

## Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society Annual Report to LTC Assembly 2021

At last year's Annual Assembly in March, we showed a portrait of Jack Rose painted in oils by Bill Robertson of Oulton because we were looking for a suitable public place to display it - see attachment.

Jack was a well-known Lowestoft character who popularised the history of our town with his slideshow talks, postcard and picture collections, books and videos. He was persuaded by our first Chairman John Holmes to become our President in 1990 with his own name in front of 'Old Lowestoft Society' which he was about to retire from after years of hard work running his society with his pal Wally Holden.

In his 'retirement' Jack had ten years as our President, attending monthly meetings and even running the Pre Christmas slideshow for us for several years as John subsequently did himself and then later, me!

Like so many events and promising socials planned for 2020, we have sadly had no monthly meetings due to the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus pandemic, a situation likely to continue for a while yet.

In January 2020 we were treated by the Lowestoft Moviemakers group to our annual visit to their mini cine studio theatre at Sparrow's Nest, always a pleasure, and in February, our last monthly evening at Trinity Methodist Church hall, where we remembered in passing the 20th anniversary of Jack's death.

Significant shows for events planned but postponed include the 75th anniversary of the end of the war at the Marina Theatre, the 80th anniversary of the Evacuation of Dunkirk with a plaque planned, and the 80th anniversary of the blitz - all may yet be held at a later suitable date.

A personal commemoration of the blitz and how it affected Lowestoft was led in the open air in Battery Green Road in September by Bob Collis, Vice-Chair and Andy Pearce, Treasurer. For the Heritage Open Days event in September, Ian Robb Secretary presented a display at 45 High Street. Society member Bert Collyer presented his personal comprehensive black and white photographic display of Old Lowestoft, at the Lowestoft Station Parcels Office exhibition centre accompanied by Bob Collis with his wartime aviation display.

Chair Chris. Brooks displayed the oil painting of Jack Rose at Bert's exhibition and it was agreed the portrait would be offered on loan for display at the Lowestoft Museum in Everitt's Park once it reopened.

The heritage plaques project with Lowestoft Town Council is still in abeyance and we hope things will improve to resume progress.

Chris Brooks has made it his business to promote the town on Facebook in his exercise walks during the past year for the benefit of those staying home or those moved to other parts who still like to keep in touch with their roots, also to offer short commentary on other people's posts on various pages.

Indeed Vice Chair Bob Collis is an administrator of the popular Views of Old Lowestoft Group Page in his personal capacity so it is a case of wheels within wheels!

Finally Chris was pleased to respond to a request from the council to produce a video input to a virtual celebration for Holocaust Memorial Day 2021 in which he focused on the theme of the Kindertransport Child Refugee programme in 1938/39 and its connection with Lowestoft. Officers and members of the Society are concerned about what will happen to local collections of historical worth that people wish to keep in the District now that there is no longer an active local Record Office archive to bequeath them to. They have joined with other concerned people to form a group with the object of setting up a Lowestoft Independent Archive.

Also of concern is the off-putting time, expense and difficulty for local people trying to access local records for their family research now sadly to be held, and we fear, unlikely to be consulted so often, in the new Record Office 'Hold' at Ipswich waterfront. We view the way this was achieved was all wrong, and will be disastrous for access to our local heritage. It is a complete reversal of the decentralised aims when a local branch of the Suffolk Record Office was first set up in Lowestoft.

Christopher J. Brooks,  
Chair,  
Jack Rose Old Lowestoft Society,  
20th February 2021.

