

THE SOUTHWOLD SAILORS' READING ROOM

NEWSLETTER 2017-18

Dear Member,

Welcome to our fifth Members' newsletter.

We are delighted to report that 2017 has been another exciting and event filled year for The Southwold Sailors' Reading Room (SSRR). There have been numerous fundraisers, a visit from former Officer Cadets, a re-enactment of the Battle of Sole Bay (in miniature) and an Art Competition for children, hosted as part of The Southwold Arts Festival in June.

Membership stands at 270, up from last year, and the finances are in good order, due in part to a very generous legacy of £10,000, left by Peter 'Peely' Palmer, who died in January.



Peely Palmer 1932 – 2017

Peely was a regular fixture on East Cliff, looking in at The SSRR each morning, and he'll not be forgotten. Amongst the many other generous donations we received, Suffolk County Councillor Michael Ladd made a most useful contribution of £750, from his Locality Allowance, for upgrading the heating in The Sailors' Reading Room.

The Southwold & District Freshwater Angling Preservation Society donated £400; Mr & Mrs Baker (SSRR members) sent £50 to mark their Golden Wedding, and hearty congratulations were duly returned. Poet and prolific, award winning author Garry Kilworth donated a copy of his recent

book *Alchemy in Reverse*, which features a poem about The SSRR. The book can be found in The SSRR Library, and the poem is on our website: www.southwoldsailorsreadingroom.co.uk

In April Patrick Pascall and his sister Pam Stewart bequeathed the historic model yawl 'Ida', made for the family in 1920, and a fine example of the model boats, carved by Southwold's long-shore fishermen, to supplement their income when they were unable to get off the beach to cast their nets.



'Ida' - measuring 20" bow to stern - was very fast, and by 1930 she had won many burgees at the Southwold Model Yacht pond. 'Ida' has been beautifully restored and will take pride of place in The SSRR together with archive photos and 'Black Joke', a similar model of the era.

There have been numerous events during 2017. On 28th May the infamous Battle of Sole Bay was fought again in the confines of The Snooker Room.



A table-top re-enactment of the naval engagement between the Dutch and English fleets in May 1672, 3 miles off Southwold, was specially created for The SSRR by Simon MacDowall and his superb

team from the Historical Games Society, who made all the highly detailed, miniature models (1: 2400) of the English, French and Dutch warships. Simon MacDowall provided a very well informed and compelling commentary throughout the day.



This fascinating and unusual event attracted many Bank Holiday visitors to The SSRR, a large number for the first time. A retiring collection raised £160. An article by Simon MacDowall, with all the background history and details of the battle strategies, can be seen on The SSRR Website.

On 21 June, the SSRR hosted a visit from the Old Worcester's Yacht Club, whose members are former officer cadets of the Thames nautical training ship, HMS Worcester. Doug Pope made the visitors very welcome and they donated nautical books to The SSRR Library as well as £100.

Vince Austin arranged another successful Children's Art Competition this year. Entries were on display in The SSRR during the Southwold Arts Festival week, June 24th - 1st July. Many local children submitted work in five categories, and Lady Elizabeth Dales, Chair of The Southwold Decorative and Fine Arts Society, presented the prizes, all of which were donated by the Society. A list of the prizewinners is available on the Website.

On 13th July Bridget Denny organised a cake stall in Southwold Market Place, raising £311 for The SSRR and selling £31 worth of branded merchandise. Thanks to all who donated a great variety of cakes, and assisted Bridget on the day.

On 28th August Ian Denney's Bank Holiday Tombola raised £174. Thanks to Ian for his hard work, and to all who donated prizes and took part in the event. NB: Prizes for next year's Tombola can be given to Ian Denney in advance at the Southwold Lifeboat shop from early summer.

During the year Lenny Townsend stepped down as a Committee Member. We are very grateful to Lenny for all he has done for the SSRR.

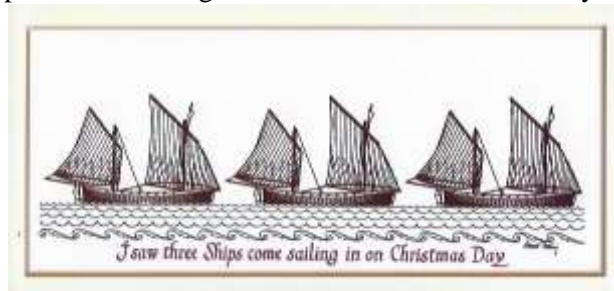
Special thanks must also go to Vince Austin, who created the Members' Newsletter (and has

compiled it ever since) and for the many valuable contributions he has made to the SSRR over the years. Vince steps down from the Committee at the next AGM.

We welcomed Bob Jellicoe as Hon. Archivist. Bob has an extensive knowledge of Southwold's maritime history and has just completed a book about local fishermen, boat builders and The SSRR. We also welcomed Tom Bright as a Director. The Wass Cup for *'the person who has gone the extra mile for the SSRR during the year'* was awarded to our Chairman, Graham Denny at this year's AGM.

Looking ahead, major re-decoration and re-hanging works will take place next month, co-ordinated by Stephen Wells. Both rooms will be closed from Monday 8th January to Monday 19th February. Thanks also to Bill Hancock, who has given us eight matching armchairs to replace the older furniture; 'Tink's Chair' will also be re-upholstered, ready for the new season.

SSRR Christmas cards, featuring Nancie Pelling's beautiful Three Ships design are for sale at The Southwold Arts Centre (formerly St Edmund's Hall) in Cumberland Road, Southwold. £2.50 for a pack of 5. We regret there is no mail-order facility.



Finally, could you help us with the administration? In order to reduce mailing costs and use of paper we'd like to begin sending out everything to all our Members by e-mail, next year. Please ensure that we have your e-mail details. Our e-mail address is: **info@southwoldsailorsreadingroom.co.uk**

Also if you would like to take a more active role in the future of The SSRR, either by serving on our Committee or e.g. managing our Website, your help is valuable and will be most appreciated. Please contact us by e-mail.

We look forward to seeing as many Members as possible at the 2018 AGM on Thursday 26th April, at Southwold Town Hall, beginning at 7pm.

On behalf of us all on East Cliff we wish you a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2018.

Vincent Austin and Laurence Vulliamy

