

I never knew that about Essex

WITH the forthcoming talks on 'Women of Essex' and 'Essex Girls' it seems rather appropriate to recall that Edith Cavell, long before she became celebrated, spent some years as a nursery governess in Steeple Bumpstead. She was born in Swardston, Norfolk in 1865 and after training as a student teacher; she came to Steeple Bumpstead in 1886 to work as governess to the four children of the Rev. Charles Powell. During her time in the village she lived in the vicarage and attended services at St Mary's church; there are memorial plaques in the old vicarage (now a private house) and in the church, and there is a street in the village named after her—Edith Cavell Way. Whilst the Matron of a Red Cross hospital in Brussels, she assisted Allied troops to escape from Belgium and was arrested by the Germans on 15th August 1915. She was brought to trial by court martial on 7th October, found guilty and was executed by a firing squad in Brussels on 12th October 1915. Her words, recorded only days before her execution, have resonated down the years; "Standing as I do in view of God and eternity, I realise that Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone."



News from the Heritage Centre

I GATHER from Wendy Cummin that the recent 'Carnival' display was a great success. Our President, Ted Hawkins, has been asked to put on a display to commemorate the 105th anniversary of 'The Battle of Jutland' (31st May 1916), the display in the Heritage Room will open on 31st May and continue until 28th June. Wendy has also mentioned that leaflets giving information on current and future displays are available from either the Heritage Room or Galleywood library.

GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Comments or contributions to this Newsletter would be welcomed by the editor
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PAST TIMES

GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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www.essexinfo.net/galleywoodhistoricalsociety

A Change of Editor

AFTER nearly nine years and thirty-three issues of *Past Times*, you now have a new editor; David Stacy has finally called it a day and I have taken over the mantle. When I looked through previous copies of *Past Times* right back to Number 1 in 2003, I fully realised what a daunting task I face. It is quite remarkable what varied items of Galleywood's history that David managed to uncover and write about in such an entertaining manner. I will try to maintain the high standard David has set; however, I am a little concerned that I do not have as many contacts in the village as David has built up over the years, as I am a mere newcomer to Galleywood just nineteen years so far. Therefore I would like to ask you, fellow members, to please contact me if you know of a story or a piece of information about the village that you may feel would interest other members, my contact details may be found on the last page of *Past Times*. I know that I speak for all Society members when I thank David for the admirable work he has done during his time as editor. One of my first duties in my new post was to ask David to write about his time as editor, it will be his farewell contribution. Thank you David and we wish you well.

Graham Smith

WHEN Graham asked me to write this farewell piece I thought I should look back to see just what I had written back in March 2003. It so happens that my copy has disappeared into that great void of lost, unbacked-up, never-to-be-seen-again digital masterpieces. Thank goodness that I found a hard copy waiting at the Heritage Centre to be eagerly perused by students of our village history. This is from my opening paragraph: *Anyone who has delved into the archives at the Essex Record Office will realise how the limitations of early record-keeping have allowed much of 'history' to disappear into the mists of time. We have no excuse for such carelessness. Technology has equipped us with the tools to capture every detail of life in our time and we will not be forgiven if we miss out on the opportunity.*

With the newsletter now in the hands of an accomplished writer, I'm certain it will prove to be a greatly improved record of Galleywood past times.

David Stacy

Our next meeting

WOMEN OF ESSEX by Daphne Field and ESSEX GIRLS

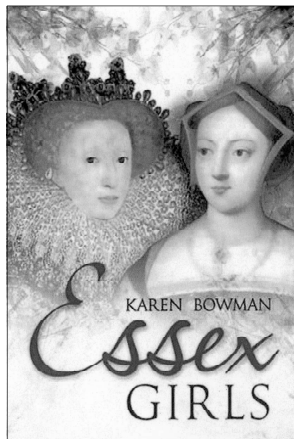
by Karen Bowman



We are indeed very fortunate to have these two Essex ladies to come and talk to us on the above subjects.

Daphne Field has lived in Galleywood since 1983 and some of you may know her. Most of her working life was spent with Strutt & Parker. During the last ten years or so she has worked as a volunteer at the Essex Record Office, been deeply involved in the Prince's Trust and became Vice Chairman of the Trust in Essex. In 2007 she was asked by the Vice Lord Lieutenant to help set up the Essex Women's Advisory Group (EWAG); and as you may be aware in May 2010 she became the Chairman of the Friends of Galleywood Heritage Centre.

Karen Bowman was born in London but became an 'adoptive Essex girl' at the age of ten years. Her love of history and her knowledge of the County have resulted in numerous articles on a variety of historical subjects; she is also a poet of some note. *Essex Girls*, which was published in 2010, is her first book and features many Essex women through the centuries, both renowned and unknown.



I am sure that we are going to have a rather special evening, full of interest and enjoyment, one that surely must not be missed. If you have friends who might be interested in the subjects, please invite them along, they will be most welcome.

**Wednesday 1 June 2011
Keene Hall Watchouse Road at 8 pm**

DATES for your Diary

2011

14 Sept NEW HALL AND ITS SCHOOL by Tony Tuckwell

16 Nov CRIME & PUNISHMENT IN ESSEX
OVER THE CENTURIES Talk by Graham Smith

Familiar Buildings Around The Village

THERE are a number of buildings around the village, which we pass every day but are probably unaware of their history, however long or recent that may be. I intend this to be a fairly regular feature of *Past Times* and the first building I have selected is GALLEYWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Many of you may well recall that before the parade of shops and the library were built, the area was a field, then part of Pym's Farm, and I have been told that the corner where the library now stands, was nicknamed 'Persil Corner' from the amount of washing that was regularly seen hanging on the washing lines!

The library was the last of the buildings along the Parade to be completed and it was officially opened on Friday 10th November 1967 by the Mayor of Chelmsford and a host of Essex Library officers including John Lace, the County Librarian. The first two Galleywood librarians were – Mrs Linda Creed, Senior Librarian, and Mrs Grace Davis, her Assistant – these two charming ladies have generously supplied the information on the library's history and I owe them my grateful thanks. Linda now lives in Writtle but Grace still lives in Galleywood and is a regular user of the library.



On the opening day ninety-two members were enrolled. Both ladies recall how busy the library was in those days, frequently there would be a queue of people waiting for the library to open and Grace recalls one Saturday when over 1,000 books were issued; of course this was at a time before library computers and users had to present their tickets in order to borrow books.

Before the opening of the library Linda was responsible for the small store of books held at the old Galleywood School (directly opposite Keene Hall). This library, if indeed it could so be described, was held in one of the classrooms and for just one evening in the week – Thursday between the hours of 6 to 8 pm – it was open to the public. The books were mostly displayed in cardboard boxes. Linda also recalls riding around the village on her cycle to collect overdue books. It would seem that the incumbent Headmaster was never very happy with the situation and finally the 'library' closed. It was replaced by a mobile library van that parked in the car park of the White Bear Inn on Monday mornings from 9.30 to 10.30 am. Largely because of the day and the early hour of this service, it was not particularly well used. However, the 1960s saw the population of the village grow rapidly and during this time new branch libraries opened at Great Baddow, Broomfield and Springfield and the Libraries Committee decided that Galleywood now justified its own library. Although not a particularly attractive building, over forty years later the library has become an essential and vital part of the village community, it is very busy hosting many activities besides its essential function. Considering the present financial restraints on Essex County Council and especially its Library Services, perhaps we should be aware of the current cliché – *'use it or lose it'!*