

Holding Back the Tide

At Hollytrees Museum Colchester

On display 10th October 2009 – 3rd January 2010- **Free Admission**
Open Mon to Sat -10am - 5pm and Sunday 11am - 5pm

The latest exhibition at Hollytrees museum is collaboration between Coastnet and Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service. Coastnet has been working to increase awareness of the changes in cultural and natural heritage of the East of England coast over the past 50 years. Inspired by oral history interviews which record people's experiences of living by the coast, this exhibition highlights the significance of the East Anglian coastline and its impact on the people who live near it.

Catherine Newley, Assistant Curator of Community History Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, explains how Colchester's collections are accompanying these fascinating oral histories. "Visitors to the exhibition can not only listen to people's experiences of living by the coast but see objects and pictures associated with it too. The objects on display focus on the impact of the coast on the residents of Colchester Borough, from fishing for oysters near Brightlingsea to building ships in Wivenhoe and Rowhedge. We've also got some lovely prints and paintings inspired by the coastline.

Plus there's even a chance to build your very own origami boat!"

Objects on display include some ship models, oysters, some mud splasers for walking on the mud at Mersea and a full-size ship's figurehead

Many people don't think of Colchester as being much of a coastal place, but in fact, whole communities in the borough have relied on its proximity to the sea for their trades. Shipbuilding was particularly important in Rowhedge and Wivenhoe, and the Hythe used to be very busy with cargo ships. Even today, the oyster fishery still relies on the currents in the Pyefleet channel to produce the finest native oysters.

This project links people up and down the East Anglian coast and creates a sense of community and reminiscence about the past, as well as provokes thought for the future.

Holding Back the Tide is a new Heritage Lottery funded project devised by CoastNet and will involve collecting stories, pictures and artefacts from the coastal communities of East Anglia.

Central to the project is a vision for increased understanding and appreciation of the changes to the cultural and natural heritage of the East of England coast over the last 50 years or more. By partnering with Colchester and Ipswich Museums this has created the opportunity to take on the travelling exhibition for Colchester but also add to the exhibition our own social history collection and stories to give the exhibition even more resonance in the local community.

Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

Our vision is to create a museum service that is a source of pride, inspiration and fun.

Marie Taylor Marketing Officer
Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service
Museum Resource Centre
14, Ryegate Road
Colchester
Essex CO1 1YG
Tel 01206 282927
Fax 01206 282925

E-mail marie.taylor@colchester.gov.uk

www.colchestermuseums.org.uk www.visitcolchester.com www.colchester.gov.uk