

Our next meeting

THE SEABRIGHT FAMILY AND OLD SEABRIGHT HALL

Talk by Christine and Les Whybro



CHRISTINE AND LES certainly need no introduction, they are so well-known to us and their wide and detailed historical knowledge of Galleywood and its past residents is without compare. I am sure that we will be given a fascinating insight into an old Galleywood family, whose name, even today, is so familiar to those of us who regularly pass alongside, or dine in, the pub/restaurant that still bears the family's name.

**Wednesday 12 September at 8 pm
Keene Hall Watchouse Road**

DATES for your Diary

2012

14 Nov THE HISTORY OF SPRINGFIELD GAOL
Talk by 2 Prison Officers - Colin Brown & Mick Tyler

These two gentlemen attended our meeting as guests back last November, when I gave my talk on 'Crime & Punishment in Essex over the Centuries'. I must confess that had I known that they were in the audience prior to my talk I would have been much more nervous!

Colin gives the talk and Mike operates the PowerPoint for the illustrations. They give this talk around Chelmsford and did not require a fee as the Prison Service consider it as a public service.

Also, of course, it is the Society's Annual General Meeting, so we do hope that we will have a good attendance.

Methodist Chapel continued

chapel. There were eight Trustees of the proposed new chapel; their names appear on the conveyance deed of the land; only four could sign their names and others appended their 'Xs'. The small brick-built chapel measured about twenty-five feet by twenty-nine feet and was over fifteen feet high at the eaves with a sharp and pronounced pitched slate roof. The building was erected by Thomas Moss of Chelmsford helped by his two sons and was finally completed in October 1860.

The first service held in the Chapel was on the third Sunday in that month, and subsequently a special Anniversary Service was held each October. The Chapel was not formally registered as a place of worship until 15th March 1861; the certificate was signed by a minister named John Guy of Tudor Place, Moulsham. Unfortunately there was insufficient land left to provide for a burial yard.

In the early days the Chapel suffered some financial difficulties mainly due to paying off the building fund. By 1871 the Chelmsford Primitive Mission in Chelmsford noted that 'The Chapel is in a dilapidated and distressed state and it has been a burden and drag ever since it was built. It has cost this station more to keep it than the society is worth and from the scantiness and poverty of the population is not likely to be any help to us.' However, the Chapel managed to survive all its early financial difficulties. Repairs were made and by 1873 there is some evidence that it was supporting or sponsoring a school, as the Chapel was due 'to be painted and coloured in time for the School Anniversary (end of July)'. Three years later the Chapel was literally 'on the map' as it is clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1876. It now went from strength to strength and in 1916 the Sunday school at the Chapel had twelve teachers (both male and female) and over eighty pupils, it was held both in the mornings and afternoons. Talking to many old Galleywood residents they still have fond memories of attending the services and especially the Sunday school when they were young. It seems rather sad that this Chapel, which is one of the oldest surviving buildings in the village, should no longer be used as a place of worship.

There is now a 'For Sale' notice in place, and I gather, at the time of writing, the sale will be by 'informal tender' with sealed bids invited by Noon on Friday, 24th August; it has been suggested that bids should be in the region of £150,000. However, in July Galleywood Parish Council submitted an application to English Heritage to declare the Chapel a Grade 1 listed building; it will be interesting to discover the outcome of the Council's application.

Our Olympic Torchbearer: Part Two

I asked Ken if he would like to write about his experiences on that memorable day. He has kindly supplied the following along with a photograph of him proudly carrying the Olympic torch.

'My 'Moment to shine' came on a surprisingly sunny evening at Hylands Park on Friday 6th July. After a short briefing I was escorted out to the gates, where the motor cavalcade arrived promptly and the flame was transferred from the mother lantern to my torch and with a small escort of Met. Police runners, I gently jogged the small path to the front of Hylands House where the flame was transferred to the next torchbearer in a process known as 'the kiss'. A moment later with my torch decommissioned and



without a gas canister, it was returned to me to keep as I had agreed to buy it at the £199 price set by LOCOG. The flame had moved on its journey and I could hear the roar as the cauldron was lit. The rest of the evening was mine – except that in the bright white track suit that every torchbearer wears; it seemed that not only my family but everyone there wanted to take a photograph. It really was a proud moment as the first to carry the flame in Chelmsford and if I did not realise beforehand just how special the torch is to people, I have only to see what happens wherever I take it and adults and children alike want to touch the torch and 'be part of it'.

KEN EDWARDS

What's in a name?

THE SOCIETY has recently been asked whether the name 'Watchouse Road' derives from a time when there was a 'Watchouse' on Galleywood Common. The consensus of opinion is that the name comes from the early 19th century and the days of the Napoleonic wars, when there was an army camp on the



Common. The Star Fort was so erected in order for 'watchers' to look for invaders coming from the direction of Maldon; hence it is thought it was originally known as 'Watchers Road'. The illustration shows Watchouse Road in the late 1920s or early 1930s. The Street is the road to the right and it was before Keene Hall was built (1937).

News from the Heritage Centre

WENDY CUMMIN is pleased to report that Volumes 1 -6 of the Ron White archive is now available online, just two volumes to go.

The Centre has recently received photographs and information about Galleywood British Legion which in 1937 became a separate branch of Chelmsford British Legion.

The 'Celebration of Sport' display will close of 28th August and it will be followed by a display 'Family Links Part 2 – the King Family'. Then from the 16th October to 4th November there will be a display on the history of Keene Hall. This will be followed by the 'Survivors of War' display.

The next Community Day at the Centre will take place on the afternoon of 6th November from 1.30 to 3.30pm.

On 16th October Christine Whybro will be giving a talk on 'The Seabrights & old Seabrights Hall'. The talk will commence at 1.30pm and there will be a charge of £1.50.

GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President Ted Hawkins

Chairman Graham Mundy Vice Chairman Graham Smith

Secretary Gillian Parker Treasurer Ken Edwards

Programme Director Ted Hawkins

Committee Madeleine Howard

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

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The Methodist Chapel



FOR ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-TWO YEARS the Methodist Chapel in Well Lane has been an integral part of the religious and social life of Galleywood; it even predates St Michael & All Angels church by thirteen years. However, in July the last service was held in the Chapel.

The evidence of nonconformity worship in the village can be traced back to 1818 when a local farmer, John Keyes, allowed his house on the Common to be a meeting place for services for those who followed John Wesley. Then, in 1850 a young Primitive Methodist minister preached in the open air on the Common and he was so persuasive that a number of villagers were converted to this rather strict form of non-conformity, which renounced alcohol and was 'sparing in the smoking of tobacco'. During the mid-1850s a room in the old racecourse grandstand was used for their small meetings.

In August 1859 a small plot of land at the northern end of Battery Field was purchased for one hundred and ninety pounds with the intention of erecting a Primitive Methodist