



## QUAY NEWS Autumn 2025

After a successful summer of exhibitions and opening our Museum to the public, which has resulted in more visitors than ever before, we are now entering the autumn season with the resumption of our RYA courses and talks for Friends. More about all of these elsewhere in this newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped over the summer, especially our Custodians, without whom we would not be able to function. We really appreciate the fact that they each give up one or two afternoons (and sometimes more!) each summer. One of the delights of being a Custodian is meeting a very diverse range of people who come and visit us. So far this year we have had visitors from places as far flung as Canada, India and Iran and many from different parts of the UK. Their comments and interest make us realise just how unique the Nottage is and how lucky we are to have such a valuable resource. This summer we have welcomed 1205 visitors.

If you would like to find out more about this or know someone who might be interested in becoming a Custodian please do get in touch with us by phone 01026 824142 or email: [admin@nottage.org.uk](mailto:admin@nottage.org.uk) and we can arrange for you to come and have a chat about what is involved.

Peter Goldsmith

Chair

## **SUMMER EXHIBITIONS**

As in previous years we hosted an art exhibition at the beginning of May by Jane Watson and Maureen Hume as part of the Wivenhoe Art Trail and then a Life Drawing Exhibition on the last weekend of May.

Our Nottage exhibition this year was 'The Life and Times of Captain Nottage', which was expertly curated by Lesley McCabe and focused on the fascinating tale of the varied and interesting life of the founder of the Nottage. Colin Smith and Friends finished the summer season with their popular annual art exhibition at the end of August.

There are two further exhibitions before the end of the year, one by Frances Vincent on the weekend of 22 and 23 November and finally the November Wivenhoe Art Trail on 28, 29 and 30 November.

Visitors have been making a valuable contribution to the fund-raising we need to undertake to keep the Nottage going by using our 'card-tapper' machine which offers an opportunity for them to simply tap their credit or debit card to make a donation. Our visitors have been very generous in the past and we hope that this will continue by using this additional method of making a donation.

## **THE NOTTAGE MUSEUM**

We have recently been the beneficiary of two beautiful boat models to add to our growing collection. The first has been donated by Edward Alport, the son of Lord Alport, the former MP for Colchester. It is a herring buss, a very early herring fishing boat circa 1760, built to remain at sea for periods of time. This particular model was made by R C Bingham in 1934.

The second model is of 'HMS Orion' built by George Galloway from Coleshill, Birmingham during the 1980s. He was a trained engineer and after being evacuated from Dunkirk served until the end of the war. The ship is a scale model to Admiralty plans, of a 'Ship of the Line' during Nelson's time and the Battle of Trafalgar. This model is on permanent loan to the Nottage from Margaret Blackwell.

These two models are now on display with the Orion housed in a magnificent display cabinet built by Wivenhoe Woodworkers, and a small unveiling ceremony was held on 13 July to which both Edward Alport and Margaret Blackwell were invited.



## **COURSES**

Our new teaching season started on 20 September with the Nottage boatbuilding course. We have a new tutor this year, Rob Maloney, who is a highly experienced boat builder. The most commonly chosen project until a few years ago was the 3m sailing dinghy designed by Fabian Bush specifically for the course - this design derives its overall dimensions from the rowing craft built at the Nottage Institute up to about 1990. He also introduced a stock 2.7m clinker plywood rowing dinghy which takes about half the time to build and costs much less. Rob is also hoping to introduce a 9ft Nutshell Dinghy to the list of boats available to build as designed by Wivenhoe Boatbuilder Malcolm Goodwin.

Teaching on the RYA (Royal Yachting Association) courses started at the beginning of October. The tutor is Robin Cole, a highly experienced sailor and instructor.

## **FRIENDS OF THE NOTTAGE**

The 'Friends' are an important and much-valued part of the Nottage, forming a bridge between the NMI and the wider community in Wivenhoe and beyond. Membership fees - which have remained unchanged for several years - provide useful incremental revenues to help support the Institute's upkeep. And Friends' meetings create a unique social networking occasion for those who love our village and its maritime heritage.

Attendance at our traditional Friends' evening talks has been declining for some time now, however. As a result, the NMI management committee has been looking at ways of increasing Friends membership as well as widening the appeal of Nottage evening activities - as demonstrated by the last few events that have been open to a broader audience than just members and their guests.

Feedback has been positive, so going forward it has been decided to continue with this approach.

We shall be keeping the Friends organisation going, together with its regular Newsletter and free entry to 'Friends' winter events... on presentation of a new membership card, which will be issued on payment of the yearly subscription, preferably by standing order.

We shall also be continuing with events that are open to non-members (but free to 'Friends'). A wider choice of refreshments will be available for a small donation... as well as our traditional free tea/coffee & biscuits!

The intention is to advertise these events well in advance - including by email to Members - particularly as they will not always be on the last Friday of the month as before.

We have three talks planned for the autumn so far:

On Friday 31 October and by popular demand, Wivenhoe artist and author James ('Jamie') Dodds will be again delivering an illustrated talk on his life and work, introducing new material to the sold-out presentation he gave in the spring. Please arrive early to ensure admittance!

This will be followed on Friday 14 November by 'Confessions of a cruise ship Deck Officer'. Wivenhoe resident Harriet Johnson will give a behind-the-scenes account of what it's like to sail as crew aboard a large cruise ship - where she first met her husband Giles. The talk will include a presentation of the bridge on board the unique vessel Queen Mary 2 (QM2), modelled on the transatlantic liners of yesteryear.

Both of these talks will start at 7.30 pm and cost £5 (free to 'Friends'). Doors open at 7.00 pm.

The final event is not a 'Friends' one as such but may be of interest. It is intended to help people who don't use the River Colne but who want to know more about the river which has shaped our riverside communities, is environmentally important and which provides an exciting playground for leisure use today. The speaker is Bernie Hetherington, a member of the Nottage Committee, a qualified RYA instructor, sailor and former Brightlingsea Harbour Master. The talk will be held on Thursday 11 December from 7.00 until 9.00 pm. The cost is £10. Doors will open at 6.30 pm.

We're currently working on the programme of 'Friends' events for early 2026, details of which will be announced in due course.

You will find the subscription and standing order forms at the end of this newsletter. We really hope you will join up, receive your Membership card, come along to our events to meet friends, old and new... and continue your vital support for the Nottage!



## **NOTTAGE NEWS**

QUAY NEWS is produced by the Nottage Maritime Institute, The Quay, Wivenhoe, CO7 9BX  
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**FRIENDS OF THE NOTTAGE**

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