

## **Newhaven Heritage Routes - Map 2- East Side**

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.

**Welcome to Walk Two-East Side-** of Newhaven Heritage Routes.

**START** (number 1 on the map)

We start this route at The Sidings a space that can be found behind the Railwayman's Club, in Railway Approach, a short walk from Newhaven Town Station, the bus stop and ferry terminal. From this space you can get a good view of the **Marine Workshops**.



*The Sidings: Photo C Joslin 2023*



*Newhaven Railway Club: Photo C Joslin 2023*

### **1. a) Marine Workshops** (number 1 on map) *Researcher: Dr J Flood.*

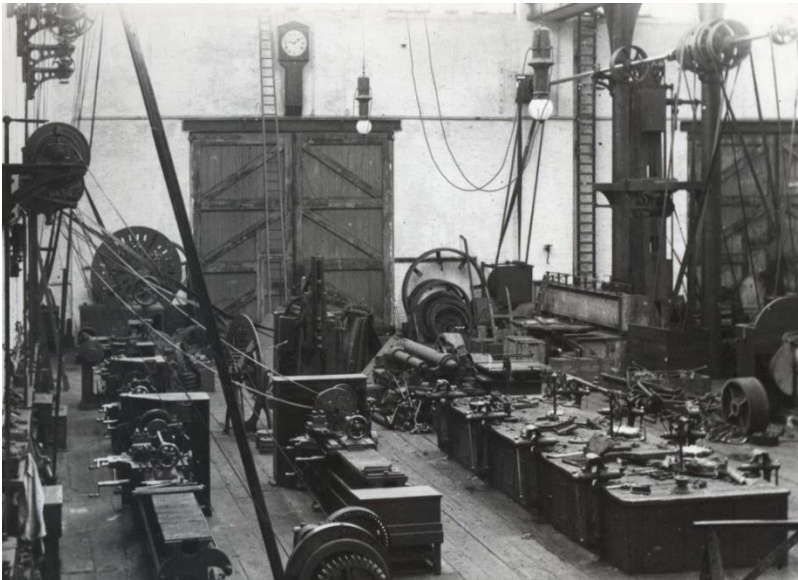
Prior to the 1880s, Newhaven Marine Workshops consisted of a small shed containing one lathe, a drilling machine, punching machine and shears, and a smith's fire blown by hand. No heavy jobs could be undertaken and steamers had to be sent to London for overhaul or repair. With improvements to the harbour, new and much improved marine workshops were built c.1881-2 for the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway. The workshops carried out repairs to the vessels and steam driven cranes at the port as well as railway engines

### **Marine Workshops during the First World War**

During the First World War, Newhaven became a major supply port of stores and munitions to the Western Front. By 1915, there were 45 transports, 3 Torpedo boats and 16 trawlers, which resulted in the Marine Workshops receiving daily urgent orders for repairs to these government vessels. In an effort to meet this need, 120 men were employed, working on average, 72 hours per week. The machinery was steam driven and unable to cope with the extra workload, so the London Brighton and South Coast Railway sought the approval of the War Office to electrify the workshops, update their machinery and improve the lighting at a cost of £14,939.



*Marine Workshops and Sheer Legs 1880s-1890s. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A001-004*



*Marine Workshops interior 1913. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A001-004*

### **Marine Workshops during the Second World War** *Researcher: Dr J Flood.*

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, the port was mostly closed to commercial traffic (except for coal) and the Marine workshops were involved in repairing vessels damaged by enemy action as well as general repairs. A lot of work was carried out on vessels that took part in the Dunkirk evacuations (May/June 1940). It was impossible to get parts as some of the vessels had foreign engines, so new parts were made in the workshops. During this time, repairs were made to 774 vessels including: hospital carriers, patrol boats, motor launches, motor mine sweepers, motor torpedo boats, motor gun boats, landing craft, RAF high speed launches and merchant ships.

## Marine Workshops Today

The workshops continued to repair ship engines until the early 1960s. It was later used for maintenance of the tractor units which pulled the trailers left on the quayside onto the ferries for shipment to Dieppe.

Eventually the Workshops were abandoned and in 2014 work started converting the buildings into a University Technical College (UTC), which opened in September 2015. It closed at the end of August 2019, and in June 2022 was purchased by Lewes District Council and renamed 'Marine Workshops'. It is now home to East Sussex College and includes offices for Lewes District Council and commercial space with an emphasis on maritime and sustainable technologies.

### 1 b) The Sheer Legs Crane (number 1 on map) Researcher: Dr J Flood.

The Sheer Legs crane dominated Newhaven's skyline for over 80 years and was situated by the marine workshops. Installed in 1881, at a cost of £2,880, it could lift 50 tons (30ft clear) although tested to 60 tons. The height of main legs were 105 feet.

The list of charges for crane use, dated 5<sup>th</sup> August 1887, ranged from 5/- per ton for loads under 2 tonnes to 20/- (£1) per ton for loads between 30 and 45 tonnes. The Sheer Legs was sold for scrap in August 1962, eventually being felled at 5:49am on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1965.

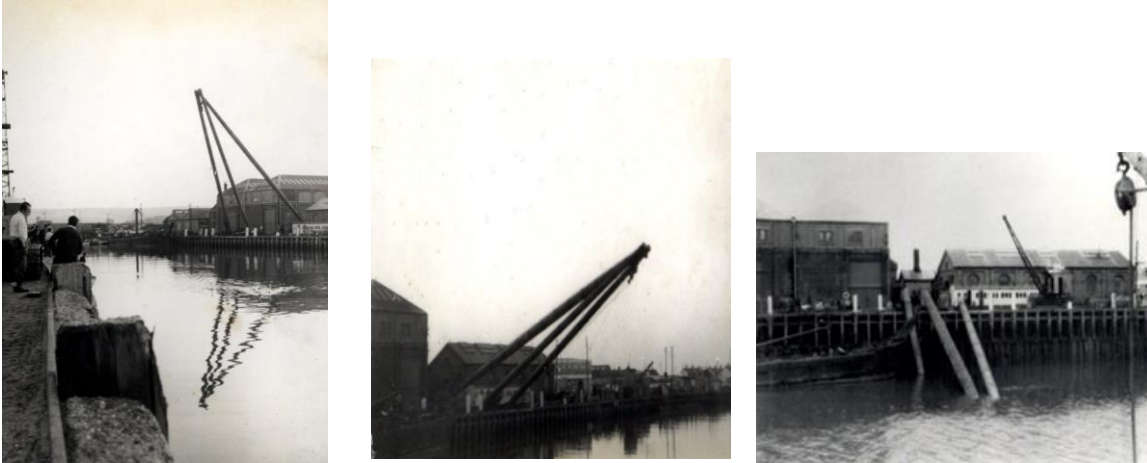


*Sheer Legs lifting locomotive bound for France, November 1883. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A318-04*

**CA.** Do you think the name for the Crane is a good one? Can you think of any other suitable names for this crane?

## Felling of the Sheer Legs Crane

At 5:49am on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1965 work began on felling the Sheer Legs crane which had dominated Newhaven's skyline for over 80 years.



Photos: Newhaven Historical Society's collection ref: A006-052

**Directions.** As you leave The Sidings, turn right towards Newhaven Town Train Station, cross over the level-crossing and turn right into Railway Road.

### 1.c) Newhaven Town Train Station (*number 1 on map*) *Researcher: B Hitchen*

At its height, Newhaven had 3 railway stations that served the town, the port and the ferry and all were on the Lewes to Seaford branch line.

The railway line to Newhaven opened in 1847. Initially there were two railway stations in Newhaven, **Newhaven Town station** and what we now know as **Newhaven Harbour station**. The Harbour Station was moved 200m south of the original when the entrance to Mill Creek was filled in. Over the years this became known by a number of names including Newhaven Harbour (Boat Station), the Continental Station, and the Wharf Station. This third station was opened on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1886 and was finally renamed **Newhaven Marine** station on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1984. The platforms at the original harbour station remained open for trains to Seaford and for the London and Paris hotel. **Newhaven Marine** (the third station) served as the boat train terminal until it was finally closed in 2020

**CA.** Look at the Poppy Trail information boards by the Newhaven Town station which tell us information about the station during World War One (1914-1918). What was the total weight of all the Christmas puddings that were sent from Newhaven to the troops during the World War One?



Early photo of Newhaven Town Station. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A061-018

### **“Turkey Town” and the East Side Community (numbers 2-9 on map)**

Our local researchers want you to know that East Side was known for its close-knit community. Employment (docks, railways, and factories), schools, pubs and shops supported the locals. Amy’s Stores, opened in 1913 in Norton Road run by Mary Amy, continues to be remembered by some of our researchers today. The railways and docks were major employers and as industry changed, factories such as Parker Pens and Vacco became big local employers.

Look out for ***East Side Memories*** recalled by our volunteer project researchers, and the local people they spoke to, throughout this PDF.

#### ***East Side Memories.***

*“The Eastsiders had everything they needed on their doorstep, their own bakery, post office, shops, recreation ground, pubs and of course work.” DP*

**CA.** Why do you think the East Side of Newhaven is sometimes called “Turkey Town”?

(some reasons given below)

“There are a number of suggestions, but the most popular one is that it dates back to a time when live poultry was imported from Normandy and unloaded at the East Quay. Apparently, the aroma of roasting turkeys which had “somehow disappeared from the docks”, used to pervade East side.”

(Source: Pen to Paper-The Story of Newhaven’s Pen Factory (2005) by Malcolm Troak).



*“East Siders” celebrate the 1911 Coronation of King George V outside Railway Road Infants School. (The coronation was on 22.6.191,1 but East Side had their celebrations on the Saturday so as not to clash with the town celebration.), Newhaven Historical Society Collection, A024-059*

## **2 Railway Road Infants School (number 2 on map). Researcher: Dr J Flood**

The plans for the Railway Road Infants School were approved in 1894. It had a class room for 60 children, a room for babies (similar size to the classroom), and another “school room” the size of the other two put together. There was a teachers’ room, a cloakroom for 250 pegs, 5 toilets, and there was another lavatory block in the playground. They must have been expecting the population of East Side to grow as the plans already included an outline for a ‘proposed future extension’.



*Railway Road Infants’ School 1920. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A058-060*

**CA.** Look at the old school photo. What do you think life was like for the children who went to this school in 1920? In what ways do you think it might be different to school life today?

**Directions.** Continue down Railway Road until you reach Parker Way, the former site of **Parker Pen Factory** (now the Safford Park housing development).

### 3 Parker Pens (number 3 on map)

The Factory played an important part in the community-it was a big employer and provided some interesting memories for some of our Heritage Walk volunteers.

#### **East Side Memories**

*"I left Tideway School at 16 and I went straight to work at Parker Pens (1981-2010), I remember when Charles and Diana got married, Parker pens produced pens for the occasion and I worked in the Department that acid etched the images onto the pen."* (D)

#### **A potted history of pen manufacturing in Newhaven.** *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

The first pen factory on the site was established in 1921 when **Felix** MaCauley bought the site of a First World War army camp, together with some ex-army huts and applied for permission to set up the Felix Works.

This was then purchased in 1930 by Harben **Valentine** who set up the Valentine Pen Company. In 1941, the **Parker Pen Company** bought shares in the company, completing their purchase in 1945.

Parker Pen was to become a major employer in the town. On the 10<sup>th</sup> October 1988, to commemorate the Company's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher visited the company in Newhaven.

YOUNG GIRLS  
— FIND —  
**CONSTANT EMPLOYMENT.**

GOOD PROGRESSIVE WAGES. MODERN AIRY WORKROOMS.  
LIGHT INTERESTING WORK. WELFARE SUPERVISION UNDER MATRON

**STARTING WAGES :** Girls of 14 years ... 9/- per week and fare.  
" 15 years ... 12/- " "  
" 16 years ... 15/- " "

and so on. When proficient in their work girls can go on piecework and earn 20/- to 25/- or more if competent.

**GIRLS ONLY** are employed in this Department.  
Boys also required for separate department:

Call **FELIX WORKS,** Railway Road,  
**NEWHAVEN,**

*"Felix Works' advert encouraging girls to apply for work in the factory. Other adverts show that parents were invited to visit the works. We liked the way the advert reassured parents that boys and girls would be working in different departments."* Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: On display



*Valentine Pen Factory Staff 1932. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A048-019*

### **The Valentine Pen Company during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War**

When war broke out much of the factory was used for munitions work making firing pins and precision torpedo parts. New cutting tools were supplied by the MOD who inspected the work. During this time staff worked 24 hours a day, over three shifts, six days a week. An air raid shelter was built for the staff and fire watching scheduled at night. Allotments were opened up in the grounds so that workers could 'Dig for Britain'. Despite the war work, the factory still managed to produce some pens at 20% of their usual production.

### ***East Side Memories***

*"They had white sheds (pre-fabs) at Parker pens- and inside they all had different departments, they even made their own ink there." (V)*

### **The Importance of Parker Pens** *Researcher: D Simmons*

Our volunteer researchers wanted to make you aware of the significance of Parker pens in the world. For example: in 1945 General Eisenhower signed the German Surrender Papers using a "Parker 51" Pen and in the Pacific, General MacArthur signed the Japanese Surrender Papers with his 20 years old "Duofold Pen". In 1987, US President Ronald Reagan and the Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signed the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Parker Pens, and in 1992 Presidents Bush and Yeltsin signed the arms reduction accord, exchanging their Parker Pens after the signing.



## **East Side Memories**

*“Parker Pens had Christmas Parties for the kids in the canteen at the factory. The presents were all laid out on a table and we picked the present with our name on it.” (V)*



*Parker Pen Children’s Christmas Party 1953. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A057-040*



*Parker Pen Factory 1980s. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A299-010*

*“I remember that there was a bloke who worked at Parker pens who was a part-time wrestler and he invited some famous wrestlers to the factory (Jackie Palo Senior and Jackie Palo Junior). They put on a show in the Factory Canteen (1970s)” (D)*

**CA.** Can you find any road names and designs relating to Parker Pens on the new housing development?

**Directions:** Return to Railway Road, turn left (by the Engineer Pub) into Baker Street. On the right, is the East Side Centre and on the left (towards the end of the street) is a small public garden. This was the site of the East Side Mission Hall (closed in 1973).

#### **4. East Side Mission Hall** (*number 4 on map*) *Researcher: S Hawkley*

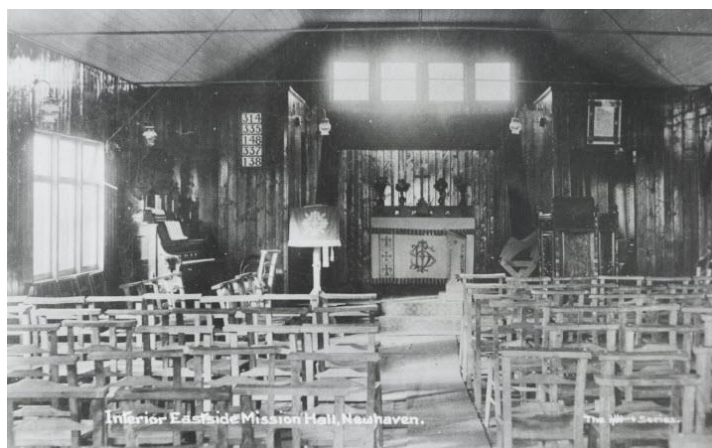
This site, now a public green space, was formerly occupied by the East Side Mission Hall. During WW1 it provided, with others, a place of entertainment and social gathering for the significant numbers of troops camped around the town. In 1932 it gained its own parish and was renamed St Wilfred's. After a special service of thanksgiving on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1973 it closed. Some items of equipment such as a small reading desk remain in St Michaels Church and its Harmonium is in the Newhaven Museum. The site was later acquired by Parker Pen and demolished to become the southern access route to the factory.

#### ***East Side Memories***

*"In the late 1950's, after Sunday Dinner, my sister and I went to the Mission Sunday School. We travelled from the top of Gibbon Road to the Mission by Bus."* (V)



*East Side Mission Hall (St Wilfrid's). Newhaven Historical Society A029-057*



*East Side Mission Hall 1930s Newhaven Historical Society A041-055 (002)*

## Coronation Celebrations in 1911 *Researcher: Dr J Flood*

To avoid clashing with the festivities on the western side of Newhaven, the East Side Coronation festivities were held on Saturday 24th June 1911. The coronation actually took place on 22 June. 200 children assembled at the Town Station gates and, headed by the Town Band, marched down Railway Road, Norton Terrace, and back to the Council School where tea was provided by the following ladies of the East Side Church Mission, Mesdames Carver, Barrow, Hilton, Legg, Nye, Martin, Renville, White, E. White, and Misses Amy, Heathfield and Strange.

### ***East Side Memories-Recollections of Graham Amy-*** The Amy Family on East Side

Graham Amy's grandfather, John Amy, ran a number of businesses on East Side. He had a building business and made his own concrete blocks. He built the castle houses in Norton Terrace. The family had three shops, including Amy's stores, a grocers and Post Office in Norton Road which was originally run by his grandmother and later by his Auntie Bess (Bussey). Graham's Uncle Mick, was a Church Army Captain at the East Side Mission, and this was where Graham was baptised.



*Amy's Stores, Railway Road c.1915. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A037-041*

**Directions.** Go along either Norton Terrace or Eastbridge Road which will lead you to Norton Road. Turn left, and at the end of Norton Road you will see **Sheffield Cottages and the East Side Recreation Ground.**

## 5. Sheffield Cottages and East Side Recreation Ground *(now called East Side Park)* (number 5 on map) *Researcher: C Manzi*

### Sheffield Cottages

Plans were drawn up in July 1891 for the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Sheffield -Berkeley Digby George (MP). The 10 cottages were unusual because of the extra-large front gardens which face the recreation ground. It is rumoured that the cottages were originally planned for the Earl's pig farmers, however the 1901 census reveals that none of the residents at that time were pig farmers, in fact they worked at the docks and railway. Although they may have also kept pigs. Further research revealed that over 35 years, four of the residents had the same name as the families from the 1901 census.



*Sheffield Cottages, Photo: C Joslin 2023*

### East Side Recreation Ground *Researchers: Dr J Flood and C Manzi*

This ground was gifted to the people of East Side by the Earl of Sheffield. It was officially opened by Councillor JS Corbett on Whit Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 1924.

Festivities started at 10:30am with a cricket match between men and women. At 2pm a procession of East Side Children, headed by the Band of the British Legion, proceeded from the Railway Inn along Railway Road to the recreation ground. This was followed by races for boys and girls.

From 6pm there were adult activities including: Tug of War matches, a Ladies Balloon Race, a 3 ½ mile walking race and 2 mile running race.

At 7:15pm there was a grand display by the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR).

In the evening there was dancing to music from the Band of the British Legion and throughout the day refreshments were available at “moderate prices”.



*Men v Women cricket match East Side Recreation Ground opening 9.6.1924  
Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A009-093*



*Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) Display at the opening of East Side Recreation Ground 9.6.1924  
Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A009-095*

**Directions.** Turn back into Norton Road and head west towards Clifton Road/Transit Road, cross over the road and follow the signs for **Newhaven Harbour Station.**

## **6 Newhaven Harbour Station.** *(number 6 on map) Researcher: B Hitchen*

Newhaven Harbour Station, opened on 8 December 1847 to serve the Cross-Channel service. The station backed on to the London and Paris hotel, which incorporated the station booking office and HM customs.

Because the Newhaven to Dieppe service was tidal, it meant that the train timetables varied each day to accommodate the arrival of the Boat Train. In the 1870s- 80s the London Brighton and South Coast Railway created a scheme which included filling in the entrance to Mill Creek (just south of the Harbour Station) and moving the station South by just 200m.

When the new Wharf Station opened in 1886. The platforms at the original Harbour Station remained open for trains to Seaford and for the London and Paris Hotel.

**CA** If you go up the steps of the railway bridge and look south and to the right, you will see the former site of **Newhaven Wharf Station**, this was demolished and replaced with a new ferry terminal and station in 1973. It was renamed **Newhaven Marine** in 1984.



*Newhaven Harbour and hotel Station 1930s Newhaven Historical Society A029-057*

### ***East Side Memories***

*“In the 1960’s I used to go to the Harbour Train Station Office to pay my Nan’s rent for the Railway House she lived in on Beach Road” (V)*

***East Side Memories- Barb and Tina- Shades/ The Harbour Tavern.*** Researcher: Dr J Flood

For 33 years, from 1962, Barb and Tina's parents, Danny and Lil Lynch, used to run the Harbour Tavern, previously known as Shades. The tavern stood on the platform of Newhaven Harbour Station and got its original name because it was in the shade of the London and Paris Hotel. In fact, the pub's cellar used to be the stables for the hotel.

Barb and Tina remember: *"A Ship would come in and there'd be nobody in the bar and all of a sudden whoosh, it looked like the United Nations. Honestly, you didn't know what was going to happen from one minute to the next and it was all nationalities. The Port was brilliant."*

The Lynches also had two kiosks at the Harbour Station, one on each platform, and Lil used to go down and open them up at 5am, sometimes earlier. It was a real family affair. Barb and Tina remember how if anything happened, their parents would phone them up and say: *"You better come down because the ferry's coming in really late"*. They would go down and open the buffets up - *"We used to drop everything because the passengers always had to be cared for"*.

Barb and Tina remember the Port being full of life. There would be Blue Star boats coming in with steaks from Argentina, boats from Jersey with new potatoes, and various boats carrying tomatoes, peaches, strawberries and bananas.



*Shades (left) Newhaven Harbour Station Newhaven Historical Society- Album-25-036*



*Newhaven Harbour Station and Harbour Tavern (on the right) 1980s Newhaven Historical Society A028-050*

## 7 The London and Paris Hotel (*number 7 on map*)

*Researchers: M Reeves, S Reeves.*

Built in 1847/48 on East Quay near the ferry terminal, the hotel was a stopping-off point for travellers from London before boarding the ferry to Dieppe where they caught the train to Paris. Travellers stayed over if the sea was rough or the tides were not suitable for ferry departures. There were 72 rooms and a large dance floor for 200 people.

In 1860, one traveller recorded that: “we found the people not the most civil ...the sheets of our bed were unquestionably damp ... [and] the refreshments were very so-so”. However, “the charges were extremely moderate”. (1)

In 1867, it was reported that an excellent cold supper provided by the steward on board the steamer was “far superior” to that served in the hotel! (2)

### **The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo**

The hotel became famous for being frequented by Charles Wells- known as “The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo”. In 1891, he used cash to break the “bank” (casino) 12 times in 11 hours! The song was written about him the year after and became a music-hall favourite. He made the hotel his home in the 1890s but was asked to leave on account of the riotous parties he gave. (3)

### **The London and Parish Hotel in World War 2**

In WW2 the hotel served as the naval headquarters HMS Aggressive. The building was bombed by the Luftwaffe in 1942 sustaining damage to the marine offices at its southern end. Further damage to the building occurred when a barge loaded with ammunition collided with a Mine along the West Beach in 1944 causing a massive explosion which was felt as far away as Lewes. The London-Paris survived to be used for offices post-war and but was demolished in 1957-58 to make way for the roll-on-roll-off ferry. (4)

Sources:

1. Henry Atsbury Leveson “The Hunting Grounds of The Old World” 1860
2. John Arthur, The Paris Way. 1867 p37
3. Robin Quinn “The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo”
4. Laurie Stonehouse “East Quay: London Paris Hotel c1900 and 1942



*London and Paris Hotel c. 1911. Newhaven Historical Society collection ref: A067-037*





*London and Paris Hotel bomb damage 23.3.1942 A025-034*

## **8 Newhaven Marine Station** (*number 8 on map*) *Researchers Dr J Flood and B Hitchen*

If you stand on the bridge at **Newhaven Harbour Station** and look south you will be able to see more trainlines- you can see that they divide into two- one goes towards Seaford (east) and the other towards the docks (south-west) and the former site of **Newhaven Marine Station**.

When the station opened on 17<sup>th</sup> May 1886 it was known as the **Wharf Station**. It also became known as the Continental or Boat Train station, before being renamed **Newhaven Marine** on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1984.

The last passenger service stopping at Newhaven Marine was in **August 2006**, however there was a daily 'ghost' train, which arrived every evening without any passengers to ensure the station could remain officially open. The station was eventually closed in 2020 and demolished.

Because the original station was built over mud, it was built of wood (apart from the chimneys), supported by baulks driven deep into the mud. The station incorporated the Continental department, booking, telegraph and money exchange offices, together with a large customs baggage examining room, a spacious waiting room and an ornamental buffet with "beautiful fully fitted up dining rooms". Outside, over the platform and the track was a glass and zinc roof supported by substantial iron columns.

## Fire at Newhaven Wharf (Marine) Station

Shortly after 1pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November 1887, fire broke out at Newhaven Wharf Station (later Newhaven Marine Station). The harbour and town's manual fire engines were quickly on the scene, but a strong north-east wind put other buildings at risk, the Brighton railway steam fire engine was called to fight the growing fire.

Newspapers reported how the fire drew a crowd of around 3,000, so when the glass canopy over the platform gave way a number of people got hurt. The injured were taken to the London and Paris Hotel.

By 5pm the fire was under control. The damage was covered by insurance and Continental traffic was redirected back to the original Harbour Station, while the Wharf Station was being rebuilt.



*Newhaven Wharf Station c. late 1880's Newhaven Historical Society A001-005*

**Directions-** You may decide that you wish to finish the walk here. If so, return back to the main road (Transit Road) and turn left and back towards the way you came.

## **EXTENDED WALK – Mill Creek Oyster Ponds and The Newhaven Seaplane Site**

**Directions.** At Transit Road turn right (south), into Beach Road. When Beach Road veers to the left, you need to cross over the road and onto the grassed path area– follow the signs for the **England Coast Path**. Cross over the railway bridge and turn left, follow the path to the next bridge (here you get a good view of **Mill Creek**) - on your right will be an Industrial Estate and on your left is the former site of the **Oyster Ponds**.

### **9 Mill Creek Oyster Ponds** (*number 9 on map*) *Researcher: Dr C Pearce*

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area to your left at Mill Creek was salt marsh. Fishing boat owner Tom Holder built beds here for oysters to ‘fatten’ themselves with algae and plankton carried in by the tide. Around 150 fishing smacks delivered oysters to Newhaven after dredging them from the seabed, first from the mid-English Channel and then by the 1870s from off the Portuguese coast. The oysters were reshipped directly, or from the ponds, to international markets, especially to France, or sold locally. In 1865, that meant £80,000 profit a year (now £5 million) for Newhaven!

Sources: Sussex Advertiser: 10 July 1826; 14 Jan 1865; Memories of A.S. Payne and Memories of Peter Jupp (Newhaven Museum collection)

### **East Quayside-Newhaven’s Oyster ‘Gold Rush’**

*Author: Dr C Pearce*

On 7 March, 1850, the Shoreham column of the *Brighton Gazette* bragged that ‘Everyone who can, is purchasing smacks to dredge for oysters. The French coast is our present California; and no doubt many persons of judicious enterprise will amass a large amount of money working at these mines’.<sup>1</sup> Newhaven was slow to respond, but by 1873, the government reported that it had shipped more oysters than any other south coast port except Shoreham.<sup>2</sup> The oyster ponds of Mill Creek and Sleeper’s Hole stemmed from this ‘oyster gold rush.’

Newhaven buzzed with boats delivering their catch; the papers claimed that between 150 to 200 boats crowded the harbour.<sup>3</sup> However, by 1876, Newhaven fishermen had to sail as far

away as Portugal to find a catch. The British government, aware of over-fishing on the British coast, declared closed seasons for spawning as well as granting 'portions of the foreshore to private individuals for the purpose of breeding and feeding oysters'.<sup>4</sup>

Newhaven's Holder family proved to be 'persons of judicious enterprise,' taking advantage of the oyster 'gold rush.' A.S. Payne and Peter Jupp remembered that they obtained grants to establish oyster ponds at Mill Creek and Sleepers Hole, as well as operating 17 fishing smacks.<sup>5</sup> The Holders located the beds where the high tide would wash over the oysters, bringing in food such as algae and plankton for them to 'fatten'. The Mill Creek ponds, on the east side of the river, were close enough to unload oysters into the beds, and then to re-harvest them for shipment to international markets.<sup>6</sup> Thomas Holder didn't obtain a lease for Sleeper's Hole, on the west side of the river, until 1877, at the end of the oyster gold rush.<sup>7</sup> Over-fishing took its toll, and water pollution and disease caused consumers to be wary of oysters 'fattened' in the ponds. As Payne opined, the oyster fishery became 'a forgotten fragment of Newhaven history.'<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Brighton Gazette*, 7 March 1850, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary Papers, *Return of All Fish Exported from Ports of the United Kingdom 1873*.

<sup>3</sup> *Sussex Advertiser and Brighton Gazette*, 1850-59; SA, 23 Feb 1864.

<sup>4</sup> Parliamentary Papers, *Select Committee on Oyster Fisheries*, 1876

<sup>5</sup> Newhaven Museum, *Memories of A.S. Payne*.

<sup>6</sup> Newhaven Museum, Newhaven harbour map, surveyed by Staff Commander W.E. Archdeacon, RN, 1887.

<sup>7</sup> *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 26 June 1877.

<sup>8</sup> Payne; Jupp. Neither one suggested the reasons behind the decline, but noted the change in the fishery, although Payne claimed that the 'escallop' was 'more readily available.'

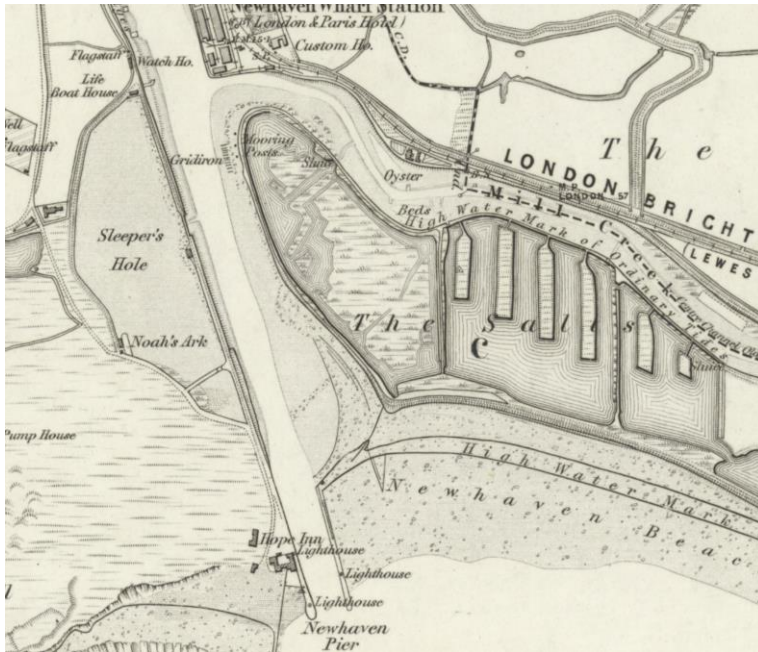


Figure 1 Oyster Beds shown in Mill Creek. Ordnance Survey Sussex Sheet LXXVIII, surveyed: 1873, Published: 1879 <https://maps.nls.uk/view/102347773> Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

**Directions.** Follow the path that runs along Mill Creek and this will lead you to the Beach. When you get to the beach, look east (upper part of the beach) for an information board where the Newhaven Sea Plane site was situated.

## 10. Newhaven Seaplane Site (number 10 on map) Researcher Dr J Flood

In January 1917, during the First World War, Germany declared unrestricted submarine warfare with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February. At that time Newhaven was a major supply port for the Western Front so it was important that the ships carrying stores and munitions were protected from submarine attack, so for 2 years from May 1917, a Seaplane Station operated from Newhaven.

The concrete hardstanding you can see on the beach formed the base of a double fronted Seaplane Shed. The metal runners were for the shed doors. To find out more about the Seaplane Station and the people who worked there, have a look at the red Poppy Trail information panel.

### CA

Have a look at the photos on the information panel, how did observers guide their pilots?



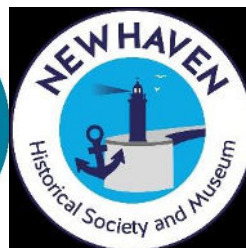
*Aerial view of Newhaven Seaplane Station c. 1918. Newhaven Historical Society Folder 33.1.1*

**Directions- Getting back** – you can either return following the same route you came or you can go along McKinley Way which will bring you to the A259, turn left at the Industrial Estate at Avis Way and this will bring you back to the Marine Workshops.

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

## 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/>