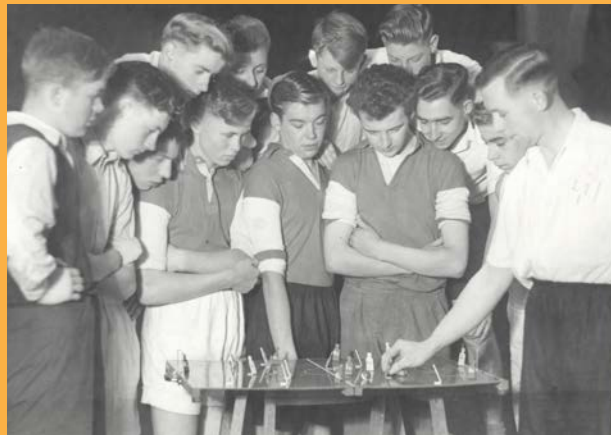


150 years of **History** at East Coast College

eastcoast
COLLEGE





“History at its best can provide a foundation for future activism”

Collating the history of a College is a time consuming and complex activity and maybe misconstrued simply as an administrative exercise related to rummaging through artefacts, collections, or historical documents. It may also be seen in an Further Education landscape which has restricted funding to be a luxurious, “nice to have”.

Capturing the history of the College, in my view, is a much less transactional process and carries much deeper and significant meaning. Therefore, becoming essential to understanding the narrative of our educational institution.

Throughout any history and, in particular any social history, across over one hundred and fifty years, there will have

been significant and long-lasting changes. Colleges by their very nature, including this College, have been through a series of revolutions and evolutions in terms of changing locations, buildings being built and raised, leadership and people, and even in nomenclature. Much of this change is inevitable and has been necessary. A deeper aspect and one that rarely changes is the fundamental purpose of an institution. Within its very DNA rests a raison d'être that is enduring. For this College its educational heart is, and always has been, the direct influence on and the service to its community. Working within and leading a College is a careful balance between providing positive student experience in the “here and now”, and the on-going stewardship of an institution and its longevity. This history allows us to understand the past and starts to create perspective and narrative, cultural identity, and a sense of pride of place.

Acknowledging us being part of something that was present in our yesterdays and will be there in our tomorrows.

The College, as many further education institutions, was born out of the tradition of guilds and apprenticeships that followed industrial revolution. A hundred years ago it was the juncture between the work of industrialists and educationalists to improve skill levels and support our economies and social and cultural development. Fast-forward a hundred and fifty years and today our teachers and leaders wrestle with a new digital industrial revolution and the same issues in a similar socio-economic context in the same geography. Whilst this might cause frustration it must surely provide comfort in the necessity of our College to our communities.

This history of East Coast College captures and documents its victories, and its defeats, its sense of belonging and its sense of place. History at its best can provide a foundation for our future activism. In our place and in our College our purpose has always been to address to social inequalities that have crossed generations.

Ultimately, the value of searching our past in this way allows us to make sense of and proactively direct our future.

Stuart Rimmer
Principal and CEO
July 2020

Principals

1900s

- 1923** Miss Grace Musson – Lowestoft Technical Institute and School of Art
- 1946** Miss E D Varley – Lowestoft School of Arts and Crafts
- 1946** J G Miller – Lowestoft Technical Institute
- 1953** J Parkin – Great Yarmouth Technical College
- 1955** S J Lidstone – Great Yarmouth Technical College
- 1967** A E Boddy – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 1976** R R V Richards – Great Yarmouth College of Further Education
- 1985** Barry Porter – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 1990** Caroline J Neville – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 1990** Kenneth Bailey - Great Yarmouth College of Further Education
- 1993** Robin Parkinson - Great Yarmouth College of Further Education
- 1994** Angeline Nicholson – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 1996** Debra M Shandley – Lowestoft College of Further Education

2000s

- 2002** Gwen Parsons – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 2010** Simon Summers – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 2011** Penny Wycherley - Great Yarmouth College of Further Education
- 2011** Yolanda Botham – Lowestoft Sixth Form College
- 2014** Stuart Rimmer - Great Yarmouth College of Further Education
- 2015** Jo Pretty – Lowestoft College of Further Education
- 2017** David Gartland – Lowestoft Sixth Form College
- 2017- Present** Stuart Rimmer – East Coast College



Grace Musson, 1923



Gwen Parsons, 2002



Simon Summers, 2010



Penny Wycherley, 2011



Stuart Rimmer,
2017 to present



Jo Pretty, 2015



Yolanda Botham, 2011

► Some of the Principals over the years of the College.

History Timeline

1874

The first art classes held at St John's School, Lowestoft

1890

County councils are provided with government funding to develop technical education

1891

The Science and Art School moves into Regent Road and the Town Hall in Lowestoft

1898

A new permanent building for the Technical and Art Institute, shared with the new high school, opens in Clapham Road, Lowestoft

1904

Grace Musson is appointed as Pupil Teacher of Art

1910

Daytime classes start in Clapham Road following the departure of the secondary education to the new Municipal Secondary School in Yarmouth Road - the site of the current Denes High School

1921

The school leaving age is raised to 14

1923

Grace Musson is appointed as Principal of Lowestoft Technical Institute and School of Art

1924

The first maritime classes are held – Navigation for Fishermen

1933

Technical Welfare Occupational Centre is opened for unemployed men

1940

Royal Naval School of Cookery is established

1941

The Technical Institute building in Clapham Road, Lowestoft, is destroyed by bombing

1945

Evening Institute classes commence in Great Yarmouth

1946

Grace Musson retires and the Lowestoft School of Art is split from the Technical Institute which is renamed Lowestoft Technical College for one year before reverting to its previous name

1947

The school leaving age is raised to 15

1953

Great Yarmouth Technical College opens in the former Edward Worledge School buildings in Southtown

1954

Great Yarmouth Technical College expands into buildings in Cobholm and Church Road, Gorleston

1954

Lowestoft Technical Institute becomes Lowestoft Technical College

1955

The first sod is cut for the new buildings at St Peter's Street, Lowestoft

1960

Both Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Technical Colleges become Colleges of Further Education

1965

The St Peter's Street buildings are completed and opened. The Lowestoft School of Art merges with the College of Further Education

1973

Russell Report recommends the expansion of non-vocational adult education

1973

The school leaving age is raised to 16

1976

Great Yarmouth College moves from being part of the borough council to join Norfolk County Council

1993

Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Colleges separate from their county councils and become independent corporations

1995

The Church Road buildings are closed and all provision is delivered from the main Southtown campus in Great Yarmouth

2007

Both Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Colleges start a collaboration with University College Suffolk (later University of Suffolk) to deliver their degree courses

2010

The Keir building opens at Great Yarmouth College

2011

Lowestoft Sixth Form College opens as a replacement for Benjamin Britten, Denes and Kirkley High Schools' sixth forms

2011

The Survival Tank opens at Lowestoft College

2013

The participation age for being in education or training is raised to 17

2015

The participation age for being in education or training is raised to 18

2017

Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Colleges merge to form East Coast College

2018

Lowestoft Sixth Form College merges with East Coast College

2020

East Coast College achieved Ofsted 'Good'

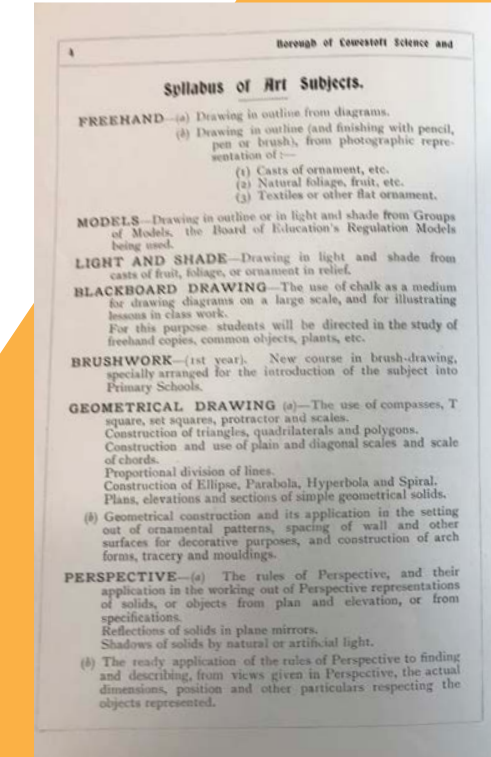
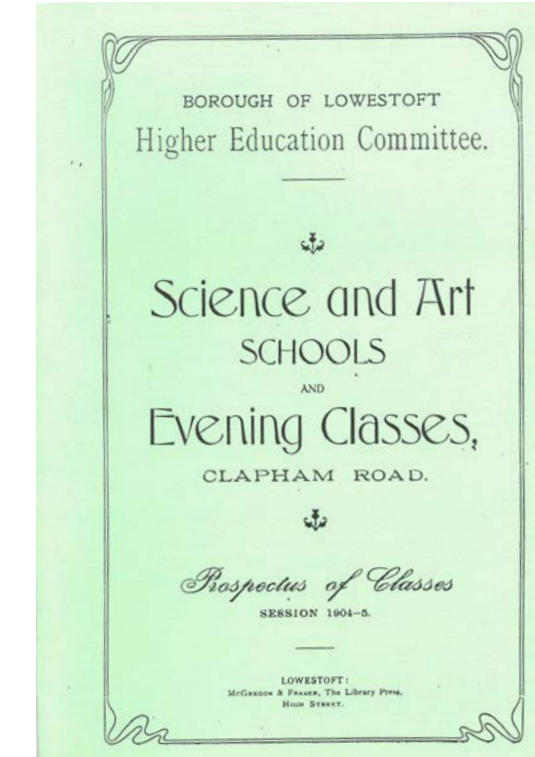
2019

The Energy Skills Centre opens on the Lowestoft campus

1900s

During the early years of its operation the Clapham Road building was jointly used by the School of Art and a secondary school during the day. When the new Municipal Secondary School opened in 1910 it allowed the School of Art to have full daytime usage of the building.

Among the staff of the School of Art was an Art Pupil Teacher, Miss Grace Musson, who was starting her association with education in Lowestoft which lasted until 1946.



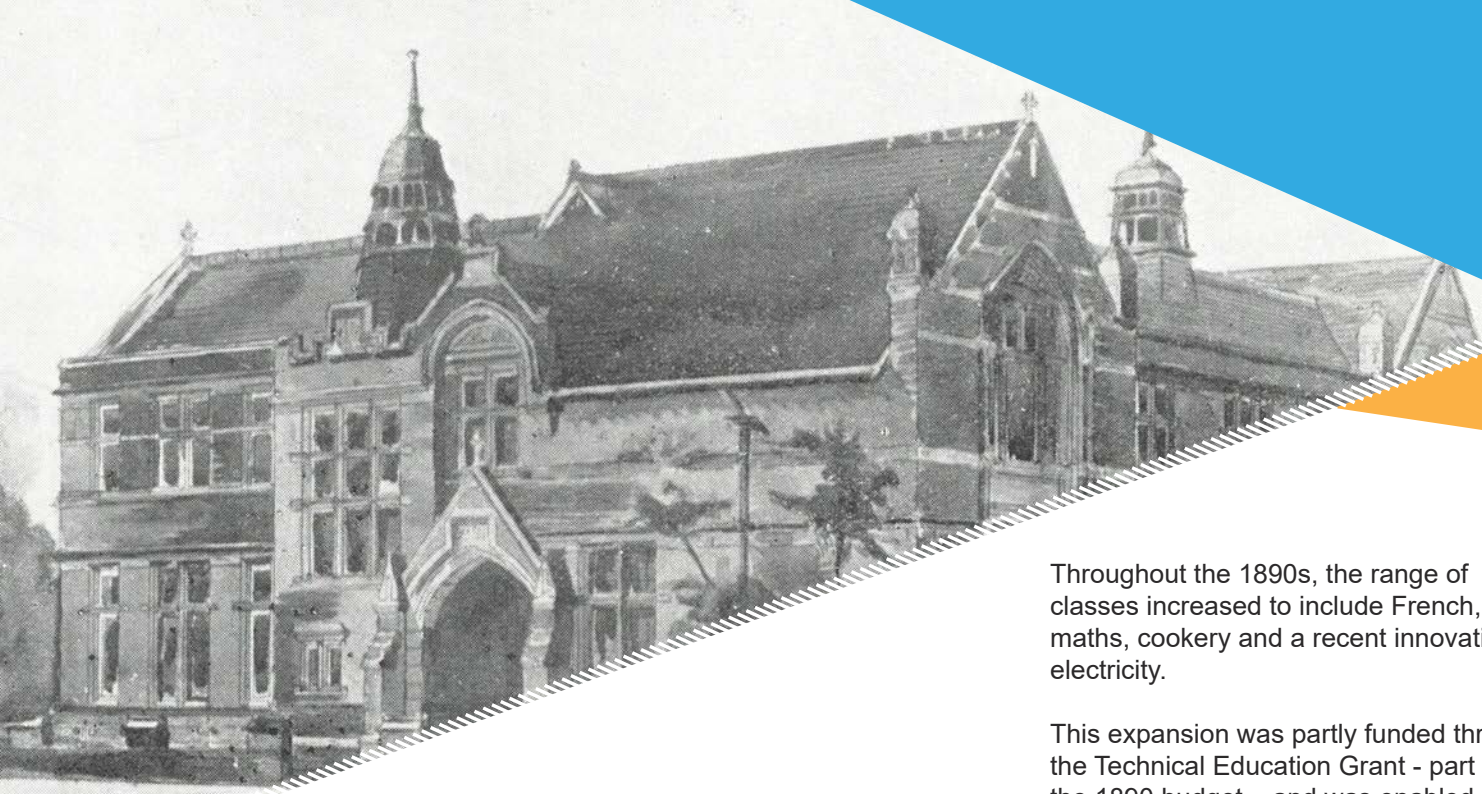
School of Art.

OBJECTS OF SCHOOL OF ART.

The objects of the School of Art are to impart systematically, with due regard to the bent and capacity of individuals, a knowledge of the Theory, Principles and Practice of Art, with a view to its application by Manufacturers, Designers and Craftsmen; to form a sound and comprehensive basis for the study of its pictorial and decorative branches, and to instruct those who desire to make a knowledge of Art a part of their general education.

Students are prepared for the various Examinations in Art.

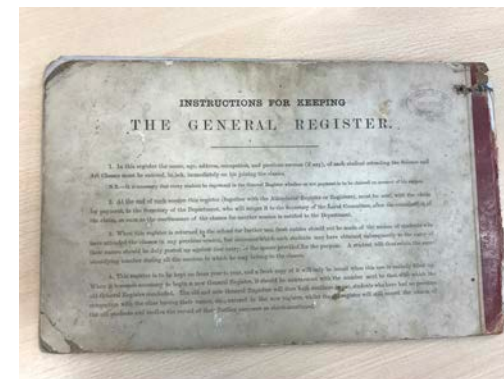
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Throughout the 1890s, the range of classes increased to include French, maths, cookery and a recent innovation, electricity.

This expansion was partly funded through the Technical Education Grant - part of the 1890 budget – and was enabled by an increase in excise duty of 6d on a gallon of spirits.

During this time courses were being held in a number of locations throughout Lowestoft. The additional funding allowed a central base to be opened in 1898 in a new building in Clapham Road as the Technical Institute and Art School.



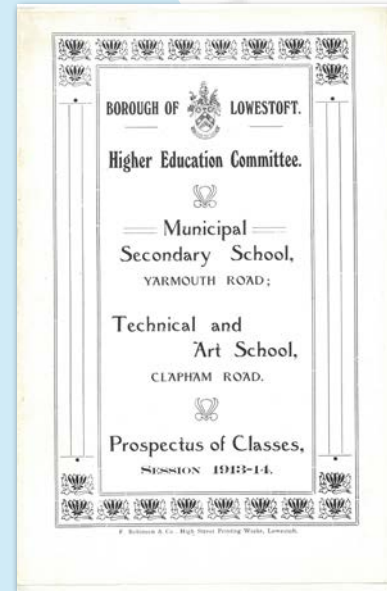
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Further education in Lowestoft can be traced back to 1874 when evening art classes started operating from the St John's School.

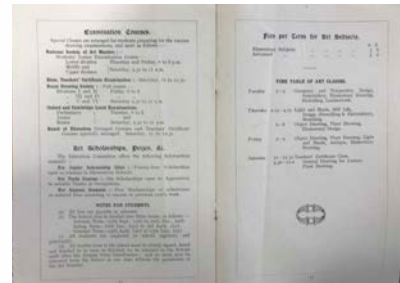
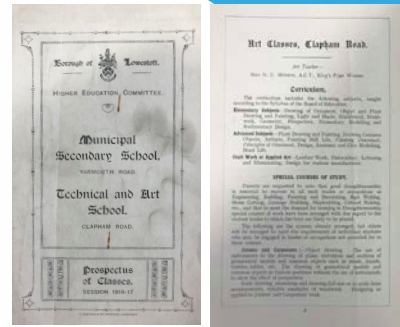
By 1891 the subjects offered had increased to include a range of science classes together with navigation and astronomy – subjects of interest and value to local fisherman.

1870-1890s

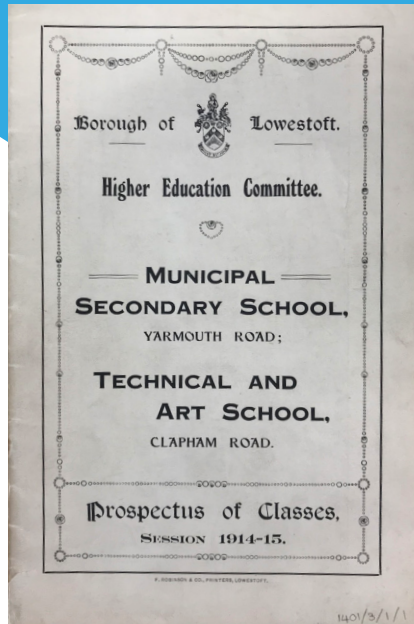
The range of subjects offered as evening classes had widened by 1913/14 to include cardboard modelling, millinery, navigation and German with 278 students enrolled.



Evening Classes.		TIME TABLE.
DAY.	TIME.	SUBJECT.
Monday	7.15-8.15	Machine Construction and Drawing
	7-8.30	Battery
	7.30-9	Cardboard Modelling
	8-9.30	French (Elem.)
Tuesday	7.30-9	General Elementary Science
	7.30-9	Commercial Arithmetic
	7.30-9	Preparatory or Continuation Classes for Boys
	7.30-8.30	Geography
Wednesday	7-9	Millinery
	7.30-9	French (Inter. and Adv.)
	7-8.15	English, including Commer. Corres. (Elem.)
	8.15-9.30	English, including Commer. Corres. (Inter. and Adv.)
Thursday	7.15-8.15	Building Construction
	7-8	Magnetism and Electricity (Elem.)
	7-8.30	Preparatory or Continuation Classes for Girls
	7.30-9	Practical Chemistry
Friday	7.30-9	Practical Plane and Solid Geometry
	8.15-9.15	Ap. Mechanics, Machines & Hydraulics
	8.15-9.15	Strength of Materials
	7.15-8.15	Practical Mathematics (Elementary)
Saturday	7-9	Navigation
	7-9	Cookery
	7.30-9	Preparatory or Continuation Classes for Boys
	7-8.30	Elementary Mathematics
Sunday	8.15-9.15	Shortland (Elementary)
	7-9	Book-keeping (Inter. and Adv.)
	7-9	Draughtsmanship
	7.15-8.15	Practical Mathematics (Advanced)
Monday	8.15-9.15	Applied Mechanics (Advanced)
	7-9	Navigation
	7-9	Woodwork
	7.15-8.15	Builders' Quantities
Tuesday	8.15-9.15	Architectural Drawing and Design
	7-8.30	Preparatory or Continuation Classes for Girls



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The prospectus for the 1914/15 year details a full programme of classes, despite the First World War having started in July 1914. Subjects included French and German though it is unknown if these were arranged as a preparation for soldiers going to war.

There was also the potential for classes to be started to enable 'Boy Scouts to obtain certain Proficiency Badges if assurances of adequate support are received.' The Boy Scout movement was in its infancy, its popularity having grown quickly after 'Scouting for Boys' was published by Robert Baden-Powell in 1908.

In the later years of the war there was a reduced programme of classes. These included art classes which were offered three evenings a week along with Tuesday afternoon and Saturday morning, and outdoor sketching classes which were held during the summer term. Draughtsmanship courses were also offered for various trades and occupations including joiners and carpenters, painters and decorators, wood and stone carvers and printers. These courses appear to have been aimed at boys who were leaving school and were too young to join the armed forces.

By 1916 Grace Musson had been promoted to Art Teacher at the School of Art.

1920s

In 1923, Grace Musson, who had joined the School of Art nearly 20 years earlier as a Pupil Teacher, who can be seen to the right with navigation students, was appointed as Principal of the School of Art and Technical Institute, a position she was to hold until 1946.

This new role will have included revitalising the curriculum as in 1922 it was reported that only 27 students enrolled with the Technical Institute. This would have had to be done against the background of a country still trying to recover from the war. There was a period of high unemployment with economic and industrial decline and locally a slowly declining fishing industry.

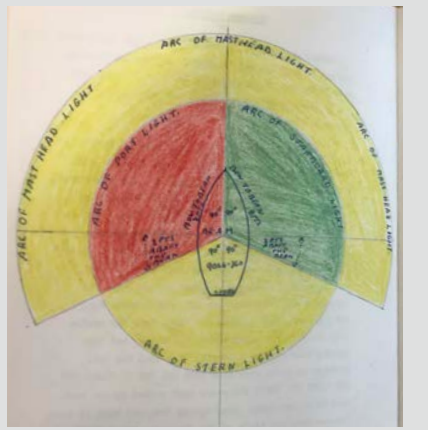
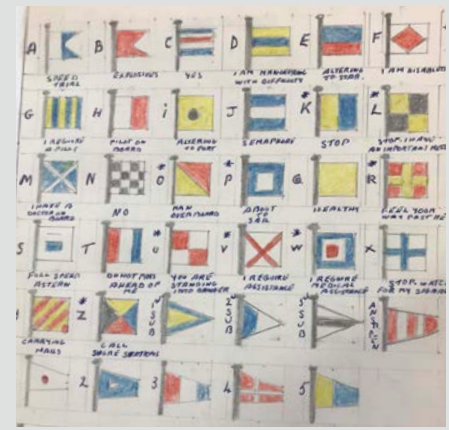
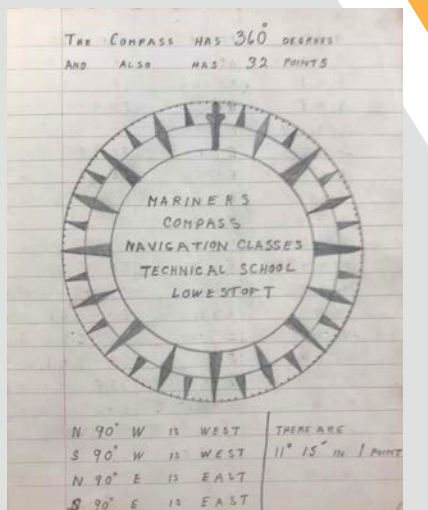
1924 marked the start of the ongoing relationship with maritime education through the commencement of day classes in Navigation for Fishermen, led by Captain Harry Balls.

The curriculum continued to broaden and a letter to local employers in September 1926 highlighted how the window display class was being further developed and a shop window had been installed for the class to use.

commercial course together with vocational education for potential RAF mechanics, telegraph messengers, electrical engineers, pharmacists, butchers, grocers, shipwrights and domestic staff.

Private schools were also invited to send their pupils to study subjects such as art and science at the Technical Institute with the newly equipped science laboratory able to offer 'training up to an advanced standard in chemistry, physics and botany.'

By the end of the decade the range of 'Courses of Instruction' offered by the Technical Institute had broadened to include a three-year



1910s

1940s

Grace Musson developed the Institute throughout the 1930s including planning a cookery course targeted at those catering for summer visitors, which can be seen in her 1931 annual report. Given that this was written during the great depression with high unemployment, public sector wage cuts and a recent steep increase in income tax, it was either a highly optimistic view that tourism would boom the following year, or simply a desire that any visitors should get value for money from their hard earned pounds

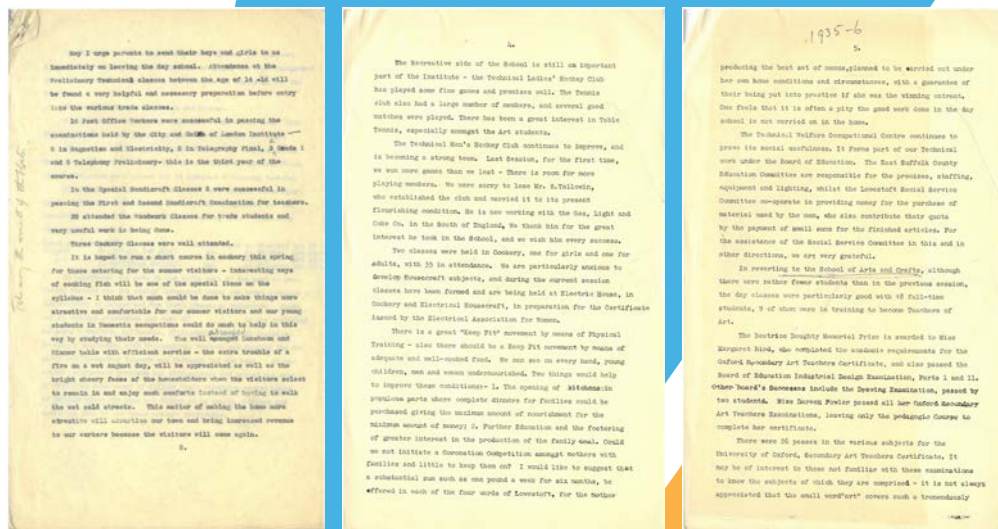
In 1933 the country was affected by high unemployment and Lowestoft was no exception. While the Technical Institute offered courses, the fees were unaffordable for many men and so it was decided to open a Technical Welfare Occupational Centre. The aim of the centre was to give men something to do to occupy their day and to provide a sense of purpose in their life. Their days were spent mending shoes and repairing household items. The centre was open for four years and closed in 1937 when the unemployment rate had fallen enough to mean it was no longer needed.

Grace Musson's 1936 annual report described both her proposals to address local people's undernourishment through a forerunner of today's foodbanks and a prize scheme for mothers to develop menus for use in the home which would be publicised to those in similar circumstances.

There was a need for diversification in courses offered. Enrolments were down as men had, as noted in the 1935 inspection report, 'been compelled by necessity to return to sea to follow the herring.'

One area of strength for the Institute was window dressing courses. Started in the 1920s, these had grown in stature and in 1935 a summer school was held.

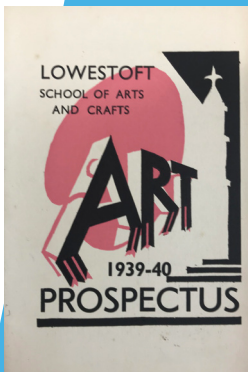
The influence of contemporary trends in art can be seen in the prospectus of the School of Arts and Crafts and the prize distribution programmes during the 1930s.



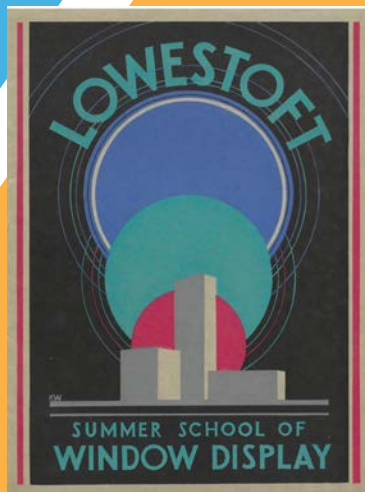
1931 Annual Report

1936 Annual Report

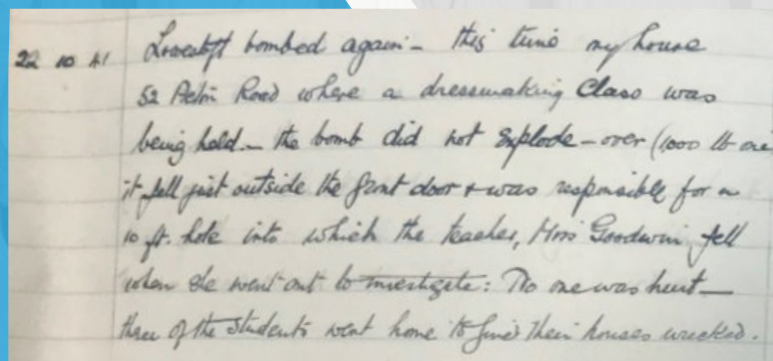
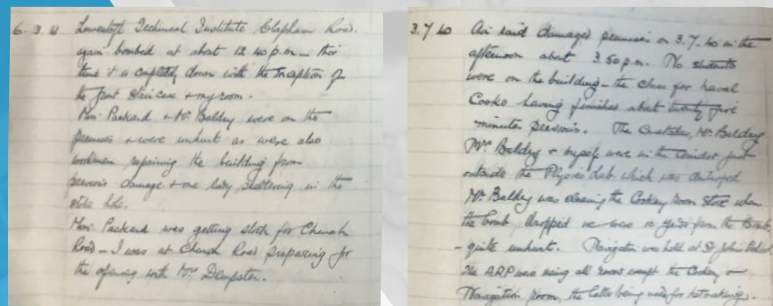
1936 Annual Report



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Extracts from Lowestoft Institute's logbook written by Grace Musson
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Trainees at the Royal Naval School of Cookery



The Technical Institute suffered badly from the bombing of Lowestoft in 1940 and 1941 and the main building in Clapham Road was destroyed in two air raids. Despite these problems, the College continued to offer a range of courses in various premises in the town.

One such class in dressmaking, being held at Grace Musson's house, was disrupted by a bomb landing outside her front door, as recorded in the Institute's logbook. Fortunately, the teacher, Miss Godwin, was unhurt when she fell into the hole while investigating what had happened.

In 1940, at Grace Musson's suggestion, the Royal Naval School of Cookery - part of HMS Europa which took over much of Lowestoft for the duration of the war - was established in an empty Lowestoft primary school with 11 teachers and 160 trainees at any one time.

The training kitchens were installed in classrooms and were equipped in the size and style of a trawler galley, including a coal fired range as found on most trawlers. The five-week course involved trainees being instructed in cooking a complete daily set of meals in as near as possible a replica of the environment they would encounter when at sea. The menus were designed to use available ingredients for familiar and nutritious meals. As the trainees lived in the school buildings and ate what they had cooked themselves, there was an incentive to learn quickly how to cook.

In 1945 evening classes commenced in Great Yarmouth – the forerunner of Great Yarmouth Technical College. Once the war was over the Technical Institute and School of Art were separated. New Principals were appointed with Grace Musson retiring in April 1946 after over 40 years' service - the final 23 of which had been as Principal. Her final entry in the Institute's logbook records the day she handed over the keys to her successor.

1930s



The Colleges continued to grow and in 1953, Great Yarmouth Technical College started operations from Southtown in the old Edmund Worledge School premises in Litchfield Road. It was still equipped with the primary school furniture. These buildings, though better equipped, were still in use by the College for the next 60 years.

On the night of 31st January 1953, the East Coast from Lincolnshire to Essex was hit by a devastating flood from the North Sea. It caused huge damage and the loss of over 300 lives on shore and over 200 at sea, including the nine crew of the Lowestoft trawler, Guava.

The Lowestoft Navigation section which had relocated to the former Central School buildings in Herring Fishery Score was one of over 400 buildings in the town to suffer extensive flooding. It was able to reopen, unlike many of the surrounding buildings on the Beach Village which were damaged beyond repair.

Throughout the 1950s, Great Yarmouth Technical College continued to expand with construction, engineering and hairdressing departments opening at Cobholm and secretarial and business studies departments in Church Road, Gorleston.

The Colleges, as from 1951, were also able to offer the new GCE 'O' and 'A' Level courses, particularly to

those students who had left their secondary modern school at the then school leaving age of 15, without any qualifications.

Whilst the minimum school leaving age was 15, it was not possible to start an apprenticeship until the age of 16. To prepare students for their apprenticeship, one-year pre-apprenticeship courses ran in subjects such as building and fishing. These courses ran until the school leaving age was raised to 16 in 1972.

In Lowestoft, the College was still operating from several buildings around the town and it was recognised that a building programme was needed to unify all provision on one site which was equipped with up-to-date facilities. St Peter's Street was identified and in 1955 a project which would take ten years to complete was started.

In 1955 the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was concerned that the UK was going to be left behind by advances in science and technology in the Soviet Union. As a result, the government allocated £100 million for the development of technical education, a portion of which was used for the Lowestoft redevelopment.

Sporting activities formed an important part of college life for students and staff and the Colleges not only played other Colleges but had teams in local leagues.



Navigation School Students



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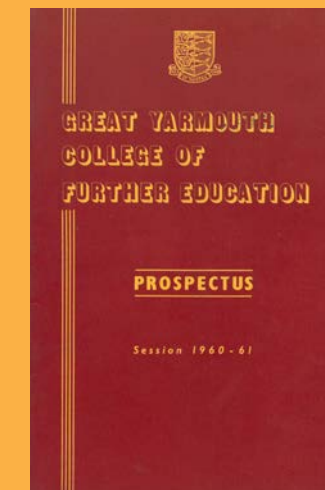
1960s



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The start of the 1960s brought about a change in college names. They were no longer referred to as Technical Colleges but became Colleges of Further Education.

In Lowestoft the School of Art continued to have its own Principal and was semi-autonomous from the rest of the College up until 1965. Somewhat enigmatically this merger was reported as being 'a welcome contrast to the former Institute with its tragic happenings.'

Lowestoft College's new buildings were completed and opened in time for the start of the 1965/66 academic year.

The buildings included a gym with a stage which was used for theatrical productions.

Other new facilities provided for catering, engineering and secretarial studies as seen above.

The Industrial Training Act 1964 brought about changes in how apprenticeships operated. The first year of an apprenticeship required full time attendance at College on a course which had nationally agreed syllabuses and standards for each industry.

The Colleges responded to this by offering off the job training in a range of areas including those particularly relevant for local requirements such as ship building metalworkers and vehicle body building. The latter was held in conjunction with Eastern Coach Works in Lowestoft which was one of the largest bus builders in the country.

1950s

1980s

The redevelopment of the Southtown campus in Great Yarmouth which had been started some ten years earlier was finally completed by 1985, although the Church Road Annexe was still in use until 1995.

This was a more rapid consolidation than had been possible in Lowestoft where the plan which had started in 1955 to locate all provision on one campus had yet to be realised and in 1986 there were still four annexes in operation.

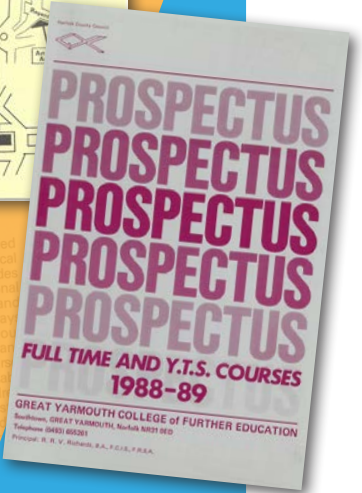
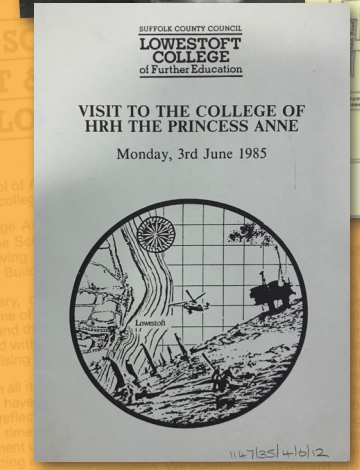
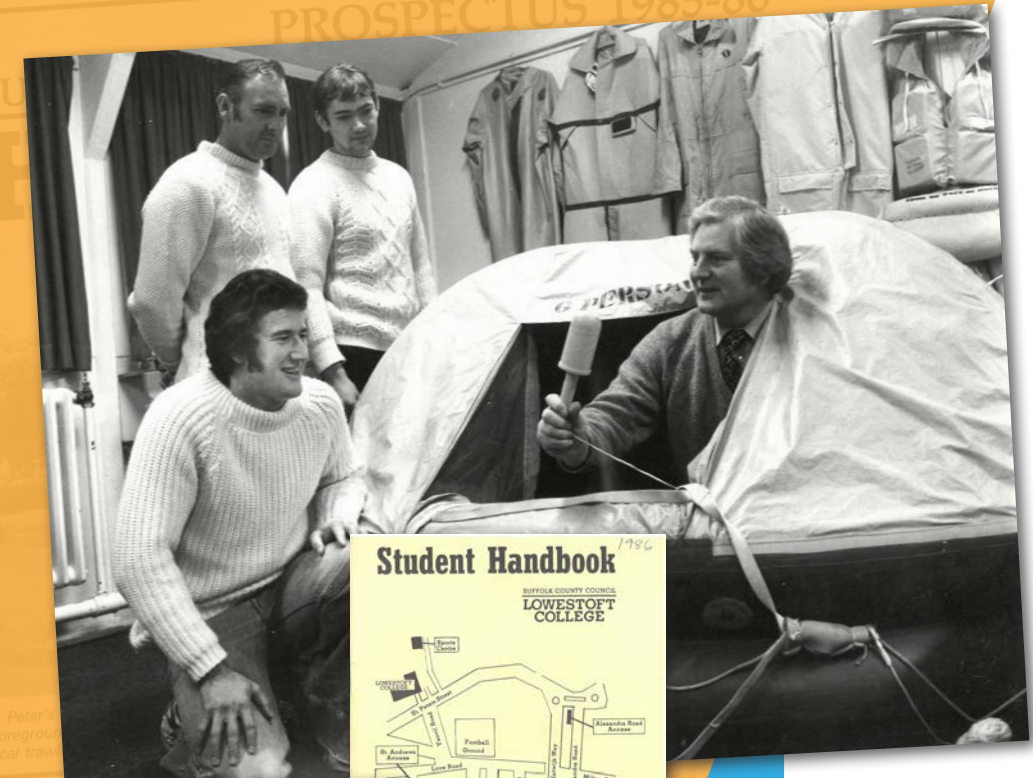
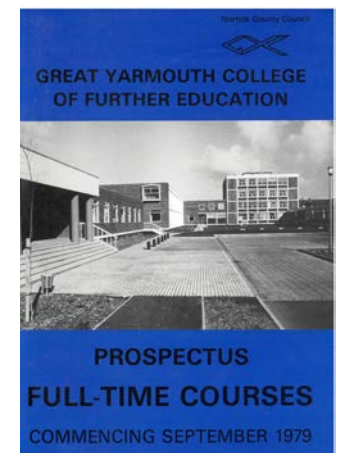
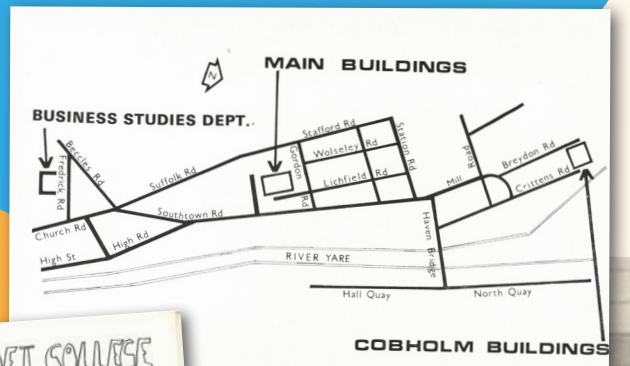
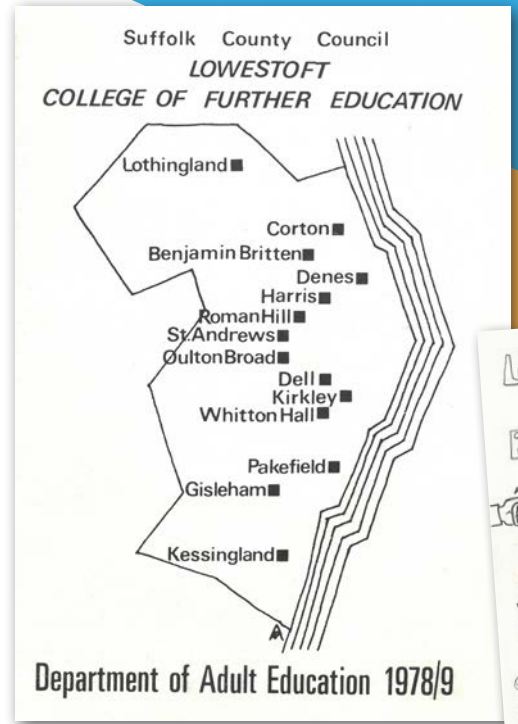
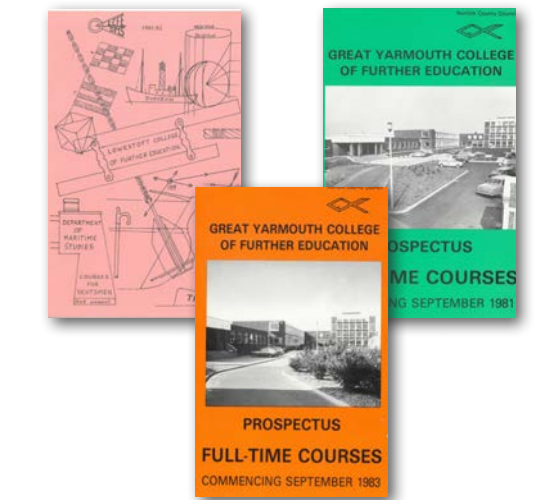
Students in Lowestoft were given a welcome by the Principal at enrolment which clearly laid down the 'house rules' of the College, some such as only allowing smoking in the Refectory and Student Common Room have become dated but others such as the need to attend classes punctually, have not changed over time.

The early 1980s was a time of recession in the economy - nationally unemployment hit a high of 10.8% by the end of 1982.

To address this the government, through the Manpower Services Commission, established a number of training schemes aimed at young people including the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and the Youth Training Scheme (YTS). The YTS started in 1983 as a six month or one-year programme, later extended to two years, aimed at unemployed 16 and 17 year olds. It involved both a

The colleges were heavily involved with YTS provision alongside their existing courses. While Great Yarmouth College went for a tried and tested style of prospectus, only changing the photograph and colour each year, Lowestoft College was more creative in its approach with newspaper and hand drawn offerings in addition to the printed booklet.

The new maritime building at Lowestoft College was officially opened by Princess Anne on 3rd June 1985 and during her trip she visited students on an Offshore Standby Vessel YTS course and an Offshore Survival course. Students awaiting her visit can be seen to her left.



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In the early 1970s, Great Yarmouth College was operating from three sites and the borough council planned significant redevelopment, as can be seen from the map top right, of the main Southtown campus to allow them to be brought together. These plans were partly implemented before local government reorganisation in 1976 resulted in the College's transfer from the borough council's control to Norfolk County Council.

The Russell Report, published in 1973, identified how adult education should be developed. It stated: 'There can be few aspects of life to which education has no contribution to make.'

By the end of the decade, adult education formed an important part of both Colleges' work with Lowestoft's newly formed Adult Education Department taking on responsibility for all delivery in Waveney from 1978/79.

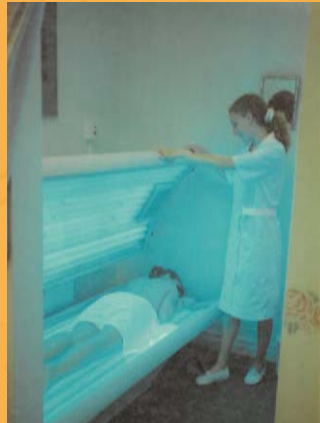
Over 200 courses were offered from St Peter's Street and 14 other locations. In addition to varied options for keeping fit through sports, yoga and dancing (ballroom, old time, Scottish and country), learning languages (French, Spanish and German), crafts, music (guitar and recorder), cookery (basic, advanced, Christmas, continental and hostess), courses were also offered in preparing for marriage and enjoying retirement.

In order to reflect its increased curriculum, the Lowestoft School of Navigation, as it had been known since the 1920s, became the Department of Maritime Studies in 1976.

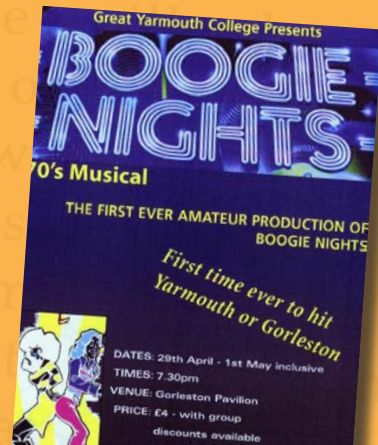
By the late 1970s the availability of photocopiers meant that people were increasingly able to self-publish their own leaflets and fanzines. The Students' Union at Lowestoft College was no exception to this trend and were producing their own publications to raise money for charity during the annual rag week as can be seen above right.

1970s





Return to the Forbidden Planet performed by Great Yarmouth College students at the Pavilion Theatre in Gorleston in May 1998.



Cast of Romeo and Juliet, Great Yarmouth College November 1998

There was a major change to how both Colleges operated from 1993 when they were no longer under the control of their respective county councils and became independent, self-governing corporations.

Higher education arrived in the two towns, Lowestoft in 1991 and Great Yarmouth in 1996 with Higher National Certificates and Diplomas and degrees in conjunction with the Regional University Partnership of Anglia Polytechnic University.

To address a 50% drop in the number of apprentices in employment from 1979 to 1995, the government decided to launch a new scheme called Modern Apprenticeships in 1995. Modern Apprentices, who were employees aged under 25, studied a NVQ Level 3 qualification. As not all potential apprentices were ready to study Level 3, National Traineeships were later established with a Level 2 qualification, as a progression route into an apprenticeship.

One success of the new scheme was to address the previous male domination of apprenticeships with around 48% of apprentices in 1997 being women. The Colleges provided the training element of the apprenticeships through day release courses.

A significant number of these apprenticeships in Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft addressed the needs of the oil and gas industries which had become major employers, replacing the traditional fishing trade by the 1990s.

In addition to the day release courses for apprentices, the Colleges continued to offer full time courses in a wide range of subjects, both at A Level and vocational.

While there had been a decline in shipbuilding in the

area, Lowestoft College still offered a successful boat building course which attracted students from overseas as well as throughout the UK.

Students in Great Yarmouth College's performing arts department put on a number of drama productions, many of which were staged at the Pavilion Theatre in Gorleston. In Lowestoft, 1992 brought the launch of a new course at the Seagull Theatre in Pakefield, which was based on the New York school for performing arts which been made famous in the film Fame.

In Lowestoft, courses in beauty therapy proved popular. The rather clinical setting looks dated to 21st century eyes and the college no longer has a sauna or a sun bed for student use. See top left.

1990s



Both the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth campuses were renovated and refurbished and in Lowestoft the Sir Christopher Cockerell building was opened by the Duke of York in April 2007.

The topping out ceremony for the Cockerell building pictured right had taken place the previous June and a time capsule was buried by the Principal, Gwen Parsons. This development formed the first stage of a redevelopment of the Lowestoft campus which was expected to cost a further £30 million.

The next stage of the plans involved the demolition of the 'wavy buildings' which can be seen in the aerial photograph from 2008. At this time the area now occupied by the Sixth Form was rough ground adjoining the Waterlane Leisure Centre.



In 2001 a survival tank was opened in Lowestoft, with the capability of recreating offshore conditions of wind and waves. While it was primarily used to train people working in the oil and gas industries in survival skills, it was also used for team building exercises by students on a range of courses.

In 2007 both Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft Colleges entered into a collaboration with University College Suffolk, later to become the University of Suffolk, in order to offer a wide range of degree courses from its campuses. Now over 30 degree courses can be 'studied on your doorstep.'

The first graduates from Lowestoft can be seen below.

For Christmas 2009, students at Great Yarmouth College worked with the Norfolk Constabulary and the NHS to develop a number of posters around the dangers of drinking too much alcohol, see below right.



2000s



In 2011 Lowestoft Sixth Form College opened, led by Yolanda Botham, in a new building to replace the Lowestoft 6th Form Consortium which had operated as a joint 6th form across Lowestoft's high schools for the previous five years.

A wide variety of courses continued to be offered across the Colleges, the creative courses often holding shows at the end of the year to exhibit their work.



The ongoing refurbishment of College buildings continued, with Great Yarmouth being given a facelift in 2015, with a time capsule also buried for future generations to discover.



Both Colleges received notable visitors and in 2012 Prince Charles came to see the work of the Prince's Trust in Great Yarmouth and had a go at bricklaying, as can be seen above left. Waveney MP Peter Aldous was also a regular visitor to Lowestoft College, in particular during apprenticeship weeks.

In 2017, following the recommendations of the Local Area Review, the governors of Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Colleges decided that in order to provide the best educational opportunities for the local area, the two colleges should merge. As a result, East Coast College was formed on 1st August 2017.

A year later in 2018, Lowestoft Sixth Form College merged with East Coast College and was able offer a broader academic curriculum in addition to its existing technical and professional training to degree level.

In 2019, the Energy Skills Centre opened on the Lowestoft campus - a state of the art facility for delivering technical and professional education in energy and engineering.

The building, part-funded by the New Anglia LEP, is the home of the East Coast Energy Training Academy which is a regional centre of excellence with both national and international

specialisms. The courses offered were designed with the support of local companies' needs in the engineering, maritime, energy and offshore sectors.

The Great Yarmouth campus opened the East of England Offshore Wind Skills Centre in 2019, a regional training and competence facility that provides support to local people wishing to reskill and gain employment in the offshore wind industry.



Formal launch of East Coast College



Energy Skills Centre



Bridge Simulator



“There are decades when nothing happens; and there are weeks when decades happen” V. I. Lenin

This history has been compiled at one of the most challenging times for the world, let alone education on the East coast of England.

When 2020 dawned, no one envisaged the sudden changes which would affect how everyone lived, including how they were educated.

In late March with the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, it became quickly apparent that the way in which East Coast College provided education was going to change more rapidly in a week or so than it had for decades.

The College closed its campuses on a Friday afternoon and became a virtual educator the following Monday morning, providing education for its students through a range of online technology.

Over 400 laptops were distributed to support students who didn't have access to their own equipment. Charge cards were provided to students in receipt of free meals to allow them to buy food at supermarkets while away from college. Additional support was also provided for the most vulnerable students through individual key working arrangements.

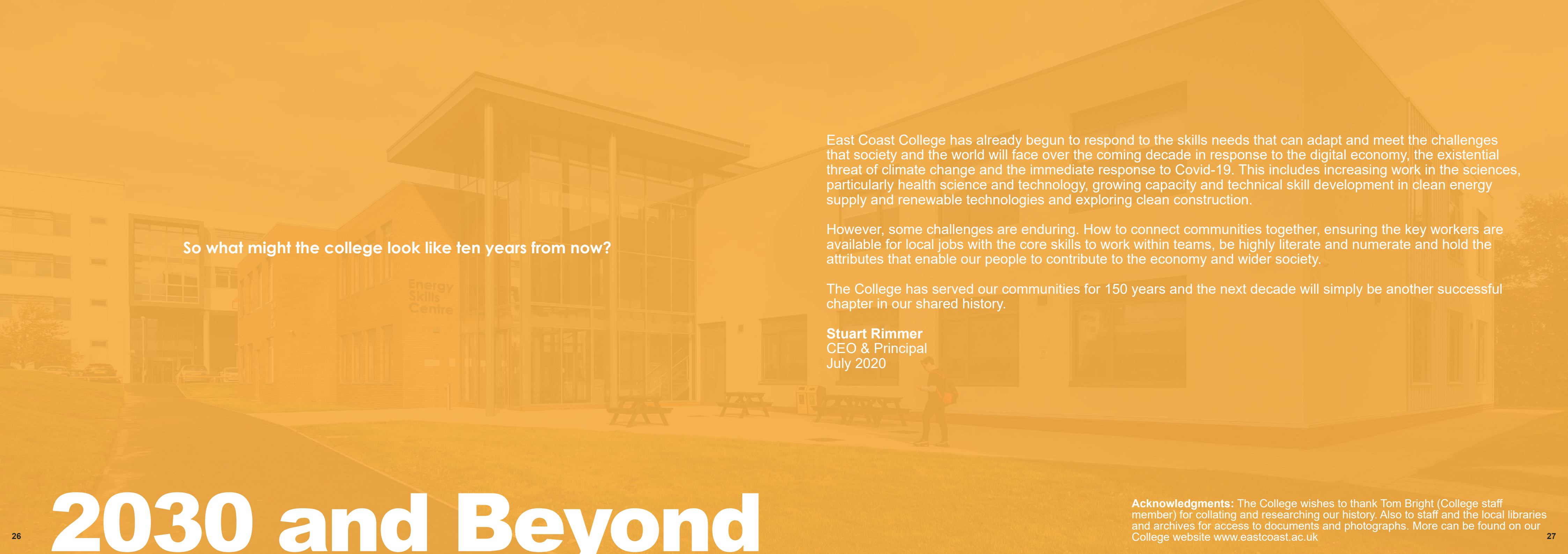
In addition to its educative role, the College worked to support the wider community through donating its stores of personal protective equipment (PPE) to the James Paget University Hospital and local police, while the College's kitchens were used to prepare food for the Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth Foodbanks. A fundraising campaign to raise £2,000 was launched to help those same foodbanks continue operating in a time of crisis, and staff and students volunteered

their time to make scrubs for NHS staff and bake cakes for key workers.

These changes happened just two weeks after the College's latest Ofsted rating was published, making East Coast College the largest Ofsted Good college in Great Yarmouth and Waveney. The rating was a fantastic achievement for the whole College community and one which bucked the national trend for recently merged Colleges.

Despite the challenges of the world and more locally the community, the College could claim the most successful year in the 150 year history in terms of student results, inspection rating and financial stability.





So what might the college look like ten years from now?

East Coast College has already begun to respond to the skills needs that can adapt and meet the challenges that society and the world will face over the coming decade in response to the digital economy, the existential threat of climate change and the immediate response to Covid-19. This includes increasing work in the sciences, particularly health science and technology, growing capacity and technical skill development in clean energy supply and renewable technologies and exploring clean construction.

However, some challenges are enduring. How to connect communities together, ensuring the key workers are available for local jobs with the core skills to work within teams, be highly literate and numerate and hold the attributes that enable our people to contribute to the economy and wider society.

The College has served our communities for 150 years and the next decade will simply be another successful chapter in our shared history.

Stuart Rimmer
CEO & Principal
July 2020

2030 and Beyond

Acknowledgments: The College wishes to thank Tom Bright (College staff member) for collating and researching our history. Also to staff and the local libraries and archives for access to documents and photographs. More can be found on our College website www.eastcoast.ac.uk

