Reader Offer!

Canvey Island - The Way We Were Available for £16.80

The motto on Canvey's coat of arms is, 'Ex Mare Dei Gratia', which means, 'From the Sea by the Grace of God', and the island's relationship with the sea has been the dominant aspect of its history. The film explores the draining of the marshes by Dutch engineers in the 17th century, charts the ups and downs of life on Canvey in the following centuries, and dramatically relives the tragic events of 1953, when the Great Flood came to reclaim the island. This could so easily have been the end of the story, but Islanders are a hardy breed, and the next chapter is perhaps the most remarkable, because, not only, did Canvey rise again, it positively boomed.

In a feature on Canvey at war, the film remembers the heroism of two local men in the evacuation of Dunkirk, the island's role in the frontline of the defence of Britain, and reveals the surprising legacy of the war on modern Canvey.

We also recall the time when the only access to the mainland was by stepping stones or the Canvey Ferry; reveal the Lobster Smack's colourful history of smuggling and bare-knuckle boxing; discover the effect on Canvey of the Hiroshima atom bomb; and look back at the island's heyday as a holiday resort for Victorian Londoners, many of whom liked it so much they decided to stay.

This entertaining journey through Canvey Island's past is produced by Britain On Film exclusively for the Echo. The running time is 50 minutes and it is narrated by Roger Vernon.

The Way We Were Canvey Island DVD
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