

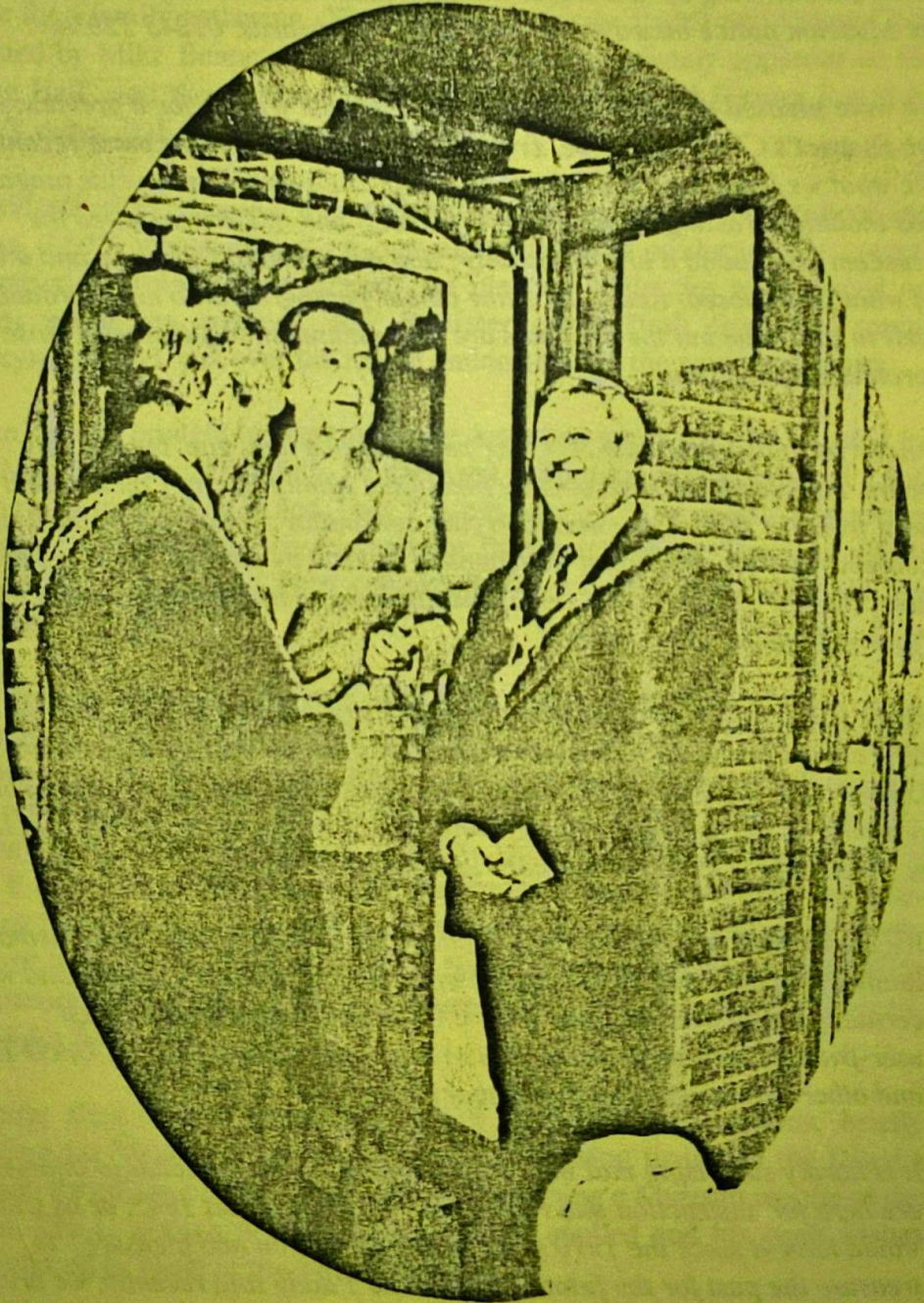
Issue 10

Autumn 1997

THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association

Cut the ribbon Arthur, and we can come in too!



Maldon Mayor; MDMA President; MDC Chairman

Ed's Ha'p'orth

Within a few hours of our celebrating 'the end of the beginning' the shocking news came through from Paris. During the subsequent weeks' sombre broadcasts Paddy spoke on air from his surgery about our official opening and since then increasing numbers of residents and visitors have been enjoying our first displays. Our Chairman, local history hat on, informs me that he can be seen and heard with slides at Purleigh Village Hall on 6th November - a lecture on Victorian Maldon. There are five speakers for a series commencing 23rd October but individual lectures may be attended - see Museum notice board or contact Mrs Iris Edwards, 01245 22038.

We were pleased that Mrs Cath Backus came with friends for a preview, and the District's Chief Executive, Treasurer, and Solicitor came more recently to see what we have done with 'their' building. The Essex Countryside magazine has included 'Tasting Maldon's Salty History' and the writer visited the Museum and 'found a hive of activity', and described our displays and a little of what is proposed. Ken Cook's fine colour photographs do not reproduce well in this issue but the originals are in the museum, together with those I 'promised not to print'.

I have recently visited the St. Giles' ruins (after a long gap, but not fifty years, Len!) and was reminded by film of the saintly Nun of Calcutta that our Men from the Monastery were carrying out similar social work in the 12th century - our leper hospital was founded in 1164 by Henry II. This seems to have slipped off 'the Trails' and I trust (NHS!) it doesn't reappear with the 'former hospital of St. Peter's'.

There is a connection between the family history of Mrs Ivy Ball and the return from Brompton Cemetary of the Sioux Indian who performed in London with Bill Cody's Wild West Show...see later item. Chief Long Wolf is returning to his happy hunting ground. Is that where our own PR Chief Long is, or on hols? Deadlines are hard to keep when unpaid!

We are bombarded with offers of "Innovative Presentations" and "Virtual Reality Displays" but we are happy with our actual reality objects and we are certainly not in need of "Inter-active CD Roms" when we have such user-friendly Stewards - it's a treat to hear (for example) Merle, Uncle Bob, and other helpers guiding our school parties.

It is hardly surprising that in Museum matters one thing leads to another. We are here for 'instruction and recreation' - Museums Act 1845, or as Cath would have it since the 1970's - 'to give information and pleasure - to treasure the past for the future'. As another Paddy said recently, we are "not accepting a glass ceiling"; so we agree - there is no limit to our ideas and enthusiasm.

The Official Opening - 30th August 1997

The day dawned fine but blustery. I arrived at the Musuem to find our good friend Sarah Burgess struggling with the awnings cynically called 'Eezie-ups', helped by a small group of colleagues, and Stewards from the Museum. Her mission completed, Sarah wished us every success and had to leave for a family gathering. The hard work of Judy Tullett and Penny Cook assisted by Mike Bennett and Brian Day was immediately apparent in the 'Long Hall', and the artistic touches added in the Natural History Room by Judy's young god-daughters were admirable.

Liquid refreshment supplied by the District Council via Averil Spencer and Fiona, MDC representative on our committee was produced, the caterer organised by Tony Tullett arrived; and plates of delicacies were placed on tables under the awnings. Ray Brewster came, fresh from his recent honeymoon, and took over the role of 'mine host' for the next three hours.

Mike Bennett brought his magnificently decorated gypsy caravan to stand by the Museum, having carefully manoeuvred it from his newly-acquired Land Rover and trailer. Len B and Tony F were busy greeting guests, organising Stewards, and doing a thousand and one things around the Museum, whilst inside Judy, Penny and Pam completed last-minute tasks to present the Museum at its best.

Our friends from the Margery Allingham Society, including Miss Joyce Allingham, arrived in force with other invited guests and our own President Arthur Simpson and his wife, both of whom were allowed a sneak preview and who appeared to be delighted at the way the 'Arthur Simpson Boards' portraying the 'Carmelite Friary' and 'The History of Maldon', completed by Len B and George Ginn, and Ken and Penny Cook respectively, the latter having burned much 'midnight oil' in the process. Maldon Mayor Cllr Peter Roberts and Deputy Mayor Cllr Peter Nickolls, a popular representative on our committee, arrived, as did the Chairman of the Maldon District Council, Cllr John Smith.

Keeping close to our advertised time I made the introductions, briefly detailing the history of the Museum, and expressing thanks to the District Council for offering us the opportunity of reopening a Museum worthy of the Town. The Chairman of the District Council replied and his good wishes were echoed by those of the Town Mayor.

A ribbon across the Museum door was cut by our President Arthur, ably assisted by the Chairman and the Mayor, and the curtain removed from the wall board announcing 'Maldon District Museum'. Arthur expressed his own thanks and admiration for what had been achieved by the Committee and friends. All were then invited to partake of the refreshments and drinks and proceed to the Long Hall if they so wished, for a 'surprise item'.

The Association had a very special guest in Guy Wilson, Master of the Royal Armouries, previously at the Tower of London, now situated in Leeds. Guy has close links with Maldon and the surrounding district, especially with the family of Margery Allingham. He brought with him a presenter from the Royal Armouries, who gave a performance from 'The Oaken Heart' which chronicled how news of the outbreak of the second world war was received in Tolleshunt D'Arcy, through the words of Margery Allingham. All who heard Sally were moved by the occasion, especially Margery's sister Joyce who was full of praise for Sally's professional contribution.

The commencement of the presentation had been somewhat delayed as Joyce had been 'kidnapped' by members of the press who had taken her to the Margery Allingham Room where a portrait of Margery, painted by Jean Upton was to be unveiled later in the afternoon. The presentation had called for a last-minute rearrangement of the Long Hall to accommodate those who wished to attend. Meanwhile others were looking around our exhibits and it was rewarding to find how many items of interest were being discovered by all our guests. The compliments were many, especially to the work of Penny and Judy, but also to all of the Committee, Members and friends.

It was a splendid unforgettable occasion and hopefully it will bear fruit in many ways over the months to come. I feel that we have won some important hearts and minds. Well done everybody!

Paddy Lacey, Chairman...September 1997

ADVANCE NOTICE

To invite everyone we would have wished, was quite out of the question; there quite simply was insufficient space. Instead, the Committee is pleased to invite **MEMBERS, STEWARDS, SPONSORS AND FRIENDS** to join us for sips, snacks and sociable evening, 7.30pm - 9.30pm on either of the **VICTORIAN EVENINGS - DECEMBER 4th and 11th.**

LFB



Mrs Renata Simpson and Sally, and Roger Johnson

SORRY...SORRY...SORRY...SORRY...

The Membership Application/Renewal Form which accompanied Newsletter No.8 and has also been handed out from the Museum contained an error. How many spotted it? Very Few! To all, apologies for the Membership Secretary's address being given as 83 Mill Road instead of 83, Wantz Road, just to confuse the Postman perhaps...(or even the occupants at Mill Road).

and on the subject of Membership.....

Conspicuous by their absence are Membership Cards issued to all who have paid subs up to 31st March 1998, and if you have paid and not received, please shout! The absence is noticeable at the Museum Ticket Office where very few visitors have produced Cards, by far the majority having paid without question....so perhaps few members have yet visited?....just a reminder!



Sub-Committee? Mike, Pat, & Bob.

'TheButton'

Twenty-one thirty-seconds in diameter, or in modern parlance seventeen millimetres, it lay on the topsoil, mistaken for an old farthing. Once washed and scrubbed it became a button, one like those we used to wear on working clothes, notably boiler-suits. This one even had some of the original lacquer on it, so must have been well protected for many years; in any event this patch of garden definitely had nothing bearing metal buttons burned on it for over forty years as all buttons in that time were cut off and stored in a cocoa tin or similar. For that matter they still are!

'The Button' has two holes in a recessed ovalled centre surrounded by a thin garland. On the face is embossed **T. Knight Maldon**; on the reverse appears **Weldon London** with what could be a size 03 (?). We recall no Maldon business named Knight in recent years, other than a hairdresser of that name, and he would never have bothered with such a button..... so we referred the matter to our friendly neighbourhood information centre who came up with the following from his own archives -

- 1855 Edward Knight, High St., - Ironmonger, Brazier and Tinman.
- 1859 - ditto - Furnishing Ironmonger.
- " Thomas Knight, Market Hill, - Clothier, Hatter, Hosier.
- 1862 - ditto - ditto -
- " Miss Martha Knight, High St., - Fancy Depository.
- 1866 Thomas Knight, Market Hill, - Clothier etc as above
- " Miss Martha Knight, High St., - Baby Linen & Wool Depository
- 1870/1874/1878
- Both Thomas and Martha recorded as above.
- 1882 Thomas.....as above.....
- 1882 Miss Martha Knight, High St., - Dressmaker.
- 1886 - ditto - ditto -
- 1890/1894/1899/1902

Records then blank to 1937, other than 'Knight, Fishmonger' in Wantz Rd.
Thanks, George!

So where did all the Knights go?. There are still several in the Maldon area, but are any descended from Thomas, and even from **Stephen Knight**, (burned at the stake near Fullbridge about five hundred years ago)? Perhaps Martha too had descendants, under a married name?

We'd love to know more! - Editor, 47 Wantz Road!

Will

MALDON - LIFE IN THE THIRTIES

by David Germain

continued from Penny Farthing No.9....

Some important dates during my schooldays in Maldon were the death of King George V in January 1936, the abdication of King Edward VIII in December of that year, and the Coronation of King George VI on May 12 1937. I think my parents along with most people at that time were ardent Royalists, because I still remember the solemnness with which the first two events were received. The abdication speech was listened to on the radio, and I still remember the discussions as to whether the King was forced to do so because of his determination to marry a commoner and an American, or because of his obvious sympathy with the plight of the ordinary British people. Working conditions were often very poor and in 1936 there were still two million unemployed. Many of these had fought in the most fearsome war that there had ever been, and this was the brave new world that they had fought for. I think my parents were inclined to believe the latter reason more readily. The Coronation however was a day of great jubilation. I remember the Coronation Mug that I was given at school, but that did not last very long in my hands.

I also remember taking part in a pageant along with all the other schools in Maldon, and being decked out as an ancient Briton. The starting point was the bus station. The day was not very warm and my costume flimsy, so I was not too happy that I had to take part. I have always assumed that this was a part of the Coronation celebrations, but perhaps it was the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935.

I suppose it could just as easily have been to mark St. George's Day, or Empire Day, or even May Day, all of which were important dates in the calendar in the years between the wars. The Union Jack was always being flown and most families had one to display on such occasions.

I rode a bike for the first time in Maldon. One of my schoolfriends had two bicycles and he sometimes brought one round for me to ride. We would pedal away along Mundon Road and the paths that led down to the river. I cannot recall having lessons on a push bike so I probably made a wobbly start, but must have picked it up quite quickly. Traffic certainly was not a problem as it is now, and

cycling was a pleasure. I have owned a cycle nearly all my life since, and still ride occasionally. I was hostelling by cycle when I first met the girl that I eventually married, so my friend has a lot to answer for.

Mill Beach was one of the places that the family used to go to quite regularly. The beach was stony but reasonably free of mud. There was a cafe behind the sea wall with a lawned area behind it. We went back to Maldon occasionally after the war and either camped by that cafe or stopped at the Youth Hostel. The beach was very uneven then and one had to be careful in the water as there were some quite large holes in the gravel. My Dad told me it was done when the invasion barges were kept there. I don't know if that was true but it sounds reasonable. On my last trip in 1993 I went back to Mill Beach and was quite upset to see the way it has developed. I didn't stay, but drove away thinking that progress and the passing of time don't always have a beneficial effect. I am delighted that Maldon itself has managed to keep its country town charm in spite of some expansion, and I hope it always does.

I think it was quite early in 1939 that we left Maldon and moved to Palmers Green in North London, where I lived until after I was married. I now live in Redditch, Worcestershire, which is a pleasant town surrounded by some lovely countryside, but Maldon will always hold a special place in my heart.

*David Germain
Redditch.
January 1996.*



EDWARD BRIGHT...

...was born 1721, and in his youth became a Post Boy, riding daily to/from Chelmsford (*His post horn and whip are in the Post Office archives and were once displayed in our museum above Matthews in the High Street*). He was later to become a candle manufacturer and grocer, and was tenant at Church House (*now the Maldon Bookshop*) built about 1700.

Edward died on 10th November 1750 aged 29 and was thought to have been "the largest man who ever lived in this England". The last time he was weighed, at the age of 28 and still an active man, he was 584 lbs (*nearly 42 stones*). He was 5' 9.1/2" tall with a chest measurement of 5' 6" (66") and an abdominal girth of 6' 11" (83").

In the last year of his life "his corpulency so overpowered his strength that his life was a Burthen and his Death a deliverence". He was buried in All Saints' on 12th November in a vault near the tower arch. A special coffin was made and a note in the Burial Register records that...'A way was cut through the wall and staircase to let it down into the shop; it was drawn upon a carriage to the Church and slid upon the rollers to the brickwork vault and interred by the help of a triangle and pulley'. "He was a very honest tradesman, a facetious (sic) companion, comely in his person, affable in his temper, a tender father and valuable friend".

From 'Maldon - A Pictorial History' by J.R.Smith. - ECC Publication 1971. - (P.L. August 1997).

TIPS FOR STEWARDS.....

I AM A STEWARD.....

and I'm interested in people, places, and artefacts, particularly in those relating to Maldon and District, its Industry, Commerce, and History. We work in pairs.

On arriving at the museum we may find that it has already been opened and ready to receive visitors. We put out the 'fat-man' museum board, and the 'open' sign if not already done.

In the kiosk we check, preferably with a witness, that the total of the cash float as taken over is correctly entered in the opening column of the cash record for the day, that the Visitors' book is in a prominent spot, a Price List is handy, and 'Steward' badges are on our lapels.

We check the Answerphone and if flashing, press the left hand bar and await the message with pencil or pen at the ready to note names and more importantly, 'phone numbers. There may be two or three messages in quick succession. We ensure that they are passed to the responsible person(s).

The visitor arrives, pays the appropriate entrance fee as displayed, and is invited to make an entry in the visitors' book. This is important as it gives a fairly accurate indication of the numbers of visitors, the areas from which they come, and the number of party visits. Comments, which can only be made after the tour, are interesting but of less importance as many are simply polite.

Having welcomed visitors to the museum, depending on numbers, circumstances and requirements, one of us guides them through the exhibits, pointing out items of interest if a particular interest has been expressed. We give unobtrusive consideration for anyone with a disability. At least one Steward is always left in the kiosk.

Given a break in visitors, we brew up in room 7, which is also the office. We do not leave the kiosk unattended.

As far as possible, we familiarise ourselves with shop items, prices, and leaflets; we take orders for items not readily available from stock, being careful to take names and telephone numbers and enter them in the diary.

We interest ourselves in the exhibits and related information all of which change from time to time, and our ability to discuss with the visitor adds to his/her pleasure and education, which is particularly important for the younger generation.

We make notes of sensible and sometimes not-so-sensible suggestions and comments, in the diary.

If we change 'shifts' we ensure that at no time is the museum left unmanned, and in the unlikely event of the new shift failing to arrive, 'phone the Hon. Sec., on 854184; the Chairman on 828001; Vice-Chairman on 852749, or anyone else available. If no-one replies, we tactfully clear the building, securely lock the exterior doors (at least), and post the keys into 44 or 84 Fambridge Road, or 38, Victoria Road. As a last resort we take the keys home and contact one of these numbers when available, noting the event in the diary before we leave.

As the hour nears 4 p.m. we gently remind newcomers that we close at 4, but do not labour the point.

At 4 p.m. the day normally ends, and if no-one else arrives to lock up, (and almost inevitably someone responsible does turn up if one of us is not already familiar with the procedure), we follow the advice on the 'Locking-up' card.

No. 672.

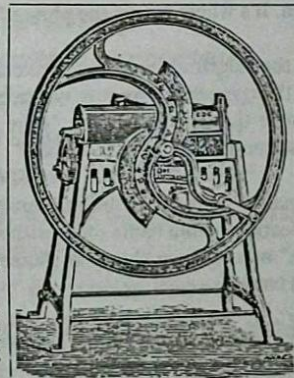
1st Section.

NOVEMBER, 1890.

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SOLD BY

'HISTORY IS BASED ON BEER'

It was accepted practice in Babylonia 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer and, because their calendar was lunar-based, this period was called the "honey-month" - or what we know today as the "honeymoon".

Before thermometers were invented, brewers would dip a thumb or finger into the mix to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold and the yeast wouldn't grow; too hot and the yeast would die. This thumb in the beer is where we get the phrase "rule of thumb"!

In English pubs ale is ordered in pints and quarts. In old England when customers got unruly, the Publican would yell at them to mind their pints and quarts and settle down. It's where we get the phrase "mind your Ps and Qs".

Beer was the reason the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. It's clear from the Mayflower's log that the crew didn't want to waste beer looking for a better site. The log goes on to state that the passengers "were hasted ashore and made to drink water that the seamen might have more beer".

After consuming a bucket or two of vibrant brew they called aul, or ale, the Vikings would head fearlessly into battle often without armour or even shirts. In fact the term "berserk" means "bare shirts" in Norse and eventually took on the meaning of their wild battles.

In 1740 Admiral Vernon of the British Fleet decided to water down the Navy's rum. Needless to say the sailors were none too pleased and called Admiral Vernon Old Grog after the stiff wool grogram coats he wore. The term "grog" soon began to mean the watered down rum and when you were drunk on this grog you were "groggy", a term still used today.

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their mugs. When they needed a refill they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

Anon.



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Previous experience unnecessary.

Uncluttered mind an advantage.

Telephone an absolute essential.

Access to typewriter or similar.

Ability to operate it would be useful.

Minimum salary - nil.

Out of pocket expenses repaid.

Those born pre-1900 need not apply to -

The Secretary, Maldon District Museum Association, 47, Mill Road, Maldon, CM9 5HX, enclosing name, address and 'phone number OR 'phone the Vice Chairman on 852749 for a civil reply.

LOCALS BORN AND BRED ! THE BALL(S) -

All Maldon knew and respected local lad Douglas Ball, who passed away only a few months ago. Ivy, his widow, herself a local lass, was recently invited to put pen to paper and outline the history of the family; this is what she said -

"Margaret and James Balls were licencees of the Rose and Crown public House in the High Street, but unfortunately James passed away at the early age of forty. It was reported in the local paper that about one thousand people attended the interment at Maldon Cemetery, and it rought many a tear to the eyes of strong men, and women wept.

In those days, about 1900, a woman could not hold the licence of a public house, so it was then that Margaret Balls bought the premises of 117 and 119 High Street and opened a fish shop at 119. James George Balls (son of James) took over the business. When his son Douglas was fourteen he joined his father and they worked together for some years.

It was Doug, on the death of his father, who built up the business to what it is today, with the help of Ivy, his wife. Their eldest daughter Judith, and her husband Alan have now taken over the running of the business.

[Douglas' mother Hetty was sister to Albert Bunting]

and..

WILLIAM CLARK BUNTING

(Grandfather to Douglas Ball)

William Clark Bunting ran away to America, joined the 7th Cavalry, and fought at Gettysburg in the Civil War. His discharge was signed by General Grant.

William travelled across America with Bill Cody then back to England with him, and joined Bostock's Circus. He used to go ahead to advertise, and buy the animal food. One son, Albert, was born in Killarney, Ireland.

They then settled in Burnham-on-Crouch selling pots and pans, and eventually settled in Maldon in premises opposite to where the shop known as Albert Bunting is at present (i.e. the butcher).

Albert Bunting was a much respected Councillor of Maldon Town Council for ten years.

Jack Ball (nephew), brother of Douglas, and another brother Harold took on the business. Harold died at the age of forty-seven.

In this year, 1997, Jack's son Stephen still continues the business.

Ivy Ball, Maldon...August 1997

PETROLEUM OIL.

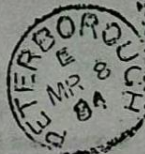
No. _____ Galls.

Mrs J Outwell

Maldon

FROM

CARLESS, CAPEL & LEONARD,
HACKNEY WICK, E.



Mrs J Outwell

Crommouges

Maldon

ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONGRESS

ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SYMPOSIUM 1997

SATURDAY 1st NOVEMBER 1997
10.00am - 4.30pm

at
The Castle Methodist Hall
(near the Castle)
Maidenburgh Street
COLCHESTER

Talks on the latest Archaeological Research and Discoveries in Essex

including

Recent Discoveries from Colchester
Bronze Age Ardleigh
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Longinus
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Bookstalls and displays

(Please Book Space in Advance)

Tickets: Symposium including morning coffee and afternoon tea £ 4.50

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Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress

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Tel: 0181-788 0015

Tickets will be available from OCTOBER, please send a SAE

CHEQUES SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO 'ESSEX CONGRESS'

Please book in advance and early to ensure a place

WANTED - DOMESTIC HELP

Part-time voluntary assistance needed urgently for Edwardian Lodge situated near to Promenade Park, accommodating exhibits of Maldon District Museum. Duties will include cleaning and dusting with no solid fuel fires to clear. Experience with vacuum cleaner desirable but not essential. Hours flexible. Expenses reimbursed. - Contact Mrs Penny Cook, 852511.

Light and as easy to use as a carpet sweeper. Ready for immediate use anywhere

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You can see the NEWMAID at any good ironmongers, hardware or furnishing stores. Not sold from door to door.

The Association wishes to acknowledge and thank individuals and organisations who have been of considerable service to members in supporting the Association in the completion of the new museum. Amongst them are -

Maldon District Council - Members and Staff
The Rugby Group. -Inc: John Sadd & Sons Ltd.-
and Rbt Shanks Esq.

Community Services Team

Abacus Antiques

R.C. Reeve & Son Ltd

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W.Geo. Ginn Esq. J.P.

Mrs Rene Cardy

John Yardley Esq

Mike Emmett Esq

Piers Greenwood Esq

Mrs Ann Day

J.W. (Jim) Allen Esq

The Blackwater and District Fine Arts Society, with

Mrs G. Wolstenholme

Malcolm Southgate

Museum Committee



Chairman.....Paddy Lacey.....



Vice-Chairman ..Len Barrell.....



Hon. Secretary...Tony Froom.....



Hon. Treasurer...Tony Tullett.....



Membership Sec:..Ray Brewster.....



(Acting) Stewarding Sec:Len Barrell.....



Accessions Officer...Penny Cook.....

Committee.....Mike Bennett.....

Committee.....Pat Preece.....

Committee.....Judy Tullett.....

Committee.....Bob Wallwork.....

Museum Reception Telephone No.....842688
(Answerphone when museum unattended)

Correspondence to:
Maldon District Museum Association,
47, Mill Road, Maldon, Essex. CM9 5HX.

All views expressed are those of the contributors!
Forty Four Eighty Four Productions, Fambridge Rd, Maldon

WANTED
Snippets and Stories of local interest for future
'Penny Farthings'
Perhaps there's a cartoonist out there?

E 258. 2002. 2 . 10

Truly a Mikesterpiece!

