

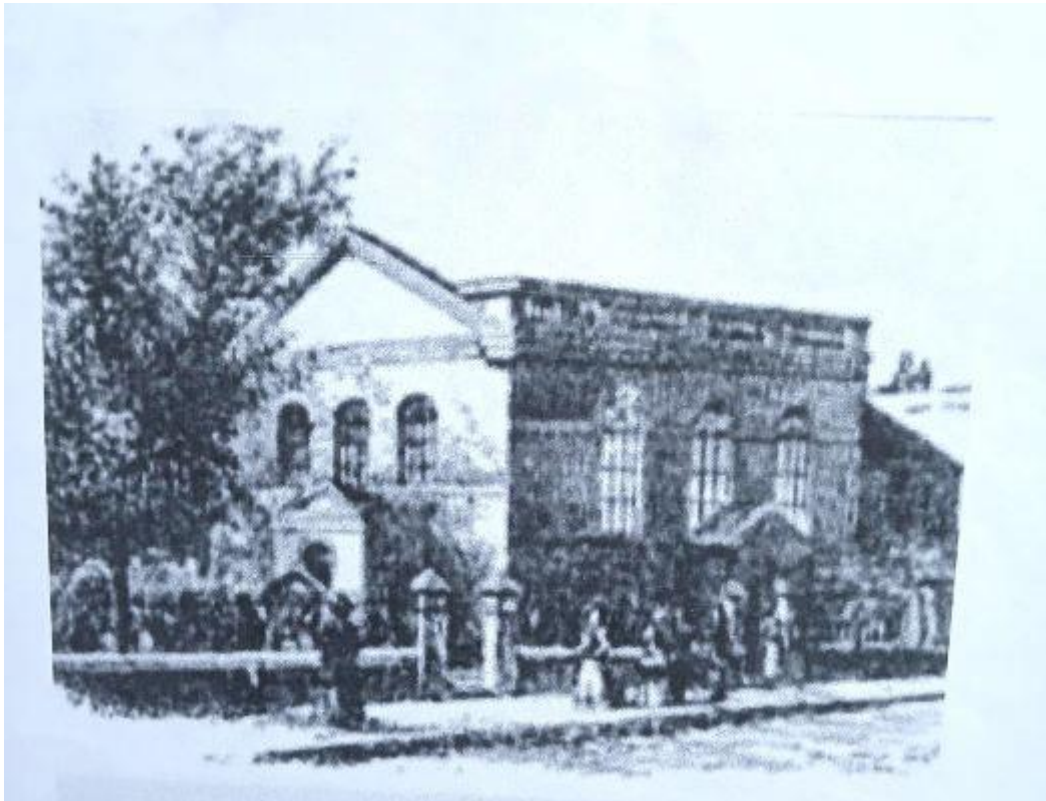
Castle Road Walk, April 2024

As a member of the Portsmouth Society, as well as a resident in the street, I offered to take a guided walk down the length of Castle Road. Thankfully, it turned out to be quite a sunny day, which added to the ambiance of the tour.

Due to health and safety reasons, the group was limited in numbers, but those who attended appeared extremely keen to hear about our street, and I invited any comments or further information upon its architecture and history, of which there were quite a few!

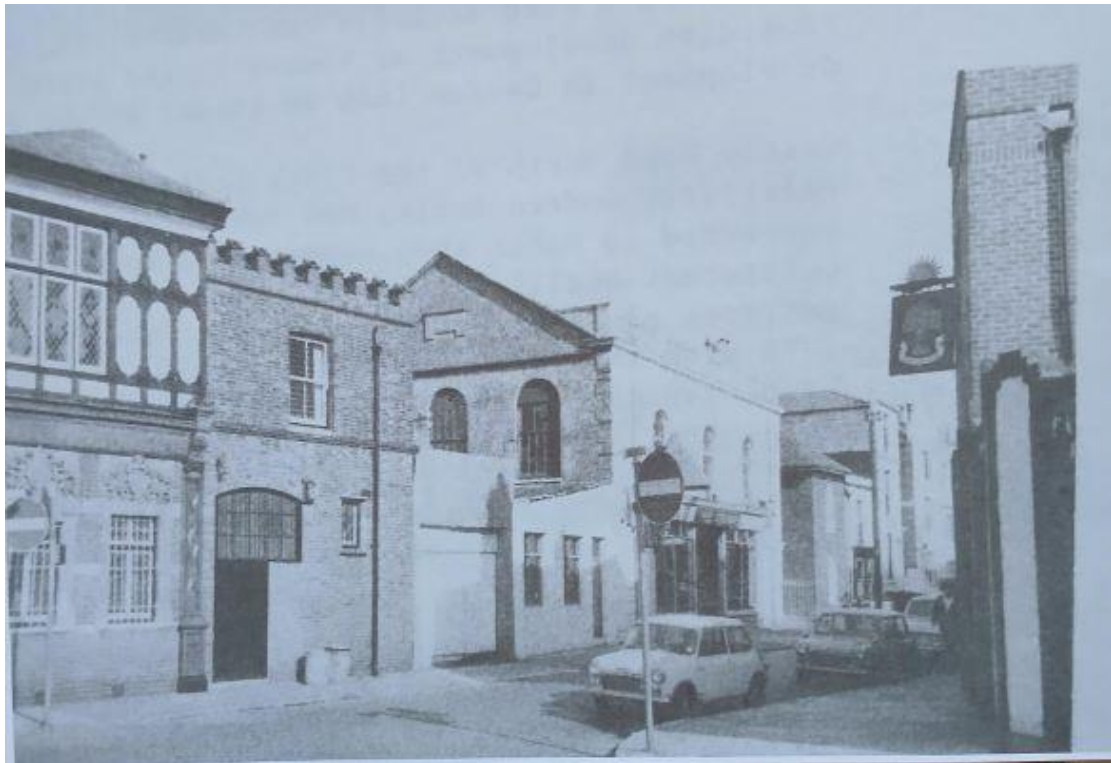
Our first encounter was with the owner of Grade II listed Southsea Lodge, 17A Castle Road (dated 1790). This was along the northern stretch of Castle Road (previously called Park Lane, as it backed onto Croxton Park).

He told us of the damage to the front elevation of the building from bombing, and that the same bomb destroyed 3 houses forming part of Park Terrace opposite; these were rebuilt in 1953, but as 2 larger houses, now numbered 18 and 22.



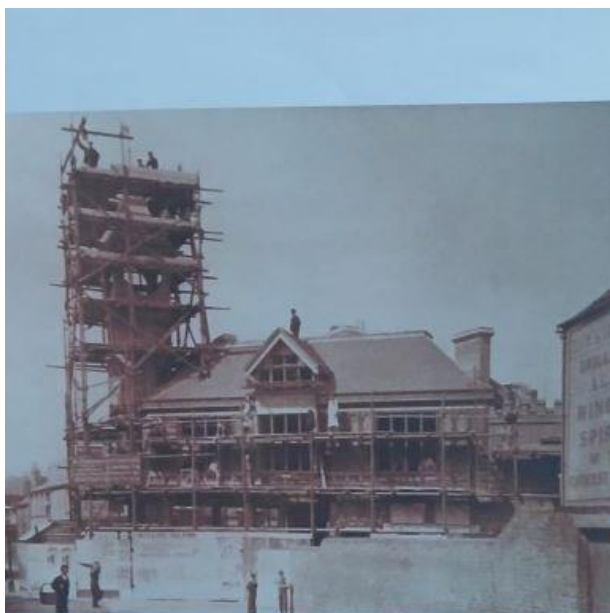
The Ebenezer Chapel in C19. Image Local History Centre.

The Ebenezer Chapel, founded in 1809 for local Baptists, caused much discussion; together with an adjoining burial ground. Known locally as 'the Chapel at Southsea Common', it was only used during C19, after which the congregation attended the new baptist church in Victoria Road South. It was then used in early C20 as the Tower Garage, replaced in 1978 by modern town houses (in Castle Road and adjoining Great Southsea St).



Former Ebenezer Chapel, used as the Tower Garage. Image courtesy of 'Castle Road and Great Southsea Street DACD Historic Buildings Report. 1971'

Naturally, the Clocktower (designed by W J Walmesley in 1903 for Gales of Horndean, but actually sold to Ernest Smith before completion) was a main focus, and several people remembered it as '*Fleming's Antiques*'.



The Castle Road Clocktower, under construction in 1902

SOUTHSEA AND PORTSMOUTH OFFICIAL GUIDE.

Artistic, Antique, and 2nd-hand Furniture, Bric-a-brac.	Upholstery and Cabinet Making in all its Branches.
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ERNEST SMITH.

Furniture Removed and Stored.	The Clock Tower, Southsea.	Old China, Glass, Sheffield Plate, ETC.
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BRANCHES:

GT. SOUTHSEA STREET. 17, CASTLE ROAD.

The Clocktower, images [www.tonywoodhair.co.uk](http://www.tonywoodhair.co.uk;); Southsea & Portsmouth Official Guide. Early C20.

A long-term member of the Society mentioned that there is a caricature on a wall in my property (Number 46), drawn in Victorian times, of a dagger; this was unfortunately covered over with plasterboard by a previous owner. Perhaps one day I'll find it?

There was discussion and mixed feelings upon the recent renovation and conversion to flats of The Brewery, Hambrook Street (locally listed). An architect in the group described the banded brick courses as 'streaky bacon'!



The Brewery, Hambrook Street. 2024.



Portsmouth Society members outside the Box Gallery.

Walking down the southern stretch of Castle Road, Steve Tyacke, of CWF, then kindly showed the group round his premises - which was originally part of Hoar's Dairy - as well as around the adjoining Box Gallery.

The owner of Number 70 explained how the front of his house was demolished by a Post Office van in 1986 and the ensuing difficulty in rebuilding it, (though you would not know the difference, now, to its neighbouring properties).

We had a chat with Alastair at Olive Antiques (based in Brocante), about a previous owner of the shop, Mr Ricketts, who ran a cycle business, and was apparently quite a character!

A group member recalled the 'railway' which carried takings to the chief cashier, in high-class Smith and Vosper, an old fashioned grocers, bakers and confectioners at Numbers 85-87. This must have been pre-1950, when they moved to Palmerston Road.



*Brewhouse and Kitchen, image courtesy Manager Emir.
North-facing.*

We discussed how Myrtle Cottage, Regent Place, was most likely the stables to what is now the Brewhouse and Kitchen.

The pub was originally built as Belle Vue House (1820), with the front elevation, facing north (indicated by the pediment over the doorway), rather than south towards the sea, as you would have expected (see photos).

I have concluded that this is because Southsea Terrace did not exist until 1859, when foundations for the road were laid, so the entrance to the pub would initially have been via Regent Place.



*White Horse Inn, now Brewhouse and Kitchen.
South-facing. Courtesy 'Castle Road and Great Southsea
Street DACD Historic Buildings Report. 1971.'*

Finally, the group was amused by the tale of drunkards being trundled home in a wheelbarrow, when water that had seeped across the swampy Common came up to the doors of the 'Wheelbarrow Castle' (locally listed)! Going by the use of the name 'Wheelbarrow', the practice must have stemmed back to 1780, or even as early as 1661, when 'Wheelbarrow Cottage' was purchased from the Crown.

If any members of the Portsmouth Society have any information about the history or architecture of Castle Road , I would be very interested to hear about it - or of any counter-conclusions upon my findings!

Avril Lewis. April 2024.