

Discover HAYLING & LANGSTONE

The gateway to Hayling



Langstone Village - the waterfront

The Waterfront

The picturesque, historic core of Langstone lies in the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and was designated a Conservation Area in 1975. It attracts walkers, cyclists, sailors, birdwatchers and artists, and those simply wishing to visit one of its two Grade Two Listed pubs, the Royal Oak and the Ship Inn.



The Ship Inn

Before the first road bridge was built between Hayling and Langstone, travellers crossed the water by ferry or by the ancient Wadeway, which is still visible from the bottom of Langstone High Street at low tide. This old bridleway was passable for a few hours each day, but was severed by a navigable cut when the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal was constructed. As a result a toll-bridge was built, opening in 1824, to be replaced by the present Langstone Bridge in 1956. However, the toll charges were not abolished until 1960

The 18th century former corn mill, near The Royal Oak, was advertised in 1809 as having “two pairs of stones with machine for dressing, head and vanes new, in good repair with excellent storehouse adjacent”. It was described in 1824 as “all that windmill with messuage, storehouse, cow-house and bake-house”.



Flora Twort

In the 1930s the mill was acquired by Flora Twort (1893-1985), the Petersfield artist and friend of Neville Shute. The mill tower was made habitable with the help of Ernst Freud RIBA, son of Sigmund Freud. After the last War Flora sold the mill but kept the watermill, which had been bequeathed to her and still remains in her family's ownership.

The mill pond is fed by the Lymbourne stream, and this waterfowl haven has recently become a favourite roosting area for up to thirty Little Egrets. From here there is a view of the surviving gateway tower of Warblington Castle, built by Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, who was executed by her cousin Henry VIII in 1541. What you see now is all that remains after the Parliamentarians had a go at the castle during the Civil War.



Warblington Castle gatehouse tower

Near the mill lie the remains of the ‘Langstone’, built by Apps of Emsworth in 1900 and in use until 1939. It was one of several barges worked by the Little family, who amongst other things were sand and gravel extractors, unloading at Langstone Quay. The Littles also owned the barge ‘Gladys’ and for many years collected the old Langstone Bridge tolls.

In 1789 Thomas Downer sought “a lycence to lett the Red Lyon at Langstone”. It's not known when it was renamed ‘The Royal Oak’ but in 1651, after the Battle of Worcester, Charles II visited Racton Manor and reputedly sent two friends to Langstone to look for a boat to take him to France. They were unsuccessful but we are told they enjoyed a dish of oysters at Langstone's only inn.



The barge 'Gladys'

There was a strong Roman Catholic presence in Langstone by the early 18th century. There is evidence of a clandestine chapel in the upper storey of 18 Langstone High Street, which has a barrel-vaulted ceiling and a trinity of patterned, plaster lozenges on one wall.



Little Egrets on the shoreline at Langstone

The Winkle Market (No.24) was once a “two-stall stable with loft over”. When it was bought in 1899 by Henry Russell, an oyster merchant, it was used for storing and grading shellfish. Noel Pycroft of Hayling used to gather winkles from Mill Rythe in the early 1940s and sell them to Russell’s sons. The shellfish were transported to Langstone Station on a trolley and sent to London. The Winkle Market became a private house in 1954 and was later extended.



The Coastguard watch tower

The Green Cottage, so-called because of its mini-green by the waterside, has a core of yellowish stone, unpainted at the rear. This may have come from the ruined Warblington Castle. There is also a well in the garden. The Coastguard Station, near the Ship Inn, was built by the Admiralty in the early 1860s and sold in 1924. The house attached to the watch tower was built in 1925. Most of the nine cottages still have their brick and slate former earth closets and coal sheds, while the old communal wash-house is in the garden of The Look-Out.



Winkle Market, No. 24 High Street circa 1952, and now

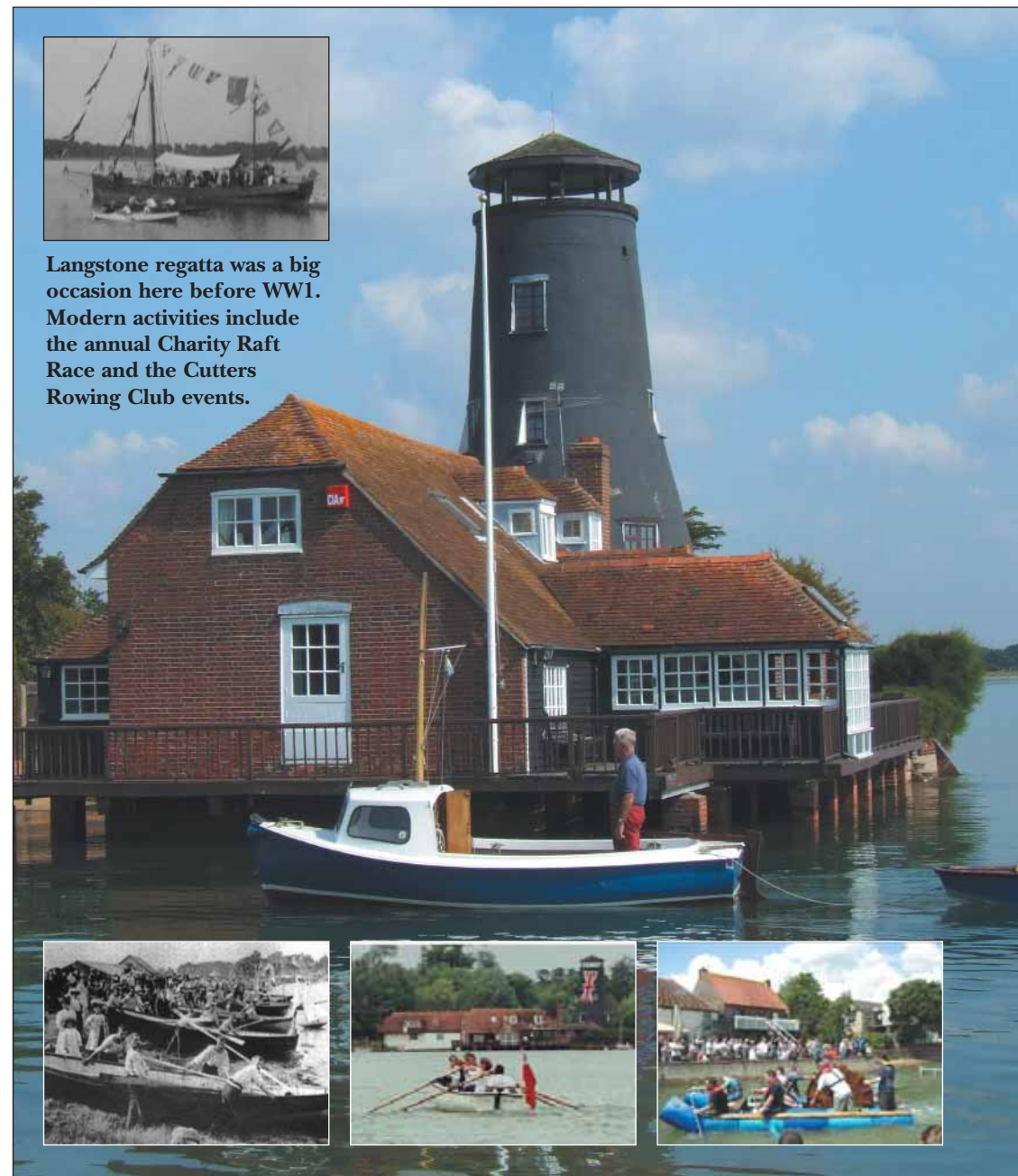


*Below: The Ancient Wadeway to Hayling
Right: The Green Cottage
Bottom right: The old Coastguard pump*

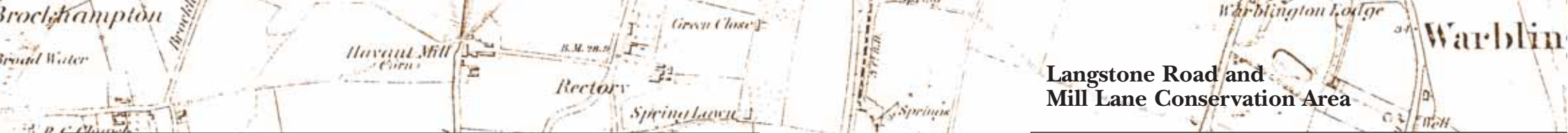


The well was in the grounds of No.1, the Chief Officer's house, the pump being embellished with the Admiralty anchor. Miss Ivy Spencer, daughter of the last Chief Officer, died in 2003 at the grand age of 103 years.

The Ship Inn, next to the Langstone quay, was sold in 1858 as “an excellent Malting House, very large, well-built and well situated for trade”. The first landlord was Ambrose Jones, born at Hayling Island in 1822. The census of 1861 shows him as a “beer retailer and coal meter” living in Langstone. In 1864 he was granted a licence for the Ship Inn, due to “the desirability of providing an additional licensed premises, the suitability of the premises and the respectability of the applicant.”



Langstone regatta was a big occasion here before WWI. Modern activities include the annual Charity Raft Race and the Cutters Rowing Club events.



Langstone Road and Mill Lane Conservation Area



Langstone aerial photograph: CJB Photography

Langstone Manor, No.40 Langstone Road, was originally named Langstone Cottage and had a rustic wooden balcony, since replaced. It was built c.1904 for Harry Clarke, whose father Samuel, of Homewell House Havant, was a well-known brewer and builder. Langstone Wharf was built in 1908 by the Little family using Bursledon bricks, which they brought here by barge. Langstone Dairy (No.32) lies next to the Wayfarers' Walk and the Solent Way long-distance footpaths.

The railway station was on the west side of Langstone Road. The pair of clapboard cottages opposite were built about 1800 and were later lived in by the level-crossing keepers.

Before it was bisected by Langstone Road, the village High Street was linked to what is now Mill Lane Conservation Area. At the far end of Mill Lane there are still signs of a former mill, which had ceased operating by 1914 and was demolished in 1936. This was known as Langstone Mill or South Mill. In 1849 it was advertised as:

Flint House, at the entrance to Mill Lane, was built in the early 1880s by William S Gloyne, a Havant brewer. It was originally called Glynfield, probably a corruption of Gloyne's Field. Flint House was occupied by the WRNS during WW2. To the north across the field is 'Southmere', built for William Clarke in the early 1890s. The 1901 census has him as a miller. The barn has '1858' on one of the rafters, the year that the farm was bought by John Bridger Clarke, William's grandfather.

"A most substantially erected six-storey water corn mill, a few years since rebuilt at a cost of upwards of £7,000."

The mill had four pairs of stones and "excellent waterwheels". The estate included 52 acres of farmland and also had "valuable rights of common attached". The old mill house, now called West Mill, was enganged in the 1970s, and enjoys views of Langstone Harbour and across to the Isle of Wight.



Below: Langstone Manor
Left: Langstone or South Mill



Right: Flint House
Centre right: 'The railway cottages'
Far right: Langstone Station circa 1953



Langstone High Street



Langstone Lodge

Langstone Lodge (c.1875) at the top of the High Street, and now minus its verandah, was one of three houses to be built along Langstone Road by the family of George Robert Mountain, Rector of Havant from 1826 to 1846. The other two houses were Woodfield (c.1830), situated at the top of Langstone Road, and Langbrook, which was built circa 1850 by Mrs Mountain and used as a 'Wrennery' in WW2. Langbrook was demolished in 1964 and the name given to the Langbrook Close development.

Frederick Furniss (1825 - 1891) was the contractor for the construction of the Hayling Billy Branch Line, which was built between 1863 and 1867.



He married his second wife, Septima Marter, at Greenwich in 1863 and brought her to live at Langstone Villa, now the site of 'The Mews'. Their five children were all born in Langstone and baptised at South Hayling. Among the goods auctioned when the family left Langstone in 1871 were "a billiard table, a fire-proof safe, an 8 horse portable steam engine by Fox, Walker & Co., a mail phaeton, a vis-a-vis phaeton, a pony cart, two double-barrelled breech-loading guns, one single and one double muzzle-loading gun, a duck gun, a handsome Alderney cow-with-calf, a fat pig and 3 ricks of meadow hay".

Langstone Towers, which is part Victorian and part Georgian, is now reduced in size, but in WW1 was used as an auxiliary military hospital, treating 1,430 patients. In WW2 Airspeed Ltd, Neville Shute's company, used the house and built aeroplane parts in the grounds. Minimodels Ltd, of New Lane, Leigh Park, made toys there in the 1950s but the site is now occupied by The Saltings.

The chapel of St Nicholas, attached to Langstone Towers, was built in 1869 by Henry W Jeans in memory of his wife's cousin, Thomas Temple Silver, Henry taught mathematics at Portsmouth Naval College and wrote "Handbook for the Stars" in 1848, which accounts



Langstone Towers

for the cupola on the top of Langstone Towers. Henry was a Churchwarden at St Faith's in Havant. In 1881 his obituary stated that "poverty was almost unknown in the village near his house".

In 2002 the chapel roof was re-laid using the original tiles; the wooden pegs were replaced with aluminium ones. At the same time St Faith's Church obtained title to the Chapel via a Statutory Declaration. Communion services are held at the chapel on the first Sunday of the month and it is used for village coffee mornings.

The chapel of St Nicholas



In 1763 five of the thatched cottages in the High Street were insured with the Sun Fire Office and an original fire mark can be seen on number 14 (see right). The tenants were a mariner, sawyer, tile maker, bricklayer and brickmaker. There are later fire marks at Nos 8 and 10. Note the flood-boards at the cottages.



14 Langstone High Street



No. 15 was originally a cow-house and was only half the present size. There were several mid-Victorian farm buildings at the back, which were associated with the 19 acres of land which belonged to Langstone Farmhouse. The barn at the back of No. 14 is the only farm building left.



Flood-board on front doorway

The farmhouse is built of Rowlands Castle bricks and can be seen from the footpath through the fields.

Langstone Farm House circa 1905



15 Langstone High Street



Langstone High Street circa 1910

Trade & Transport

In the 16th century woad and other merchandise from Exeter, Lyme Regis and elsewhere, were being landed at Langstone. Circa 1580, Southampton Customs put a stop to this practice and 23 local men petitioned the Bishop of Winchester, stating that this was causing great hardship to the clothiers of Havant and those who had invested in building storehouses for the reception of the goods.



“...fourty shippes... may Ryde Laden aflote at Lowe water within one myle of Langston Keye”.

Woad, used as a blue dye, had been landed at Langstone “time out of memory and should anyone say that Langstone is but a creek we can prove that fourty shippes or upwards may Ryde Laden aflote at Lowe water within one myle of Langston Keye”.



Isatis tinctoria - woad, also known as *glastum* or dyers' woad

The petitioners stated that the Quay could accommodate ships as large as any that arrived at Southampton and that if trade were restored, they would seize any illegally landed goods for Her Majesty's use.

(Southampton Archives
Ref: SC 15/36)

Handwritten petition text in Old English script, including phrases like 'The Inhabitants of the County of Havant' and 'the place aforesaid into the Haven of Langston'.

By 1817 Langstone was described as having 3 mills, 12 houses and a public-house; coal was imported from Newcastle and Sunderland. In 1865 the Havant & Hayling Coal Company Ltd advertised the arrival of a cargo of coal in the Balmoral (320 tons burden) with prices alongside Langstone Quay 23s per ton, or delivered in Havant 24s. “The Hayling Railway now being open to Langstone Quay offers facilities to merchants and others situate on the Portsmouth direct line, to get a first class sea-borne coal at a price they have hitherto been obliged to pay for inland coal, the former being admitted of a far superior character to the latter”.



The Branch Line from Havant to Hayling was opened as far as Langstone in 1865. It was completed in 1867 and finally closed in 1963. The railway bridge across the water (west of the present road bridge) was demolished in 1973 and the piles are still visible.

Top: Kingfisher at the Millpond
Centre: Emperor Dragonfly
Bottom: Southern Marsh Orchid



The residential area lies between the Langbrook and the Lymbourne streams and is well served by ancient rural footpaths. South Moor, lying to the west of the Langbrook, is an area of marshy coastal grassland, which has provided rough grazing for cattle and wintering wildfowl for centuries. This area also supports a thriving colony of Southern Marsh orchids.

Langstone's Roman Villa

In 1923 Walter Owen Adames of Spes Bona, in Langstone Avenue, began to unearth the remains of an extensive Roman villa in the garden of his Edwardian house. The villa lay between the old Roman road through Havant and the head of the harbour. Artefacts found at two levels indicated prolonged occupation of the site. At a depth of one to two feet, lay a Roman hypocaust within a semi-circular stone wall and a frigidarium with a red-tiled floor and tile-lined drain. At a lower level there were scrapers, arrowheads, stone beads and animal bones. The hundreds of finds included oyster, winkle and cockle shells, pottery sherds, tiles, painted Roman plaster, Purbeck marble, Roman glass, and bronze ornaments.



The coins dated from circa 150 BC to 350 AD. Some of the finds are held at Brighton and Portsmouth City museums.



Top: Walter Adames poses with members of his family by the excavation of the villa's hypocaust system.

Left: Coin of Carausius, [photo: Andreus Pangeri, www.romancoins.info]

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