

Newhaven Heritage Routes - Map 3- Central Newhaven

In 2023, SCDA received a Heritage Lottery Grant to research and set up three Heritage Walks for Newhaven. Volunteers participated in this project and identified, as well as researched, points of heritage interest they wanted to bring to your attention. This walk is not designed to be a definitive version of Newhaven's heritage for this route, but hopefully it will encourage you to learn a bit about Newhaven's history and want to find out more, thus keeping Newhaven's rich heritage alive.

There are some additional Children's Activities (**CA**) on this PDF- also look out for some ***Newhaven Memories*** shared and researched by our volunteer researchers.

Welcome to Walk Three- Central Newhaven- of Newhaven Heritage Routes.

START (number 1 on the map) **Newhaven Swing Bridge.**

Directions. A good place to see the Bridge is on the pavement on West Quay Side, as the traffic comes off of the Bridge and heads West along the A259. You will also get a good view of the Cormorant Sculpture from here.

The Act to build Newhaven's First Bridge was passed by George III in 1784. Previously the river was crossed by ferry. This first bridge, at the bottom of the High Street, was a toll bridge.

When a new cut was made in 1864, to straighten the river, a swing bridge was built as the original toll bridge now only went to the newly created Denton Island. The free to cross new swing bridge opened on 22nd December 1866, it took 8 men to swing the bridge open.

Despite the bridge being strengthened in 1900 and 1939 the weight and volume of traffic meant that it needed to be replaced. The new bridge was opened on 7th November 1974. It cost £1 million and can be operated by one person.

Did you know?

Trains used to go across the old swing bridge.

CA Look across to the other side of the river- can you see the remains of the old bridge?

CA Look at the signal box on the bridge- does the sign tell you if the bridge is going to open today?

The Bridges of Newhaven. *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

A ferry boat has carried people across the river since at least 1332. The ferry service stopped around 1784 when the Act to build Newhaven's First Bridge was passed by George III in 1784. The last Ferryboatman was Henry Bates who was compensated for his loss of income. The bridge ran from the bottom of the High Street across to what is now Denton Island.

The following tolls were taken at the hut between the bridge and Tipper Brewery:

Bridge Tolls

A four wheeled wagon or carriage was charged - 2 shillings

A two wheeled cart -1 shilling

A Horse -1 penny

A Score of Oxen, Cows or met cattle-1 Shilling 8d

A Score of Hogs, Calves, Sheep or Lambs -10 pence

One section of the act gave "all persons living in the Parish of Denton, the right to pass over freely" because they had in the past been allowed to use the ferry free as they had maintained "The Long Drove" (now known as "The Drove") at their own cost.



Photo: Old Toll Bridge and Toll House (pre-1875) -Newhaven Historical Society, ref: A001-104

When improvements were made to the harbour in the 1860s, the river was straightened by making the new cut which created Denton Island. This meant that the toll bridge now only went to Denton Island so a new swing bridge was built in 1866.

The new swing bridge provided a free crossing and the last toll of one penny was paid by a man, for himself and his companion, on 22 December 1866, the day the new bridge opened.

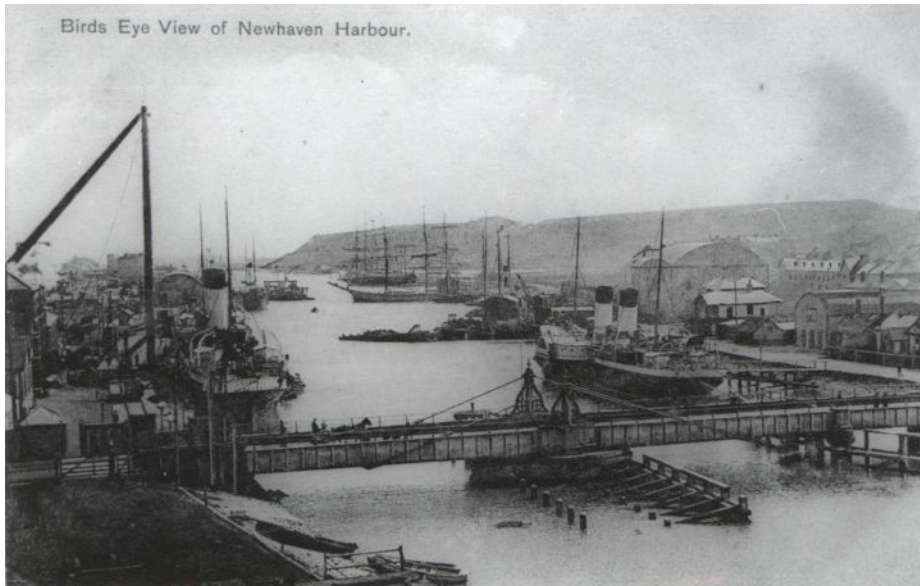


Photo: Old Swing Bridge c. 1890 - Newhaven Historical Society Collection, ref: A016-087

As well as traffic the new bridge also carried a gas line and a tramway which formed part of the West Quay line, originally built to facilitate the building of the breakwater and was closed in 1963. The Fenchurch, one of the Terriers worked the line between 1898 and 1955. It has since been renovated and can be found at Bluebell Railway.



Photo: Train going across Newhaven Swing Bridge (1961) Would run along the West Quay Line (closed in 1963)- Newhaven Historical Society Collection ref: A001-062

To open the bridge, the gates were closed at each end, the gas line was shut off and a capstan set up in the middle of the bridge. Eight men were needed to swing it open.

The opening and closing each took about 3 minutes, with the bridge being closed to traffic for 9-10 minutes.

Ships would start to nose ahead as soon as the bridge started to move, and might occasionally touch it before fully open. This would push it into the fully open position while the men on the capstan sprang clear. This is not possible with the new bridge

Even though the bridge was strengthened in 1900 and 1939 the weight and volume of traffic meant that the bridge needed to be replaced.



Photo: Last opening of the Old Newhaven Swing Bridge November 1974 - Newhaven Historical Society Collection ref: A019-023

The new bridge which cost £1 million, can be operated by one person. It was opened on 7th November 1974 by Councillor Lt. Col. W Emden Chairman of ESCC. The old bridge closed the same day and was eventually demolished in 1976. The Victorian gas lamp from the bridge is in Newhaven museum along with some of the finials. You will also find the last penny toll paid to cross the drawbridge in the museum.



Photo: Testing the New Swing Bridge 1974 - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A016-036



Photo: Remains of East Side Site of old Newhaven Swing Bridge (viewed from West Quay Side)

C Joslin 2023

Newhaven Memories - Opening the Bridge - Derek Payne

Researcher Dr J Flood.

Derek Payne's dad, John Payne, was a Berthing Officer at the harbour and one of his duties in the 1950s was to make sure the bridge was opened and closed on time. Sometimes, if they were short of men, Derek would help, he would have been 12 years old. When asked if it was difficult work, he said: "It was relatively easy, it was always well greased and looked after. It wasn't any quicker than it is today and not slower, because it was the time the craft takes to go through."



Photo: Newhaven Swing Bridge (viewed from West Quay Side) C Joslin 2023

The Cormorant Sculpture *Researcher C Manzi*

As you consider the Swing Bridge and its' rich past, you cannot fail to notice the Cormorant sculpture. This work was created by local artist Christian Funnell and was installed in 2005.

Of the sculpture, the artist states:

"I made the Newhaven Cormorant in an attempt to divert people's eyes away from the industrial comings and goings of the port (and encourage them to) look at the natural world which is all around us.... The bird effigy has become a symbol of the town- a pre-historic survivor living alongside the noise and waste of the industrial port."

He also commented:

"Real cormorants and shags congregate on the re-purposed wooden structure of the old bridge, unaware they are imitating their galvanised cousin, drying their wings."

<https://www.christianfunnell.com/work/public-art>

CA Look at the Cormorant- what name would you give it?

Did you know?

Before the current cormorant sculpture was installed, there existed for 6 years on the site a cormorant sculpture that was made of tyres!!



Photo: C Joslin Dec 2023



Photo of Sculptor C Funnell reproduced with permission

Directions: Cross over the A259 (just before Riverside North), at the crossing and you will see the Memorial Green ahead of you (corner of Bridge Street)

2. Memorial Green (number 2 on the map)

There are three memorials on Memorial Green

The Transport Memorial which commemorates the officers and men of the Merchant Navy who lost their lives transporting stores and munitions to the Western Front in the First World War.

The Town Memorial which commemorates those Newhaveners who died as a result of both the First and Second World Wars

The Canadian Memorial which honours of members of the Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers who lost their lives as a result of the Dieppe Raid of 19th August 1942. It has come to be regarded as a tribute to all the Canadian forces lost their lives in the Dieppe Raid.

You can find out more about the memorials from the information panel on Memorial Green.

CA. What 4 symbols can you see on the Transport Memorial. What do you think the symbols represent?

Memorial Green- additional information

Researcher Dr J Flood

The town comes together here to commemorate the anniversary of the Dieppe Raid in August and Remembrance Sunday in November.

Canadian War Memorial

The first memorial to be placed here was the Royal Canadian Engineers Memorial. Unveiled on 17th August 1977, it honours members of the Corps of Royal Canadian Engineers who lost their lives as a result of the Dieppe Raid of 19th August 1942. It was financed by a group of veterans, based in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada, many of whom trained in Newhaven before sailing for Dieppe on that fateful day. Although it is dedicated to 27 men of the Royal Canadian Engineers, it has come to be regarded as a tribute to all the Canadian forces who took part in the Raid.



Photo: Unveiling of the Canadian Memorial 17.8.1977 - Newhaven Historical Society collection Ref: A013-043

Transport Memorial

During the First World War, Newhaven was one of the major supply ports to the Western Front. "The Transports" were the ships that transported stores and munitions to France. It was dangerous work. There were submerged mines in the channel and the Transports were liable to submarine attack.

The memorial is to the men of the Merchant Navy, who lost their lives whilst working on the Transports which used Newhaven as their base. It was unveiled on Friday 13th August 1920 at its original site at the junction of Dacre Road and Meeching Road. The panels on the memorial are inscribed with the names of the men and the ships on which they were lost. On top of the memorial is a ship's anchor light, used when the ship was at anchor or 'At Rest'. In the 1970s it was moved to Riverside, to make way for the one-way system, and moved again, to its present position on Memorial Green, in the 1990s when the West Quay was redeveloped.



Photo: Unveiling of the Transport Memorial 13.8.1920 - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: 06-045

Town Memorial

Public meetings were held in 1919 to discuss the options for a permanent memorial to the men of Newhaven, who had laid down their lives during the First World War. One popular suggestion was to provide a cottage hospital for the town. Other options discussed included a nurses' home, a fund for the education of those Newhaven children, whose fathers had died in the war, a recreation ground and a motor ambulance. In the end it was agreed that a stone memorial should be erected.

The town memorial, originally located at the junction of Chapel Street, South Road and Fort Road, was finally unveiled on Sunday, 2nd October 1921 by Col. Lord Leconfield (the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex). It was dedicated to 120 Newhaven men who died as a result of the First World War. Since then, the names of Newhaveners who died during the Second World War have been added. The memorial was moved to Memorial Green in 2005.



Photo: Unveiling of Newhaven Town Memorial 2.10.1921 - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A319-030

Directions. From Memorial Green, you walk down **Bridge Street** towards **Bridge Inn.**

3. Bridge Street and The Bridge Inn (number 3 on the map)

This was once a thriving shopping street with traffic going in both directions. The street ran into Newhaven High street where the range of shops continued.

Our local researcher (*J Brandon*) remembers the following shops in Bridge street during the 1960's: The Crown Pub (now Estate Agents), Baldwins (Newsagent), the Co-op furniture store, the New Bridge Inn Pub and the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves (RNVR) Hall – used for drilling purposes (near the Bridge Inn) and demolished (early 1970's) for the one-way system. She remembers coming into the town centre, including Bridge Street, to do all of her shopping.

Newhaven Memories-Bridge Street

One of our local researchers (V) commented on the Book and Bacca Shop that used to be in Bridge Street:

“I remember that you always went in one door and out another door.” (V)

She also mentioned the (Old) Social Club:

“My dad went there and I went with him. Families went there and chatted to each other.”

In the 1970's, when the (New) Social Club moved across the street into the old co-op furniture store, she commented: “This was a much bigger building and bands played there.” (V)



Photo: Post Card Image of Bridge Street Circa 1913. Permission to use from "Our Newhaven" Website.
http://www.ournewhaven.org.uk/page_id_1758.aspx?path=Op2p10p



Photo: Bridge street circa 1905 (note: Sheer Legs Crane at the end of the street). Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A037-034

Newspaper Report relating to the Co-op's Gentlemans Clothing (Outfitters) Department, Bridge Street (1916) *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

When conscription was introduced in 1916, so too was an appeal system. Local Tribunals were set up to hear appeals, which could be made by an individual or their employer. Many of these were reported in the local paper and give us an insight into the issues of the day.

In June 1916, the East Sussex News reported on an appeal brought by Mr Hacker, the manager of the Co-op on the corner of Bridge Street and Chapel Street, on behalf of Cecil Underhay, the manager of their outfitting department. The newspaper's heading was 'Ladies as Outfitters?'

During the appeal hearing, Capt. Boyne, the Army's representative at the appeal asked Mr Hacker whether a woman could do the work. In reply, he asked whether the Chairman on the Tribunal, Mr F Thyer, would like to go to an outfitters and be served throughout by a lady. In other words, would the Chairman be happy for a woman to measure him for a pair of trousers. The questioning continued:

The Chairman: "That is rather a personal question" (laughter)

Mr Hacker: "Your reply would be my answer"

Capt. Boyne: "I suppose you know that in France women do manage these shops? They are more broad-minded over there."

Mr Hacker: "They do a good many things over there which we are not accustomed to in England."

Mr Corbett (another tribunal member): "You do not think ladies are capable of measuring men for suits of

Mr Hacker: "There would be a good many misfits if they did" (laughter).

Mr Hacker felt that women weren't suitable for the job and stated that Mr Underhay was indispensable, pointing out that they were only applying for the heads of departments 'who really cannot be spared'. However, only a two-month exemption was allowed to enable the Co-op to make arrangements to release Mr. Underhay. We don't know whether or not he was replaced by a woman!



Photo: The Co-op on the corner of Bridge Street and Chapel Street – Newhaven Historical Society collection, ref: A062-072



Photo: Bridge Street (Co-op building on the left) undated but possibly 1920s - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A029-027



Photo: Bridge Street, Co-op Furniture Store/Social Club. Dec 2023 C Joslin

Directions. At the end of Bridge street, on the right, you will see The Bridge Inn.

3.The Bridge Inn (number 3 on the map). *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

Did you know that the last King of France spent his first night in exile at the Bridge Inn in Newhaven? Following the outbreak of the 1848 French Revolution, King Louis Philippe of France and Queen Amelia escaped to England arriving in Newhaven shortly before 7am on 3 March when they were taken to the Bridge Inn.

They only stayed one night, but when they left the *Illustrated London News* reported that ‘the King emphatically conveyed his thanks to Mrs Smith, the landlady; and the Queen, who had been attended by Miss Skinner and Miss Stone of Newhaven, embraced them for their attention; the King shaking hands with them, and adding his earnest thanks’.

CA Look at the windows of the Bridge Inn – which room do you think is the best room and the one the King and Queen of France might have stayed in in 1848?



Photo: Bridge Inn 2023 C Joslin

Find out more architectural details about Bridge Inn on the following Historic England Website:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/item/IOE01/03698/23>

Explore prints from the London Illustrated News which depict sketches of Louis Phillippe at breakfast at the Bridge Inn

https://www.printsandephemera.com/ourshop/prod_7523400-Louis-Philippe-and-Party-at-Breakfast-at-the-Bridge-Inn-Newhaven-1848.html

Directions. Turn left into Newhaven High Street

4. Newhaven High Street (number 4 on the map)

Our local volunteer researchers want you to know that this used to be a bustling street full of people, noise and traffic. Before the ring road, traffic (including buses) used to go up Newhaven High Street

Did you know the High Street had a nick-name?

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Bannisters took over six stores, three on each side of the High Street, this gave the High Street the nick-name of a staircase, with bannisters on each side! At Bannisters you could buy clothes with separate men's and women's departments alongside furniture and other goods, a traditional department store.

Bank Robbery! *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

On the morning of 14th September 1896, the manager of Barclays Bank, Mr Kennard, was found unconscious. It looked like a robbery had taken place. The door to the street was unlocked and the police assumed that's how the robbers made their escape. However, there was no evidence as to how they got in. A week later Mr Kennard was arrested and accused of stealing £907 and falsifying the books to cover it up. This is worth about £149,000 in today's money. At his trial, the bank pleaded for leniency saying that during the manager's '24 years he had been in the employ of the bank he had always bourn an excellent character. His ruin however had been brought about by his having been induced to speculate on the Stock exchange'.

Memories of 1960s shops

Our researchers have memories of seeing the following shops in the high street: The Ship hotel, Flower shop, Bannisters, Freeman Hardy Willis (shoes), Clarkes Butchers, Launderette, Fishmongers, Post Office Sorting Office, Funnells (bakers).

One of our local researchers (V) commented on Woolworths (1952-2009)

"Growing up (1950/60's), this was one of the main shops in the High Street and sold most things including: broken biscuits, Angel and fruit cake (sold by weight), as well as sweets, clothes, etc"

One place that has remained in the High Street for some time is **19 Newhaven High Street**, currently the offices of **Barwells Solicitors**. This is an 18th century, Grade II listed Building. For architectural details about this building go to:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1280272?section=official-list-entry>



Photo: 19, Newhaven High Street, Barwells Solicitors. Dec 2023 C Joslin

CA What shops would you like to see on the High Street now?



Photo: Newhaven High Street Circa 1905 (**Barclays Bank** opposite Bannisters- demolished to make way for Newhaven Square) - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A022-037

Public Houses of Newhaven High Street (number 4 on the map)

Author: Dr C Pearce

The Ship Inn (short version)

In the past, pubs were not only places for drinking. They were centres of business for the town. The Ship Inn was the site of auctions – of newly built ships, wrecked ships, and the materials from shipwrecks – and events such as the Coronation dinner for George IV. It was also a temporary place to billet soldiers. In 1824, magistrates convicted the publican because he refused to let in two soldiers of the 12th Lancers staying at the inn. He had gone to bed, locking the men outside in winter!

The White Hart

The White Hart Inn is another of Newhaven's historic pubs, although rebuilt and moved back from its original location. It was the favourite dining establishment of Thomas Turner of East Hoathly when he attended Customs House auctions in the 1760s to purchase currants and 'foreign brandy' seized from smugglers. His favourite meal was 'a leg of mutton broiled, a currant bread pudding and greens'. In 1794, law enforcement gathered here to quell the rioting Oxfordshire Militia. The soldiers attacked the town looking for flour, meat and bread, as prices were too high after a harvest failure and a cold winter

The Ship Inn (Longer version) *Author Dr C Pearce*

Public houses, like today, had many uses. They weren't just places of drinking and drunken brawls, though those certainly happened. Rather, they played an important communal role. The Ship Inn, here on the High Street, was a site of auctions, selling newly built vessels of 'the best Sussex oak' from Newhaven shipyards, yachts whose owners were finished with their summer cruises, materials salvaged from shipwrecks and even property, such as a large estate in Heighton 'delightfully situated, with an extensive land and sea view'.¹ The inn itself, described as 'that old established and well-accustomed Posting House' was also auctioned in 1827.²

The Ship Inn was used for important events, such as the Coronation dinner in honour of George IV in 1821, chaired by the Comptroller of HM Customs. The inhabitants of Newhaven were treated to strong beer and music in front of the Ship, and about 300 children were given gingerbread.³ It was also a place where soldiers were billeted as they moved around the country. In 1824, the Ship's publican, refused to get out of bed to let in two soldiers of the 12th Lancers who were staying there. They were left out in the cold, in winter! Local magistrates didn't accept his excuse; they convicted the publican who had to pay fines.⁴

References:

¹ Morning Herald (London), 21 Nov 1827; *Sussex Advertiser*, 9 Sept 1833; 13 May 1839.

² *Sussex Advertiser*, 23 April 1827.

³ *English Chronicle and Whitehall Evening Post*, 26 July 1831.

⁴ The National Archives, WO 43/229, 1 Jan – 31 Dec 1824.



*Photo: Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A056-083
This picture taken c.1900 – (Barclays Bank on the left). We believe the front of the public house was knocked down to widen the High Street for cars/buses.*



Photo: The White Hart, Dec 2023, C Joslin

The Harbour Masters House (short version)

(Formerly situated on the site of The Nat West Bank Building -corner of Bridge and High street)

Author: Dr C Pearce.

This building stands on the original site of Newhaven's Customs House, a place of corruption, religious conversion and murder. Oh, and a ghost! In 1678, former Customs Collector William Halsted petitioned Charles II, claiming he had built the customs house and pier, and that a notorious Protestant-turned-Catholic named Rose had ousted him out of the lucrative government post. Rose allegedly got his maid pregnant and murdered her; her brother saw her apparition! Rose escaped trial; the government didn't give Halsted his job back. His claims were too fantastical. What was truth and what was fiction in his story?

The Harbour Masters House (longer version)

(Formerly situated on the site of The Nat West Bank Building -corner of Bridge and High street)

Author: Dr C Pearce.

In 1678, the former Newhaven Customs Collector William Halsted sent an emotional plea to King Charles II. It had all the makings of a gothic tale – an ousting, religious conversion, fornication, murder. Oh, and a ghost!

Halsted claimed that he had built Newhaven's first customs house, perhaps here at 5 High Street, and a pier on the river. A man named Rose – a Catholic – allegedly ousted Halsted from the lucrative government post. At this time, Catholics could not hold government office. Halsted reported that Rose got his maid pregnant, and then murdered her. Then her brother saw her ghost! Rose escaped trial after a last-minute witness claimed she was in Virginia. If this weren't enough, to prove his loyalty to the Crown, Halsted claimed that he had seized a Dutch ship full of gold valued at between £30-40,000 six years previously. Wasn't this enough loyalty to get his job back? He also wanted to be paid expenses for building the customs house.¹

What was the truth and what was fiction? Unfortunately, most of the documents about this case have not survived, but they do show that Halsted's pleas were ignored by the Secretary of State Sir Joseph Williamson and his clerk, Robert Yard, editor of the *London Gazette*. A *Gazette* article about the Dutch ship indicates that it was not Halsted who seized the gold, but rather Customs Collector Robert Stockdale at Seaford. The vessel had anchored in Seaford, not knowing that the English were at war with the Dutch!² The National Archives holds Stockdale's letters about the incident that appear to be the source for the *Gazette* article.³ The Dutch gold was held at the Newhaven customs house only until it could be forwarded to London.

It looks like Halsted might be an unreliable witness! We don't even know if he was the one who built the customs house on this site, although it was here into the 19th century.⁴ Even so, it shows the importance of Newhaven as a port during the period of the Restoration and the Anglo-Dutch Wars.

¹ The National Archives (TNA), State Papers (SP) 29/411, f.1. William Halsted to Sir Joseph Williamson and Charles II, 2 Jan 1679. Accessed via State Papers Online.

² Seizure of a ship at Seaford with gold. *The London Gazette*, 22-25 July 1672.
<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/697/page/1>

³ SP 29/313, f.24. Robert Stockdale, collector, to the Commissioners of the Customs, 21 July 1672.

⁴ Newhaven Museum. Maps of Newhaven, 1770, 1838. By 1887 and with the building of the railroad, the Customs House was located on the east side of the river to the south east of the London and Paris Hotel, near the packet wharf. The Customs Watch House (sic) was directly across the river.



Photo: National Westminster Bank Building (site of Harbour Master's House, corner of Bridge and High Street, Newhaven) C Joslin Dec 2023

Cinemas in Newhaven *Researcher: V Holcomb*

There have been three cinemas in Newhaven

- (1) The Electric Theatre (Palace) Chapel St/Bridge St (on site of Horace's Fish and Chip shop)
- (2) Cinema-de-Luxe (became The Rex in 1960's/ demolished 1970s) opened 1915. The Entrance to which was on the High Street, through the booking hall and then into the auditorium.
- (3) Kinema (opened mid 1916) Entrance to Cinema was in Meeching Road. Variety shows held there. Silent films shown.

The Rex Cinema was previously known as the Theatre deluxe opened in 1911. By 1915 it had been renamed Cinema de Luxe which after refurbishment could seat 548. In the early 1960s the new owners renamed it the Rex Cinema- it showed films and ran part-tie bingo sessions. The cinema was known as the "bug hutch" by locals. Rex cinema closed in 1970 and was demolished not long after.

Example of Admission (Rex) prices

Circle 2s 6d (12 1/2 pence)

Front seat 1 s (5 pence)

Back Row 1s 10d (9 pence)

Matinee 1 s (5 pence)

Newhaven Memories

Our volunteer researchers spoke to those who remembered going to see films at the Rex and these included: Chariots of Fire, Carry on Films (1970's), A Hard Days Night and (the original) Mary Poppins.

One commented:

"I remember that the Usherette had a tray where she would bring it to the front of the cinema between the two films (there was often two films shown -a smaller film alongside the main feature). She was known to shine her torch on the back row to ensure everyone was behaving themselves." (V)



Photo: Cinema De Luxe 1931 (opposite turning to Meeching Road) Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A033-056



Kinema 1957, after it was converted to a Fire Station (source: Newhaven Museum)



Poster on display showing films on at the Electric Theatre Chapel Street (source Newhaven Museum)



Advert in the Newhaven Chronicle 17.11.1918 of films showing at the Kinema (source Newhaven Museum)

5. Newhaven Time Capsule – Newhaven Square TQ445013/ BN9 9PE.

In 1980, it was decided to bury a time capsule in the Square. We believe that local businesses of the time were encouraged to donate items to go in the capsule.

CA – What things do you think were put in the 1980 Newhaven time capsule?

What would you put in the time capsule now to represent Newhaven?



Photo: 1980 Installation of Newhaven Time Capsule Newhaven Historical Collection ref A020-026



Photo: Compass -Engraved Stone (on top of Time Capsule) Newhaven Square, August 1980. Newhaven Historical Collection, ref A025-071

Article in Sussex Express 7.11.1980

“The marble compass is now in place in Newhaven’s new town centre. Helping to position to compass correctly by finding true north was Newhaven’s senior Harbour pilot Cap Aubrey Durham. The compass has been laid over the spot where the lead time capsule was buried last month. Brief details of events in Newhaven’s History have been carved between the eight points of the compass.”

Contents of the 1980 Newhaven Time Capsule (donations from local businesses)

Christian Dior (UK) Ltd – 1 Gel Crème Eye Shadow

Anglicon Instruments Ltd – printed circuit board + leaflet depicting temperature controller

Dawns Boutique – 1 pair ladies' leg-warmers, 1 dawn's boutique Newhaven diary, 1 fashion carrier bag

Parker Pen Co Ltd – A Parker 25 pen

Alan Lee (Turf Accountants) Ltd – plastic wallet containing betting slip & RNLI lottery tickets on sale in Newhaven 1978/9 and photos of betting office

Kulicke & Sofa (UK) Ltd – 1 semi-conductor assembly

British Rail – timetable and ticket

Sealink UK Ltd – Newhaven to Dieppe ticket

Charrington & Co Ltd – 1979 Beaujolais Nouveau

Thorn Consumer Electronics – component from one of their reproducers

Fludes (Carpets) Ltd – piece of carpet

Newhaven Pharmacies – jar of their own brand of hand cream, disposable syringe and needle, insulin injection and a packet of effervescent vitamin c tablets

Vacco Ltd – quarter litre vacuum flask, manufactured in the factory at Newhaven

Sussex Express & County Herald – Friday 14/12/1979 (election)

HR Electric Motors (Newhaven) Ltd – armature from dc servo-motor, used for school teaching

Barclays Bank Ltd – set of 1979 coins

Newhaven Head Post Office – set of 1979 Christmas Stamps

Bevan Funnell Ltd – components of their reproduction furniture, leather, hinges and handle

Enerpact Ltd – hydraulic cylinder

Source: http://www.ournewhaven.org.uk/page_id_2039.aspx?path=0p2p10p

Directions. Return back to the high street and head north, take a left into Meeching Road, cross over the A259 where Meeching Road continues (divided by the Ring Road built in the 1970s) and it is here you can see some houses in the street that celebrate the work of Victor Stuart Graham.

6. Meeching Road

Did you know?

In the late 19th century, Meeching Road gained the nick-name **Piano Street**? The name arose because it was one of the more fashionable streets where the majority of the households were able to afford a piano.

Artist -Victor Stuart Graham (35 Meeching Road) *Researcher: C Manzi*

Was a successful local artist whose sculptures and depiction of boats, seaside cottages and harbours, usually created from driftwood or found materials can be found throughout the UK and Europe. His work can be seen locally displayed on houses in Meeching Road and in the Hillcrest Centre.

“To Victor, a simple piece of driftwood was never waste. It was a boat or a house or perhaps a lighthouse.”

<https://victorstuartgraham.co.uk/about-victor/>

More information about Victor Stuart Graham’s life can be found at:

<https://victorstuartgraham.co.uk/>



Photo: Victor’s work at the Hillcrest Centre. C. Joslin Dec 2023

CA

How many Boot Scrapers can you spot in Meeching Road? When Meeching Road was first built, the roads weren’t tarmacked and therefore liable to get muddy. These boot scrapers made sure that mud wasn’t walked into the house. One of our researchers was told that in the 1960s people used to ask the milkman to put the milk inside the boot scraper to keep it cool on hot days.



Photo: Boot Scraper in Meeching Road, Newhaven. J Flood, January 2014

Directions. At the end of Meeching Road, turn right into Hillside (becomes Bay View Road)- you will see the Hillcrest Centre ahead. However, just before you cross over to the Hillcrest centre, you will go past **Norman Road**. This road gained notoriety when **Lord Lucan**'s car was abandoned there in November 1974. To date, Lord Lucan has never been found.

7. Norman Road

Lord Lucan

On 10th November 1974, a dark blue Ford Corsair was found in Norman Road. The car had been abandoned by Lord Lucan who had fled London on 7th November following the attempted murder of his wife and the murder of their children's nanny, Mrs Sandra Rivett.

Over the next few weeks checks were made with the Cross-Channel ferries and searches took place of on the cliff tops, at the caravan site and of all the boats at Newhaven Marina. Tracker dogs were sent in to search the Fort tunnels and police divers even searched a deep "death hole" in the harbour, known locally as a place where bodies can be trapped.

To date Lord Lucan has never been found.



Photo: Builders of Norman Road c 1900 - Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A032-058



Photo: Norman Road. Dec 2023. C Joslin

8. The Hillcrest Centre

Formerly an adult education site, owned by East Sussex County Council, the Hillcrest was saved from probable demolition in the mid 1990's and became a charity-run thriving community centre providing a range of educational, social and well-being opportunities to locals.



Photo: Newhaven Further Education Centre (Hillcrest Centre) - 1960s. Permission to use from: Colin Holden / "Our Newhaven website".

http://www.ournewhaven.org.uk/page_id_419.aspx?path=0p2p105p50p



Photo: Newhaven Further Education Centre (Hillcrest Centre)-undated. Newhaven Historical Society Collection. ref A0653-018

Hillcrest Centre: From Boys' School to Community Centre.

Researcher Dr J Flood

The Hillcrest Centre started life as a Boys' School in 1902. There was a separate Girls' School in Dacre Road, but this building was demolished in the 1970s to make way for the one-way system.

At the beginning of the First World War, the Boys' School was converted into a 50-bed Military hospital. After enjoying a 10-week summer holiday, the boys were first taught in the Church Room and Congregational Hall before sharing accommodation with the Girls' School, alternating mornings and afternoons on a week by week basis. Mr Corbett, one of the school managers complained "the girls and boys attended school half a day and were running the streets the other half and when the next day came they had forgotten what they had been taught on the previous day". Despite his protestations the situation continued until the end of the war.

The Hillcrest continued as a Boys' School until June 1951, opening its doors in the September to both boys and girls, as Newhaven County Secondary School. However, by the end of the 50s plans were being drawn up for a new school in Southdown Road. The first stage of the new school, which was later to be renamed Tideway, was completed in January 1959 when the Upper School moved up from the Hillcrest. They were joined by the Lower School in 1966, with just a few classes being taught at the Hillcrest.

From 1969 until the 1990s it became a Further Education centre, running evening classes in all sorts of subjects. Jenny remembers in going to touch-typing and conversational Japanese classes in the 1980s, while Derek remembers they used to run car maintenance classes in the basement. Derek's wife Ann, who was a secondary school teacher, used to run needlework, dress-making and cake decoration classes in the pre-fabricated buildings at the back of the Hillcrest. "She did that when the children were small and before we had the children she did evening classes to help pay the mortgage".

In 1995, Lewes Tertiary College announced it wanted to sell the building, sparking a three-year campaign by local residents to save the building for the community. On 31st July 1998 the Hillcrest Community Centre was born offering clubs and activities for all ages. Why not pop inside and enjoy a tea, coffee, or even lunch at the cafe and browse through all different events on the What's On page of their website?

<https://www.hillcrestcentre.co.uk/whatson>

Extended Walk

You can choose to return back to the High Street, going back the way you came or you could decide to walk a bit further and explore more heritage gems.

Directions. Leave the Hillcrest Centre by the Nursery, turn left and head towards the top of Bay View Road. Look for the **Nuns Walk** sign (9 on the map). This path gets very muddy in winter, to avoid the mud, you can start the path and then take a right which will take you to Neils Close. At the end and you will reach **Meeching Rise**, then turn left into **Church Hill** (10 on the map). This is a circular walk leading you up and then back down Church Hill.

9. Nun's Walk. *Researcher- D Cooper*

Nun's walk is a footpath linking Bay Vue Road with St. Michael's Church. The footpath skirted land that belonged to the Convent of the Sacred Heart in nearby Church Hill.

There was a small shrine situated in the wall separating the church from Neil Close partway down. It was named The English Alter, Corpus Christi.

Nun's walk was used by the convents school pupils to access the nearby tennis courts.

Today it is a tree lined walk and is mainly used by dog walkers.

The old convent is a section of the building named Churchill Lodge. Another part of the convent is in Meeching Place.



Photo: "Nuns Walk" sign, C Joslin Dec 2023

Directions. For the workhouse, take a left at Church Hill (10), go past the Church on your left and you will see the Workhouse Building on your right.

11. The Union Workhouse

The Union Workhouse. *Researcher: D Cooper.*

Newhaven Poor Law Union came into existence on 2nd February, 1835.

It was one of the earliest Unions and represented sixteen parishes and the population of Newhaven at this time was 904.

The Union Workhouse was built on land called the Church Furlong belonging to William Elphick. £3,300 was allocated to the building work to a design by the architect Sampson Kempthorn who had designed many new workhouses. It would accommodate 150 inmates.

Later it became the Newhaven Downs Hospital, now occupied by the Newhaven Poly Clinic and Rehabilitation Centre.



Photo: Workhouse Buildings, Dec 2023, C Joslin

The Union Workhouse *(Additional research on the early years)*

The Union workhouse opened on 5th February 1836- during that first month 57 men, women and children were admitted. (p5)

Records suggest that in addition to adults, there was a “predominance” of children in the workhouse. These children were provided with an education as it was thought that this would “help them to support themselves (and)... not to become a permanent responsibility of the workhouse.” (p6)

Able-bodied inmates were expected to work and given task such as: Oakum Picking (untwisting and picking old hemp ropes to obtain the loose fibres), digging untilled ground, stone-breaking and bone-crushing (animal bones crushed to be used in manure by farmers).

“The work had to be more irksome than ordinary labour but not so much so that the paupers would refuse to undertake it.” (p8)

In 1914, the workhouse became a billet for soldiers- including the 4th Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment. The workhouse inmates were moved onto other workhouses including one at Cuckfield. (p14)

Source: *Harry Gaston: Out of the Shadows. A history of Newhaven Downs. 1836-1996. Pub 1997 South Downs NHS Trust.*

Directions. Return down Church Hill, visit the **Brazen Memorial** in **St Michaels Churchyard** (12 on the map). **St Michaels** is Newhaven's oldest surviving building at over 900 years old.

12. St Michaels Church. Author: Dr J Flood

St Michael's Church is Newhaven's oldest surviving building. It is now over 900 years old and was built on lands granted by William de Warenne. De Warenne, was a leading Norman Baron, who had fought alongside William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. In gratitude De Warenne was granted extensive lands in 13 counties, including the Rape of Lewes, where he had Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory built.

Sadly, William died before the church was completed. He was mortally wounded at the First Siege of Pevensey Castle in 1088. It was the monks of the priory that oversaw the completion of St Michael's Church around 1120.



*Photo: St Michael's Church with Brazen memorial undated likely to be early late 1800s - 1900s
Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A033-058 c. early 1900s*

Thomas Tipper

In 1767 Thomas Tipper married Susanna Dean at St Michael's Church. Susanna, a widow, had inherited a cottage which Thomas converted into the New Inn (later the Bridge Inn).

In May 1768, he bought the warehouse next door which he converted into a brewery. Water to make the ale was drawn from a well in the adjacent flour mill. The water was said to be brackish which gave it its unique taste.

Tipper Ale was very popular and was supplied to the Prince Regent at the Royal Pavilion. The bill in 1821, George IV's coronation year, was £855.7s.10d (nearly £116,000 in today's money).

Thomas Tipper died in 1785 and is buried in St Michael's Churchyard. His gravestone bears the bridge which became the trademark for Tipper Ales.



Photo: Thomas Tipper Gravestone/ Location St Michaels Churchyard, Newhaven. C Joslin 2023

Building the Church

We haven't got the exact date the building of the Church was completed, but we do know that the lands (4 acres) were granted by William de Warenne via his sheriff Peter.

De Warenne, was a leading Norman Baron, who had fought alongside William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. In gratitude (and no doubt to keep one of his own in a position of power) De Warenne was granted extensive lands in 13 counties, including the Rape of Lewes, where he built Lewes Castle and Lewes Priory.

Following a visit to Cluny Abbey in Burgundy, William and his wife Gundrada, decided to found a Cluniac Priory, at Lewes (Lewes Priory). The priory, whose main buildings were put up between c.1082 and c.1100, was built on the site of a Saxon church dedicated to St Pancras, so the priory, too, was dedicated to that saint. Sadly, neither William nor Gundrada lived to see the priory, nor the church at Newhaven, completed. Gundrada died in child birth in 1085 and William died in 1088, having been mortally wounded at the First Siege of Pevensey Castle. Both were buried in the chapter house of Lewes Priory. Their burial cist (stone-built coffin) was uncovered during the construction of the Brighton to Lewes railway in 1845. In 1847, a chapel (now known as Gundrada Chapel) was built, as an extension to St John the Baptist Church, Southover, to house their remains.

It was the monks of the priory that over saw the completion of St Michael's Church around 1120.

The church has developed over the years - here are a few highlights:

- 1724 - Bishop Bowers visited the church and recorded "Church and Chancel in good repair without; walls, floor, and seats nasty and indecent ... pulpit cloth and cushions scandalous ... steeple and one bell in good order, but two other bells lost years ago. Families number 44. No dissenters or papists

- 1780 - The present tolling bell was installed, bought 2nd hand (originally made in 1737).
- 1795 - The town had grown and there were now 90 houses in Newhaven. The increase meant that the Nave had to be extended to the North
- 1810 - Due to the increase in population (146 houses and a population of 755 in 160 families) the back wall was extended by 20 ft.
- 1821 - The population was now 927. Early marriages amongst the poor and the large number of Customs officers and Enforcers were given as the reason for the increase, so in 1825 they erected galleries on the North and South sides of the church. At this time HMS Hyperion, under Captain Mingaye, was stationed at Newhaven as part of the Coast Blockade (which aimed to reduce smuggling). Captain Mingaye provided 5 carpenters to assist in the building of the galleries - there is no record of any wages being paid by the church but they were mentioned in the costs for beer allowance. At this time the vestry was added and at some time before 1851 a chimney was built (evidence of heating in the church)
- 1854 - The population was 1,358 and the church was closed for 6 months so the South Aisle and East porch could be added. The South & North galleries were removed and the choir & organ gallery added. The organ dates from 1854 . It was first installed in the gallery, then moved down near the vestry then under the tower in the chancel, before going back to the gallery. The churchyard was also extended down to the road.
- 1920 - the First World War memorial on the south wall was unveiled on 5th March 1920. At the time it was the only memorial in the town to those men who had lost their lives, the town memorial not being unveiled until 2.10.1921. You will find some of the same men commemorated on both memorials.
- 1929 - A carillon of 10 bells was given to the church (paid for by John William Stevens) and are chimed from a clavier (carillons are usually 23 bells)
- 1952 - The Lychgate was erected as a memorial to members of the Norman family

12. The Brazen Memorial (a short introduction) *Researcher: Dr C Pearce*

This monument is a place of remembrance for the men lost in the shipwreck of HMS Brazen on 26 January 1800. The British Admiralty sent the vessel to protect local fishermen from attack by privateers during the French Revolutionary War, but it was lost in a gale under the cliffs between modern-day Peacehaven and Newhaven. At least 69 men were buried in mass graves in and around this churchyard. However, many, including Capt. James Hanson, were never found. The memorial's panels have been restored two times, with the last, in 1878 introducing the error in the date of the ship's loss.



Photos: Brazen Memorial, St Michaels Churchyard, Newhaven. C Joslin Dec 2023

The Brazen Memorial (research piece) *Author: Dr C Pearce*

The Brazen monument memorializes the loss of HMS Brazen, Captain James Hanson, and 105 men on 26 January 1800. The Brazen was sent to this area to protect local fishermen from the depredations of French privateers during the French Revolutionary Wars (1). Caught in a vicious gale, the vessel crashed into the chalk shelf under the cliffs between modern-day Peacehaven and Newhaven. All hands were lost except one.

The memorial was erected soon after, near where many of the crew were buried in mass graves. Only the names of the officers are given. War memorials did not include the names of all who were lost or killed until the First World War. However, this monument was built at the beginning of a movement to honour the missing. For Capt. Hanson and a third of the crew, the sea itself was their grave. This is shown symbolically – note the storm imagery, the carvings of scallop and whelk shells, the seaweed, and the Roman-styled dolphins. These are Christian symbols, but they are also symbols of the underworld and shoreline (2), conveying the message that the sea was their final resting place.

The memorial also echoes the ideals of the Royal Navy in its design and inscriptions: honour, duty, bravery and sacrifice for the nation are present in the panel's text. The monument has undergone refurbishment two times. The original inscriptions were by 1813 almost 'completely obliterated' (3). They were replicated on slate in the 1830s

(4). The last refurbishment was in 1878, paid for by Capt. Hanson's widow, Louisa. A mistake was made in the date at this time. The 26 was incorrectly carved as a 20.

The monument became a place of remembrance for friends and family of the deceased, but also for the community itself as inhabitants made their way up the hill for worship. Its presence would have prompted memories of the gale for those involved in the rescue and burials, such as Newhaven's Sea Fencibles, a local naval militia unit formed to protect the coast from French invasion. It continues to be a place of commemoration, for every year on the Sunday closest to 26th January, the church holds a memorial service, including a wreath-laying, a bugler, and a demonstration by local sea cadets.

References

¹ The National Archives, ADM 1/1502. Evan Nepean, Secretary of the Admiralty, in response to Capt. Henry Cromwell, commander of the Sea Fencibles, 13 Jan 1800.

² David J. Stewart, *The Sea Their Graves: An Archaeology of Death and Remembrance in Maritime Culture* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2011), 131.

³ Frederic Shoberl, *The Beauties of England and Wales, Or, Delineations, Topographical, Historical, and Descriptive, of Each County*, vol. Vol XIV, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex (London: Longman & Co., 1813), 146.

⁴ Thomas Walker Horsfield, *The History, Antiquities, and Topography of the County of Sussex*, vol. 2 (Lewes: Sussex Press, 1835), 195.

Directions. Return to Church Hill and as you head back down Church Hill towards the High Street you will pass the **Convent** buildings on your right (**13** on map).

13. Caroline Catt, The Convent, Church Hill. *Researcher D Cooper*

Caroline Catt was born in 1815 and was one of eleven children born to William Catt, the owner of Tide Mills, and his wife Hannah. Caroline was a very wealthy woman and owned most of Denton. She was often referred to as the Dame of Denton. Caroline purchased Meeching Place from William Elphick and she remained living in the house until her death at 80 years old in 1895. On 1st May each year, Caroline would give out presents of a penny, an apple or orange and a bun to every child living in the town. On her death, the deeds were purchased by a French Convent Order in July 1896 who then set up the Sacred Heart Convent

The Convent

The Nun's created the convent of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and formed a boarding school for older girls, many coming from France. At the top of Meeching Rise, the convent had a laundry and a dairy. The Nun's had a field where cows were kept and also used for haymaking. There were tennis courts provided for the pupils adjoining First Avenue and were accessed via Nun's Walk. There was also a Chapel that later became Newhaven library. On 28th October 1940, the convent was bombed by the German Airforce that killed a nun and injured several others. The Order moved out immediately to Billingshurst.



Photos: Convent Buildings- Chapel and Nun's Residences. C Joslin Dec 2023.

13.The Convent. *Additional Research Dr J Flood.*

In 1895 sisters from the French colony of the Immaculate Heart of Mary came over to found a Convent at Newhaven. They first lived in a property called Abbeville in Fort Road before purchasing Meeching Place and adding a chapel and two large buildings. The extensive grounds included a small farm with a dairy herd. There was also a tennis court, while croquet and badminton were played on the lawn next to the East side entrance of the chapel.

The convent provided education girls up to 16 (and originally for boys to the age of 8). The nuns taught English, History, Geography, Maths, French, Latin, Drawing, Singing, Needlework and PE. There were also optional lessons in Music, Painting, Dancing and Elocution.

On 11 October 1940, eight high explosive bombs and one oil bomb fell on Saxon Road, Brighton Road and the Convent. The Chapel Building took a direct hit, the stained-glass windows were shattered and the bell tower fell apart. One nun, Sister Mary of Angel Guardian was killed and a number of nuns were injured. The school was evacuated, eventually settling at Summer's Place in Billingshurst. A few nuns remained at Newhaven until 1943, when the building officially closed.

The convent chapel was purchased in 1951 and converted into a library. Other buildings were taken over by the Council and converted into flats (and some into offices). When the library moved into the town, the building was saved for the community and became a community arts centre which opened in 1996. It is now a private business.



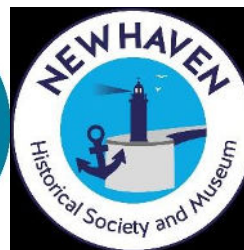
*Photo: Interior of Convent Chapel as Newhaven Town Library - Newhaven Historical Society
Collection ref: A067-052*

14. Directions- End of walk- at the bottom of Church Hill, you will reach the A259 Ring Road, cross over and you will be at the top of Newhaven High Street.

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In addition, thanks to D Payne, J Brandon and V Holcomb for their valuable additional contributions to our research.



There are two other walks as part of the Newhaven Heritage Routes Series- West Quay and Beyond and East Side.

Further research

We recommend the following websites as a great starting point to further develop your knowledge of Newhaven's Heritage:

Newhaven Museum: <https://www.newhavenhistoricalsociety.org.uk/museum-archives>

Our Newhaven: <http://www.ournewhaven.org.uk/>

Newhaven Fort: <https://www.newhavenfort.org.uk/>