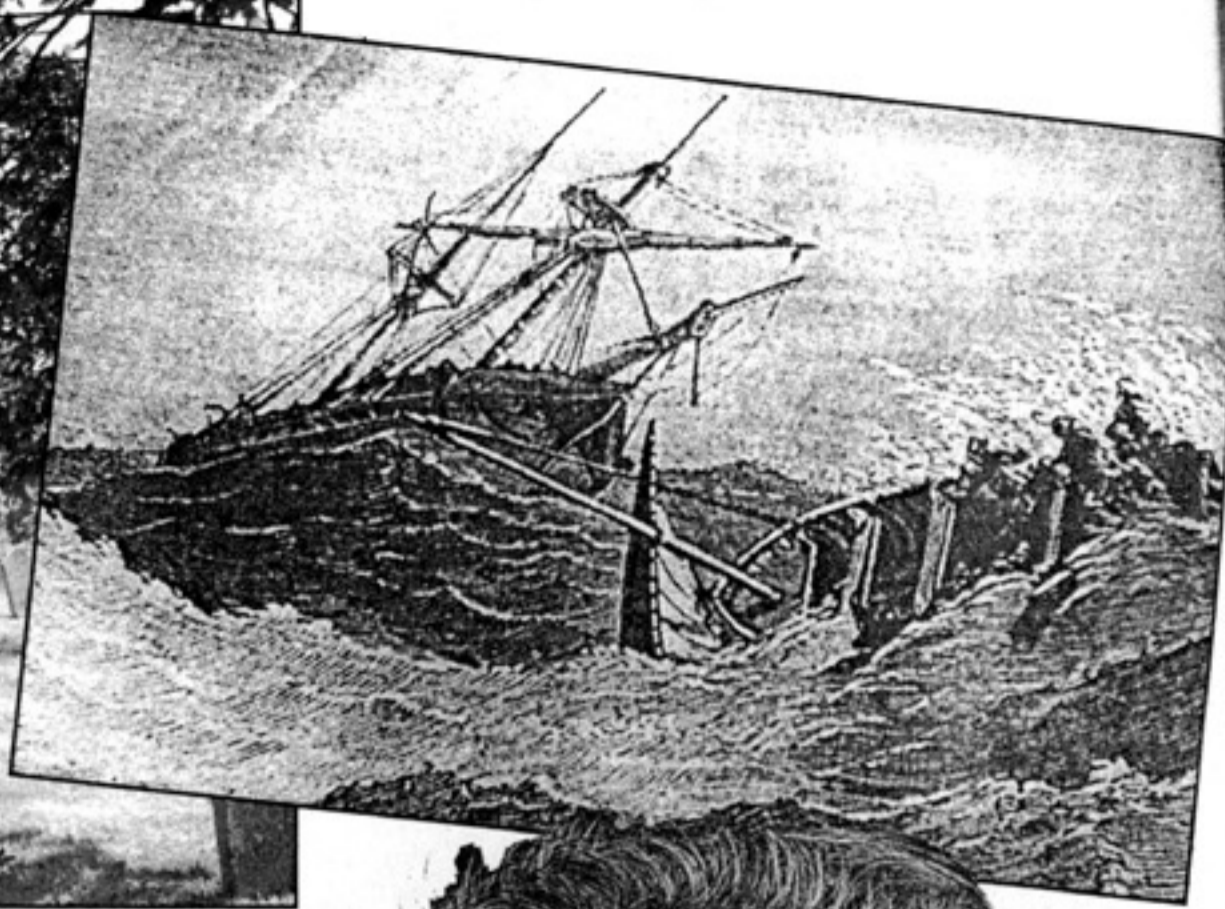
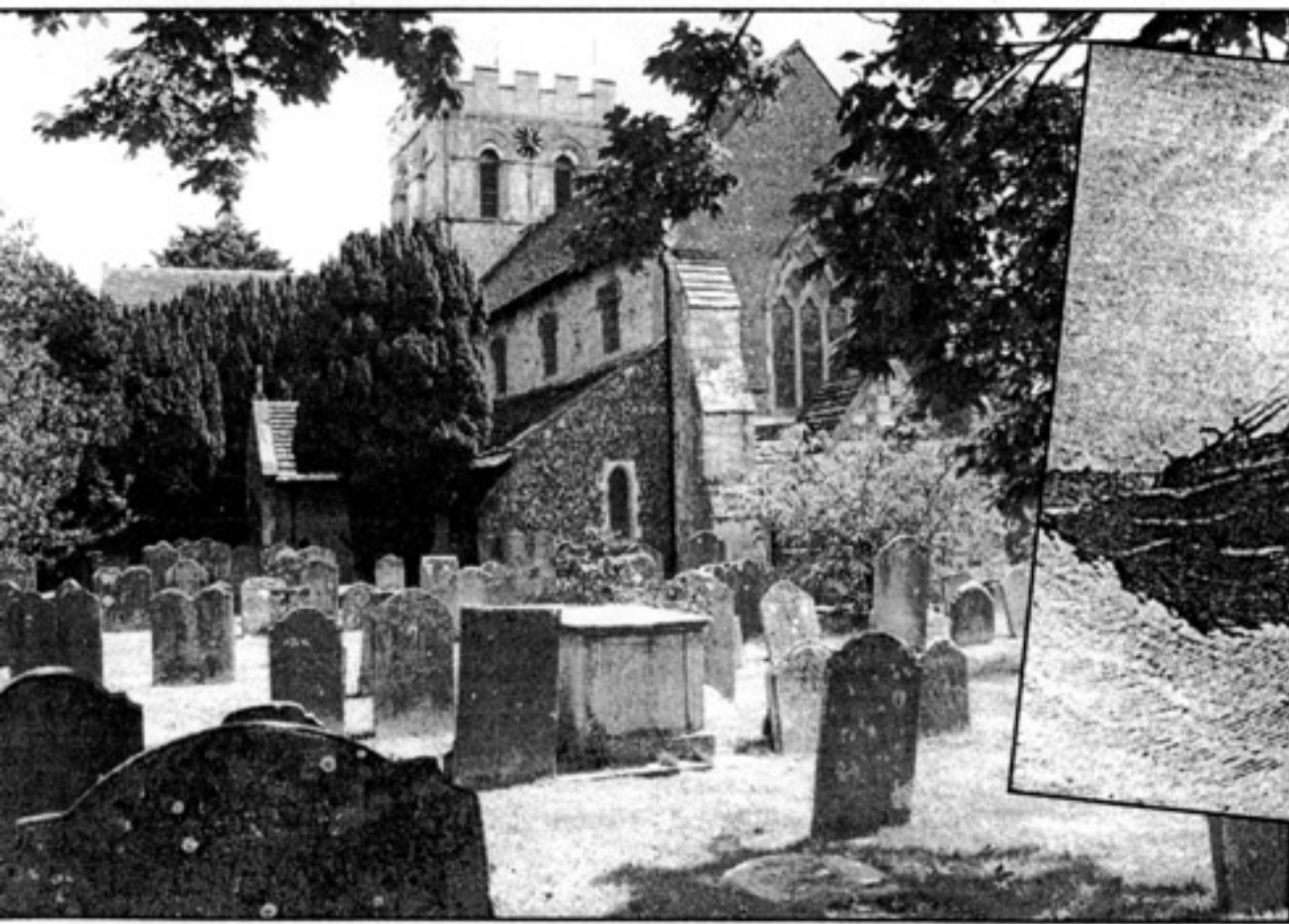


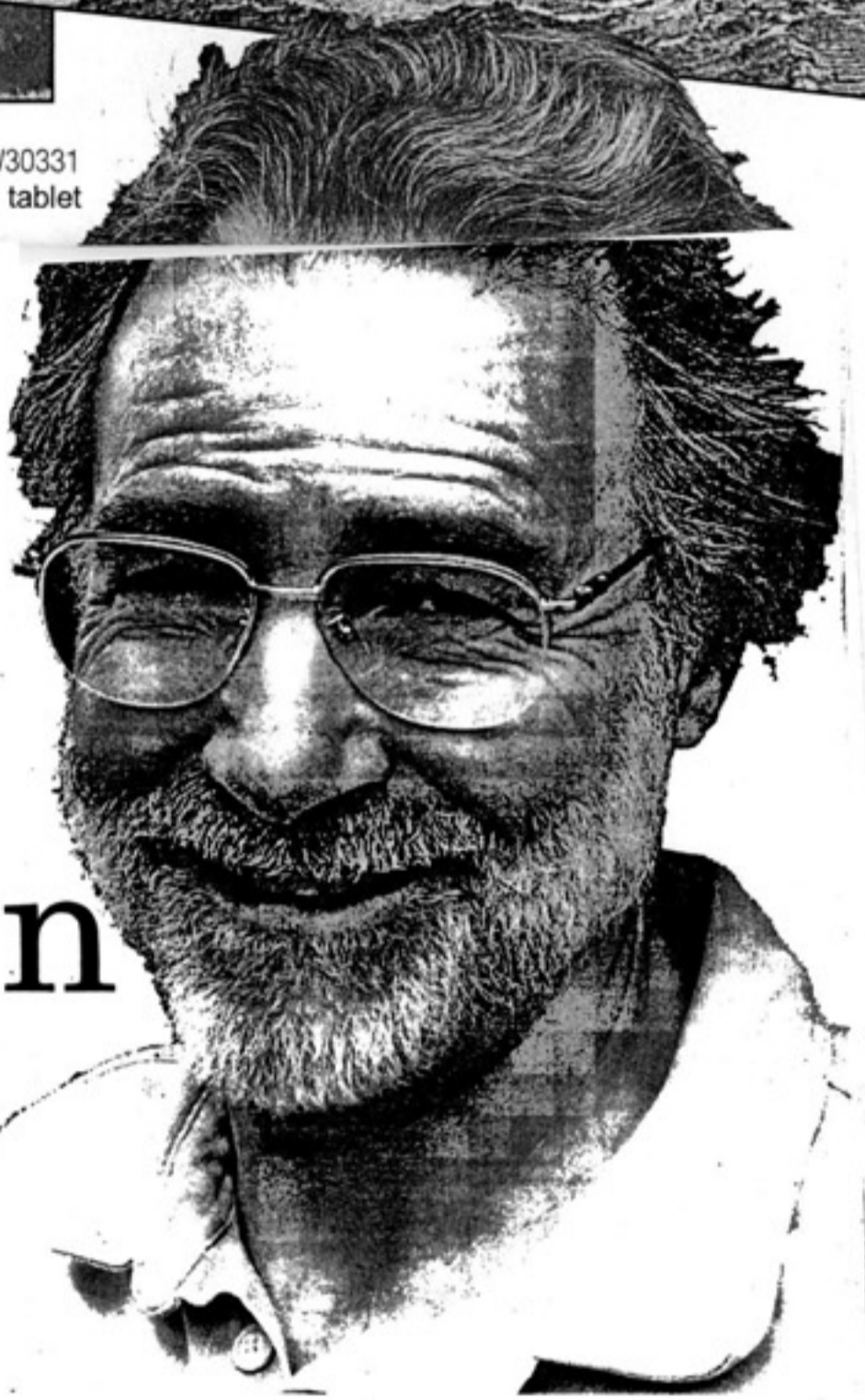
# SEA TRAGEDY: Art project recalls disaster



W30327 & W30331

TRAGIC REMINDER: St Mary's Church, Broadwater, home for an inscribed stone tablet remembering the Brave Eleven and, right, an etching of the disaster

## Killer storm that sent shockwaves through town



W30366 (above) & W30324

THE BRAVE ELEVEN REMEMBERED: Rob Blann and, left, the memorial

A LATE November storm led to an heroic tragedy on Worthing's shore in 1850, when 11 local fishermen lost their lives trying to help the stricken Lalla Rookh.

Now, 154 years on, a major new art project is being developed around the event as a memorial to those who died.

Canadian artist, writer and curator Andrew Hunter is currently developing Lalla Rookh: A Poetic Archive for West Sussex Local Studies Archive in Worthing Library, creating narrative links to other events and stories as a memorial to the men who became known as The Brave Eleven.

It was the early hours of Monday, November 25, when stormy weather along the south coast brought Worthing's local fishermen to the beach to scour the sea for any sign of boats in distress.

Through the biting wind and sea mist, a distress flag could be seen flying from a barque, the Lalla Rookh, with only two of its three

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masts intact. The largest boat that could be launched, a ferry boat nicknamed Lady Lump, was quickly readied and 11 of the most experienced sailors and fishermen in Worthing took to the sea shortly after 8am.

Conditions worsened as the ferry neared its target, but a wave of excitement swept through the assembled watching crowds of townsfolk as the distress flag was lowered from the Lalla Rookh.

The excitement was premature, however, as the signal was suddenly raised once again.

Consternation grew on the beach among the watching fishermen and, taking advantage of a rising tide, they

launched a larger boat to go and investigate. Upon reaching the barque, they could see no sign of the ferry and Captain W. H. P. Hains of the Lalla Rookh con-



firmed their worst fears. All aboard the Lady Lump were lost.

The horrific event sent shockwaves through the town and when the first body was recovered and sent for internment, hundreds lined the road or walked with the procession. The funeral cortege included every fisherman in the town.

A national appeal to help support the 49 widows, fatherless children and dependants of the dead raised £5,000, an enormous sum for the time, and the event directly contributed to the creation of Worthing's lifeboat service.

An inscribed stone tablet in St Mary's Church, Broadwater, is all that officially remains as a reminder of the Brave Eleven, but local author Rob Blann covers

both the event itself and the subsequent development of the lifeboat service in his book, A Town's Pride - Victorian Lifeboatmen and their Community.

Andrew Hunter will be in Worthing from July 27 to 29 to further research the tragedy and is very interested in making contact with descendants of the men who died.

If you are interested in arranging a meeting or have information, items or images relating to the tragedy, contact Martin Hayes, principal librarian - local studies at Worthing Library on 01903 212060 or drop into the library.

For further information about Andrew Hunter's exhibition, collect a programme from your library or visit [www.navigating-history.net](http://www.navigating-history.net) from mid-September.