

Patron: Lord Cobbold DL
Ivry, Lady Freyberg

THE LIFEBOAT INN, SHINGLE STREET

Although the Tolly Cobbold estate once numbered over 300 pubs, only one can claim to have been built in the brewery yard and to have been destroyed by friendly fire!

The Trust was saddened recently to hear of the death of Alec Burwood who died last month after a short illness. Alec had devoted enormous time and energy to discovering and recording the history of Shingle Street, a remote seaside hamlet on the east coast of Suffolk. With Sarah Margittai he published their findings in a most comprehensive book "*Cosy in the Winter*", a copy of which he kindly gave to the Trust. He would have liked us to have been more help but the truth is we learned much more from him than he did from us.

Prior to the existence of the Lifeboat Inn the hostelry in Shingle Street was probably the "*Old Beach House*" patronised by Margaret Catchpole's brother in Richard Cobbold's eponymous Victorian best-seller, together with the teams of workmen building the Martello towers against the very real risk of a Napoleonic invasion.

About 1810 the "*Old Beach House*", built largely of driftwood, was replaced by a pre-fabricated two-storey structure which had been put together in the yard at the Cliff Brewery and subsequently shipped in sections by barge to Shingle Street, for re-erection. This is perfectly possible, though no proof exists, as the shingle beach at that time was such that passing barge masters are known to have called there for refreshment.



The Lifeboat Inn from the beach

November 2017

COSY IN THE WINTER!



A HISTORY OF SHINGLE STREET

by
SARAH MARGITTAI
and
ALEC BURWOOD

Cosy in the Winter

The Inn prospered for a while in the middle of the 19th century drawing its trade from the growth of the Coprolite industry and from its fashionable position enjoyed by sea bathers and holiday makers. Shingle Street experienced a large influx of visitors each year over the Whit Monday weekend and local shopkeepers from Alderton and Hollesley set up stalls outside the Lifeboat in order to capture some of its flourishing trade but sadly it was not to last.



The Lifeboat Inn from inland

The village fell from favour between the wars and not long into the second World War the beach was heavily mined for fear it would be chosen as the invasion landing site. Worse was to come. On 18th June 1940 the order to evacuate came and Shinglestreeters had only 48 hours in which to pack their possessions and leave. They were not allowed back to collect furniture much of which was vandalised. Their homes were requisitioned by the War Department and the site was chosen for experimental bombing which took place in the spring of 1943 with the Lifeboat Inn as the principal target. Barnes Wallace is said to have worked on the project. Needless to say, the Inn and most of the cottages were destroyed. The War Department thought that the area was so heavily mined that it could never be re-inhabited. Many villagers thought otherwise and some cottages have been returned to domestic use but all that remains of the Lifeboat Inn is the over-grown brick foundations on which the sectional building had been erected more than 200 years ago.