



Why Honey Hill is important.

HORNINGSEA Herald

Issue #143 September 2020

For further information on Horningsea
visit our village website at:
www.horningsea.net

To contribute to the Herald, please
contact the editor by the 25th of the
month at:
horningseanews@googlemail.com

Horningsea Development

Consultation ends 14th Sept. on the sewage works relocation.

Anglian Water plans to relocate Cambridge Sewage Works in order to build a new housing district on the old site: North East Cambridge. One of the proposed sites is Honey Hill which is Green Belt land between Horningsea and the A14. The illuminated 26m high plant will be visible (and likely audible) from Horningsea High Street. A new roundabout looks likely just up the road towards the A14 to cope with the 146 slurry lorries a day!

AWA's consultation ends 14th September

If you object to having the site near Horningsea:

1. Visit the Anglian Water website
www.cwwtpr.com
 - i. Post your comments on the interactive map in the documents tab on www.cwwtpr.com
 - ii. Make comments on why site 3 is not ideal.
 - iii. Like comments that you agree with.
- b. Call Anglia Water's Freephone information line 0808 196 1661 to ask questions.
- c. email info@cwwtpr.com to ask questions



- d. write to Anglian Water at **Freepost: CWWTPR**
2. Email our MP Lucy Frazer on why Horningsea is a bad place to put a sewage plant. All three sites are in her constituency so you need to point out why other sites are preferable (e.g. Honey Hill is greenbelt land. Sites 2, 3 and the original site are partly brownfield sites).

Events

First live service in St Peters Church!

Sunday September 13th at 10.30 at St Peters Church

Our first "live" service will take place in the church, led by Reverend Nick Moir who is the Rural Dean, and so responsible for us during the vacancy. All Covid rules are being followed, please come, please wear a face mask and please use the hand sanitisers! We will have a live service in Horningsea on the second Sunday of each month for the next couple of months.

If you want to talk about arranging a baptism, wedding or funeral, please let one of the Church Wardens know.

Each Sunday you can join in the services by Zoom so if you would like an "invitation to Zoom" please let the church wardens know.

Friends of Horningsea Church AGM

Sunday September 27th at 14.00 in the Church

The AGM of the Friends of Horningsea Church followed swiftly by the launch of the new History of Horningsea Church. Michael Yelton, the author will give a talk on the history of the church and sign copies of the book which will be on sale for £5. The book is illustrated with photographs including a Victorian photograph of the church, and drawings, including one from about 1800.

Horningsea Past

ON113

John Wilson

When researching events that took place a long time ago it is very rare to find that the records pertaining to what happened agree. However, in this case the alignment is very accurate.

In July 1942 in France, England, Germany, Canada and the North Atlantic events started to unfold which would affect the lives of many people. In La Pallace on the coast of Western France the sleek low hull of U132 commanded by Ernst Vogelsand along with U43 commanded by Hans Schwantke slipped quietly



from the U boat pens of La Pallace and Lorient out into the Bay of Biscay. U132 was destined for the Gulf of St Lawrence and U43 was to join "Group Wolf " a line of U boats commanded by Erich Topp, whose job was to stop Allied ships reaching England.

Meanwhile in Horningsea George received a telegram to rejoin his ship in Cardiff where he was the appointed radio officer. He had not been home long after leaving his previous ship that had just completed the crossing from America, so it must have been a sad farewell to his wife Edie at Waterbeach station. "Sunnyside" must have felt a lonely place when she returned home having already experienced many departures as George joined previous ships. George had already been a radio operator before the war but left the sea when he married to work at Pyes of Cambridge, but had returned to the Merchant Navy at the start of the war.



Pacific Pioneer

The MV Pacific Pioneer was a General cargo ship which had just finished discharging a cargo of food and war materials and was about to make the return crossing of the Atlantic.

One of the duties of the Radio officer along with monitoring radio traffic and communications was in this case using a device known as MF/Df, which although not a new device, was not common on ships in this form of use. Radio direction finding was used to find the bearing on which a signal was transmitted in this case it was tuned to the U boat net. The convoy records held at Kew show the Pacific Pioneer was the designated watch ship for the convoy.

On the 15th of July the ship was prepared for sea but prior to moving out to the anchorage at " Barry Roads" four passengers joined. Mrs Thompson and her two children Mark and Valerie along with Mrs Lucy Young. They were to join their husbands in America where they were involved in the training of British airmen. One of our village residents, Basil Lewin was out there at the time training at two of the airfields which he commemorated by naming two houses in the village, Dallas and Tyrell's both at Church End after the airfields he trained at in America.

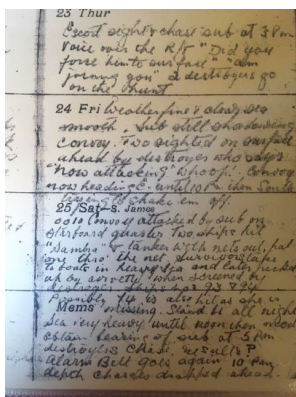
On the 18th July the Pacific Pioneer left her anchorage and joined a convoy from Liverpool for the Atlantic crossing. The escort group assigned to them was made up of Royal Canadian and Royal Naval ships, some were old first world war lend lease destroyers which were known as "woodbines" because of their four thin funnels and ability to produce smoke, the reference being to woodbine cigarettes a popular brand smoked at the time. Other ships were the workhorse of convoy duties, small durable ships, very uncomfortable but good at their jobs and referred to as a "flower class corvette". Often referred to as being built by the mile and cut off by the foot. One of which was the "RCN Calgary" commanded by LT Commander Hill. In the mid Atlantic Topp the flotilla leader was advised by radio from Lorient that this large convoy designated as ON113 was approaching from the East. He immediately disbursed the line of U boats across their advance to find and sink as many ships as possible this included U43. U132 was already in the Gulf of St Lawrence causing damage to shipping. While U43 had joined the Wolf Pack.

The days passed and the convoy moved at the sedately pace of 10 knots, zigzagging their way westwards George notes in his diary says how pleased he was to be attached to a fast convoy, some convoys were only rated at seven knots, and in bad weather they would appear to just mark time

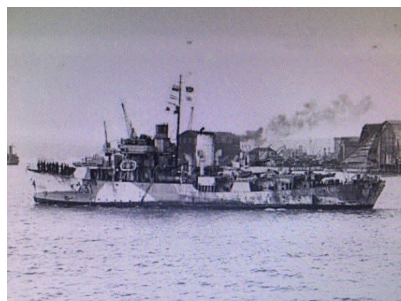
For everyone involved in the Atlantic the weather could be cruel. U boats were cramped and living conditions terrible. Corvettes were known to be violent in their rolling and everything was continually wet. George's diary goes on to tell as to how more information arrived and various measures were taken to throw off the U boats. We now know that Ultra and Bletchley Park played a great part in reading the orders of the German high command.

At one point they were ordered to make a turn in the shape of a great square which would have made no sense to them and was much criticised at the time. This is mentioned on the 24th July a day after the attacks started. Throughout this period the MF/DF was used to great effect. The commodores report held a Kew on the 26th July HMS Burnham (one of the escorts) received a report from the Pacific Pioneer of the bearing of a u boat ahead. The Burnham and St Croix were sent to attack it. In the German report it said that U43 was badly damaged in the attack and had to return to port, taking no further part in the battle. Many cross references can be found about the continued attack in a game of cat and mouse in the records and diary even giving the mf /df bearings passed from the Pacific Pioneer to the escorts. Ships were slowly being picked off and then on the 29th of July I found an extract in a book where Captain Campbell the Master of the Pacific Pioneer was on deck after dinner with the children when one of them spotted a whale. The whale turned out to be a U132 which had come down from the North to join the attack. The tracks of two torpedoes headed towards the Pacific Pioneer were spotted by the children before they struck the ship beneath the Bridge and No 5 hold sinking her in forty five minutes. George's diary picks up the events when they find themselves rescued by the "Calgary". Due to the shortage of fuel she broke away from the convoy taking survivors to Halifax where they were landed. His praise for the treatment by the Canadians is recorded in the diary. This was at a time that Merchant Seamen went off pay the moment their ship was sunk, so the

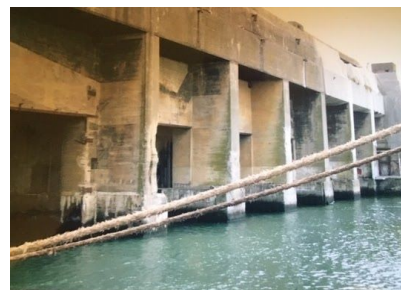
generosity of the Canadians in clothing and feeding them before they were returned to the UK as "Distressed British Seamen" does not go amiss



George's diary



Calgary



Submarine pens at La Pallace

What happened to everyone involved.

- The remaining ships of the convoy made it to New York where they were reloaded and set off back to England.
- The wives and children made it to New York and later returned home towards the end of the war. The children were still alive until recently, I then lost trace of them in the Records.
- Lt Commander Hill of the Calgary passed away recently and had vivid memories of the rescue of the survivors of the Pacific Pioneer especially the two children and the two women. He was one of the founders of the RCN Calgary association. The Calgary has long since been broken up.
- Eric Topp survived the war and became a leading light in Nato and the development of submarine warfare during the cold war.
- Hans Schwantke commander of U 43 and a victim of the Pacific Pioneers MF/DF during the battle, made it back to port, but was lost with all his crew later in the war.
- Ernst Vogelsang was lost later in the war along with his crew.
- The U boat pens are still there in La Pallace, where U 132 departed low and brooding with the faint outlines of the U boat numbers still visible on the concrete they were used in the filming of Das Boat a film about the u boats
- Of the "Pacific Pioneer", she lies deep in the North Atlantic south of Sable Island. There is nothing to mark her resting place, just one of thousands of ships sunk at sea.
- George continued to sail in convoys and also the Landings in Europe but left the sea in 1946 returning to PYS of Cambridge where he worked until retiring.

I do have one small link with the "Pacific Pioneer". My father and mother had a silver sixpenny piece which they cut in half, each carrying one half with them. At the time of the attack my father lost his. Deep down in the wreck the other half will still be there. While the other half is still here in Horningsea. On one occasion I was able to pass over the position of the wreck. Nothing marks the spot where the ships and submarines

played out their part in history, only the long swells of the grey North Atlantic. Perhaps if I had the other half of the silver sixpence with me I would have dropped it into the sea so they could be together. George and Edie are buried in the church yard

Sources

Canadian naval records

U boat Net

Public records office - Kew

George's diary

Log of attack on Pacific Pioneer German naval records

Lockdown thoughts

Letter from Lockdown

Richard Pleasants

I don't know whether it has anything to do with lockdown, but I can't help noticing that almost everyone in the village now seems to have a dog - or two. My wife has always professed to prefer dogs to humans, so the absence of a mutt from our marital home was a mild, but continuing, issue.

For years I tried to persuade her to consider taking a lover instead. My logic was this: he would presumably not expect to sleep between us on our bed whilst breaking wind vigorously every few minutes. Nor, I imagine, would he defecate on the lawn or lick his own genitals noisily on the living room carpet. I would not be expected to accompany him on long rain-swept walks stopping only to pick up his steaming faeces in a plastic bag. Possibly, and most importantly, one assumes he would be largely self-funding. Despite all these manifold advantages, I was unsuccessful and am now - and have been for twelve years - a dog owner.

Now, I don't want to labour the cost thing, any more than I want to labour the faeces thing, but there does seem to be an awful lot of both. A few years back I went to my dentist and she stared into my mouth and said 'Hmm, two extractions and a root canal' While I was still choking she nudged me and said 'Only joking!' When I took the dog for a short routine procedure, and asked how much, he said £354. I waited for the nudge, but it never came.

The main bone of contention - if I can use that term - for our elderly Labrador, Pyro, is that he is not actually a human being. We took him to two noisy garden parties on his first weekend with us so I suppose it's only natural that he expected a human-type lifestyle from there on. There's always a slight edge on his part that he's not getting everything that he's entitled to. When he was younger, people used to sometimes ask 'Is he a working dog?'. I was never clear what this meant, so I would answer 'Yes, but

he works mostly from home. I'm not absolutely sure what he does. Some kind of consultant I think.' The questioner and the dog would usually look at me blankly.

Pyro's already dissatisfied status took a sharp downward turn when Wilf arrived. Wilf first spied me when he was exploring the roof of a house which sits lower in the valley than ours, and clearly identified me as exactly the kind of mug that he needed. Wilf is, I should explain, a rescue dog from Greece. I had assumed that his provenance included bits of most of the dogs found on the island, with a bit of mountain goat chucked in, but when we took him to the vet to expend the first couple of hundred euros on the adoption process, she exclaimed with great excitement 'Oooh! Special dog. Hunting dog!' Everyone with any German connections that we know takes one look at him and says 'That's a Munsterlander.' Even the English waiter at a nearby pub said it. 'How do you know?' I said. 'I'm a vet' he said, without further explanation. Even I, who am not a doggy person, tell other dog owners about this. 'Not available in this country. Left-hand-drive only' I quip. More blank looks.

Pyro's Eeyore-like temperament is affronted on a daily basis by Wilf's Tigger-like exuberance. For the last five years Pyro has tried to completely ignore his existence. Wilf, for his part, has totally abandoned the doting obedient persona that he affected in order to achieve his removal from Greece, and now devotes his life to seeking out any tiny opportunity to escape - like a sort of canine Steve McQueen - in order to terrorise the local wildlife. I'm serious. The garden is fenced like Stalag Luft III but one day I came out and Wilf was gone. The only difference from normal was that I had moved some motorcycles out of the garage and left one parked against the fence. It seems that it's not only McQueen (or actually his stunt double Bud Ekins) who can escape by jumping a fence on a motorcycle. I should have left him in Greece to spend a very short life sweltering under an olive tree, sucking on a lizard.

Like many pursuers of minority interests, dog owners can be a bit odd. There's one man that I pass frequently on my hike to the fen. He has three small but foul-tempered animals that he fights to restrain as Wilf trots self-consciously past. I make a point, every time I see him, of bidding him a hearty 'Good morning' and no matter how hearty I am, he never replies. Imagine my surprise, then, when I was topping up the old Jag at the petrol station and a voice behind me said 'Wow! What a wonderful car!' I was astonished to turn and see the same geezer, complete with his trio of hounds yapping their stupid heads off in the car behind him. He went on at some length about the virtues of the motor. I had to tear myself away. 'Four and six a gallon when that was new!' he shouted after me. 'Six and eight, actually.' I responded as I dodged inside the building.

When I saw him advancing towards me on the fen a few days later I offered my usual hearty greeting, but then followed up with 'I enjoyed our chat about the car the other day!' Nothing.

'The E Type - at the petrol station...' I persisted. Still nothing. Just a blank look and he walked on.

See what I mean? Odd.

Horningsea Shops and Pubs

A thank you from us . . .

From The Crown and Punchbowl.

I think it is safe to say that 2020 has not been the year any of us hoped or expected. It has been difficult for all in our industry and your support during this time has been crucial. We have had to diversify in many ways to keep our customers and business safe for the future.

If you haven't yet visited us since our reopening, we want to assure you that we have many new procedures in place and when you do visit us, things may be a little different from the moment you arrive.

However, we are looking forward to seeing you very soon and will be offering you a very warm welcome!

Have a starter or dessert on us.

When you dine in with us from 1st September to 31st October, and a main course is ordered, have a free starter or pudding to the value of £7 on us. Just present this advert to your server on arrival. This can be used multiple times but only one per visit and does not include sharing dishes.

Advance Events

HRA Calendar of events for 2020

Forthcoming Dates for Diary 2020-21 (don't write in pen).

- 1st November Bonfire Night
- 29th November Christmas Tree Lighting
- 20th January AGM
- 30th January International Night

Reports

Please send in reports and photos of Horningsea and relevant events to horningseanews@gmail.com

Notes

Join the Friends of Horningsea Church

Helen Skaer

The church of St Peter is the oldest building in Horningsea dating from before William the Conqueror and the Domesday book. The main costs of its upkeep are met by grants that we can apply for but there are always smaller ways in which the church needs our care and attention. The Friends of Horningsea Church was set up to cater for those needs. Members are not necessarily church-goers but share a commitment to preserving the church and churchyard as a central feature of the village and the focus of its spiritual and social life over centuries.

An important way in which the Friends are able to help is in raising seed funds so that the PCC can apply for larger grants to fund major projects such as repairs to the tower and roof, the installation of toilets and refurbishment of stained glass in the windows. But the Friends also raise funds for their own projects such as the purchase of a new altar cloth, planting in the churchyard and commissioning a new guide to the church. One of the projects that the Friends would like to help fund in the future is the improvement of access to the church by alterations to the floor of the porch in order to avoid the need for ramps.

The Friends also enjoy social occasions so we plan an event at the church, to coincide with our Annual Meeting at 2pm on September 27th, to launch the new church guidebook (written by Michael Yelton and selling at £5 a copy). We will need to observe social distancing but the church and churchyard can accommodate plenty so please come. Later on we plan to organise an event to dedicate the refurbished Bailey window and we are also hoping to follow up on the very enjoyable churchyard natural history day last year – again with social distancing.

So - what can you do? The simplest is to become a member. The annual subscription is only £15 (to become a life member £150). The information you need and a standing order form are attached as a PDF with this newsletter. Please contact the treasurer Nicky Asplin (theasplins@hotmail.co.uk) to arrange. But you can also help with fund-raising events such as a Horningsea Open Gardens Day, which we hope to organise for a sunny afternoon next summer. Contact Helen Skaer (hs17@ac.cam.uk) if you'd like to help. As there is so much artistic talent in Horningsea, we also plan to collect together sets of cards (either of art work or photographs) to sell in the church and perhaps also at village social occasions. If you would like to make cards or contribute art/photographs to be made up into cards again please contact Helen.

But most of all welcome one and all as Friends of Horningsea Church.

Public Calendar of Horningsea events

There's a public calendar to share Horningsea events. This is a busy little village and it can be hard to keep track of all the different events. Anybody can view the calendar with this link:

<https://goo.gl/4592dL>

You can also add it to your own calendar directly using the following link:

<https://goo.gl/MrNWfg>

How to submit news to the Herald

The only guideline for news is for events and articles that are of direct relevance to the inhabitants of Horningsea. The Herald does not accept advertising, but one off "news items" may be used to publicise your "service". To submit news items either email "horningseanews@gmail.com" or submit them via Twitter.

<https://twitter.com/horningseanews>.

In these lockdown days all villagers are invited to send in recipes, thoughts on lockdown, photos of the village past and present, your hobbies! If it interests the editorial team then it gets published!

You must submit by the 2nd or 4th weekend of the month, the Herald being published before the first and third weekends of the month. Submission of any news items implies consent to any editing and the editorial team's decision is always final. **Always send as plain text via email.** Do NOT send formatted documents as then the editorial team need to remove all the formatting. Do NOT send articles as PDF. Stay under 700 words, preferably less. Attach any photos to the email. If you send in a PDF or image of a poster/flyer then attach a paragraph of text to go into the Herald as well.