

Felixstowe Town Council Occasional Grant Report 2025– Felixstowe Museum



Thanks to a £500 Occasional Grant from Felixstowe Town Council in 2024, Felixstowe Museum was able to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the loss of Lancaster Bomber LM258, HA-Q of 218 Squadron and honour the crew.

Context

At 21.20 hours on August 25, 1944, Lancaster Bomber LM 258 crash landed in the sea just beyond the pier in Felixstowe. Seen flying low on its approach to Felixstowe with both port engines out of action, it circled the town before diving into the sea with two dull thuds heard by residents in the town. Clearly looking for somewhere suitable to land, the pilot deliberately chose to put the plane down in the sea in order to protect Felixstowe. All seven crew members were killed. A heroic sacrifice of a young RAF crew.

The Grant

The grant enabled Felixstowe Museum to:

- host a commemorative service on Felixstowe Town Hall steps in conjunction with Cllr David Rowe Mayor of Felixstowe, over 100 people attended
- arrange a wreath to be laid at sea, at the crash site via Coastal Patrol & Rescue
- produce a limited edition A5 Commemorative Flyer for Felixstowe residents
- produce a learning pack for Felixstowe School who undertook a project during summer school, producing drawings of the aircraft and poems dedicated to the crew
- research the crew and locate their graves, contacting relevant authorities who laid the A5 flyer and a wreath at each of the graves. The Mayor of Felixstowe laying a wreath at the grave of Flight Engineer Glyn Davies Mathias RAF, aged 25 years
- undertake research to find living relatives of the crew. Relatives of Flying Officer Charles Bryce Oxenham, RNZAF, aged 20 years, Auckland New Zealand were able to attend the commemoration service. Correspondence and photos shared with family in New Zealand.

- share the commemoration with Bomber Squadron and John Constable Reeves family (artist of a painting donated to Felixstowe Museum, printed on the A5 commemorative card)
- extend the Lancaster Bomber display in Felixstowe Museum, including photos & back stories of the crew, pieces of the plane recovered, letters to and from family 1944 , map of the crash site etc
- host a special museum visit for the family of Charles Oxenham and Station Warrant Officer - RAF Honington

