn. The POF recently spoke about permanent diversion of this particular crossing again we would vehemently oppose any such action. We will do our best to ensure that all these crossing points are maintained and enhanced to reflect their level of use.

Operation Stack or Operation Stuck !

There is in place a system called Operation Stack that is supposed to deal with the inevitable traffic problems associated with a shutdown at Felixstowe Docks. As I am sure you are aware it has not been working properly. We have had talks with the POF who have accepted that it is not satisfactory and needs urgent attention before the winter storms get under way. We are very concerned about this not only because of the gridlock it causes on the A14 through Trimley St Martin but also the knock on effect in Trimley High Road and the increased danger to local residents. The consequences of a major event requiring emergency services coinciding with this are all too obvious and we have written to Martlesham police HQ about this. The POF have assured us that they too will be holding talks with Suffolk Constabulary to avoid this level of chaos occurring again.

Acoustic barriers

Apart from finer details of small areas unprotected and issues over access and maintenance the acoustic barrier project still looks as if it will go ahead.

Felixstowe Peninsular Masterplan

Nothing much to report on this other than to say that we have been very disappointed by the apparent lack of credence given to our ideas for the village. I hope we are wrong and that our views have been listened to and will be included in the final report but as always we will keep you posted. In finishing I hope you can see that we are continuing to be mindful of this balance I mentioned at the start so that Trimley St Martin does not become a car park, railway siding or just a 'route to Felixstowe' but continues to enjoy independence, countryside and a sense of community while still providing it's share of facilities and recreation and recognising the need for continued employment opportunities in the area.

Nigel Smith

Clerk's Corner

You may recall from our last issue and that we included a village questionnaire and 'thank you' to everyone who took the time to complete and return this. I have been collating the answers from these and hope to have a summary of the answers in the next issue. However, it has not been surprising to see that 100% of you all want to keep the village identities separate from Felixstowe with the same reason – to keep its rustic characteristics which give you the peaceful environment that you enjoy. Whilst the town of Felixstowe may only be less than three miles away and the cranes at the Port visible from the village, Trimley St Martin still retains its rural character and long may this continue. As a village, I do feel that it is important to hold on to as many local traditions as possible and one that I'm pleased to hear will be continuing is the village carnival which brings Trimley St Martin and Trimley St Mary together every year. Last years carnival was a huge success, mainly due to the commitment of the small band of volunteers who put on a fun-filled day, helped of course by the weather! As well as providing a great day out, the Carnival raised approximately £1500 for local charities. I have been told however that some of the committee have resigned having been part of it for a couple of years and new volunteers are being sought. Help with the planning stages is especially needed and if you would like to help, please contact John Sills on 210721.

Tracey Hunter

Trimley Saints Players

Trimley Saints are well into rehearsals now for the annual panto, 'Frankenstein - the Panto', which will be presented in the Memorial Hall from Wed 11th - Sat 14th January, 7.30 nightly with 2.30 Sat matinee. If you like good music, comedy, and watching our local talent producing their best, then this is the show for you! We normally sell out, so get tickets early by contacting our Box Office on 671119.



The Treacle Miner



You should try going to council meetings — having time on my hands, I went to the November Meeting. Horrifying it was!!!! It appeared that the POF had been at it again, the proposal to dual the railway line was not as it seemed from the presentations given in the Summer. The final current proposal is to dual the line from Trimley Station to a point just west of the new Levington bridge. This will provide a holding area for two freightliner trains, each of a length of approx 500m, with the possibility of being increased to over 700m. One train would park between Morston Hall and Levington Bridge; the other would park between Gaymers

Lane and the old Grimston Lane Crossing. The fiendish planned timetable by Network Rail would be for two freightliners to follow the passenger service from Ipswich to Felixstowe (passenger train travelling at 75mph — freight train travelling at 60mph. The first freight train would stop just west of Gaymers Lane and the second freightliner just west of Morston Hall crossing, both on the new siding—sorry I mean line. They would wait with engine running until the passenger train starts its return journey from Felixstowe and is followed by two freightliners exiting from the port. Once these three trains had passed over the Trimley Station Crossing towards Ipswich then the two standing freightliners would have moved down to the port. Beggars belief doesn't it!!

On top of all this they wish to close some of our best footpaths that cross the railway line and lead down to the river. Is there no end to their generosity? The Parish Council had already made their feelings known to POF on this proposal, following an earlier meeting. The representatives from the POF then announced that they had spoken with Network Rail and the latest proposed timetable now showed only five trains waiting for about a minute each time. However they had asked Network Rail to look at their proposals again and produce a timetable which did not contain any planned "waiting trains" - they seemed confident that this could be achieved.

Well this only leaves the footpath issue to be sorted then!!!!

The Chairman then bowled the Port representatives a googly—you should have seen their faces!!!! . Would you like to comment on the success of "Operation Stack", I think "Operation Gridlock" would have been more appropriate! Members of the Parish Council then fired questions to the port people — I can tell you that the Spanish Inquisition was nothing compared to rather upset parish councillors!!!!

We learned that Operation Stack could provide parking for up to 2000 HGVs. It would be initiated by POF police faxing the Martlesham Control Room of Suffolk Police. It would appear that, in this instance the Suffolk Police response was slow, slow, slow. Eventually our local officers were tasked to respond — but guess what by then the POF Road and dock gate approaches and the A14 back to the Trimley Flyover were well and truly gridlocked. In this particular case my impression was that Suffolk Constabulary and the Highways Agency were jointly responsible for this fiasco, due to their slow response. I only hope that they have learnt by this and will respond more quickly next time.

Sam

The Enigma that is Trimley

A short history of two parishes

The Plague in Trimley

Another event which was played down at the time so as not to create a panic, was an outbreak of "food poisoning", which in later years became accepted as bubonic plague, probably the last outbreak in England.

This happened in December 1909 in a cottage what was then lower Street, now Thorpe Lane. The cottage today is known as "Lynn". In those days it was known as "Pretyman's Cottages".

Here lived the Rouse family; of the father, a farm worker, the mother and five children. It is difficult to imagine seven people in a cottage that size.

On December 19 1909 Mrs. Rouse became ill and died on December 22. Daughter Carrie on December 26 and died on January 5 1910. Alice on January 8 and died on January 10. Willie on January 15 and died on January 17. Mr. Rouse, Honora (the eldest daughter) and John (the youngest son, only 6 at the time), were all taken ill but recovered. At the time the medical authorities were baffled. There had been similar outbreaks at Shotley, Ewerton and Freston.

The school log of Trimley St. Martin of that year (1910), shows that a child died, but after that the entries have been rewritten, another way of probably subduing what might have caused public panic. At that time, those people still alive, recall that it was put around that it was food poisoning. Mr. John Rouse, the last survivor of that family, still alive in 1978, living at Woodbridge, believes that it was a rabbit pie which caused the outbreak.

It is generally accepted that the disease was carried by rats, which could have come ashore from grain ships lying in the Orwell.

The outbreaks lasted from 1906 to 1918 in the area of Trimley/ Shotley/Freston, probably the last time there was an epidemic.

The Trimley Gun

Another piece of antiquity belongs to the gun which stood for many years at the entrance to Gun lane, the track leading to Grimston Hall. Then for some years it was almost obscured in the hedge of the bungalow. Recently there was a plan to move the gun to a permanent site near the village sign of Trimley St. Mary, in

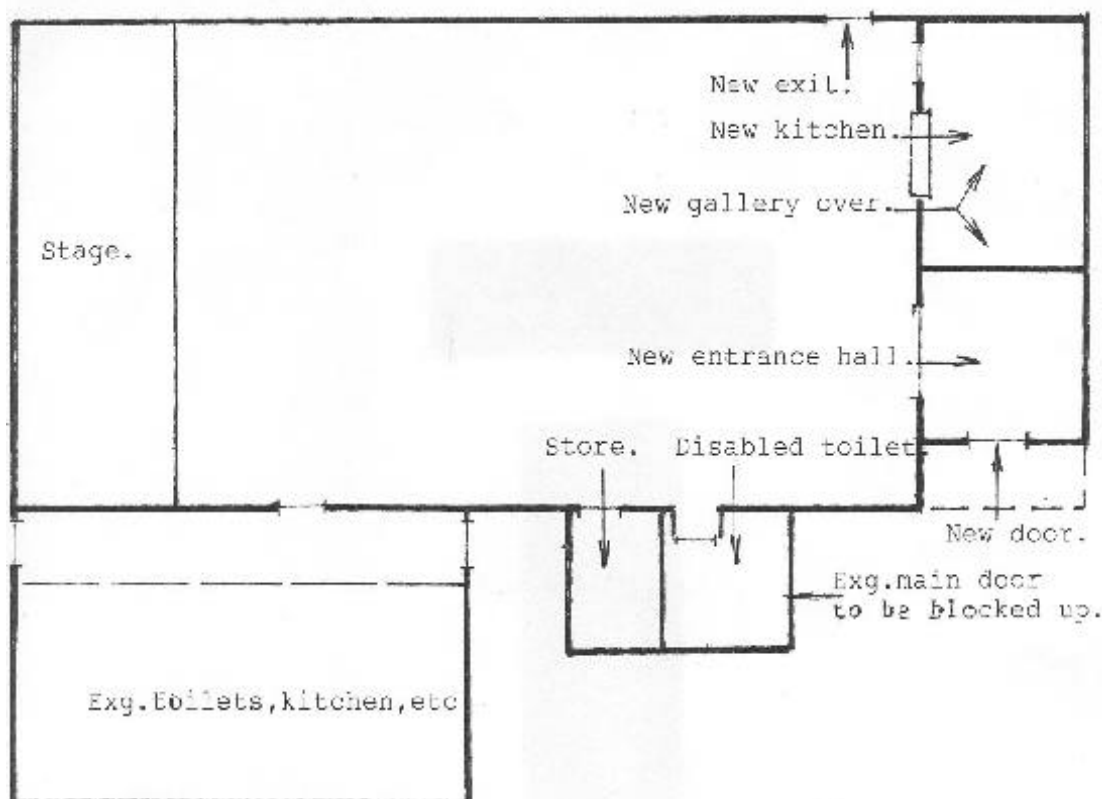
which parish it has always been. But due to public concern, it has been decided to let it remain on the corner where it was originally.

The gun is of French origin dating from between 1525 and 1547. When it was discernable the letter "H" above the touch hole stood for Henri and the dolphin was the badge of the heir to the French throne. It was probably cast for Henri II when Dauphin.

There are three similar French guns in the Tower of London collection. There is some reason to believe that the gun was brought back by sailors from that period. Another theory put forward, is that it was brought by Thomas Cavendish (1560-1591), which could be correct from the date point of view, having been captured during one of Cavendish's privateering escapades.

© The Enigma that is Trimley—Ray Howlett, 1980

Memorial Hall News



Progress towards carrying out the improvements to the hall facilities has been rather slow this year. This has been mainly due to the difficulties met with financing the project, and not, a lack of enthusiasm!

An application for Lottery funding was considered but even getting the application forms has been nigh on impossible over the last few months, and the general feeling is that we would not be successful although it has not been totally discounted.

In the meantime a decision was made, as it were, to go back to the drawing board. and revise the scheme.

The above sketch shows an outline of the proposed new layout, which in many ways may well prove to be better than the original. The building work would cause less disruption and, best of all, cost less.

The present toilets would remain along with the kitchen. However when further funds become available these areas would undergo refurbishment. The room marked kitchen on the revised plan would in the meantime be used as a light refreshment bar for functions being held in the hall. Incidentally, the snooker table, which is very underused, is being put up for sale; thus making room for the new construction (and helping towards the cost). Keith Slaughter

The Mystery Of St John's At Alston

Travel through the countryside today and from almost any road you will see the recognisable shape of the parish church. It is easy to believe that churches are permanent fixtures in the country side. This is not actually the case. Suffolk has lost at least fifty churches and St John's was just one of them. There has been a church or chapel at Alston since at least 1086AD (when the Domesday book was commissioned) and is likely to have been there in Anglo Saxon times. Although then called a church this may have been too grand a title, it was most likely a chapel for the local lord. Unfortunately Anglo Saxon churches were generally built of wood and any trace of this original church has probably long since gone. The later Norman church, the one we think of as St John's was most likely built from stone. Alston was important enough to have parish status in Norman times but the formal parish status was removed in 1362AD, when the lands and presumably the tythes were transferred to Trimley St Martin. It appears that for some time the church still functioned under the patronage of the lords of Grimston Hall with papal blessing. The church was all but demolished about 1500AD but not levelled to the ground. We know from old maps that the ruin was still visible in the late 18th Century.

There are several theories and ideas about the exact location of St John's. Most compelling is from a local farmer who relates the site of the church to be under a cart shed near Alston Hall. As for the graveyard a local farm worker dug up a skull in the 1930s when working on some nearby cow sheds opposite the cart shed. This he displayed on a post at a junction with a clay pipe hanging out of its mouth, the joke was soon ended when the local policeman had a few words!

Others believe it to be under the present Alston Hall. This is doubtful as parts of the Hall have been dated to the 15th century AD. This date also conflicts with the map evidence, the ruins were still apparent in 1783AD. The case against this location is strengthened by the alignment of the Hall being north-south and not east-west as you would expect if the church foundations were reused to a large extent. There is a potential third location based on a map of 1808AD. On this map there is a group of farm buildings that were all orientated north-south except for one which is set east-west, the classic church alignment. If we think that a church was there in 1783AD and then it is possible that the land owner of the time reused the foundations of the church somewhere in the 25 years between the maps being published. There is now no trace of any of these farm buildings as they are covered by 20th century structures adjacent to the hall. The only way we will ever solve the mystery and find the exact location of the church is by excavation. My bet would be under the farm buildings beside Alston. Do you have any views or information? If so please let the Parish Council know and help end the Mystery of St John's.

Berridge Eve

© Berridge Eve 2005



The Memorial Hall Committee
Invite you and your family to
The Lighting up of the Christmas Tree
on Tuesday 6th Dec at 6.30pm
Followed by Carols in the Hall.
Father Christmas will be in his grotto. Soup & Rolls will be provided

Christmas Services

St Cecilia

Christmas Morning	Mass	11.30am
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Trimley Methodist

Christmas Eve	Carols by Candlelight	7.00pm
Christmas Morning	United Christmas Mom Service	10.30am

St Martins

Sun 21st December	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols	6.30pm
Christmas Eve	Candlelight Pilgrimage to Crib	4.30pm & 6.30pm
	Midnight Communion	11.30pm
Christmas Day	All Age Christmas Communion	10.30am

Trimley Free Church intend to join in with the above services

The Parish Council wishes all its residents the compliments of the season



The Parish Clerk of Trimley St Martin is:
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