

Foulness Island

May 2019

Later this month the Christian Church will be celebrating the festival of Whitsun or Pentecost, though this does tend these days to get overshadowed by the secular Bank Holidays which fall in this month. To the very early Christians the Spirit that came to them at Whitsun was like a mighty rushing wind. The mighty force of the wind can be very frightening. How often have you commented on its strength when you've been safely tucked up indoors? And if you're outdoors? Just think of the noise of the wind whistling past you as you seek protection from its power, the unbridled force of the wind blowing branches off the trees and perhaps demolishing buildings, that feeling of being puny and helpless as the wind tosses boats around on the sea and unleashes the sea over the biggest barriers – we all think how we feel when the tide comes hurling itself at the sea wall, our only protection from the North Sea.

It's against that sort of background and feeling of mightiness that the first disciples experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in wind and in the flames of Pentecost fire. Acts 2 v2: *Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing which filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

If you get the chance you might re-read that chapter next time you are aware of 'a mighty rushing wind' hurling itself at the house.

In Memoriam

In May we remember

*Karl Arnold
Kathleen Burroughs
John Lilley
Andy MacIntyre
Ann Mahoney
John Mahoney
Walter (Sagey) Rawlings
June Stanford
Margaret Wood*

Gone but not forgotten

Joyce and Leon Dobson

The family of Leon and Joyce Dobson would like to thank everyone who generously made a donation to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution or the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance in memory of Leon and Joyce. These charities were very dear to their hearts. We were also very pleased to see so many residents of Foulness at the funeral service and burial and have been touched by all the kind messages of condolence and offers of help we have received at this sad time.

PLEASE NOTE

Rochford District Council

We have received information from RDC that the ward of Foulness and the Wakerings will not be contested in this year's elections for Rochford District Council.

Therefore the Heritage Centre will not be open for the previously scheduled elections on 2nd May.

No poll will take place.

Foulness Parish Council

Due to the issue regarding the recording of meetings, the Parish Council continues to hold two separate meetings.

We are holding an informal meeting with QinetiQ, the DIO and the MOD which commences at 7.00pm on the night of Council meetings. This is for the Parish Councillors and the Parishioners of Foulness Island only. This is followed at 7.15 pm by the Parish Council meeting.

QinetiQ Report

Early start: there will be an early start on April 30th, 8.30 am at DAT.

Security Pass Renewal: Tony Colwell has confirmed that he is

still the right person to contact about renewing residents' security passes. He acknowledges that he can be difficult to contact and that he knows there are requests outstanding. He's working through all of the paperwork submitted by residents some time ago and will be issuing passes based on that. In the meantime, if you are experiencing any difficulties because your pass needs to be renewed, please contact Nicki Uden (nuden@qinetiq.com). Otherwise, please send your renewal requests by email to tdcolwell@qinetiq.com

Group Property report

Havengore Bridge: the northern (island side) wig-wag lights are being replaced this week (w/e 12.04.19). There may be minor traffic delays as the system is being tested but local traffic control will be in place. Monthly maintenance on the bridge is planned for later this month, date to be confirmed. This can't be completed at the same time as the light repairs due to contractor availability.

Roads: there are no road works planned for this month.

Ditches: A & B ditching works are being planned and areas and dates will be shared directly with tenant farmers in due course.

Flood defences: The sluice gates are MOD assets. Please can we

remind everyone not to touch or tamper with the gates as this is having a negative effect on wildlife.

Power supply: network maintenance was completed w/c April 8th; nothing further is planned at present.

Water supply: Water risk assessments: if you haven't yet done so, please respond to the letters you have received to arrange access.

Let Estate: The MOD has not yet released funding for the Let Estate for the financial year 2019/20. At present, only emergencies or health & safety issues such as complete loss of heating or hot water, or leaks, will be sanctioned. Funding is currently being sought with aspirations for the end of May 2019. All other minor jobs received through the help desk in this transition period will be logged and actioned once funding is available.

Prepared by Nicki Uden, Community Liaison Officer, and Edwin Birch.

Parish Council

The Parish Council held its Annual Parish meeting on 10th April 2019 commencing at 7.15 pm. This was followed by the Council meeting at 7.20 pm.

County and District Councillor Mike Steptoe was in attendance.

The meeting approved the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2019.

Councillor Steptoe gave a report on County and District matters.

The meeting approved the bank reconciliation as at 31st March 2019 and the accounts for the year to 31st March 2019.

The meeting also approved the payment requests for the period March to April 2019 and noted the receipts during the period.

There was nothing to report about the possible provision of a Post Office on the Island.

The Clerk reported that Councillors Green and Steptoe would not be standing at the Parish Council elections to be held on 2nd May 2019 and thanked them for their participation in Island matters over the last four years. Council asked that a vote of thanks to both of them be recorded in the minutes. This was endorsed by members of the public.

The next meeting of the Council will be on Wednesday 8th May 2019 commencing at 7.15 pm. This will be preceded by an informal meeting with QinetiQ which will commence at 7.00 pm.

All documents presented to Council can be viewed on the Parish Council website.

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Children's Society Boxes

Towards the end of this month we have to think about emptying the Children's Society boxes which some of you have indoors to help children in this country less fortunate than those you know personally.

If it is convenient, and you are passing Hall Farm, it would be helpful if you could leave your box inside the porch door. Every box delivered is one fewer that I have to go and collect, and you'd be surprised how heavy 20-odd boxes and their contents can be. Then I'll make a tour of the island and collect any remaining boxes, and the total sent to Headquarters will be in the earliest newsletter I can manage, depending on how quickly I get all the boxes together.

If you don't have a box indoors and feel you might be able to support by putting in a few pence each week, or whatever your system might be, I'll be more than pleased to talk to you about this; it would

be nice not to have the number of box holders decrease. Thank you.

Denise

Foulness Tide Times

May 2019

	AM		PM	
Sat 4	00.35	5.5	12.56	5.5
Sun 5	01.10	5.7	13.30	5.6
Sat 11	05.13	5.4	17.40	5.0
Sun 12	06.15	5.2	18.49	4.8
Sat 18	00.18	5.8	12.44	5.8
Sun 19	01.00	5.9	13.24	5.8
Sat 25	05.05	5.1	17.15	4.9
Sun 26	05.54	4.8	18.07	4.7

Have things changed in 20 years?

Snippets from our magazine

May 1999: Our news expanded and the magazine contained an extra half-sheet. Thea Lilley held a coffee morning in aid of church funds and money raised by each stall was listed. (One T-shirt bought there for 10p is still in use for work today.)

There was a beer tasting featuring beers from countries playing in the World Cup.

The emptying of house boxes enabled £293 to be sent in support of The Children's Society.

The Race Evening had been so successful that in future tickets would have to be strictly limited. Has anyone on the island still got grazed knuckles?

It would appear that this was the first year of the Cycle Ride. The Parish Council had not been asked an opinion on this; it was planned without their knowledge.

Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society

The next opening of the Heritage Centre will be on Sunday 5th May from 12 till 4pm., and we look forward to seeing you there. If you have visitors over the weekend it is certainly somewhere to take them.

Our next Committee and Friends meeting will be on Tuesday 14th May in the Centre at 7.30pm. Do come along and join us if you are interested - we don't bite - and you don't have to be a committee member to have any input, and any offer of help, however small, will be most welcome.

Have you read ...

By the Skin of My Teeth

by E. Namel

The Mouth of the River

by S. Tuarry

Australia and Beyond

by Anne Tipodies

Totally Fed Up

by P. Stoff

Speed Around the Track

by Miles Prower

Thanks to Roy Eighteen for these

Have you tried ...

Syrtaki

60-62 Milton Road

Southend SS0 7JX

☎01702 302715

After reading last month's review of a Turkish restaurant (tried it – well worth the visit) we thought we'd try this relatively new place in Southend. It's only been open about a year and this was the first time it had come near our radar. As a Greek-themed restaurant it would be interesting to compare with the Turkish one, we thought.

They have their own website – just type in Syrtaki – and there's plenty of other places mentioning it, and info@syrtaki.co.uk might be useful. From the many on-line reviews that can be seen, you can get an idea of some of the dishes available, and how happy diners are with what they had experienced.

Mondays-Thursdays they are open from 12.30 to 10.30pm, Fridays and Saturdays they are open till 11pm and on Sundays, after those long hours, they understandably close at 9pm. With those opening times you could pop in for lunch if

you worked in Southend or have something in the afternoon if your shopping had taken you into that area. They also have a takeaway menu and my regret is that I didn't pick one up.

We chose to go early one weekday evening, thinking it might be easier to park. Delusion! It was a case of "Oh there's a place – no there isn't" as another vehicle whipped into the gap. Still we eventually got sorted, even if the subsequent walk was a bit longer than I preferred.

The inside of the restaurant is bright, light and clean. It's not huge, but there's no sense in having a restaurant that's so large it never gets full to pay its way. The welcome was warm and friendly, and the staff remained pleasant and helpful throughout our visit. One has to say not only 'friendly' but 'child-friendly' too: on the evening of our visit there was a family party which included children who had clearly been brought up to eat out and try new things. Not a murmur of complaint at anything, and the confidence to walk up to the serving area to ask for another basket of flat bread.

The kitchen is open plan and on the night of our visit was staffed by three, who all seemed under control – no banging and crashing, no

harsh words and certainly no Hell's Kitchen. Close to the service point there is a chef's table, with proper drapery; the other tables 'make do' with wipe-clean tops but don't go down the paper serviettes route – there are linen napkins. With the wipe-clean tables there was immediate attention after the departure of diners – everything cleaned till spotless, then the table prepared for the next diners.

There is a good choice on the menu, from the starters, hot and cold, through fish dishes, grills and desserts. There are possibilities for vegetarians and vegans. Considering the way Southend prices have gone of late, trying to be as costly as London, this place is more than reasonable.

There are beers, spirits and wines available, mostly of Greek origin, and orange and apple juice. Some wines are available by the glass, medium or large. It is perhaps on the drinks where money is made: a Mythos beer was £3.70 and a medium glass of wine £5.25, with £2.50 for a glass of apple juice.

On the subject of price, I found they offer a meze for £24.95 per person, for a minimum of 2 people, and that is very reasonable, considering what you usually get in a meze. Be warned: you must be very

hungry before you go down that road in Syrtaki and I had to apologise for my eyes being bigger than my stomach, as my mother used to say. When we tell you that the first course of cold starters arrived as an array of NINE little dishes between the two of us, with the accompanying flat bread, you will see what we mean. Among these nine there were of course the taramasolata, the tsatsiki and the hummus; there were also butter beans in a tomato and dill sauce (better than you might think from 'butter beans'), a tasty potato salad, mashed smoked aubergine with garlic and olive oil, a dish of cubed beetroot, mushrooms in dressing and a feta mousse with a touch of chilli.

With all that lot, if you'd eaten it all with the bread, you'd have had enough for the night. But then came the hot starters, which included sausage-shaped meatballs and dolmades, and we pondered for a while at what stage of their development do you remove the vine leaves from the plant for this dish.

Then came the fish course, which included what I can only call 'baby octopus', beautifully cooked with no trace of leatheriness. They did have a trace of batter, adding to the flavour. The squid rings were equally good, but the fillet of fish

(dunno what sort of fish it was) was perhaps overcooked.

We were both struggling by now and our eyes popped at the arrival of the meat course. There were cubes of chicken and pork which had been grilled and then the skewer removed before service, meatballs and two large chunks of lamb. There was a nicely-shaped mound of rice, and a dish of Greek salad. What we were able to eat of that dish was beautifully tender but my vision of ending the meal with Greek coffee and baklava had long since disappeared.

This is where the staff's helpfulness showed itself: our waiter was most anxious, worrying if there was anything wrong when we had stopped eating, and swiftly packed our meat and salad remains in a container and, at my request, added, separately packed, two baklavas. I had no room for them when I got home but had to test a corner of one – delicious. Typing this the day after our visit, I'm looking forward to the rest of it!

And finally There are three balloons, Mummy, Daddy and Baby Balloon. Over the early years Baby Balloon slept in the same bed as Mummy and Daddy Balloon. One day Daddy Balloon takes Baby Balloon aside and tells him

he's made him a new bed and that he is to sleep there from now on.

During the night Baby Balloon is scared sleeping on his own and so sneaks back into bed with Mummy and Daddy Balloon. Baby Balloon tries to squeeze between the two of them but can't get enough room. He reaches over and lets a little air out of Mummy Balloon but to no avail; he still doesn't have room. He then reaches over to Daddy Balloon and lets a little air out of him. Still he can't quite fit in. Finally, he lets a lot of air out of himself. He fits in nicely and falls asleep.

In the morning when Mummy and Daddy wake up they find Baby Balloon in bed with them. Daddy Balloon looks sad and shakes his head at Baby Balloon and says, "Son, I told you to sleep in your own bed, didn't I?"

"Yes, Daddy, I'm sorry," replied Baby Balloon.

"Well, son, you have let me down, you have let your mother down but most of all you have let yourself down."

Items for publication, (an advert, an opinion, news, 'free to a good home') are always welcomed. For inclusion in the next newsletter, items should be with Denise at Hall Farm by the 18th of the preceding month