

The Society with the Longest Name!

Grimsby Cleethorpes and District Civic Society is perhaps YHACS' member with the longest name! With a mind on 'district', we tend not to distinguish ourselves between our towns and the whole of NE Lincolnshire.

North East Lincolnshire is a unitary authority area in the ceremonial county of Lincolnshire. Amounting to 74 sq miles and with a population of 160,000, it borders the unitary authority of North Lincolnshire and the non-metropolitan county of Lincolnshire. Its 3 main towns are all coastal: Immingham, Cleethorpes and the administrative centre, Grimsby. Surrounded by the more historical industry of agriculture, their positions nevertheless are why each grew into the towns they have become: Grimsby from fishing and into food production, Immingham from imports and exports via the Docks, and Cleethorpes as a seaside resort.



Figure 1 North East Lincolnshire Council, 2011

What does Heritage mean to the people of North East Lincolnshire? That was a question that was asked of us at the inaugural meeting of North East Lincolnshire Heritage Network, of which GC&DCS is a part of. Words most commonly suggested to connect with Heritage were: *People, Places, Buildings, Past, Future, Generation, Histories.*

Just a couple of the names of people who are associated with our area, are Brenda Fisher, who in 1951 broke the women's record for swimming the English Channel, and from the music scene, Rod Temperton, from Cleethorpes

who wrote Michael Jackson's "Thriller", along with many other well-known Disco hits. both Brenda and Rod are commemorated by civic society blue plaques.



Figure 2 (Susan Milsom)



Figure 3 (Susan Milsom)

Our most iconic structure is Grimsby's Grade 1 Listed Dock Tower. 170 years old next year, it was originally built to hold a water tank at the top to hydraulically work the lock gates into the Docks. Within the Docks is *The Kasbah*. A town-within-a-town of small workshops dating from the Victorian era, up to the 1970's (the area takes its name from a small triangle of narrow streets within the historic docks), it was designated a conservation area in October 2017 to not only protect the historic dock streets strongly associated with Grimsby's fishing industry, but also to attract funding to take it into the 21st Century.



Figure 4 Grimsby's Dock Tower – a landmark for 170 years (Susan Milsom)

Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust, a spin off from our Civic Society in 2010, has recently appointed a team of architects to take forward the renovation of the Grade 2 Listed Peterson's Smoke House. This is part of a lottery funded project to make the building available for rent by Autumn 2022 as a smokehouse and retail outlet (Grimsby Traditional Smoked Fish has been associated with the town for 150 years and is a Protected Geographical Indicator).

Grimsby Ice Factory is outside, but close to the Conservation Area, and has the greater protection of a Grade 2* Listing. A building at the forefront of food preservation from 1901, it is now redundant though as part of our Industrial Heritage is currently the subject of a planning application by prospective new owners to renovate and re-purpose as a theatre.

Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham all owe their growth in the Victorian and Edwardian eras to the Railway Industry which transformed an ad hoc collection of villages into industrial and commercial powerhouses. While the fishing industry began to fail in the 1970's, there was a strong tradition of food processing which led to the area being dubbed "Europe's Food Town" in the 1990's. Findus, Birds Eye, and Smedley's were just some of the food brands pioneered in the Humberston Road area of Grimsby. Although globalisation has eradicated many of the processing plants, their memory is still part of the area's industrial heritage. For generations, school-leavers have followed parents into the area's food-based industries from the sourcing of fish to the preservation, processing and haulage of that fish and land-based crops from the area's agricultural industry.

Present day commerce includes a thriving fish market using high tec trading facilities, reduced food processing, much dock traffic with a wide variety of goods including new vehicles both into and out of the country. An increasing dominant Service industry for the off-shore wind farms visible on the horizon, operates out of the Port of Grimsby where the Marine Control Centre is now based having moved from Spurn Point, controlling the vast amount of shipping in and out of the Humber.

There are many areas of Victorian vintage, public parks, and the seaside resort buildings in Cleethorpes. One such highly prominent building is Grade II listed *The Knoll* on Kingsway and can be toured virtually at <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=M6GWAZprzFZ>. Before the lockdown, when much non-essential Council work was halted, the Society was working with North East Lincolnshire Council to put 21st century heritage walks in place. Cleethorpes' trail is now accessible via the *Love Exploring* App for use on visitors' phones and launched this year as part of the Heritage Open Days. Both it and the equivalents for Grimsby, will be expanded via visitor boards, paper and website.



Figure 5 Cleethorpes seafront (Susan Milsom)

Immingham is part of the “district” in Grimsby, Cleethorpes and District Civic Society. It is another community which expanded massively in the early 20th Century due to the creation of the docks by the railway companies. Immingham’s fortunes have ebbed and flowed with industry; since the 1950s, the Humber Bank between Immingham and Grimsby has been synonymous with various chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Immingham still has a strong sense of community in its own right and has a museum – with an absolutely splendid model railway layout! Immingham also is our local connection to the “separatists”, or Pilgrim Fathers, who gathered there after arriving on foot and sailing ship from Gainsborough and East Nottinghamshire area, and to the eventual founding of America. *The Mayflower Trail* starting from Immingham Museum, tells their story.

Recent large funding pots have enabled local regeneration projects. Grimsby was an early recipient from the government’s Towns Fund and Cleethorpes is benefitting from the Coastal Communities Fund. The final outcome of these is yet to be experienced but the GCDCS is acting as a voice of reason trying to balance respect for our history with the need for positive future change as developments progress and all the while ensuring that community continues.

<https://www.mayflower400uk.org/news/2020/june/7-things-you-didnt-know-about-immingham/>

<http://www.imminghammuseum.org/>

<https://www.ggift.co.uk/>

<https://thekasbah.co.uk/>

<http://www.grimsbycleecivsoc.com/>



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