

# Folkestone Museum Story Mat



**Threads of Creativity....**



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# Introduction

Welcome to Folkestone Museum's story mat, an interactive and tactile mat designed to inspire creative thinking, storytelling and imagination!

The story mat can be used for a range of different audiences from pre-school and primary age children to people with disabilities, older people and those with dementia.

The mat is based on the rich heritage of Folkestone and its diverse communities. It's tactile and flexible to use. Each patch or symbol represents either an example of the history of Folkestone, an important building, event or community within the town and a full description of each patch is included within this guide (see page ??).

Some patches have pockets in which objects to inspire creative thinking or storytelling can be placed. The mat comes with a box in which there are a range of objects relating to the history of Folkestone. These can be placed in the pockets or on the mat to provide a starting point for story-telling or for children to find and describe in a hidden objects game. Alternatively, you can use objects of your own which relate to your class topic or groups' interests: it's up to you!

The story mat has been created in partnership with, and the active involvement of, the Nepalese Community (*Cheriton Stitch & Chat*), Age UK, Folkestone Mind, Friends of Folkestone Museum and local schoolchildren as part of the Folkestone HEART National Lottery Heritage Fund Project. It was designed and sewn by Jenny Langley, a tapestry and needlework specialist, in consultation with people from Folkestone.



# Simple notes for Story Mat

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- 42 Martello Tower No3, Napoleonic defence tower
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- 44 Horsetails grow on the clay soils of the Warren
- 45 Smuggler: a porter or 'flasker' carrying 2 kegs away from the beach
- 46 Hoy Boat (19th century heavy duty freight boat)
- 47 Wavy Sea pocket

# Detailed notes for Story Mat

## **1 Folkestone White Horse, Cheriton Hill. Designed by Charlie Newington and built by the Gurkhas**

The giant White Horse hill figure above the Channel Tunnel entrance was constructed in 2003 to mark the Millennium, with the help of soldiers from the Royal Gurkha Rifles. This dramatic modern interpretation of the Invicta White Horse – the symbol of the county of Kent – is now writ large in this uniquely British traditional folk art form, and greets millions of visitors to and from the Continent. It has since also become a proud icon for the south-east Kent area and was adopted by Folkestone and Shepway District Council as the authority's logo.

Located on private North Down land on a Site of Special Scientific interest (SSSI), every consideration needed to be taken to preserve the delicate upland. A team of volunteers and army engineers laboured over the construction under the direction of the artist Charles Newington.

Construction of the horse began in September 2002. The work to build the horse was completed entirely by hand. Directed from afar by the artist via radio, a team of volunteers staked out a second canvas template of the horse, and following this, shallow trenches were then dug into the topsoil, 12–24 inches (30–60cm) wide. These trenches were then filled with limestone slabs. The entire figure is approximately 90 metres long, measured from the front to the rear hoof.

Over two weeks in May 2003 a team of volunteers including locally based Gurkha soldiers transported, cut and positioned limestone slabs in the trenches, fixing them in place with pins. The limestone laying phase of the construction was completed in early June 2003. In June 2004 "The Friends of the Folkestone White Horse" was formed, to promote the landmark and look after the site, which requires periodic light weeding. A time capsule was buried on the site on 18 June 2004.

## **2 Gurkha Royal Rifles with Gurkha kukri swords and crown**

The pocket to the top left of the mat, to be near Shorncliffe Barracks and the White Horse, represents The Royal Gurkha Rifles (RGR) who have been based at Sir John Moore Barracks, Shorncliffe since 2001. They are a rifle regiment of the British Army, forming part of the Brigade of Gurkhas. RGR soldiers are recruited from Nepal, which is neither a dependent territory of the UK nor a member of the Commonwealth. The regiment's motto is '*Better to die than to be a coward*'.

On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the RGR, who are based at Shorncliffe, paraded through Folkestone to the Leas. Near to the Leas Cliff Hall they were greeted by the town mayor, Janet Andrews who presented them with the freedom of the town. This is a ceremonial honour, which the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion were given some years ago.

There is now a thriving Nepalese community in Folkestone and they have been involved in the creation of this mat. The pocket on the mat is made with authentic

Gurkha uniform fabric and has quite a story behind it. Teela, who is part of the *Stitch and Chat* group has relatives in Nepal who were part of the Gurkhas. She contacted them and they sent her this from a uniform's trousers. Sadly, we don't know whose trousers they came from.

### **3 Folkestone was founded by its fishing industry; hence this Town Emblem. It was also a Cinque Port**

The emblem of Folkestone can be found in many locations around the town, including at the base of lampposts and on the weathervane of the Leas Bandstand. At the top there is a lion with battlements at its rear end which is part of the coat of arms for the Cinque ports. Folkestone was known as a 'limb' port. This Confederation is a unique association of maritime towns and villages in Kent and East Sussex, dating back 1000 years. In the centuries before the Tudor Kings of England first developed a standing navy, the men and ships of the Cinque Ports provided a fleet to meet the military and transportation needs of their Royal masters. With good reason, these small ports have been dubbed the '*Cradle of the Royal Navy*'.

### **4 Pen – writers: Agatha Christie, Dickens and HG Wells, all visitors or residents of Folkestone**

Some famous writers have connections with the Folkestone area. HG Wells lived in Sandgate for 13 years; he lived in Spade House, a large mansion overlooking the sea. Charles Dickens lived in Albion Villas in 1855 and wrote part of *Little Dorrit* there. He wrote about Folkestone:

*'One of the prettiest watering places on the south coast. The situation is delightful, the air is delicious, and the breezy hills and downs, carpeted with wild thyme and decorated with millions of wildflowers are, on the faith of a pedestrian, perfect.'*

Agatha Christie was a frequent visitor and wrote *Murder on the Orient Express* whilst staying at The Grand hotel, one of the most fashionable places to stay in Folkestone during its heyday as a seaside resort.

### **5 Dame Sheila Sherlock (liver specialist) and Sir William Harvey (discovered blood circulation)**

Dame Sheila Sherlock (1918-2001) was a world expert on liver diseases and Britain's first female professor of medicine. Under her leadership at London's Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, the department became a focal point for trainees in hepatology from virtually every country, and many of today's leaders in the field spent part, or all, of their training under her. Her influence extended to colleagues in surgery, radiology and pathology, and many of them became liver specialists in their own fields. In March 2008, on the 90th anniversary of her birth, the liver unit which she had founded at the Royal Free Hospital, was renamed the Sheila Sherlock Liver Centre in her memory. Her name is painted on a boat as you go into Sandgate where she lived

from 1929 and went to Folkestone County School for Girls.

Sir William Harvey (1578-1657) was born in Folkestone. He became a doctor and was physician to both King James I and Charles I. His discovery that the heart was a pump that circulated the blood around the body was published in 1628. It caused great controversy because it showed the accepted ebb-and-flow theory to be incorrect. His statue stands on The Leas. The Harvey family were great philanthropists, providing money for the poor, for fishermen and for education. In 1674 the Harvey's established a Free School for boys, now the Harvey Grammar School.

## **6 The Victorian Leas Bandstand still hosts concerts throughout the summer season.**

The Leas is a mile-long, cliff top promenade at Folkestone, created by Lord Radnor in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This is where many Edwardian visitors to Folkestone spent their time, whilst staying at The Grand and Metropole hotels. The Victorian grade II listed bandstand is well maintained and still hosts regular concerts throughout the summer season. Its tent-shaped canopy with a weathervane is supported by 8 cast-iron columns provides shelter for the band while deckchairs are set out for audiences. An unusual Victorian water-driven cliff lift and several paths, including the famous zigzag path connect The Leas with the beach.

## **7 Zigzag path from the Leas to the sea, with palms and pulhamite rocks**

The Upper Leas gardens at the top of the cliffs at Folkestone, and the Lower Leas gardens along the foot of the cliffs, were created by Lord Radnor in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in order to attract Victorian holidaymakers to the town. He also built a water-balance lift in 1885 to transport visitors nearly 50m from top to bottom – and vice versa. This did not cater for people in bath chairs, however, so the Folkestone Council decided to construct a new path – the Zigzag Path– up (or down) the face of the cliff.

The contract was awarded to James Pulham and Son, who had invented the artificial rock, Pulhamite. It usually looked like gritty sandstone and was used to join natural rocks together or crafted to simulate natural stone features. It was so realistic that it fooled some geologists of the era! The recipe went to the grave with him. Modern analysis of surviving original Pulhamite have shown it to be a blend of sand, Portland cement and clinker sculpted over a core of rubble and crushed bricks. Looking at some of the weathered rocks on the zigzag path, the rocks in Folkestone also contained crushed glass.

Further additions to the zigzag path were made in 1921; this was partly to provide employment after WWI. and it is now a Grade II listed structure. The zigzag path linked by its Pulhamite features include seating bays with wooden benches and planting bays and includes a Pulhamite rock arch about 8 feet high and 8 feet wide, a cave of about the same dimensions with seating, a grotto of three linked caves, the end one supported on a thin vertical rock, and a much larger cave about 30 feet by 20 feet with two openings.

Today the zigzag path is a lovely scenic walk leading from the upper Leas to the seafront and the Lower Leas Coastal Park. This is a linear park between Folkestone and Sandgate which has been developed into an award-winning park for recreation and enjoyment of the coast. Wildlife such as migrating birds and insects thrive in the area and the park contains an under cliff area with a unique microclimate attracting wildlife rarely found in the UK. Events take place throughout the summer including concerts, children's workshops and drama. The Coastal Park has won the Green Flag Award (given to quality green spaces) every year since 2007 when it first applied for the award.

### **8 Poppy - Shorncliffe Military Cemetery. Canada Day when children place flowers on the graves**

The Shorncliffe Military Cemetery is near the Shorncliffe Army camp. It contains more than 600 Commonwealth war graves from the World Wars. There are 471 from World War I, including more than 300 Canadians. There are also 81 burials from World War II, some died over 200 years ago, and some very recently, including soldiers killed in Afghanistan.

Three Victoria Cross recipients are buried here:

- Private Patrick McHale (1826-1866), Royal Artillery, Indian Mutiny
- Sergeant Joseph Charles Brennan (1818-1872) 5th Regiment of Foot, Indian Mutiny
- Private John Doogan (1853-1940), King's Dragoon Guards, First Boer War

In honour of the Canadians, Edward Palmer, the Editor of the *Hythe Reporter* newspaper, conceived the idea of inviting local dignitaries and school children to attend a service of remembrance there. The ceremony was planned to take place on or close to Canada Day, July 1<sup>st</sup> and began in 1917.

As part of the service, the children were asked to place flowers on each of the graves. Tradition has continued in the same format ever since. This moving ceremony is still attended by local children, several British Legion Branches, the Mayors of Folkestone and Hythe and a representative of the Canadian High Commission.

By the end of the First World War, a total of 305 Canadians had been buried at the Cemetery and each one is still honoured with flowers. Mr Edward Palmer personally attended the ceremony each year until his death in 1927.

### **9 Samuel Plimsoll campaigned for load lines on the ships to prevent overloading**

Samuel Plimsoll (1824-1898) is buried in St Martin's church in Cheriton. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when he was an MP, he campaigned for load lines to be painted on the side of ships to prevent them being overloaded and sinking. At that time hundreds of lives were lost in heavy seas and rough weather due to dangerous overloading of ships. Such overloading and poor repair made some ships so dangerous that they became known as 'coffin ships'.

Samuel Plimsoll established the United Kingdom Merchant Shipping Act and in 1894

power was given to fix the Plimsoll Line to all British vessels. The Plimsoll Line marks where the hull of a ship meets the surface of the water. Ships will sink to different depths when loaded with similar weights, depending on the type of water they are in. The line indicates the legal and safe limit to which a ship may be loaded as the water level isn't supposed to go above the line.

However, the water can reach different parts of the line, depending on its temperature, saltiness, time of year and geographic location. Temperature and salinity affects this level as warm or fresh water provide less buoyancy as they are less dense than cold or salty water, meaning a ship will sink further down in fresh warm water than in salty cold water.

As long as the cargo is balanced on the ship, the lines show how much cargo can be safely carried for each destination. Looking at the relevant exhibit in the Museum the letters stand for:

T = Tropical

S = Summer

W = Winter

WNA = Winter, North Atlantic

F = Fresh

The top line that has no letter is for Tropical Freshwater (TF)

The other mark with NK, is who the ship has been registered by. It stands for 'Nippon Kaiji Kyokai' which is a ship classification society. It is also known by the brand name "ClassNK" or often in the industry as just "NK". It is a not for profit society dedicated to ensuring the safety of life and property at sea, and the prevention of pollution of the marine environment.

### **10 Makers signature – JAL.**

This patch shows the maker's mark for Jennie Langley, who created the mat. Jennie loves swimming and would love to swim the Channel, so she's put her maker's mark here to represent her dream of going to down the beach to begin her cross-Channel swim!

### **11 Wave pocket**

A generic pocket for anything Maritime. The denim in the centre is an upside down back pocket of a pair of jeans. The original sewing decorating the pocket is still there – Can you see it?

### **12 Compass – essential equipment used by sailors**

This compass is based on a photograph of a compass on display at the museum. They were vital navigational tools.

### **13 The White Feather Movement**

In the first weeks of WWI Admiral Charles Penrose Fitzgerald from Folkestone had the idea of women publicly pinning white feathers onto young men who hadn't signed up. The white feather represented cowardice and its aim was to shame men into volunteering for the armed services.

It started on 30 August 1914 and the White Feathers Brigade quickly became a national phenomenon. Many men were aggressively harangued by groups of women, even when they were back on leave, unable to fight due to medical conditions or were in essential occupations. A white feather was even handed to George Samson, a recipient of the Victoria Cross who was back in his town to attend a celebration in his honour. Because of the pressure put on these men, the government issued silver badges to men who'd already served or were needed for the war effort at home.

The practice spread throughout Britain and Ireland and was adopted by pro-war suffragettes, including Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, although the prominent novelist Mary Ward – a leading opponent of women's suffrage – was an enthusiast too. The Order of the White Feather raises interesting questions about women's response to the Great War. For pacifist feminists, ranging from Sylvia Pankhurst to Virginia Woolf, as well as the many rank and file members of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, the obvious feminist position on war was to be against it. Yet, to fully understand the dynamics behind the white feather campaign, we need to recognize the range of both female response to war and to examine why those militarist women who supported the conflict might have chosen the path they did.

The campaign seems to have peaked during 1915, as the first of many Allied catastrophes led to a shortage of troops. But by then the excesses of some featherers, including harassment of convalescing soldiers, were also attracting a backlash. It lasted until conscription in 1916.

### **14 Eurotunnel Folkestone terminal opened in 1994**

The Channel Tunnel English terminus is just north of Folkestone. It is a rail tunnel linking Folkestone with Coquelles, Pas-de-Calais, near Calais in northern France. It is over 50 km/31ml long and goes beneath the English Channel at the Strait of Dover. It carries high speed Eurostar passenger trains, the Eurotunnel Shuttle for road vehicles and international goods trains. Some trains travel at 160kmph/99mph per hour. The average depth of the tunnel is 50 metres below the seabed, and the lowest point 75 metres below. Much of the chalk marl spoil bored on the English side was deposited at Lower Shakespeare Cliff in Kent, now home to the Samphire Hoe Country Park.

### **15 Flap covering a tree – deforestation of the Downs started in the Neolithic**

The flap represents the land management of The North Downs by humans and below is a tree. For thousands of years the countryside around Folkestone was covered by dense woodland. From about 4000BC, Neolithic people began to settle and cultivate the land. They grazed animals on the hills and began to clear the woods to grow crops.

Fragments of woodland still remain, particularly where the geological layer of clay with flints overlying the chalk has inhibited clearance or the land is very steep.

### **16 Good Friday parade to put three full sized crosses on top of Sugarloaf Hill**

Sugarloaf Hill is so called because of its conical shape; like a traditional sugarloaf. It is part of the Folkestone Downs along with Castle Hill, Round Hill, Holywell and Cheriton Hill. The ancient chalk grassland is rich in wildflowers and insects such as butterflies. It has been designated as a site of European importance for wildlife, especially for its orchid interest. There are many other beautiful wildflowers of ancient chalk grassland that can be seen on Folkestone Downs, such as cowslips, thyme, salad burnet, marjoram. It is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), as a Special Area for Conservation (SAC) and forms a part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

### **17 Quern stone. In the Iron Age quern mill stones were traded to the Roman Empire**

During the Iron Age, an extensive, pre-Roman native settlement occupied the East Cliff above East Wear Bay. During excavation of the Roman villa which was built on top of this site, remains were discovered which suggest that this was an Iron Age Oppidum (a large fortified settlement). Remains beneath the Roman villa also suggest that querns, or stones used to grind cereal crops into flour, were produced here during the Iron Age on an almost industrial scale. Over 60 quern-stones have been recovered from the site of the villa and the lower cliff area.

The querns are made of the local greensand stone, most likely collected or cut from nearby Copt Point and taken to the headland to be worked. The majority of the found querns are unfinished, with partially worked surfaces, or incomplete hoppers and spindle holes.[2]

In many cases, the querns appear to have been damaged and discarded, many seeming to have fractured during the hole boring stage. In addition to the numerous broken or unfinished querns, a layer of the excavation strata at the Villa/oppidum site is entirely composed of greensand dust, which is almost certainly stone-working debris, suggesting that this was the location of the Iron Age quern workshop. Archaeological evidence suggests that these querns were traded with Gaul for pottery from Gaul and wine from Italy.

### **18 Roman mosaic found in the Roman Villa excavated along Wear Bay Road**

After the Roman conquest in AD43, a luxurious Roman villa was built on the East Cliff above East Wear Bay, probably in the confines of the pre-existing Iron Age settlement. The villa was discovered by SE Winbolt in 1924. It had over 50 rooms, some of which were decorated with very fine Roman mosaics, a sample of which is in the Museum.

### **19 Mosque in Foord Road South**

This mosque serves the Muslim community in Folkestone. Muslim's make up about 0.6% of the population of Folkestone. This article gives some insight into the lives of some local Muslims.

## **20 Railway viaduct built by William Cubitt and gasworks on Ship Rd**

Sir William Cubitt (1785-1861) was an eminent civil engineer and as engineer-in-chief he constructed the south eastern railway from London to Dover. That involved building the railway viaduct over the Foord Valley in 1843, which consists of 19 round-headed brick arches, nearly 100ft high in the centre. He also built the harbour viaduct and swing bridge. Both of these structures are protected by English Heritage.

The coming of the railway was very important to Folkestone. Many visitors came, it was a transit point to the continent and fish caught in Folkestone could be transported to other markets inland via the railway. The design is inspired by a painting by artist, P. Ewer.

The Folkestone Gas Company was founded by Ralph Thomas Brockman in 1842. In the same year, the gasworks was built on the seafront, where Marine Crescent sits today. It moved to the bigger site in Ship Rd in 1888 and went through many changes over the years.

This is an important part of the working class/industrial heritage of Folkestone. It stopped producing gas in 1956 and the holders stayed until they were demolished around the turn of the Millennium. It has been a derelict area since then but now Creative Folkestone used the land for the 2014 Triennial. They have been organising a Gasworks History Project. Local residents are now engaged in a discussion about the future use of the space.

## **21 Anglo Saxon Cemetery excavated at Dover Hill. Brooch and skeleton in the museum**

In 1906 an Anglo-Saxon cemetery was found on Dover Hill, dating to the sixth and seventh centuries AD. 40 graves of men, women, and children were discovered, all part of a much larger original cemetery. There is a skeleton and grave goods in the museum. The brooch is made from materials from all around the world including Sri Lankan garnets, Baltic amber, Persian amethysts and cowrie shells from Egypt.

## **22 Christchurch Garden with memorials to many groups, mostly WWI and II**

Christ Church, in Sandgate Road was consecrated on 27 July 1850 and was destroyed by a German Bomb on 17 May 1942. All that was left was the tower at the west end. The tower is still there and around the clock is carved "Trifle not thy time is short". The area around the tower has been turned into a 'Memorial Garden' or 'Garden of Remembrance', in memory of all those who gave their lives for their country.

There are memorials to many different groups. These include:

- The Gurkha Memorial Statue, serving with Britain since 1815 across the globe
- Normandy Veterans Association, who fought and died in The Battle for Normandy June to August 1944
- Burmese Star In remembrance of all comrades, 1939-45
- Civilians of the Folkestone air raid 25<sup>th</sup> May 1917

- Those who died in the holocaust and subsequent genocides
- Those with hoof, wing and paw who served mankind in peace and war

### **23 Mind Community Cafe**

A community kitchen and a wellbeing cafe which has recently opened in Folkestone. This provides a space for peer support groups and an opportunity for education, training and employment skills building.

### **24 Withervane, by Rooftwo; an artwork by Creative Folkestone in the town**

Withervane was created for the 2014 Triennial when five sculptures were on display. In 2019 only two of these sculptures remain. Creative Folkestone is a visionary arts charity dedicated to transforming Folkestone through collective creative activity, making the town a better place to live, work, play and visit. They run lots of events and exhibitions as well as having over 70 artworks displayed outdoors throughout the town.

### **25 Step Short Memorial Arch erected in 2008 for WWI centenary in 2014. Also poppies on the railings**

The Step Short Memorial Arch was unveiled in August 2014 by Prince Harry, as part of the commemorations marking 100 years since the start of WW1. The arch stands on the Leas on the cliffs to the west of Folkestone harbour. On the Folkestone side a steep road leads down to the harbour, which in WW1 was a major port of embarkation for France.

This road was called Slope Road at that time and is so steep you have to shorten your stride to walk down safely. In WW1, the thousands of soldiers who assembled on the Leas or marched to the harbour along the Leas from Shorncliffe Military Camp were given the order "STEP SHORT" at the top of the road. After the War the road was renamed The Road of Remembrance in honour of all who marched down it.

There is also the war memorial unveiled in 1922. This is a bronze statue and is near the memorial arch. Fences on the Road of Remembrance are decorated with 3,000 hand-knitted poppies made by local groups. These are permanently on display and are washed once a year.

Near the memorial, there was a beautiful flowerbed celebrating 30 years of The Merchant Navy Association (1989-2019). This association has been able to get the general public and bodies such as The British Legion to acknowledge the vital role the merchant navy played in wartime convoys. In 2000, Merchant Navy veterans marched on Remembrance Day and a Merchant Navy wreath was placed at the Cenotaph. That year the government also approved the 3<sup>rd</sup> September as Merchant Navy Day.

### **26 12th Century Anglo-Saxon Saint: St Eanswythe**

This pocket uses a seal from the Museum's collections, which relates to the *Blessings of the Fishes*. The colours surrounding the seal are taken from St Eanswythe's halo in the stained glass window in the church of St Mary and St Eanswythe.

Eanswythe was the granddaughter Ethelbert, Kent's first Christian king. She was daughter of Kent King Eadbald, King of Kent and Emma, daughter of King of the Franks. In 630AD Eadbald built a chapel for Eanswythe in his castle somewhere in The Bayle (street) area, east of the present church in Folkestone. This chapel was dedicated to St Peter and St Paul. Here Eanswythe settled a community of nuns as Abbess and Founder of the first religious community for women in England. This nunnery was said to be at Folkcanstan; which is the first recorded mention of the name Folkestone.

The date of Eanswythe's death is usually given as 640AD. The monastery did not survive her, being either sacked by marauders or victim of coastal erosion or perhaps both. It was later replaced by a monastery was rebuilt with a church dedicated to St Mary and St Eanswythe on the site where the current church stands. This monastery remained until the Dissolution by Henry VIII.

Several legends are told about St Eanswythe. She chose not to marry and refused a Northumbrian prince as suitor when his pagan prayers failed to lengthen a beam required for building the church. Her own Christian prayers succeeded. Other legends include providing water for her convent by making it flow uphill from the stream a mile away, restoring the sight of the blind and forbidding the birds to eat the nun's corn.

In October 2018, srchaeologists and volunteers in Folkestone unearthed an ancient watercourse, said in legend to have been created by an Anglo-Saxon princess. The engineering was so complex people believed the 7th century princess had performed a miracle because the water appeared to flow uphill. The water travelled for two miles towards St Eanswythe's convent in the heart of the town. The water-course provided Folkestone with water for centuries and is believed to be one of the reasons the town was situated there.

### **27 Tontine St Air Raid WWI: 25th May 1917**

A century ago, while the Great War raged on, Tontine Street was a bustling hive of enterprise, lined with colourful shopfronts, street vendors and shoppers. And on Friday 25 May 1917 it became the site of the First World War's largest single incident of civilian casualties outside of London. Tontine Street was packed with local people shopping for the long Bank Holiday weekend. It was payday and there were rumours of a prized potato delivery at Stokes Brothers greengrocery. Late into the day, mums, children and workers thronged the street in the warm spring sunshine.

Gotha planes returning from an aborted daylight bomb raid on London (the first ever) had decided to shed their load on the Folkestone area. At Shorncliffe, 18 servicemen were killed and there was substantial damage to Central Station; but it was Tontine Street that took the brunt when a single bomb fell outside Stokes' Brothers, opposite Gosnold Brothers Drapery. The injuries, deaths and aftermath were horrific. Ten men, 28 women and 25 children were killed and more than 100 injured on Tontine Street that evening.

The image on the mat of Annie Beer who was one of the people killed, is based on the work of Roy Eastland, a Margate artist who created a piece of work which tells the

stories of the people who were there. In the Christchurch Memorial Garden there is a list of everyone who dies in Tontine St and in other areas around Folkestone from other bombs dropped on the same day.

## **28 Rainbow patch – representing the LGBT+ community in Folkestone**

Folkestone is home to a thriving LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) culture and each year a Pride march is held in the town in July, featuring live music, drag artists and theatre shows. The Pride march is one of the highlights of the Folkestone calendar and everyone is invited to the party!

## **29 Rotunda funfair's roller coaster (Flap with meandering path on the shingle beach)**

The Rotunda Funfair is remembered with great fondness by many in Folkestone. It was a bustling mini theme park complete with rollercoasters, helter skelter, arcades, crazy golf, dodgems and log flume.

Previously the area had a large boating lake which opened in 1937 and a 50m open air swimming pool opened a year later - all perched between the main Rotunda building and the Victoria Pier. While unable to match Dreamland in Margate for wider appeal, the Rotunda was a site which pulled in huge crowds and which would eventually host the popular Sunday market too.

By the time both the lake and pool were filled in, an additional dome building was built and the modern day Rotunda would continue until 15 years ago when it was sold. Demolition work saw most buildings gone by 2007 and only in 2019 did work begin on clearing the site of its concrete base.

Development plans have been delayed for more than a decade, but homes are earmarked for the site as part of a major overhaul of the seafront.

The flap has the shingle beach with the 800m Boardwalk path made from railway sleepers and one of the several Creative Folkestone artworks on the beach: a poppy made from painted pebbles.

## **30 The eight best whiting from each catch financed the Rumbald's feast**

Whiting were one of the main catches by Folkestone fishermen and seemed to have been the centre of a traditional Folkestonian custom. Folkestone Fishing Heritage and History Museum says this about the mysterious custom:

*“There was anciently a curious custom among the fishermen of choosing eight of the largest whiting out of every boat on returning from the fishery and selling them apart from the rest, the money being appropriated to a feast on Christmas Eve, called a RUMBALD, which the master of each vessel provided for his crew, there being as many different entertainments as there were boats. The whiting taken on this coast are remarkable fine, and those chosen for these feasts, from their large size were known all round the country as RUMBALD whittings. This custom has*

*long been discontinued; but some of the oldest inhabitants remember convivial meetings in commemoration of Rumbald night. It was possibly in honour of St Rumbald, and the fish designed as an offering for the saints' protection during the fishery".*

### **31 Victoria Pier (1888) named in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee (1887)**

Victoria Pier was constructed on iron columns, with a wide promenade deck and a pavilion which could seat 800 patrons. The pavilion was leased out to theatrical companies who provided suitably high-brow entertainments for Folkestone's largely aristocratic and middle class clientele. The pavilion held a six day publican's licence and house refreshment bars on the ground floor and a kitchen, dining room, bureau and balcony on the first floor. A stroll on the pier cost 2d. The pier was opened in 1888 by Lady Folkestone.

There were lots of entertainments there in the season and the first international beauty pageant happened on Victoria Pier in 1908. Robert Forsyth was an Edwardian entrepreneur and the Managing Director of Folkestone Pier. He did a great amount to provide entertainment for the town. One day he came up with a brilliant idea for putting Folkestone on the map and attracting more tourists - a beauty pageant. So on 14 August 1908 the Folkestone Beauty Pageant was born. In fact every single beauty pageant right the way up to Miss World can be traced back to Folkestone.

During the First World War, the pier was popular with the many troops recuperating in Folkestone's rest camps. A variety of comedy and propaganda films were laid on for them, including patriotic films and Charlie Chaplin movies, as well as boxing and wrestling events. Upon the resumption of peace, the entertainments provided on the pier continued to principally consist of roller skating, novelty shows, dancing and bands. A new novelty was Captain Sidney Lawson Smith, who descended from the pier down to the seabed in full diving gear and gave a description of what he found. He also took up challenges to find items thrown into the sea.

The pier was closed at the outbreak of World War II, although it was subsequently reopened for a short period. However visitor numbers were meagre and two months later, the pier was closed again to allow the centre section of the structure to be blown up as a defence measure. The gap was closed with a small bridge in 1943 when a pump was housed in the pavilion to enable seawater to be used in the fighting of fires caused by enemy action. Not surprisingly, the pier became very run-down as the war dragged on and, sadly, an intruder deliberately set fire to the pier pavilion on Whit Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 1945 and completely destroyed the sea end of the structure.

The fire dashed all hopes that the pier could be repaired. It was left to the local landowner, the Earl of Radnor and his estate, to commence demolition of the pier in 1952. The last section of the old pier was finally blown up in November 1954. Today, only the abutment to the pier and a small section of iron supporting column survive to show where it once stood.

### **32 Textured sea pocket – fabric from dress bought in Folkestone charity shop**

This material was chosen to represent both the sea and the array of charity shops in Folkestone that doing sterling work in raising money for local charities.

### **33 'Landing of the Belgian Refugees' by Fredo Franzino**

The painting 'The Landing of the Belgian Refugees' is on display in the town museum and commemorates the months in 1914 when more than 100,000 Belgians arrived in Folkestone fleeing WW1. They were welcomed with such kindness that King Albert of Belgium said:

*"Folkestone had earned the admiration not only of the Belgians, but also of the whole world: yes, the whole civilised world knew how the town of Folkestone had received them with such cordiality which would never be forgotten."*

The Belgian refugees crossed the Channel in any boat they could find. On just one day in October 1914, some 16,000 people of all ages arrived at Folkestone Harbour. The painting is by an Italian artist, Fredo Franzoni, who himself came to Folkestone as a refugee in one of the boats from Belgium. The work was gifted to the town in 1916.

### **34 Tea Mug – cafe for WW1 soldiers going to continent.**

Throughout WWI, the Harbour Station had a canteen which provided free tea, cakes and buns to soldiers, sailors and members of the Red Cross. Millions of enlisted men and nurses passed through the Folkestone Harbour Station on their way to WW, as the Boulogne-Folkestone crossing was the usual route for getting to, and returning from, the trenches. Many of them signed the Harbour Station canteen visitor book which provides a record of many of those who passed through Folkestone, many never to return.

The canteen was a voluntary organisation and, according to the catalogue at the East Kent Archives Centre:

*"This canteen was staffed by local volunteers and amongst the most devoted were the Misses Margaret Ann and Florence Augusta Jeffery."*

After the war, the Jeffery sisters were both awarded the Order of the British Empire, the Queen Elisabeth Medal (Belgium) and the Medal of Gratitude (France).

The visitor books are in the museum and include the names of men and women from all over the British Empire. Every race, creed and social class from King George V to the humblest private soldier is represented. Date of visit, rank, name and corps or unit are almost always included. A few men have also written their regimental number and a number have written comments or short poems.

### **35 Whiting ( under textured wave flap)**

For a long time, the fisheries were the main source of income for Folkestone. Even in pre-Roman times, shellfish were caught and exported to Gaul (northern France). A

wide variety of fish have been caught over the years. The fishing industry is now very small in the town, but it continues and is celebrated in different ways. One of these celebrations is the Blessing of the Fisheries at St Peter's Church.

The ceremony is first mentioned in the early 1890s and took the form of a long procession of fishermen and women from the parish, servers, choirs and clergy from St Peter's and other parishes, together with the Mayor of Folkestone and Civic Dignitaries leading the Bishop from the Church to the Stade either down North Street and along Radnor Street or over Radnor Bridge and down Dover Street. These days the Blessing of the Fisheries is held to coincide with Town Sunday on the last Sunday in June (when the new Mayor is proclaimed from the Churchyard Cross of the Church of St. Mary and St. Eanswythe).

Whiting is represented because of the story of the importance of whiting in St Rumbald's feast (# 30), and the blue and white fabric has come from a silk kimono.

### **36 Fishing Boat**

For centuries fishing was the economic heart of Folkestone and many fishing boats still have the symbols FE painted on them, meaning that the home port of the ship is Folkestone.

### **37 Downs pocket**

Generic pocket for handling samples.

### **38 RAF WWII Kings Crown Pilots Wings**

The Battle of Britain was fought over the Kent coastline from 10<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> October 1940, where the RAF defended the UK against large-scale air attack by the Luftwaffe, Nazi Germany's air force.

Although the Germans had more planes and pilots, the British were able to fight them off and win the battle. This was because they had the advantage of fighting over their own territory, they were defending their homeland, and they had radar. Radar allowed the British to know when and where German planes were coming to attack. This gave them time to get their own planes in the air.

It was a very costly battle, our allies lost about 1,000 planes and the German's 1,800. The battle and the blitz ended when Hitler needed the planes for attacking Russia.

This badge is an RAF WWII Kings Crown Pilots Wings and was worn by both Officers and Sergeant pilots. There is the Kent Battle of Britain Museum in Hawkinge near Folkestone and the memorial site at Capel-le-Ferne.

### **39 Folkestone patch badge**

The boat with the three people is the town emblem and the lion with the battlement tail is part of the Cinque Ports coat of arms. It's a very common emblem around Folkestone.

#### **40 Garden Tiger Moth (under flap of the Downs)**

This moth is part of the Natural Folkestone collection in the Museum. It's also on the front cover of the Museum's visitor guides. The dramatic patterns on the wings serve as a warning to predators because the moth's body fluids are poisonous. The garden tiger moth or great tiger moth is a moth of the family *Erebidae*. The moth prefers cold climates with temperate seasonality, as the larvae overwinter. It can live in a wide range of habitats and eats a wide range of herbaceous plants, including common nettle. It can be found on the Warren.

The flap is an imaginary representation of the Downs and the Warren. The background has the rounded hills of the Downs and the Warren, and its vegetation is represented by a piece of silk velvet which reveals multicoloured floral patterns as it is opened.

#### **41 Ammonite fossil**

Folkestone's visible geology comprises of three distinct types of sedimentary rock: The Lower Greensand, Gault Clay and Chalk. A wide range of fossils can be found in these rocks. Ammonites can be found in all of these rock layers. Gault fossils are easily found on the beach at East Wear Bay and the Warren's rocks and fossils are world famous and are in collections found all over the world. The Museum has many locally-found fossils in its Natural Collection.

#### **42 Martello Tower No.3, Napoleonic defensive tower**

From 1805 to 1809, there were 27 Martello Towers built along the Kent coast, from No.1 to the north of Folkestone to No.27 in St Mary's Bay, to defend the coast from Napoleon. Of these 16 remain together with Sandgate Castle. Martello Tower No.3, was constructed in 1806 on the cliff edge at Folkestone above Copt Point.

After 1850 the tower was used by the Coastguard, with the Coastguard members and families living there. During WWII the tower had a concrete observation point added on the roof, incorporating the tower with the coastal battery built adjacent to the tower. The tower was disused after the war until 1990 when Shepway Council bought it and later opened it as a visitor centre. It was used as a Visitor centre up to 2011 but is now unused.

#### **43 Deckchair on Sunny Sands**

Sunny Sands is a popular beach as it's great for making sandcastles and swimming. It has an annual sandcastle making competition.

#### **44 Horsetails grow on the clay soils of the Warren**

Horsetails are just some of the many plants that grow in The East Cliff and Warren Country Park. It is rich in wildlife and is a dramatic landscape formed by landslides. It is a local Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) both for its wildlife and geology. The side of the park closest to the town centre has wide open lawns overlooking the cliffs with a playground, bowls club and Pitch & Putt golf course, all watched over by three Napoleonic-era Martello Towers.

Further east, 200 years of landslides have created a steep, pockmarked landscape called The Warren which is covered in thick vegetation leading down to the sea below the cliffs. Chalk grassland wildflowers grow alongside woodland plants here, while the sea air promotes the growth of rock sea lavender, wild cabbage and rock samphire. Around 150 different species of birds can be found in the Warren. The area is a great site for rockpooling when the tide is out – and is also one of the best sites in southern England to go fossil hunting.

#### **45 Smuggler: a porter or 'flasker' carrying two kegs away from the beach**

Smuggling was rife in the UK in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and Kent was no exception. Smuggling was the natural consequence of punitive taxes imposed by successive governments to pay for costly wars in Europe.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the headquarters of the smugglers in the area was The Warren. Four secret passages led from a house here into a nearby wood, and the premises were considered such a problem that in 1698 the government bought the lease to the house. The smugglers commonly brought goods ashore at East Wear Bay, then moved them up to the Warren, and on to the Valiant Sailor Inn nearby for onward distribution.

#### **46 Hoy Boat**

A hoy boat was a 19<sup>th</sup> century heavy duty freight boat that worked between London, Dover and Folkestone. The image used comes from an exhibit in Folkestone's Fishing Heritage and History Museum called 'A hoy boat approaching the harbour, 1820s.' The vessel is either the 'Aid' or the 'Earl Radnor', both of which ran from Griffins Wharf, Tooley St, London. They took turns calling at Folkestone every week delivering and picking up cargo. The masters were William and Jacob Spicer, of Folkestone. The seagulls on the pocket represent the gulls who follow the fishing boats in the hope of a free meal!

#### **47 Wavy Sea pocket**

A generic pocket for anything Maritime. The pocket is made from silk velvet and old linen.

#### **48 Sealink Ferry (under sea flap)**

There has been a long history of packet boats and ferries taking passengers across the Channel from Folkestone since the arrival of the railway in Folkestone in the 1840s. The opening of the Folkestone-Boulogne route to regular traffic was 1<sup>st</sup> August in 1843.

Roll on Roll Off (RORO) ferries operated from Folkestone to the continent. Sealink had various ferries, including the 'Horsa', the Maid of Orleans' and the Hengist, of which there is a fine model in the Museum.

## Contents of Objects Box

- Woolly Mammoth Toy
- Male Gurkha soldier puppet
- Female Nepalese puppet in national dress
- Lizard model
- Megalodon (shark) model
- 1960s seaside postcard
- Ammonite fossils
- Sea urchin fossil
- 1950s vintage bucket and spade
- Punch & Judy annual
- 19<sup>th</sup> century visiting cards (young girl, older woman and boy in sailor suit)
- 1950s advertisement for guest house in Folkestone
- 1960s toy dodgem car
- 1960s souvenir of Folkestone

# Ideas for using the Mat

These notes provide useful information and ideas for storytellers and activity leaders looking to deliver fun and creative learning activities for Early Years and Key Stage 1 and 2 children, using the Folkestone Museum storymat.

Activities can easily be differentiated for different age groups and abilities, and adapted for school or family groups, including special needs audiences. The length, theme and type of activities can also be adapted depending on subjects being explored, and the amount of time available.

## Arrival

Welcome the group or families as they arrive. Make sure front of house are briefed and direct people to the activity. Ask children or visitors to take off their shoes and sit on the floor around the closed mat.

## Welcome

- Welcome to [insert organisation name here]. I'm [introduce yourself]
- What are your names?
- Who likes stories? What's your favourite story?
- Today we are going to explore some stories about our town, the town of Folkestone. And we're going to do it using this very special magic storymat!
- Does it look like a magic storymat? No! OK what does it look like?
- What do you think's inside? Get some ideas from your group.

Here are some ideas on how to use the mat:

## Introducing characters

A good way to explore the mat is to have a puppet character that the children can take turns to hold, and take on a trail of discovery across the mat. The puppets are called Samita (Gurkha lady) and Amir (Gurkha soldier).

Introduce group to the characters and tell them that they are going to go on adventure together. Samita lives in Cheriton and loves knitting (in fact she and her friends helped make this mat). Amir is a Gurkha soldier. They both love exploring. Where are they going to go? Let's open the mat to find out.

Ask children or visitors to move the puppets around the story mat to visit different locations. As the child or visitor if they can create a story from the locations that Samita and Amir have visited. [NB: You can use any puppets or characters that the children or visitors are familiar with for this activity].

## The Big Reveal

Start with the mat folded up. Ask children or visitors, one or two at a time, to uncover bits of the mat.

At each stage ask what they can see and what they think it is?

Ask them, and any adults too, what they think it is?

What is there favourite part and why?

Hand out pieces of ribbon included in the objects box. Ask children or visitors to lay it across the mat for the puppets to follow. Where are we going to start? Where next? Where now? Tell the children some of the stories associated with the patches they've uncovered.

### **Pick a Theme**

The mat can be used thematically, for example, to explore Dinosaurs, Railways or Seaside Holidays. Pick a theme and a range of appropriate objects to put on the mat and in the pockets. Ask children or visitors to try and guess the theme from the objects provided. If someone guesses right they can make up a story for the remainder of the group. Alternatively, ask children to pick out an object in the theme and facilitator tells them a story about the object from the notes above [NB: You can use your own objects if you are covering a particular theme not included in the objects box].

### **Mystery Objects**

Insert a range of different objects in the pockets of the story mat (you can use objects from the box provided or your own). Ask children or visitors to pick one pocket and put their hand in it. They then describe the object to the remainder of the group. Ask if they can guess what the object is from the description. Ask child or visitor to reveal the object. Ask them if they can create a story that includes the object.

### **Make your own fabric landscape**

You can use the story mat as a starting point for making your own fabric landscape. Have ready lots of different pieces of material (of different colours and textures). Ask children or visitors to make a landscape for Samita and Amir to explore. It could be the beach, the sea, the hills behind Folkestone... anything you please!

# Handling and Caring for the Objects

Start by asking your group how they think they should handle objects so they don't get damaged or broken.

Then go through these simple guidelines together.

- Always hold the object using both hands
- Hold it close to the ground or table (so it won't break if dropped).
- Pass it carefully to the next person, with both of you supporting the object underneath in both hands
- If the object is in a clear plastic sleeve please leave it in the sleeve, as this is to protect it from damage
- Do not swing objects around
- Do not grab them from other people
- Always remove objects carefully from the box, and unwrap them on a table. Rewrap them carefully at the end of the session and put them back into the right compartment of the box
- Wash your hands before and after handling the objects to keep them and you clean and safe.
- Check all objects have been returned at the end of each session using the *Object Box Contents List* (p23)
- Make sure the resource is kept in a secure locked room or cupboard when not in use
- Don't worry if an object gets damaged or broken, but do let us know straightaway, so we can find a replacement

## Appendix 1 Feedback form

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<b>Story Mat Feedback Form</b>	
Please can the workshop leader complete this form and return it with the mat. We recommend you spend a few minutes gathering feedback from participants at the end of your final session using the questions below, as well as adding your own comments. This will help us improve this resource in future. Many thanks!	
<b>Name of workshop leader</b>	
<b>Contact email and phone</b>	
<b>School or community group</b>	
<b>Which classes or groups used the resource? (Please state group and number of participants)</b>	
<b>How long did you use it for?</b>	
<b>How exactly did you use the resource?</b>	
<b>What did you enjoy most about using the mat?</b>	
<b>What did you enjoy least?</b>	
<b>Which activities did you do?</b>	
<b>Did you create any outputs such as artwork or creative writing? If so, what was it?</b>	
<b>Would you be happy to share any photographs?</b>	
<b>What could we do to improve the mat?</b>	
<b>Any other comments</b>	

## Appendix 2 Risk assessment advice

### Folkestone Museum Story Mat

**Locations:** School and community venues

**Name of assessor:** Alison Moore

**Date of assessment:** 08.08.2020

Hazards and Effects	Affecting Whom (staff / visitors / public / contractors)	Risk rating with no controls	Existing Controls (if any)	Residual risk rating (With existing controls)	Actions required where residual risk is still too high
Moving the Story Mat	Member of school or community group team collecting/returning the resource	8	The story mat and objects box light enough to be easily carried short distances by a fit adult. However, we recommend that the person collecting them has received manual handling training. We recommend a second person is available to open doors and make sure the route is clear at both ends of the journey.	4	Not applicable
Object Box	All participants	8	The objects should be checked as safe to use in advance of each session by the session leader, with no broken parts or jagged edges. All items are made from non-toxic materials. Object handling guidelines are provided to help keep participants and objects safe during a workshop. The session leader should read these out in advance.	4	

			Very small objects that may be put in mouths should not be used with pre-school children or some SEND audiences. Workshop leaders should not use objects they think unsuitable for their audience.		
Damage/loss/theft of objects in the object box	Workshop leader, school staff and students		Objects have been chosen that are robust, difficult to break and of relatively low value. Damage/loss/theft of objects is minimised by appropriate packing. Object handling guidelines has been provided. The object investigation box must be kept in a secure location when not in use. The workshop leader will check all objects out and in at the start and end of each workshop using the checklist. Small objects will be closely monitored.	4	Not applicable

Assessor: Alison Moore

Date: 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020