

# PAST TIMES

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## GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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[www.essexinfo.net/galleywoodhistoricalsociety](http://www.essexinfo.net/galleywoodhistoricalsociety)

### THE PROPOSED CLOSURE OF GALLEYWOOD LIBRARY.

I cannot think of any news that has caused such an unprecedented public outcry than this depressing news and not just in Galleywood but in other places in the County where a number of other libraries are planned to be closed. Headlines such as *"Hundreds of families backing campaign to save our libraries"* have appeared in the local newspapers and a demonstration group 'SOLE' – 'Save Our Libraries Essex' has been formed with its members being very active in many places in the County and more especially in Chelmsford outside the Essex County Council building.

The Parish Council is, of course, strongly opposed to the closure and then on Saturday morning, 29<sup>th</sup> January it held a Public Meeting in the Heritage Centre to explain its strategy to the proposal. The meeting was very well attended and those present were also allowed to express their deep concerns about the closure. The Parish Council strongly maintain that the Library is a valued part of the community, providing a very wide range of services for both adults and children. Then in early February there was a large demonstration outside Galleywood Library, which was supported by 'SOLE' and a 'Book Raid' was conducted, this is when library users borrow a maximum of fourteen books to demonstrate how well the library is used.

So in historical terms how long has Galleywood had use of a Library? I happened to write a piece on the Library in *Past Times* No 34 – June 2011; and by a very strange coincidence this was the very first issue that I had written and edited! So no less than thirty issues of *Past Times* later the Library is back in print.

The Library was the last of the buildings along the Parade to be completed and it was officially opened on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 1967** by the Mayor of Chelmsford along with a host of Essex Library officers, including John Lacey, the County Librarian. **So the Library is over fifty-one years old.**

On the opening day ninety-two members were enrolled and in those early days there would frequently be a queue of people waiting for the Library to open. I also had been told that on one Saturday over 1,000 books were issued.

Prior to this there was a Library of a kind, which was held in a classroom of the old School, directly opposite The Keene Hall. It was for open for the public for just one evening per week – Thursday between the hours of 6 to 8 p.m. When this so-called 'Library' had to close, it was replaced by a mobile library van, which parked in the car park of *The White Bear Inn* on Monday mornings from 9.30 to 10.30 a.m.

I completed my article (in 2011) with the sentence – *"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'."* Which, in retrospect, seems to be a bit prescient – oh dear!

The deadline for protests has now passed - it was 20<sup>th</sup> February. So perhaps by the time of the next *Past Times* in June the future of our Library will be known?

### NEXT MEETING.

**13<sup>th</sup> March: Essex Railways from 1901: A talk by Adrian Wright.**

I am sure that you recall that in March 2018, Adrian gave us a talk on 'Essex Railways in Victorian Times', so this talk is a natural follow-up. Since 1996 Adrian has lived *Watchouse Road*.

### DATE FOR YOUR DIARY.

**12<sup>th</sup> June: Essex Country Houses, including Audley End: A talk by Margaret Mills.**

### **SOCIETY NEWS.**

At mid-February the membership stands at **84**, which includes **8 honorary members**; **four** less than it was in last November. However, our funds amount to a healthy **£2,370**, which is an increase of **£180** on last November figures.

If you happened to attend our A.G.M. back in November, you will be well aware that **Graham Mundy**, our recent Chairman, has resigned as Chairman as well as from the Committee. Graham was one of the Society's original members and for many years he served in several capacities on the Committee – most notably as Chairman. Therefore I feel that it is only right and proper for us to acknowledge all his sterling work for the Society. We wish to thank you Graham for all your work on our behalf.

### **THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.**

At the end of January the Oral History Project was brought to a close with **47** interviews completed. After a short one day course on interviewing techniques in the March 2016 at the Essex Record Office, the first interview was completed by 2 Project members on **1<sup>st</sup> July 2016**. Each interview was always conducted by two members, one doing the interviewing and the other controlling the recording apparatus. The six Society members engaged in the Project – Ken Edwards, Gillian Parker, Stephanie Troop, John Turkentine, Geraldine Willden and me - consider that they have produced a valuable archive of the history of Galleywood, as well as learning many new facts about the history of the village. All of those taking part in the interviews said that they enjoyed the experience of recalling memories of their early days and families. Also, of course, they and their families have their own CD and a written resume to remember the occasion. These will also be available to the public in both the Heritage Centre and subsequently at the Essex Record Office.

In order to show their appreciation of all those persons who were interviewed, the Project Team have arranged a Celebration Tea in The Keene Hall on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May between 2.00 – 4.00 pm**. The

invitations have already been sent out and each person is allowed to bring a guest with them.

### **PLAQUE FOR TED HAWKINS.**

A plaque, which was funded by the Society, has been erected in the Heritage Centre in fond memory of Ted Hawkins. The wording reflects Ted's enduring interest in the races on the Common and the celebrated horse *Golden Miller*. The plaque reads –

*“Galleywood Historical Society  
In Memory of  
Ted Hawkins (1925 – 2016)  
and his interest in  
GALLEYWOOD RACECOURSE  
and the Grand National champion horse  
GOLDEN MILLER  
who also ran there”.*

Ted was one of the founder members of the Society and for many years its President and Programme Director arranging the many and varied talks enjoyed by our members. The Plaque is sited in the Ted Hawkins Archive Room; so perhaps the next time you visit the Heritage Centre, you can pop in and view the plaque and remember dear Ted.

### **GALLEYWOOD GOOD NEIGHBOURS.**

The next 'It's Time to Chat' coffee mornings will be held on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May, 14<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> July**. Over this last winter the numbers attending have varied according to the weather and school holidays. We have a number of regulars, along with several new members and all of them are very appreciative of the service and they say how much they enjoy the mornings.

### **GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

President: David Stacy.

Chairman: Graham Smith. Vice-Chairman: Ken Edwards.

Secretary & Programme Director Gillian Parker.

Treasurer: Geraldine Willden. Committee: Alex Gilbert & Stephanie

Troop. Comments or contributions to this Newsletter would be

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