

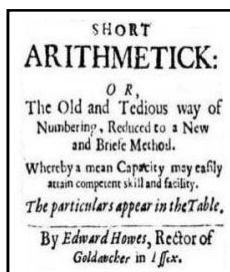
Local Authors and Characters

from the past

Authors

arranged in approximate chronological order
(Characters from the past follow below)

Revd. Edward Howes



Rector of Goldhanger in 1650, conversed by letter extensively with the first governor of Massachusetts John Winthrop, including writing to him about "a magnificent engine" which would enable them to "sympathize at a distance". This was in effect a proposal for form of telegraphy long before the basics of electricity were understood. He also published a book on a "new and brief arithmetic" which, he promised, would enable even a "mean capacity person" to attain skill and facility.

John Winthrop's importance as a founding father of the USA has resulted in all the correspondence between Howes and the governor being carefully preserved by the Massachusetts Historical Society and much of it is now available on the internet. There is more about Edward Howes in the book.

Revd Dr Daniel Williams

The Revd Williams had the reputation in the early 1700s of being a formidable non-conformist preacher in London who was well connected with royalty and politicians. He owned Beckingham Hall in Tolleshunt Major and several other large estates.

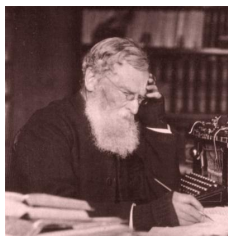
At his death he bequeathed the income from his lands in trust for 2000 years to the New England Company in Massachusetts (which was, and still is, a missionary society), to Harvard College in Boston and to Glasgow university. He also created a library in London which even today bears his name specialising in English protestant nonconformity. He was the author of many religious books during his lifetime.



The Revd John Atkinson

The Revd John Atkinson (1787-1828), the Goldhanger curate, was also a well known ornithologist in his day and a short biography of him is included at the beginning of Miller Christy's *Birds of Essex*, published in 1890.

The Revd John Christopher Atkinson



The Revd. Atkinson was a prolific author and antiquary. He was born on 9 May 1814 in Goldhanger, and the son of curate the Revd. John Atkinson (above), and later became a well known author of historical works, folklore and ornithology.

He spent the first 24 years of his life in Essex and was educated at Kelvedon school before becoming a sizar to St John's College, Cambridge. The rest of his life he was the vicar of Danby in the North Riding of Yorkshire. One of his early books: *Walks and Talks* was semi-autobiographical and was based on Kelvedon and the Essex Marshes.

Henry Coe Coape

H C Coape was a wealthy Goldhanger and Heybridge landowner and a Victorian author of some repute. Fifteen literary works written by him covering novels, plays, operas and short stories have been identified. He used the pseudonym *Mervyn Merriton* for some of his work. During his lifetime he received notoriety for being prosecuted for fraud and being 'scandalously divorced for adultery' from his wealthy wife.



Miller Christy



Miller Christy (1861 - 1928) was a respected authority on Essex archaeology and ornithology, and over a forty year period he published many books and articles on these subjects. Although he did not live locally, some of his literature refers to the Blackwater region and this has contributed significantly to our local history and to the Goldhanger Past website. He lived two miles west of Chelmsford in the small village of Chignal St. James, but is said to have stayed at the Mill House in Fish St, Goldhanger on occasions, probably while undertaking local research work.

Dr. Henry Salter

Although not a Goldhanger resident, Dr. Salter was the local GP between 1864 and 1932 who lived and worked in Tolleshunt Darcy, so he was the village GP for 68 years. All his working life he maintained a detailed diary of his many exploits and interests which was published in 1933 after his death.

The 400 page diary contains many references to Goldhanger and the immediate area, and is a wealth of local historical information. Although he was involved in organising and funding the Spitzbergen expeditions from Goldhanger, his diary does not record that he went himself. Extracts from the diary are at. . . Dr Salter's Diary. As the local Medical Officer of Health his diary also gives us an insight into the village Public Health in the past.



Ernest Mansfield



Ernest Mansfield came to live in Goldhanger in about 1904, having been a mine manager in Canada and New Zealand. His friendship with the rector the Revd. Gardner and the local GP Dr Salter resulted in him leading many expeditions to Spitzbergen to prospecting for gold and other minerals between 1904 - 1919.

Several other Goldhanger residents became involved and initially the company they formed did very well. Mansfield was, and still is, well known on Spitzbergen/Svalbard and he wrote a semi-autobiographical novel which was clearly based on this experience.

H Crawshay Frost

Mr Frost lived in several addresses Fish St between 1920s & 1960s. He studied history at Oxford, was injured in the Great War and came to the village originally to be a teacher. He then involved himself in local history, archaeology, languages, art, sculpture, music, ornithology, horticulture, photography, antiquarian book, and writing. *Fostie* also established a reputation as an eccentric local philanthropist.

He delighted in writing articles and letters to newspapers and magazines, but perhaps the most telling aspect of his life is the volume of material written about him by others since his death. He also left a legacy of unusual photographs of birds and local people.



Major Lindsay Fitzgerald Hay



Major Hay was a career army major in the Black Watch and the intelligence service and lived at Follyfaunts in the 1930s. He served in the Great War and was twice wounded and was decorated. At 6ft 11inches he was tallest man in the army at the time and nicknamed *The Lampost*. He was the author of four books. His first novel, *It Wasn't a Nightmare* which has an espionage theme, and said to be semi-autobiographical. In later life he became a very well known collector of expensive quality Ming China and his name is still used in auction room statements of provenance to this day.

Maura Benham

Maura lived in Church St between the 1970s and the 1990s and is best known locally as the author of the only book published on the history of the village:

Goldhanger - an Estuary Village (1977)

Miss Benham was also author of the following publications:

An Introduction To The Birds Of Hong Kong (1963)

Medical Social Work in Hong Kong (1980)

The Story of the Wesleyan Chapel in Goldhanger

The Story of Tiptree Jam - the First Hundred Years

Byrthnoth's Last Journey: from Maldon to Ely



Maura's history of Goldhanger is out of print, but her executors have kindly given permission for the material to be digitised and made available for non-profit uses. It is on-line in full.

Cyril Southgate



Cyril lived in Goldhanger since childhood and attended the village school, he was always an enthusiastic church supporter, choir master, church warden, and the bell tower captain. He also maintained the churchyard for many years.

In 2002 when Cyril decided to move to Tiptree to be nearer to his family he wrote his early Memories of Goldhanger, which with the permission of his family are preserved in the village history archives.

Peter Padfield

Peter Padfield is a well known naval historian and biographer who lived in Fish Street in the 1960s while working in nautical journalism, and where he wrote two of his earliest books. He then moved to Woodbridge, where he still lives. Over the last 50 years he has writing about 30 books or marine and military subjects. He is also an accomplished artist.



Joseph Canning



Joe Canning is a retired journalist who has spent thirty-five years working on morning daily and evening newspapers and is the author of several semi-biographical novels. He was brought up in Goldhanger and attended the village school, but now lives in the north of England. *Once Upon An Island* was his first novel (2006) which is clearly semi-autobiographical. His own words describing the book are: *It is written about places that exist and characters I knew. I grew up along the estuary and in the village I describe.*

Characters from the past

arranged approximately chronologically

The Higham Family

In the 15th and 16th centuries several generations of the Higham family resided at Highams Farm. They were involved with both St Peters Church and St. Nicholas Church, Tolleshunt Major, and there are family tombs and brass effigies in both Churches.



Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk



The Duke of Suffolk was given the Manor for Little Totham with Goldhanger and Fawly, now Vaulty Manor, by Henry VIII in the 1530s just after the reformation, and was therefore Lord of the Manor for Goldhanger at the time. Charles Brandon had three wives - two of them at the same time, and one of them was Henry VIII's sister.

Jacob Mickelfield, Clockmaker

Clockmaker Jacob Mickelfield lived and worked in The Square in the mid 1700s and is known to have built several clocks at that time, which are inscribed on the dial with. . .

Jacob Mickelfield
Goldhanger



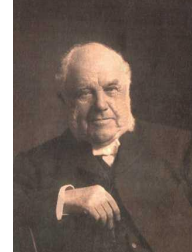
William Bentall



William Bentall lived at Cobbs Farm in the 1790s and was the inventor of the Goldhanger plough and founder of Bentalls Engineering Ltd., Heybridge. His original ploughs were made by the Goldhanger blacksmith but within a few years their reputation led to a demand from other farmer and Bentall opened a small foundry and smithy on land opposite his farmhouse. The reputation of the plough for excellence grow and Bentall moved his business to be near the recently opened Chelmer and Blackwater canal at Heybridge, so that the raw materials could be brought directly up the canal to his works.

Revd. Charles Brian Leigh

The Revd C B Leigh was rector of Goldhanger and Lt Totham for 47 years from 1846 to 1893. In that time he was responsible for building a new rectory (now called Goldhanger House), the village school and substantially re-furnishing St Peters Church. To achieve this he employed the now famous ecclesiastical architect Ewan Christian who designed the house, and possibly the school and the Church refurbishment. A substantial amount of his families fortune was spent on these projects and the rector was declared bankrupt in 1891 just before retiring.



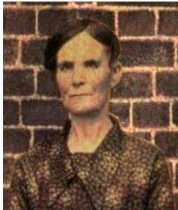
Revd. William James Jay

The Revd. Jay was the Goldhanger curate between 1847 and 1849. He subsequently joined the East India Company, went to India and taught the young Maharajah Duleep Singh. Later in life he became rector of Elveden near Thetford when the Maharajah Singh came to England and lived at Elveden Hall and the Maharajah became a close friend of Queen Victoria.

This window in St Catherines College Chapel, Cambridge commemorates the life of Revd. Jay. . .



Teacher Lily



"Teacher Lily", alias Lily Clark taught in the village school for 43 years. On her retirement in 1939 the village presented her with a comfortable chair and a plaque, which is shown as the 1939 entry in Documents from the past.

John Sydney Wakelin

Killed in action with the 10th Battalion Essex Regiment in the Great War on 24 March 1918, aged 27. He was one of nineteen Goldhanger men who lost their lives in that war and are commemorated on the War Memorial in the front of St Peters. He is also commemorated in the window on south wall of St Peters, and on the Pozieres Memorial. His family lives at Follyfaunts.



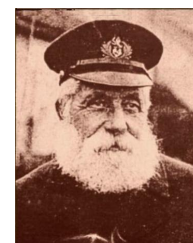
Revd. Fredrick Gardner



Rector of Goldhanger and Lt Totham from 1893 to 1936, he was the last of the prosperous rectors to hold the Perpetual Advowson of the joint Goldhanger and Little Totham Benefice, owning the Rectory and the surrounding Glebe land. Despite suffering from motor neuron disease for much of his life he was a great traveller and one of the group of Goldhanger residents who went to Spitzbergen several times to prospect for minerals from 1904 onwards. He was a man of strong convictions, reaching from his wheelchair in St Peters Church and writing in the parish magazine with great passion. He lost one of his sons in the Great war and was largely responsible for the building of what *The East Anglian Times* in 1939 referred to as *the impressive and noble war memorial in front of the Church*.

Taffy Norton

Taffy Norton was a Goldhanger Coastguard. His son became the Baker at No.2 Fish Street and some of his decendants remain in the village.



Charles Mann



Charles Mann lived in The Square from 1900 to the 1950s and was one of the group of Goldhanger residents who travelled to Spitzbergen several times to prospect for gold around 1907. Later was chairman of the Parish Council, a lifelong bellringer, tower captain, school manager, builder, undertaker and landlord of The Chequers in 1926.

John Veitch

John Veitch was the Goldhanger Head Coastguard. His sword remains in the hands of his family.



Charles Page



Charles Jacob Page was a member of a local farming family who spent all his life farming Old Rectory Farm and Highams Farm. Over a period of 40 years he developed a soft fruit orchard in the centre of the village. Charles had a strong interest in cars and mechanical devices, and was said to be the first person to own an automobile in the village.

Jack Spitty

Jack Spitty was the Landlord of the Chequers Inn at Goldhanger between 1926 and 1953. He was much better known however throughout East Anglia as an accomplished and popular bargeman who won many trophies as captain of the barge Edith May.



Canon Francis Dobson



Father Dobson was very well known in the Essex Catholic community for a large part of the 20th century. He was born into a farming family at Hall Farm, Church Street, Goldhanger in 1909.

While part of the Brentwood Diocese he established a *Travelling Mission*. Using his black Austin motor car Fr Dobson visited the parts of Essex most distant from a Catholic church and celebrated Mass in village halls, private homes and public houses. The British Legion hut in Fish St was used for this purpose. As Canon of Brentwood and Kelvedon (1972-1986) he built the chapel-of-ease in Tiptree. He also published short studies of the history of two of the parishes in which he served, Westcliff-on-Sea and Kelvedon.

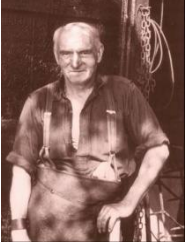
Stanley Wilkin

As a member of the Tiptree family of Wilkin & Sons and a company director, Stanley managed Bounds Farm from 1920 to 1946. He not only developed and maintained the fruit orchards for the company business but also bred many pedigree and thoroughbred animals and birds over the years including horses, dogs, pigs, sheep, cows, chickens and ducks.

However, he became best known as an international breeder of Whippets. He was an enthusiastic supporter and benefactor of the Goldhanger Wesleyan Chapel and its last preacher. As a keen horseman and member of the local hunt, he was frequently seen riding his mount to the Chapel and to the factory at Tiptree.



Harold Emeny



Harold Emeny was the village blacksmith in the early part of the 20th century, who lived and worked in Church Street opposite the Cricketers Inn, and was part of a long running family of blacksmiths. His father, James George Emeny was the blacksmith before him blacksmith and John Emeny is also listed in the 1914 Kellys Directory as a carpenter. Harold was succeeded by his son, who ran the business as Agricultural Engineers until the 1980s.

Sir Jack Cohen

Jack Cohen lived at Little London Farm (within Goldhanger parish) from the early 1940s to the late 50s. From there he created and developed a canning factory in Tolleshunt Major called Goldhanger Fruit Farms before opening his first supermarket in Maldon in 1956 and from that beginning went on to build the vast TESCO supermarket chain.



Ernie Johnson



Ernie Johnson was a member of a long established Goldhanger family and became an exceptional local bellringer and well know throughout Essex as he used his motorcycle to travel all over the county to ring. The "Johnson Trophy" was named after him, and is still used for bellringing competitions today. He was also secretary of the Cricket Club.

Harry Appleton

Harry was an accomplished bellringer and bell Tower Captain for a short. He was also a wonderful story teller and beguiled an audience in The Chequers with his reminiscences of his time in the Merchant Navy in WW-2 on convoys in arctic waters taking vital suppliers to Russia.



Sir Gilmour Jenkins, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C

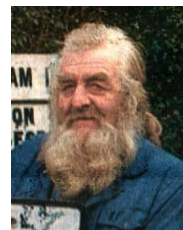


Sir Gilmour Jenkins lived at Goldhanger House in the 1950s and 60s, and was Permanent Secretary of State for Transport and Civil Aviation. He was president of the Institute of Marine Engineers in 1953 and Chairman of the NATO Board on Ocean Shipping.

During WW-1 he was awarded two Military Crosses for services to the army. He was an accomplished baritone singer, and Vice-President and then Chairman of the Royal Academy of Music.

Ron Wells

Ron created and ran the *Maldon Agricultural & Domestic Museum* at Four Winds in Church Street.

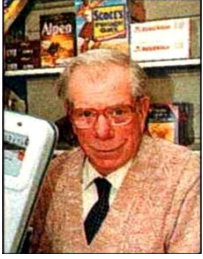


Bernard Mann

Bernard was an accomplished bellringer and the bell tower captain for many year, having taken over from his father Charles Mann. He was responsible for refurbishing and upgraded the tower to a peal of 8 in the 1950s, and was Secretary of the Essex Bellringing Association for many years. He was the local builder, carpenter and undertaker, and the son of Charles Mann.



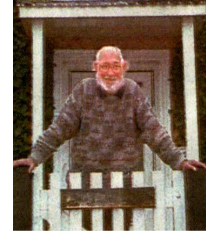
George Abrey



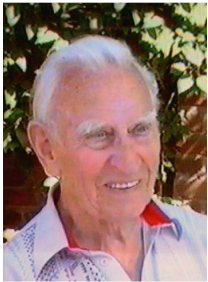
George Abrey was Postmaster and village store keeper on the Maldon Road between the 1970s and 1990s.

Peter d'Adehmar

Peter lived in the Old Parsonage in Head Street. He was a retired banker, a local philanthropist, Essex Air Ambulance fund raiser and supported young handbell ringers by purchasing additional handbells



John Wilkin



John lived most of his life at Bounds Farm, and was managing director of Wilkin & Sons of Tiptree and grandson of the Company founder. In support of his father, Stanley Wilkin he played the organ in the Wesleyan Chapel for over 16 years. He also played in the village Brass band that was based in the Chapel. He hosted a boxing club at Bounds Farm, played in the Cricket Club and was a strong supporter of the Sailing Club. He was a well known local artist and member of the Art Society.

Jean & Barry Rose

Jean & Barry lived at Hall Farm, and farmed the land in the middle and around the village between 1952 and 1990, and were founding partners and directors of the agricultural consortium, North Maldon Growers. They were both great supporters of Goldhanger Sailing Club and members still compete for the Barry Rose Plate. They were also founder members of the Blackwater Bridge club. They donated the land and small wood behind the village hall and funded a refurbishment of the hall. Jean and Barry were super hosts and Hall Farm was the scene of regular parties and all kinds of gatherings.



Eva Blighton



Eva was a founder member and the first secretary of the local W.I. She was accomplished cook and always contributing to village sales and Bazaars. She enjoyed fundraising, she would hold coffee mornings in her garden to help the village hall. For many years she was the church caretaker. She was born in 1907 and for many years was the oldest resident of the village, living to the age of 102.

Oliver Warin

Oliver was a geologist, and an accomplished musician and artist, who spent his childhood in Goldhanger. His mother was the village school headmistress. He went to Maldon Grammar school, and, Cambridge University, where he gained a degree in geology. His career in mineral exploration led to him becoming a world-renowned expert in that subject. He died at his home in California in 2008.



Kate Wright



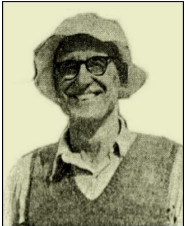
Kate was Organist and Choir Master in St Peters Church up until her sad premature death in 2009. Kate had trained as a school teacher, but her greatest passion was music. She had a lovely voice and was a member of the Camerata Singers. She also played the piano very well and for many years gave private piano lessons to young people at her home.

Julian Jenkinson

Julian Jenkinson lived at Follyfaunts for over 30 years, and was Chairman of Verine Products. He and his wife Dian opened the gardens Follyfaunts each summer for charity and for special village events.



Pat Bunting



Pat was a member of the local Bunting family and farmer of Highams Farm all his working life. He was also a keen sailor.

Jenny Green

Jenny Green, ne Bunting, 1951-2013, was the daughter of Pat, grew up at Highams Farm and became a very successful dingy sailor. In later life suffered from motor neurone disease and raised tens of thousands of pounds for that charity.



Cecil Chaplin



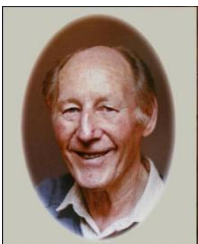
Cecil was born in Fish Street, lived all his life in the village and worked for several local farmers, including Charles Page. He built up a large collection of documents associated with local history and these remain with his family. He who was the secretary of the Friendly Brothers for over 50 years and was largely responsible for the continuing existence of this unique society and piece of village history. In his younger days, Cecil was the Flag Man at St. Peters Church.

Rosemary Mann

Rosemary was a village school teacher, the wife of Bernard Mann, the builder, undertaker, and Belltower Captain who lived at Sunnyside in The Square until the 1990s. Rosemary's voice can be heard on the BBC programme Funeral of a Bellringer



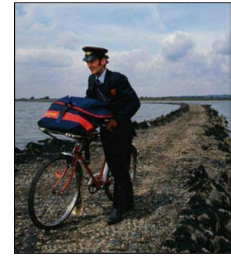
Allan Hunter



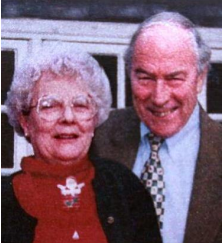
Allan Hunter farmed Beckingham Hall Farm for over 50 years before handing the farm over to his son and moving to Fish Street. He also farmed other land along the perimeter for Goldhanger Parish including lands at Lauristons Farm. Allan was a very active member of many Goldhanger and local clubs and societies, and a keen sailor. Several years ago Allan kindly provided members of the history group with information about the history of Beckinhham Hall, its association with local author the Revd Dr Daniel Williams, his library still in London and the doctor's involvement in the New England Company.

Kenny Chaplin

Kenny was the Goldhanger Postman and newspaper delivery man, who made the daily journey over to Osea Island on his bicycle to collect and deliver mail for many years.



Derrick & Margery Bailey



Derrick & Margery lived in The Square for 40 years, having converted the former shop into their beautiful period home. They were both fully involved in village life, including Church activities, Sailing Club, W.I., Friendly Brothers, Jubilee celebrations and more.

Geoff & Ann Appleton

Geoff was born and lived all his life in the village and was a carpenter working for Sadds and then for Charles and Bernard Mann. Ann was proud of her Maldon past and her days as a Maldon Ladies football club player.



Tony Moore



Tony lived in Fish St for over 60 years, was a enthusiastic member of the Sailing Club, a keen amateur photographer who made a major contribution to the Millennium Calendar and was a dog lover.

Ken Perry

After military service in the Royal Air Force, Ken gained an apprenticeship with Marconi Company in Chelmsford and he stayed until retirement. Ken was a Chartered Engineer and a full member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers. *Over the Horizon Radar* was his speciality which detects and tracks low flying aircraft and ships well below the horizon. His major success came in 1985 when Marconi won a contract from the Australian authorities to install his system at Jindalee, Alice Springs, that is still in use today(2015).

Ken was a bellringer and for 15 years the Tower Captain at St. Peters Church. On occasions when not enough ringers were available he would use the Ellacombe chimes to play hymns on the bells.

Ken encouraged and trained many new and young ringers. He managed the ringing for all the services, arranged concerts musical events and acted as stand-in organist. Ken fully utilised his musical, engineering and managerial talents. At home he had a Hammond organ which was played enthusiastically to the delight of passersby who would sit on the low wall at his Fish Street cottage. See: Alice Springs News article and Funeral of a Bellringer



Ron Cook



Ron was an enthusiastic supporter of local good causes and clubs. Having been brought up in Heybridge he was involved in many Maldon based groups, such as Round Table, the Cavaliers, the Carnival committee and Rotary Club. In recent years Ron helped form a new Rotary Club in Heybridge. In his younger days he was a keen footballer, playing for Heybridge Swifts for many years.

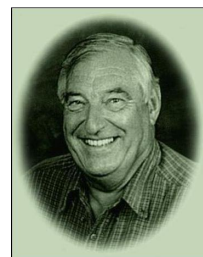
For many years he was a member of the Parish Council and for a period was Vice Chairman. For ten years he was a highly active and dedicated member of the Village Hall Management Committee and its Chairman.

More recently Ron helped to re-instate indoor carpet bowls and the dancing classes in the Village Hall. Dancing was always one of Ron's passions.

Ron was a founder member of the Goldhanger Sailing Club, later taking the roles of Treasurer and Commodore.

Many will remember Ron as Scoutmaster of the Tolleshunt D'Arcy Scout Group. He was Chairman of the 2002 Goldhanger Jubilee celebrations committee and a member of both the 1977 and 2012 Jubilee committees.

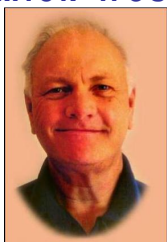
Ron was deeply involved with St Peters Church and a long-standing member of the PCC. He was a regular 'MAP' lay preacher in the Church and played a major role in the financing, development and day-to-day running of the Community Room. He was also a very keen bellringer and a member of the Friendly Brothers.



Victor Marigold

Victor reached the rank of Major in the British Army before joining Lloyds Bank and the Access Credit Card Co. in Southend. He retired to Goldhanger in the 1980s.

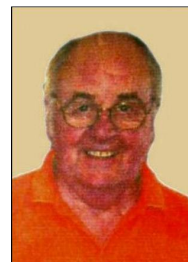
Mick West



Mick was a professional guitar player and composer who played with many top bands during his long career. Perhaps best known in Goldhanger for his windsurfing ability, he originally moved to Fish St. for the fishing, but became hooked on windsurfing.

Fred Halls

Fred was well known as the very helpful last Post Master to run the village post office on the Maldon Road in the 1990s. Fred was a keen Freemason and he used his artistic skills to produce many Lodge banners and artefacts.



Denis Chaplin



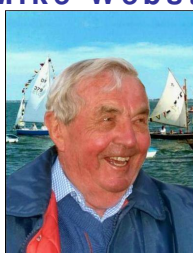
Denis lives all his life in the village. He was brought up by Teacher Lily in Fish St. went to the village school and then worked on local farms. He had a passion for sport:
Football - he was captain of Goldhanger Wanderers
Cricket - he was secretary of Goldhanger Cricket Club
Bowls - he was a founder member of the Village Hall Bowls Club
and sailing. In retirement Denis was well known as a local gardener.

Steve Wynne

Steve grew up in Liverpool and was involved in shipping from an early age. It led on to him running his own successful business in Colchester and he moved to St Peters Close with his family. He was always a keen and accomplished Golfer.



Mike Webster



Mike served in the Royal Navy and gained a lifelong passion for sailing. A career in the wood industry led to his other hobby in retirement of carpentry. As a keen member of the Sailing Club he was well known for helping others using these skills.