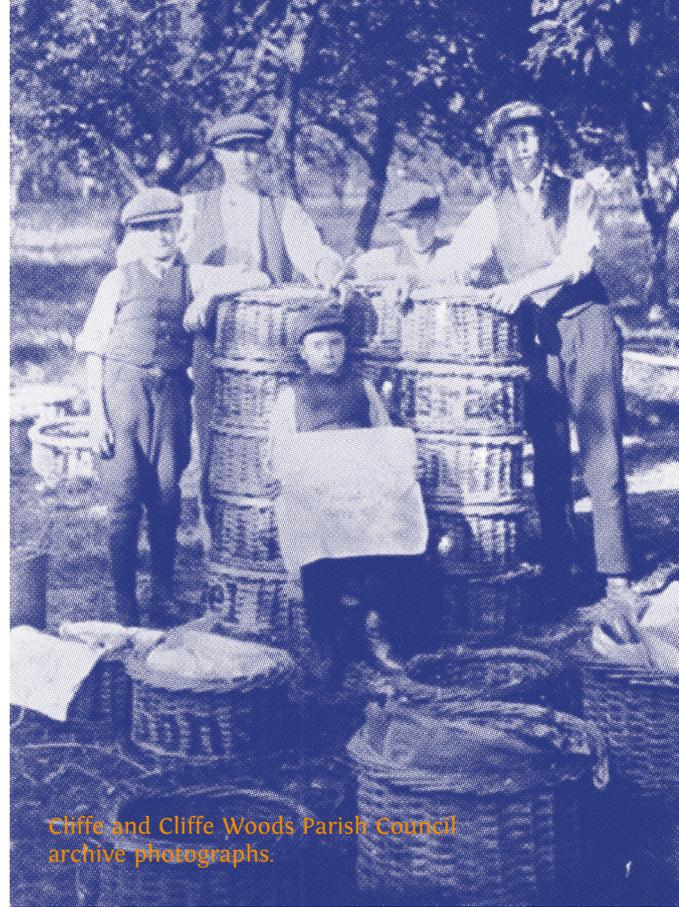


HISTORIES OF THE HOO PENINSULA

MEMORIES OF WORKING LIVES EDUCATION PACK

(To be used in tandem
with the website
hoo-peninsula.com)



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.

This education pack is designed to deliver Key Stage 2 learning objectives for History and Art curricula. Local studies often generate cross-curricular work - in this project, making artwork is a key element.

Where children live and grow up is an important part of who they are. This project aims to make history relevant to their lives and give them an improved sense of identity and place through engagement with real people's stories.

The Historical Association states: 'Local history provides rich opportunities to engage children in their immediate local area and understand their own history and how history contributes to a greater overall understanding and bigger picture'.

INTRODUCTION

hoo-peninsula.com/about

This year-long project, which took place from 2016-17, celebrates and records stories from the Hoo Peninsula in North Kent. Local people were invited to have their memories and stories of working on the Hoo Peninsula recorded for the future. Audio recordings were made by volunteers to document the trades and industries of the area. They have captured stories of bargemen, muddies, salt shepherds, farmers, shop owners and bird wardens as well as those who have worked in industries dependent on the river such as the power stations and the container terminal.

These recordings will be permanently placed at the Medway Archives & History Centre and will be made available to the public through a permanently held public collection for visitors and users to access.

See image of the volunteers taken during the filming of the BBC Countryfile programme here: hoo-peninsula.com

The podcast can be played to engage pupils in the wide variety of voices in the project; it is useful to pause the podcast at intervals for Q&A to heighten engagement.

Special Educational Needs

The two 'Working Lives' that illustrate animals and wildlife were found to be engaging for SEN - these are 'Salt Shepherds and Marsh Life' and 'Contemporary Working Lives RSPB'. Most effective was playing very short audio clips with Q&A.

Audio clips of particular interest to children are:

- * Michael Dale's story of a beached whale on Grain Beach.
- * John Dockwray's story of otters on the marshes.
- * Tony Brooks on the 'Muddies'.
- * Peggy Dockwray on life on the farm.
- * John Luck on working at a huge power station in his youth.



WORKING LIVES ON THE HOO PENINSULA

The following section of the education pack has been organised into eight different categories including quotes from the audio clips on the website - these can be played to expand on each Working Life. Pupils can engage with Q&A during/after each audio clip:

hoo-peninsula.com/oral-histories

Art Project

Each of the eight Working Life categories can be seen on the website here with archive images: hoo-peninsula.com/working-lives. Each class/group can cover a different Working Life.

Display archive images/distribute prints of images (use the link above) as visual prompts during the audio clips and as visual references for drawing.

Children draw characters carrying out the described activities for each Working Life, wearing clothes appropriate to the era and activity.

These characters can be drawn in felt tip pens with a bold black outline then cut out and individually stuck on to a large landscape image

relevant to each Working Life. (See example on previous page/below).

As a larger scale project, the landscapes can be projected on to a white board/ interactive white board. In this way, the landscapes are 'peopled' and the past becomes infused with the present.

Project Development: photograph the characters and superimpose on to a landscape background using Photoshop. These could be printed as posters or banners with groups choosing their own titles.

This art project includes elements such as:

Perspective - drawing different scaled figures to show depth in the picture plane

Drawing character - paying close attention to details of dress and activity

Collage - placing and locating the figures in relation to the landscape and in juxtaposition to other figures..

Creating **relationships, narratives and composition**

Collaboration - working together to make a group artwork

EXAMPLE BANNERS MADE WITH HOO ST WERBURGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

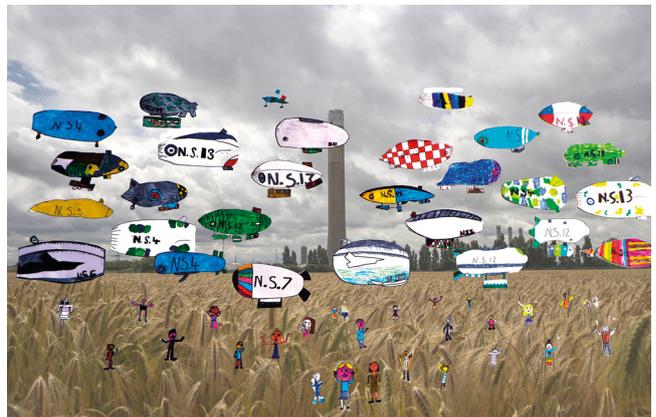
Agriculture and Farming: *Let's Go
Back In Time To Pick Fruit*



Bricks & Barges: *The Great Barges Of
Hoo*



Contemporary Working Lives: *RSBP:
'The High-Flying Birds'*



Military and Defence: *The Unexpected
Visit*





Muddies & Cement: *The Muddy Old Days*



Power Stations & Heavy Industry: *Power Cut!*



Salt Shepherds & Marsh Life: *The Animals Return*



Village Life: *Scenes From The Past*

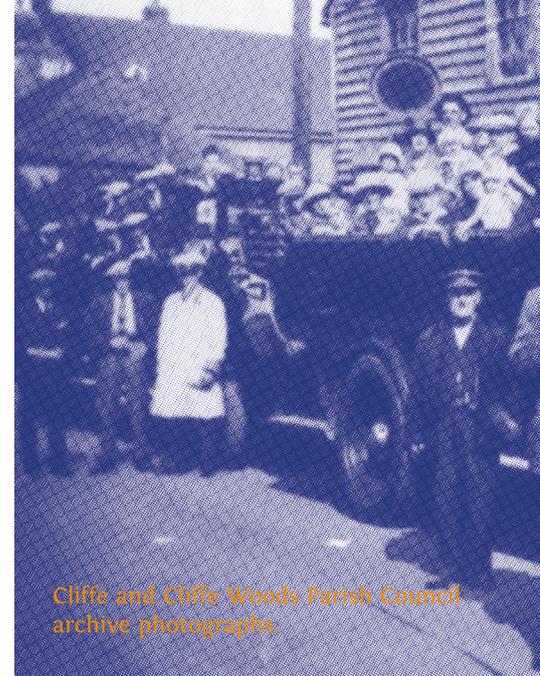
WORKING LIVES ON THE HOO PENINSULA

1. VILLAGE LIFE

The 34,000 residents of the Hoo Peninsula predominately live in villages, most of which are based on the higher ground above the marshes, with the exception of Grain and St Mary Hoo. The largest village is Hoo St Werburgh. Other villages which make up the communities of the peninsula include: All Hallows, Chattenden, Cliffe, Cooling, Frindsbury, High Halstow, Stoke and Upnor. Most of these villages are still rural in nature and some, such as St Mary Hoo, Cliffe and Cooling still retain many historic buildings, dating back to the medieval period whilst other villages, including Grain and Hoo, expanded rapidly post-war with new housing being built to home the growing workforce connected to the industrial developments on the peninsula.

Many families have lived in the same village for generations and some have worked in the same trades and industries for a long time, passing down businesses and skills within the family. There is a strong community spirit and active communal life in these places, helped by institutions such as village halls, churches, local pubs, libraries, shops and the familiarity of village life. However over time village life has changed considerably.

For this project we interviewed many local residents who shared their memories, some of them described a bygone era, others spoke with passion about the strength of the communities living in villages on the peninsula today, others described a changing world.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council archive photographs.



'The communities around here are very strong and some of the battles that we've fought in recent times have brought people even closer together and we all feel a sense that we want to protect the place – the fact that we've had farming families here for centuries, everybody knows everybody, everybody says good morning or good afternoon and new people are welcomed, it's a wonderful place to live. And all across the Hoo Peninsula – we go to different fetes and fairs in different villages – and it's exactly the same.' Gill Moore

'There was a horse drawn wagon people used to do their shopping. Another shop up the road used to sell nuts and raisins in blue wax bags then further up was the Butchers and he used to slaughter his own cows, sheep and pigs'. The little shoe shop sold boots, children's shoes, clothes, all sorts and she used to store the trunks for the BP sailors that came in. I remember her selling a boot to a skipper who had one leg, she probably gave it to him knowing Mary.' Faye Bradley

'At the Forge [in Cooling] was Mr Plewis he did his shoes for horses and that sort of work but he also made the co ns for the local Church.'

Gill Martin

'Once a fortnight a man came round in a horse-drawn fish cart with the fishes...the butcher as far as I remember had a van. Any grocery orders had to be taken up to the village... they were then delivered.' John Dowling

'The village of Cliffe has changed so much from when I first came here, the cement works were still working then... a lot of the labour force was around that and that's all gone. People mainly now are travelling out of the village to work in London and across Kent...so you've got more of a commuter mentality... I think it does make a big difference.' Jill Wright

VILLAGE LIFE - SAMPLE IMAGES



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



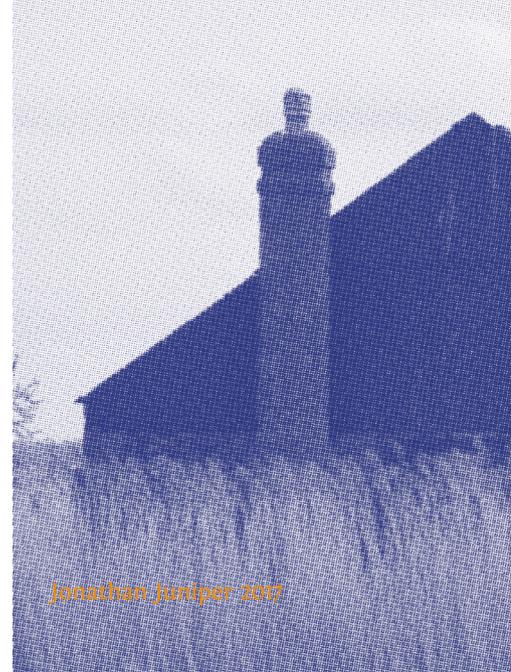
Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Jonathan Juniper 2017

2. SALT SHEPHERDS AND MARSH LIFE

The low lying marshes on the Hoo Peninsula stretch for miles along the North Kent coastline. Since the area was first inhabited thousands of years ago local people have worked on the marshes. Evidence of Roman potteries and salt production can still be found there along with archaeological remains of seawalls created by other early settlers, who enclosed them from the incoming tidal waters of the Thames Estuary through a process called inning to create grazing pasture for livestock. The marshes are still used for this purpose today. Since then some of the marshlands have been drained and turned into arable land for farming, other areas have become protected wildlife reserves.

'You feel a world away when you're down on those extraordinary open marshes full of birdsong and wildness.' Julian Hoffman

In the seventeenth century the writer Daniel Defoe described the marshes as 'desolate' and 'malaria ridden'. At that time 'marsh fever' or Ague was rife in the area and many local people died of the disease until an enterprising local farmer called Henry Pye had the idea to drain the land in the late nineteenth century. Malaria almost died out from the peninsula although cases were reported in 1949, then the BP refinery sprayed the marshes and it completely disappeared.



'Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea.'

Charles Dickens, Great Expectations

Being a salt shepherd has been a traditional job on the marshes for centuries, often passed down between father and son. It is a tough working life, looking after the flocks of hardy Romney sheep often alone, sometimes in very tough weather conditions. Sheep wicks were built out on marshes to protect the flocks from the snow.

'I was a shepherd on the marsh for a long long time...one morning I could hear some whistling...it was otters coming down the Fleet...a week later the otter hounds come and I never see them no more...' John Dockwray

'In the '70s some of the grazing marsh was turned into arable land and farmed, Working with the EU, the RSPB and others have managed to turn it back into grazing land which is better for wildlife.' Gill Moore

'I went shepherding on the marshes, through the course of shepherding. Like my father before me. We never went short of food. There was always wild rabbits, ducks, eels caught in the ditches and fleets and ample mushrooms.' Dick Dowsett

2. SALT SHEPHERDS AND MARSH LIFE - SUPPORTING MATERIALS

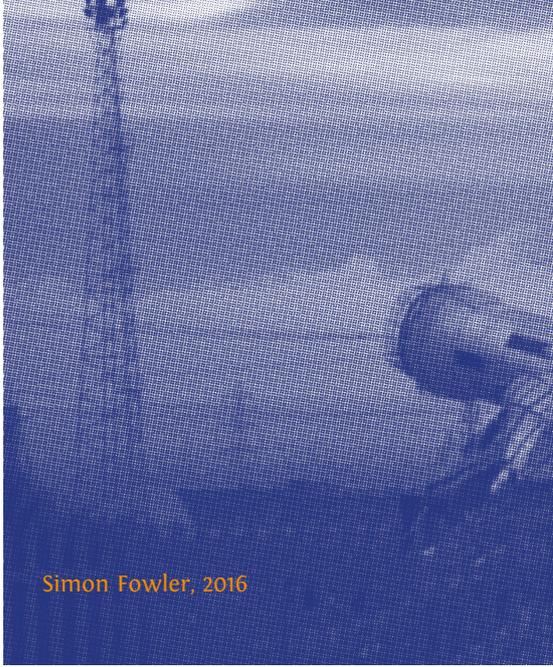
Please refer to wildlife images from the following website:

www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/find-a-reserve/reserves-a-z/reserves-by-name/n/northwardhill/sightings.aspx





Jonathan Juniper 2017



Simon Fowler, 2016

3. POWER STATIONS AND HEAVY INDUSTRY

The southern side of the Hoo Peninsula has been an important area for heavy industry since the Admiralty erected oil storage tanks on the Isle of Grain in 1908. In 1923 the Medway Oil and Storage Company (MOSCO) refinery was built nearby and by 1931 Berry Wiggins & Co had opened a refinery at Kingsnorth, which mainly produced bitumen. They built a long jetty to access the deep-water channel. In 1948 the land for the Kent Oil refinery on Grain was purchased by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, (which later became by BP), by the early '50s a gigantic operational site had been erected there. The BP oil refinery became the main employer of people in the village. New homes were built on Grain for the workforce.

The Kent Oil Refinery was once the largest in Europe, it refined millions of tons of oil (mainly from the Middle East), which was then transported around the world from nine jetties in the Medway. The refinery closed in 1982, the site was partly used by British Gas for storing liquefied gas.

Construction began on the Kingsnorth Power Station in 1963, which burnt coal and oil. The oil burning Grain Power Station was built in the 1970s and once provided 3% of the National Grid. Both power stations were built by the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) and were huge employers of local people until they were recently shut down and decommissioned because of environmental concerns.



'The working lives of the people in this part of the Hoo Peninsula have been inextricably bound up with the petro chemical industry, the power stations and oil refineries. It was sort of the gateway into the national grid system and the oil terminals fuelled the growth of the South-East. The Hoo Peninsula has great industrial heritage.'

Julian Hoffman

'At Kings North Power Station the amount of people there amazed me. People of different colour, different races....it was just an experience for me to see that many people, that much machinery and something that was growing out of the ground. All the steel work going up, bit by bit, day after day; the chimney itself was 600 foot when I left.' **John Luck**

'BP refinery, I started around 1955...a lot of people that was working on farms at a very low wage got jobs at this brand new BP oil refinery and most of them stayed there for the rest of their lives and it changed lives of people because with the job went with a house. So most of these council estates all around the Hoo Peninsula were built for workers of the new BP refinery.' **John Luck**

'In 1992 when the BP Refinery closed down I went to work for the container port as a welder looking after the...maintenance of the cranes. The cranes at their highest point are 300 feet. They had to be maintained all the time and they was worth about £6M each...there was 25 of us looking after them and I had 8 blokes working for me 12 hours a day, 7 days a week just on the maintenance looking after the cranes on the rails.'

Alan Thompsett

3. POWER STATIONS AND HEAVY INDUSTRY



Simon Fowler, 2016



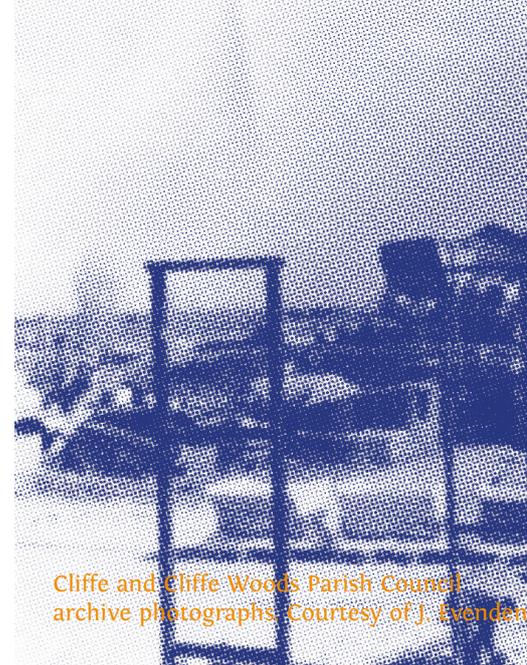
Simon Fowler, 2016



Simon Fowler, 2016



Simon Fowler, 2016



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs. Courtesy of J. Evenden

4. MUDDIES AND CEMENT

Cement is made from clay mixed with Gyproc and limestone, which is found in chalk. The Hoo Peninsula and the entire Medway area is a great area for chalk pits and clay digging and was well known for the different factories for the cement industry and became best known for its Portland Cement. Before mechanisation the clay needed for the cement industry was gathered by hand by 'muddies' who would gather at low tide on the foreshore of the Stoke Saltings and Hoo on the southern side of the Peninsula because the mud there was particularly rich in clay. They removed so much mud from this area in the C19th they altered the shape of the coastline. The 'muddies' would load the clay mud onto converted barges or old lighters beached on the mud. When the barges were full they would wait for the tide to return then carry the material away to the various cement works, which

were located beside the river. The 'muddies' were tough working-men and fights sometimes broke out between rival gangs in local pubs after payday.

'They would load 100 ton of mud in a tide by a gang of eight or nine of them and they would run up a wooden staging and fly the mud over the comb into the barge, because when a barge is on the mud it's got quite a high free board, so you need to throw the mud quite high. It's very hard work and it was done with a special shovel called a fly tool with a narrow blade so that it did not catch the suck when they lifted the mud.'

Tony Brooks



Francis and Co cement works opened in Cliffe in 1860 near to the Thames Estuary. The riverside location provided ease of transport and wharves were built at the mouth of Cliffe creek. In 1910 the Alpha cement Works (part of the Thames Portland Cement Works) opened nearby, the two companies merged in the 1930s and became a major employer for local people until it closed in the 1970s.

'I worked on the clay digging pontoons. Over a thousand acres of lake, which was marshland, was dug for clay for the cement industry. The machine I worked on floated on the water. The clay we dug here would be ground up into slurry aboard these pontoons by crane and then go into the wash mill and be pumped away by mixing it with water into slurry. The slurry boats would pick up the clay from land tanks then pump it back up to shore. There were two clay boats,

Clay Carrier and Clay Transporter, they both carried a thousand tonnes – and there were storage tanks on the shore at the relay pumping station.'

Dick Dowsett

The chalk quarry to the south side of Salt Lane in Cliffe has since been flooded with water and is around sixty feet deep in parts. The quarry is now an RSPB nature reserve called Cliffe Pools, which is home to the country's largest population of Avocets and many other rare wading birds such as Black-winged Stilts and Redshanks.

'We did have the cement industry, that's where RSPB Cliffe Pools are now, it was taken over for wildlife even while the men were working there...they used to watch the herons, it's always been a magical place for wildlife even while industry was here.'

Gill Moore

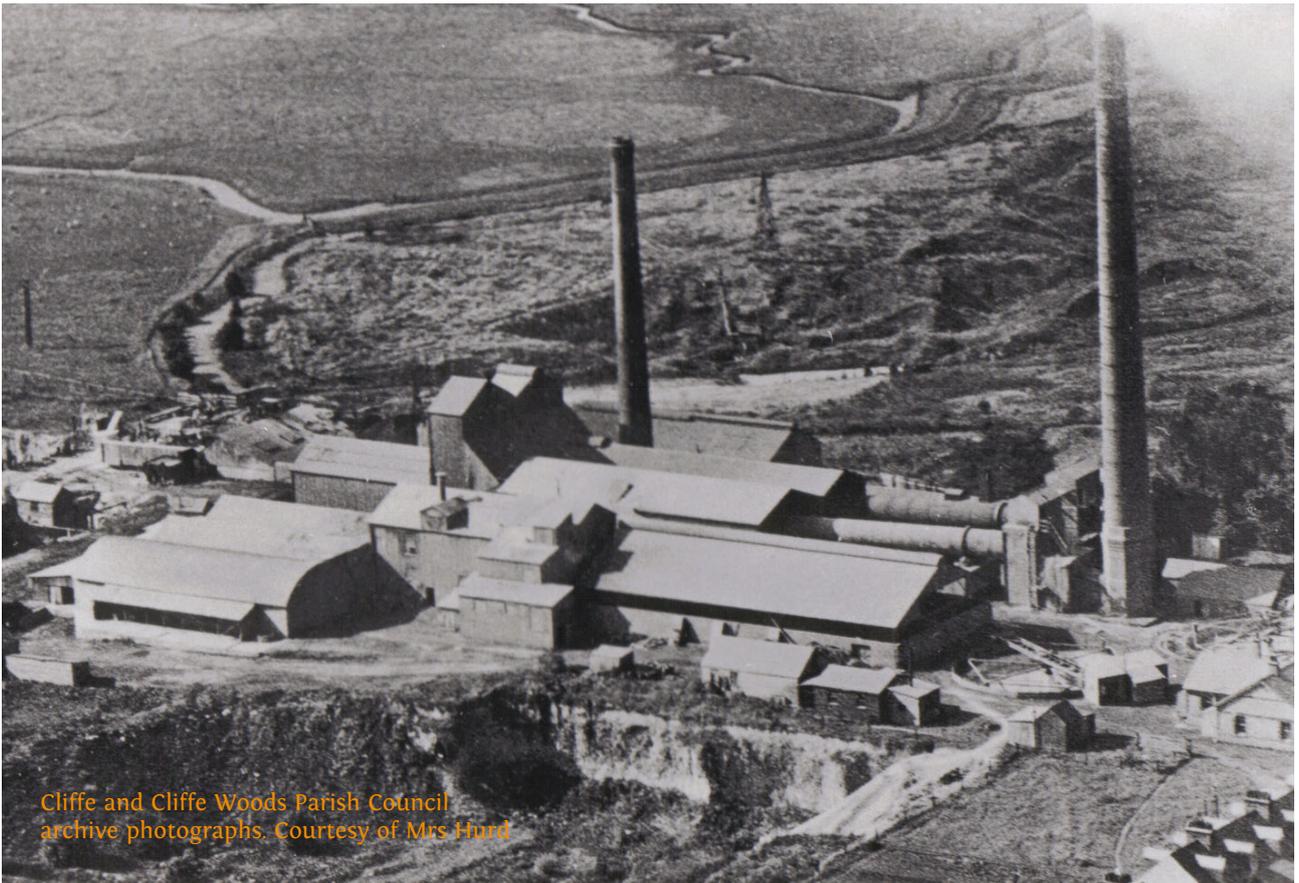
4. MUDDIES AND CEMENT



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council archive photographs. Courtesy of J Sullivan



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs. Courtesy of Mrs Hurd



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs. Courtesy of Mrs Hurd



Cliffe and Cliffe Works
archive photograph

5. MILITARY AND DEFENCE

Because of its strategic position beside the Thames Estuary and the River Medway the Hoo Peninsula has been used for centuries as a site for various military and naval installations to protect London and the nearby naval dockyard of Chatham from invasion. The peninsula has also been used as a place to situate firing and testing ranges, explosive factories and various other defensive fortifications and coastal batteries. The oldest is Cooling Castle, which dates back to 1381. It was built to protect the area from possible attack by sea, as were Grain, All-Hallows and Cliffe Forts and the gun tower of Grain during the nineteenth centuries. Many of these forts were reused during WWI and WWII as anti-aircraft gun batteries.

In the 1890s gunpowder storage magazines were built on St Mary and Cliffe Marshes. When Curtis's and Harvey Ltd took over the site

in 1900 it expanded considerably and employed many local people. Most of the factory workers lived in houses built for them in Cliffe.

'Through WWI there was a major explosive factory located down on the marsh. And they were manufacturing nitro glycerine. There were several accidents and a number of people were killed, but the government also bought up quite a bit of land adjacent to that and set up another explosives factory, producing gun cotton and ultimately cordite for the shells that were used during the first world war.'

Frank Withers



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ts.

In Cliffe the steam winch-powered Brennen Torpedo Station was built in 1880, one of only 8 in the country. The RNSA Kingsnorth Royal Naval airship station was used for the production of airships during WWI, it employed large numbers of local civilians in fabric-working and other related trades. Britain's first anti-aircraft gun was built in 1913 at Lodge Hill, which had been a naval base from the 1870 onwards. The MoD used Lodge Hill as a training ground until quite recently. There is a complete replica street from Belfast there. Lodge Hill is now an SSI and the most important site in the U.K. for Nightingales. In 1912 a Royal Naval Air Service seaplane station was situated on Grain. The Hoo Peninsula continues to be used by the military today, on the Isle of Grain there is an area used by the MoD as a firing range.

During both World Wars the Hoo Peninsula was attacked, often by German bombers on their way back

from London, bombing decoys were situated on All-Hallows and Cliffe marshes and multiple anti-invasion defences were placed along the coastline, including barbed wire, pill boxes, anti-aircraft batteries, anti-tank lines and concrete blocks.

'During WWII there was a lot of alterations to Cliffe Marshes, there was a decoy aerodrome. There was bombs and landmines dropped, we lived right opposite Shell Haven on the River Thames which was bombed quite badly, tanks were alight. On the Cliffe marshes there are still 7 live bombs.'

Dick Dowsett

'About 1975 I joined the Royal Observer Corps and we had an observation post at Hoo, we used to go there for exercises, simulation of nuclear attacks and we'd have an instrument called an Observation Post with a light sensitive film in it which would record the sun and we'd use the sun as a nuclear burst.' Brian Odell

MILITARY AND DEFENCE

Please refer to military images from the following website:

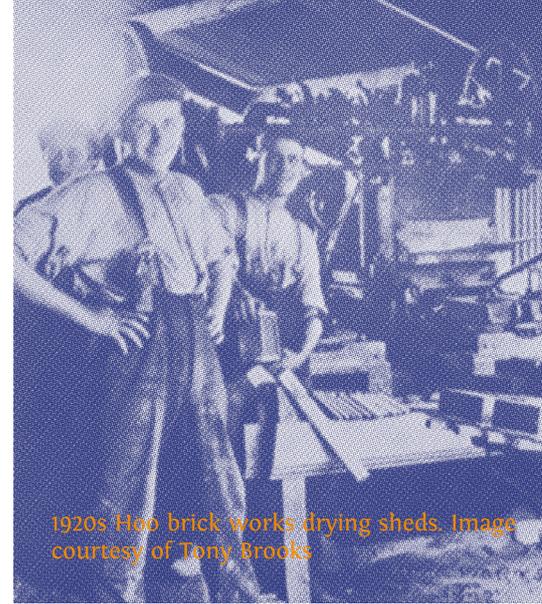
<https://historicensland.org.uk/whats-new/first-world-war-home-front/what-we-already-know/air/airships-balloon-seaplane>



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



1920s Hoo brick works drying sheds. Image courtesy of Tony Brooks

6. BRICKS AND BARGES

The Hoo Peninsula was the ideal location for producing and gathering building materials because of its rich natural resources of clay, gravel and chalk (which are used to make bricks and cement) and its easy access to the River Medway and the Estuary, which made transporting materials upriver to London easy. In the C19th and C20th the brick and cement works on the peninsula were major employers of local people.

Many brickworks were once situated by the riverside in the village of Hoo St Werburgh where the Hoo Marina Park is now. Materials needed for the production of bricks, such as chalk and lime were transported to the brickworks via barges. Brickfields once covered a wide area south of the church in Hoo. The rich clay soil was placed in a machine called a crusher to make a fine powder called brick earth.

'The brick industry was massive in this area. South and north of the Medway was a massive brick building industry. South of the Medway and Sittingbourne you had Smeed Dean's, you had...all sorts of brick makers were over there, and in Hoo the Bryce family ran a large brick concern.'

Tony Brooks

Large moulding sheds were used to make the bricks, each brick was made by hand in a wooden mould and then other sheds were used to dry them out. The finished bricks were easily transported by barge up to London and other places. The brick industry was in decline by the early 20th century, although brick making continued at Hoo St Werburgh until the mid-20th century.



'Each brick was made by hand and stamped with the name of the brickfield. Then the bricks would be stacked into a clamp; a massive stack with airways between layers of bricks and rough stuff called breeze, which was combustible ash and rubbish. The clamp could be 30 feet high and 70 feet long, filled with thousands of bricks. Each brick master had his own pattern of stacking. They would set light to it and it would burn for weeks until all the bricks had fired. The bricks right in the middle were the hottest, so they would be firebricks. The rest were sorted into different grades for various types of building and uses.' Tony Brooks

'The Cambria was the last British registered sailing vessel to trade under sail alone...so she is a very iconic piece of our British maritime history.'

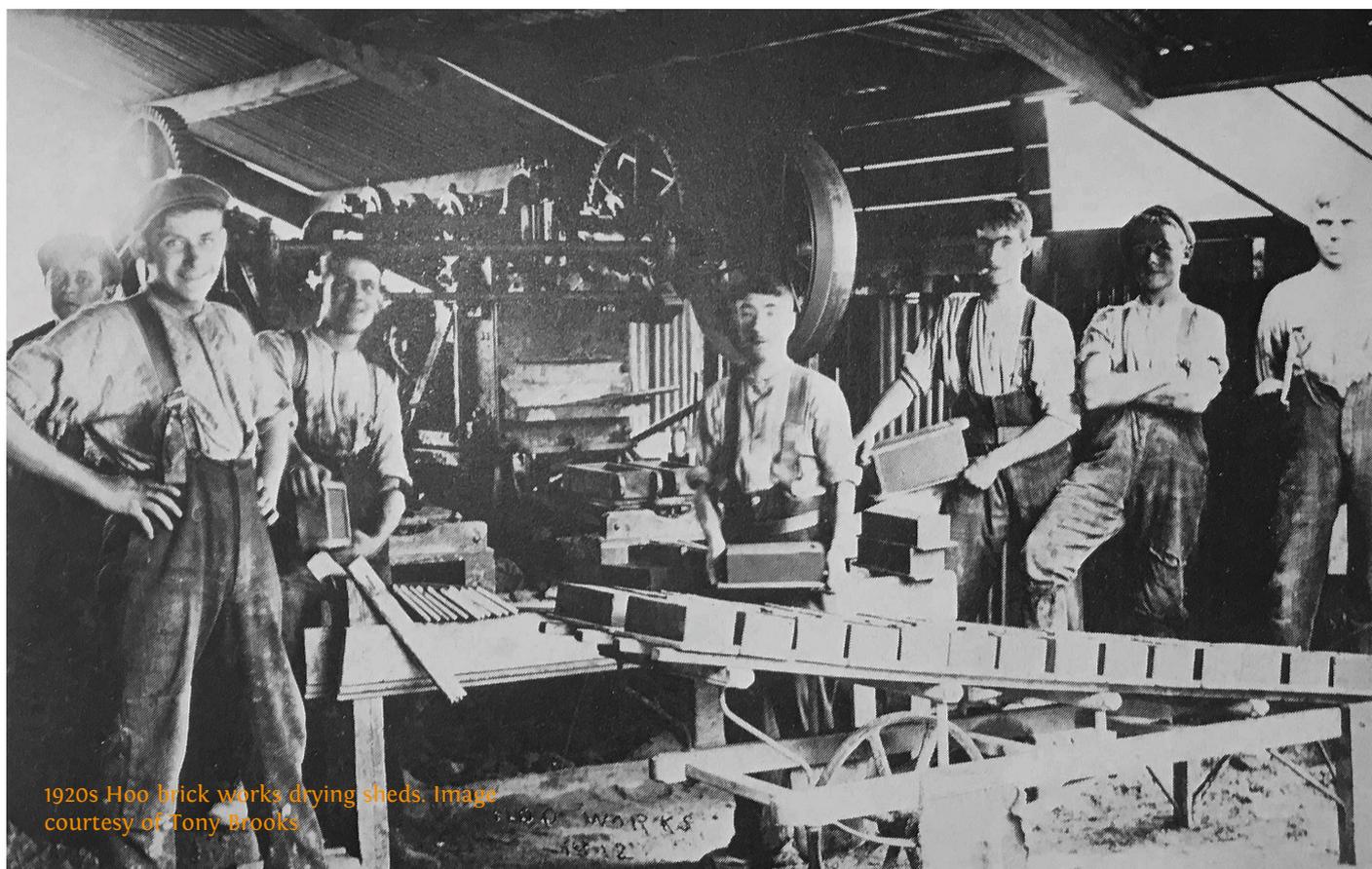
Dave Brooks

'The guys would be out on the salt-ings...and they would load sailing barges with...clay mud which was used in the cement works. They would load 100 ton of mud in a tide by a gang of eight or nine of them...you need to throw the mud quite high, so it's very, very hard work.'

Tony Brooks

BRICKS AND BARGES

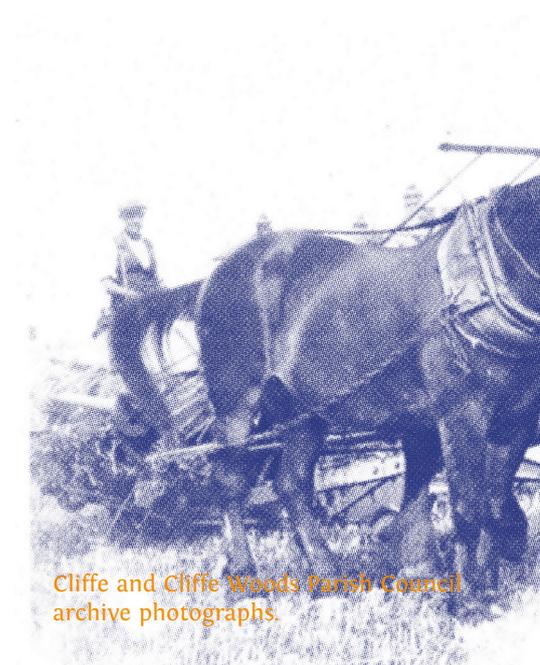
Please refer to images from the following website:
<http://www.kentonline.co.uk/medway/news/historic-sailing-barge-arrives-in-101941/>



1920s Hoo brick works drying sheds. Image courtesy of Tony Brooks



Tony Brooks. Photograph by Jonathan Juniper, 2017



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council archive photographs.

7. AGRICULTURE AND FARMING

Farming has taken place on both the higher and lower ground of the peninsula for centuries and has been the predominate industry for the area, which is well known for its high-grade agricultural land and distinctive micro-climate, it is one of the driest parts of South East England. The long history of farming on the peninsula is visible everywhere you go from the medieval historic farmhouses and remains of ancient sea walls for enclosing the marshes, to the herds of grazing sheep and cattle, as well as the many ancient orchards and fields growing everything from daffodils to lettuce, rhubarb, strawberries and asparagus.

‘Everyone out here I know worked on the farms and were really happy working for pennies really. They used to take their prams up to the farm for the children, leave them in the barns, they were all brought up very healthily...it was all farm produce.’

Faye Bradley

‘We used to have up to 20 staff to help get the harvest in there was a lot of work involved with all that. Now the whole thing will be done with one enormous combine and what used to take us about a month is all done in a couple of days.’ Robert Filmer



'We are very fortunate here a lot of food is grown on the peninsula, all sorts of fruits and vegetables...we've got wonderful orchards here and there are a lot of old farming families that live on the Hoo Peninsula and their families have worked the land for centuries.' Gill Moore

'We used to have over 100 people picking plums and pears and apples mainly during the picking season which would run from end of July right through to the beginning of October.' Gill Wright

'I was only 15 when I left school and worked on a farm because that's mainly all you could do then. And it was local to me, I must say I did enjoy it.' John Luck

AGRICULTURE AND FARMING



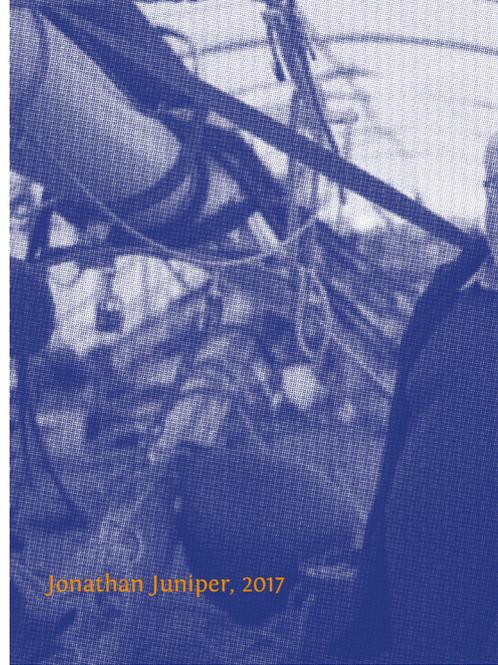
Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
archive photographs.



Jonathan Juniper, 2017

8. CONTEMPORARY WORKING LIVES

The Hoo Peninsula is changing, until recently the majority of people who lived there worked locally on farms, in the cement works and power stations, in the river trades or in various jobs connected to village and agricultural life. Many people we spoke to expressed concerns about how the area was changing beyond recognition with new housing developments and improved transport links to London.

Today the majority of people who live on the peninsula commute into London or other nearby Medway towns such as Rochester and Chatham to work and the traditional trades that are connected to the area, including farming, are starting to disappear. For this project stories

of a great range of people who live and work in the area were gathered from female truck drivers, to local Policemen, vicars and environmental campaigners.

'I never used to see another female anywhere when I was working as an HGV driver...it was tough, because you were expected to do everything, the same as what the men did and it was physically demanding. If you had to lift bags of potatoes, or anything heavy. But travelling the country and all over Europe, I loved it, such happy times.'

Sharon Luck, HGV Truck Driver



‘Friends of the North Kent Marshes started out as the NO AIRPORT AT CLIFFE campaign liaison group, which we set up to try and stop an airport being built at Cliffe. In 2003 when we got the result that we wanted we were all cheering. But after that we set up Friends of the North Kent Marshes because we could see that there would be other threats coming, because to some people, the Hoo Peninsula looks like a big empty space with nothing in it but to us it’s a really important place filled with wildlife and lovely wonderful communities and we wanted to protect them.’

Gill Moore, Environmental Campaigner

‘I applied for a job as a rural policeman on the Isle of Grain. A policeman then did so much more than you would today. We used to issue firearms licenses, dog certificates, attend every sudden death, I was involved in a lot of family disputes, most of them you could talk people out of their anger. I found the best thing you could do as a policeman is befriend people then you were far more successful doing your job. There is a fantastic community spirit in Grain.’ **Michael Dale**

CONTEMPORARY
WORKING LIVES



Jonathan Juniper, 2017



Jonathan Juniper, 2017



HISTORIES OF THE HOO PENINSULA

MEMORIES OF WORKING LIVES

