

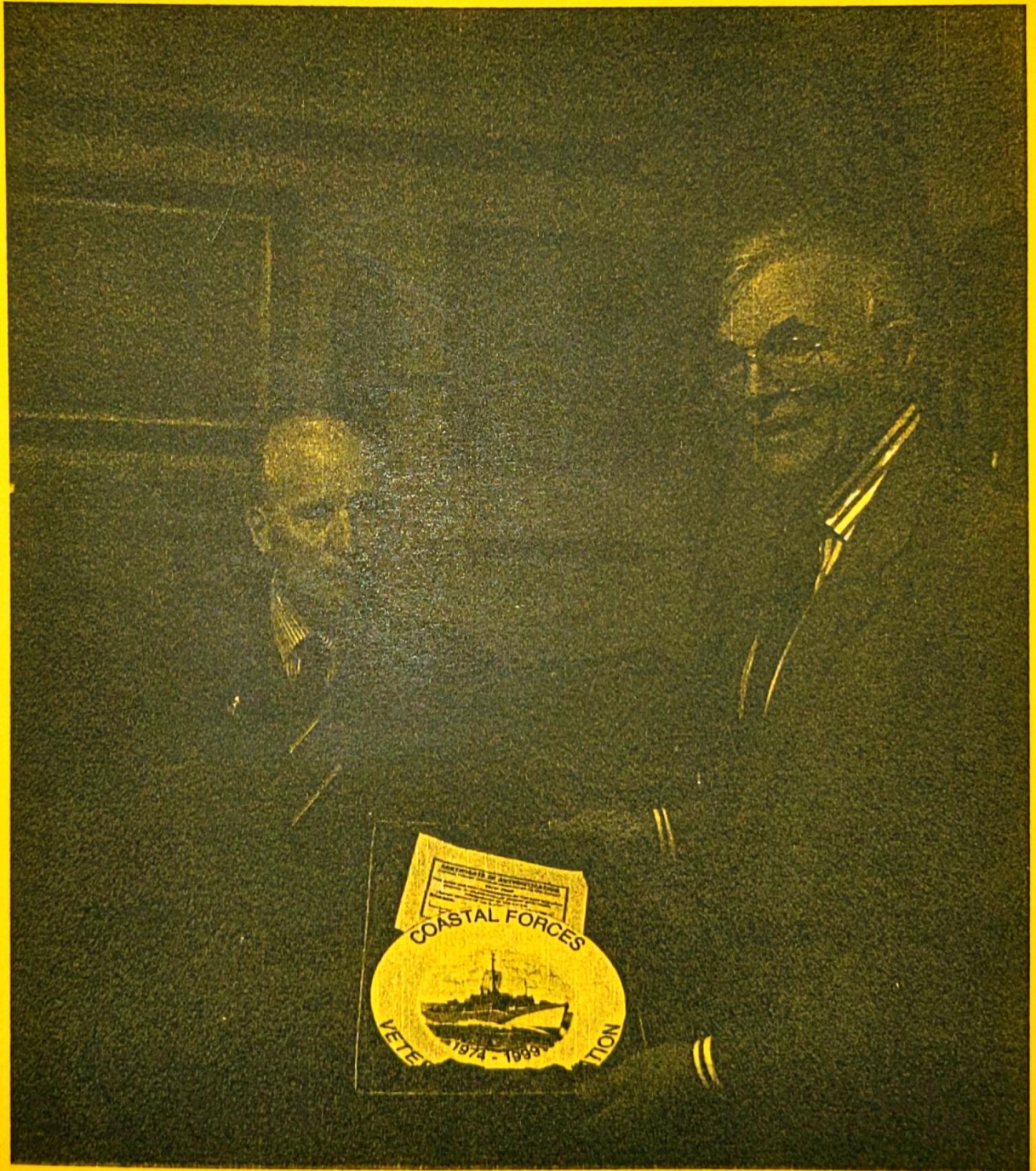
Issue 15

Winter 1998

# THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association

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*John 'Tiny' Ramshall presents Commemorative Plate on behalf of  
the Coastal Forces Veterans Association on 27th October 1998*

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## FORTHCOMING EVENT

Maldon District Museum Association  
Members and Stewards are  
**CORDIALLY INVITED**  
to THE MUSEUM from 7.30 PM on  
**THURSDAY 3RD DECEMBER 1998**  
the first of Maldon's Victorian Evenings.

Light refreshments will be available, with the opportunity to meet old friends and acquaintances, inspect the latest displays, and talk about plans for the future.

This is your opportunity to get your points of view over to your elected Members of Committee who want to hear your opinions and ideas.

Note this in your diary NOW. No RSVP required

AJF...October 1998

### OPENING DAYS AND TIMES REVISED

The Committee has decided that during 1999 the Museum will open between

2 & 4 pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and between 2 & 5 pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

In addition, School and other parties, by prior arrangement outside normal opening hours, and most public Bank Holidays from April to October inclusive.

Adverse comments have been made about our inability to produce good clean photocopies of late BUT we regret that our own technicians are not au fait with solid state technology, whilst we are advised by the experts that our humble copier 'has had it'!. This issue has been contracted out...Thanks for your help Fiona!

### SALES LIST

'Beeleigh Mill' A History of	M.A.G.	£2.95
'Bradwell on Sea' A Short History of	-----	£1.00
'Branch Lines to Maldon'	Dennis Swindale	£3.95
'Branch Lines to Southminster'	Dennis Swindale	£3.95
'Byrhtnoth's Last Journey'	Maura Benham	£1.00
'Carmelite Friary' The	Arthur Simpson	£2.00
'Golden Chaff Cutters' The	TBSC	£7.50
'Handleys' The	D & J Vesey	£5.00
'Maldon & Heybridge'	Patrick Lacey	£9.99
'Maldon & Heybridge' Origins of	ECC/MDC	£1.75
'Maldon - Life in the Thirties'	David Germain	£-.75
'Maldon - Links with America'	---	£1.00
'Maldon & the Tidal Blackwater'- Vol 1	C.A.Devall	£7.99
'Maldon - Then & Now'	Maldon Society	£5.99
'Oaken Heart' The	Margery Allingham	£7.00
'Underground Maldon'	M.A.G.	£3.50
'Traditional Sail'	Mike Emmett	£3.50
POSTCARDS.....	(unless otherwise marked)	.20p
NOTELETS.....		£1.50
POTTERY.(unless otherwise marked).....	Reduced Prices !!	
'Penny-Farthing utensils'	With Handles	£5.80
	Without Handles	£4.90
FOSSILS.....to clear.....	50p each / less if marked lower	

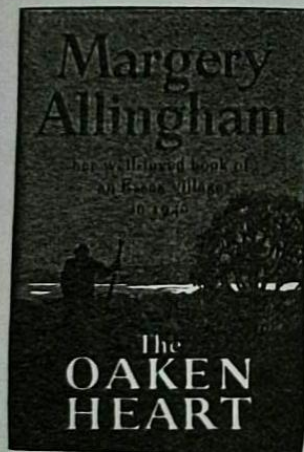
Updated 9.10.98 LFB

A UNIQUE CHANCE TO OWN

# THE OAKEN HEART

MARGERY ALLINGHAM'S

VIVID DIARY OF THE WAR YEARS IN  
TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY.



A number of NEW copies of the second edition, with outstanding illustrations by Philip Youngman Carter, have come to light and are on sale at the Museum kiosk.

 **PRICE £7.00 ONLY!** 



## 'THAT GEAR WHEEL'



*In Issue 12 we hopefully removed the mystique surrounding the Gear Wheel and Shaft mounted on the lawn beside the Museum 'Lodge', explaining that it came from the old Wantz Road pumping station where it had operated for many years, presumably to supplement the supplies from the Spital Road pumping station. A report of the Borough of Maldon, prepared for a visit by the Corporation on Tuesday 21st March 1939, could prove to be an interesting supplement to our earlier article.....*

*It was on this date that a Tablet was unveiled to commemorate the gift of Hill House to the Corporation of the Borough, by the will of the late Alderman Granger, in 1937.*

*Following this event the Corporation toured the 'Corporation Buildings' which included both the Spital Road and Wantz Road Pumping Stations; typed descriptions were provided at the time and the following extracts are from those reports -*

### SPITAL ROAD WATERWORKS PUMPING STATION

The old buildings that originally stood on this site were of concrete and brick walls, the latter being cement rendered. Considerable trouble was experienced, particularly in the concrete section, in keeping the structures dry, coupled with the necessity for complete new pumping equipment led the Council to decide to build a new station on this site and provide modern equipment.

**PUMPING STATION.** Accordingly the present building was erected; the whole of the work being in fletton brickwork with a red multi-coloured facing. The roof is of steel sheet decking with Ruberoid finish supported by steel joists. A travelling crane of 7.1/2 tons carrying capacity is installed to facilitate operations in the well. The floor is of red quarry tiles.

**PUMPING PLANT.** Independent duplicate pumping units are installed:-

- 1) Unit comprising new Ruston and Hornsby Oil Engine driving the old set of deep well pumps.
- 2) Unit comprising an 8-stage electrically operated centrifugal pump.

The main pumping unit is the electrically operated pump, which has been designed to give maximum efficiency when pumping at a rate equal to the yield of the well. Thus it is possible to obtain the maximum quantity of water from the well.

Another reason which influenced the Council in its decision to instal duplicate plants with different sources of motive power was that of Supply of Water during an Emergency - an A.R.P. measure taken by the Council over two years ago.

The contractors for the new works were Messrs F.H.Sherling and Son of Maldon.

### WANTZ ROAD PUMPING STATION

This old pumping station at this site consisted of timber framing covered with corrugated iron, and the pumping plant which was duplicated, in this instance comprised suction gas producers and engines. The pumping plant after many years of use, needed renewing, and the Council decided to instal new plant and erect a new pumping station. Actually, the old pumping plant failed altogether a few days before the new plant was put into operation.

**PUMPING STATION.** This is of similar construction to that of Spital Road except that the building is faced with best quality stock bricks, and has a travelling crane of 5 tons carrying capacity.

**PUMPING PLANT.** Here again the pumping plants are arranged in two distinct units as at Spital Road, but the Oil Engine is of greater horse power in this case.

The contractors for the works were Messrs F.H.Sherling and Son of Maldon.

LFB, October 1998

The Gear Wheel displayed was removed from the Pumping Station c.1974

SWIMMING CERTIFICATE

LOANED BY

MRS P. E. LYNN, MALDON

-- DAUGHTER-IN-LAW --

MALDON  
COUNCIL  
BOYS  
SCHOOL

This is to Certify that  
Henry Lynn  
on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1924  
swam 110 yards  
in the

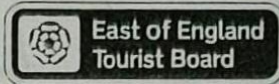
Marine Lake, Maldon

A. Brown

Swamsted

'Taylor's Yard'

The recent controversial proposals for development reminds us that we have the records of the Sailing business together with the tools of the trade and examples of the fine work carried out there, some of which is always on display. We have a wealth of interesting historical records available to researchers.



This is to certify that

Anthony Froom

Has qualified as a  
Welcome Host  
and is committed to the  
objectives of the

Welcome Host Scheme



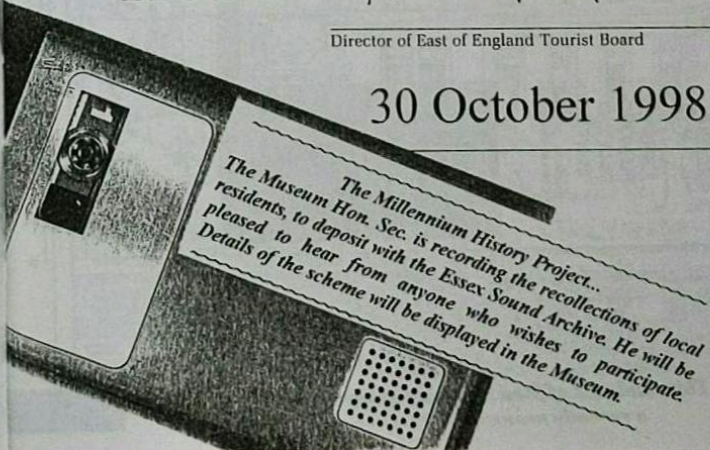
ON COURSE.....

Penny Cook and Tony Froom were pleased to take advantage of a last-minute offer by Maldon District Council's Tourism Development Officer, Russell Dawes, to attend a day course relating to tourism and relevant to our business of dealing with the public. Tony found it something of a shock to be certificated again. In addition to her other voluntary duties, should Penny become our official Training Officer? (a case of 'No ken do!')

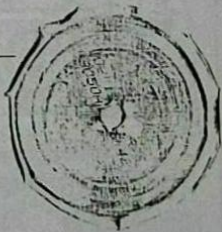
J M R Taylor

Director of East of England Tourist Board

30 October 1998



The Millennium History Project...  
The Museum Hon. Sec. is recording the recollections of local residents, to deposit with the Essex Sound Archive. He will be pleased to hear from anyone who wishes to participate. Details of the scheme will be displayed in the Museum.



WANTED

Photocopier! a.s.a.p!  
Old one on last legs!  
Tel - 8 5 2 7 4 9

In the first World War 1914-18, Osea Island was, in its own right, a Naval Base for Coastal Defence vessels, and titled 'HMS Osea'.

We recently advertised in the Maldon & Burnham Standard for any information from local people whose relatives served on HMSOsea, or who were connected with it and have family records; we wished to hear from them.

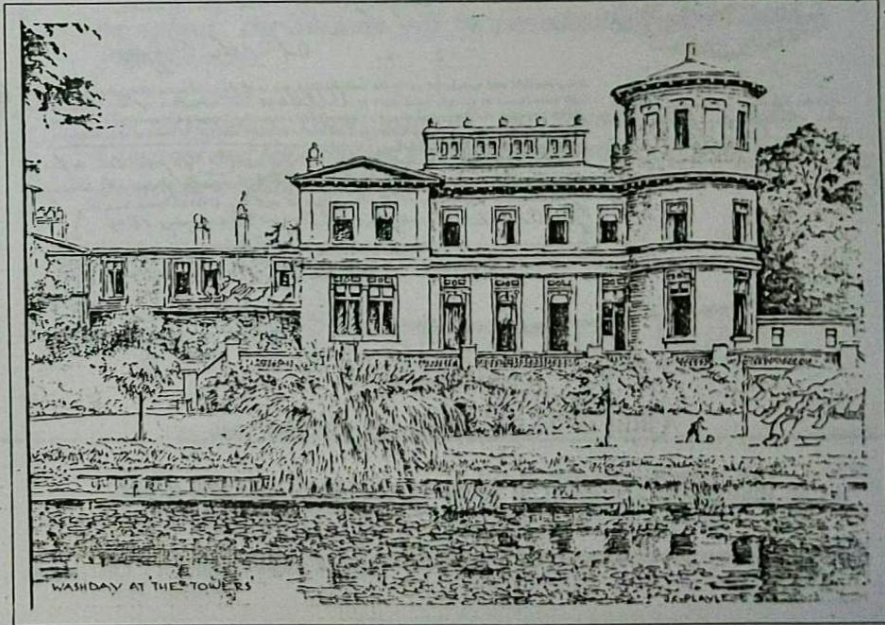
The response was very good and most encouraging. Many people have offered to give or lend records, photographs, and artefacts.

The Museum will shortly be organising a joint exhibition for next year with many marvellous photographs and details of the exploits of the Coastal Motor Torpedo Boats based at Osea during WW1.

Did you know that these boats, known as CMBs, were even in action after 1918, involved in anti-Bolshevik activities, including the sinking of two Russian/Bolshevik Battleships at Kronstad, near Leningrad?. More of this later, it is a truly fascinating story.

Bob Worklow...Sept 1998

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WASHDAY AT THE TOWERS

# The Leading Gardening Weekly

Edited by H. H. THOMAS

N.R. 50.

our 5  
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Top  
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Greenhouse,  
able Garden, th  
Growing and Fr  
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practical weekly  
leader and fi  
paper. The hi  
your service at ;  
Be su



NATIONAL REGISTER.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION DAY IS FRIDAY, 29th SEPTEMBER, 1939.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN SCHEDULE AS TO "PERSONS TO BE INCLUDED."

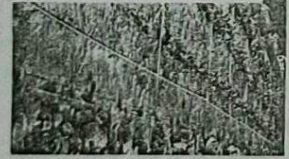
**RATIONING.**—The return on the schedule herewith will be used not only for National Registration but also for Food Rationing purposes. It is to your interest, therefore, as well as your public duty, to fill up the return carefully, fully and accurately.

Help the Enumerator to collect the schedule promptly by arranging for him to receive it when he calls. Do not make it necessary for him to call a number of times before he can obtain it.

When the Enumerator collects the schedule, he must write and deliver an Identity Card for every person included in the return. Help him to do this properly for you by letting him write at a table.

If the whole household moves before the schedule is collected, take it with you and hand it to the Enumerator calling at your new residence or to the National Registration Office for your new address. The address of this office can be ascertained at a local police station.

Wt 28033-171 12 00



Produce on crops at  
Farm at Houghall.  
SUCCESSFUL  
GROWTH  
VEGETABLES.

# NEWSTIR POWDER

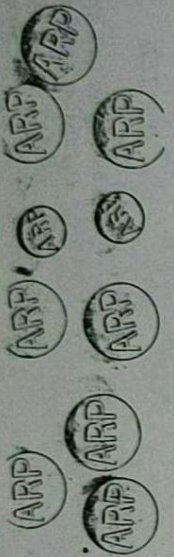
(REG. NO. 67114)  
A SCIENTIFIC NON-CAUSTIC LIME.

POPULAR GARDENING ANNUAL—ADVERTS.

**Poppo**

uniform to

Thank you Mrs Phillippo, now all we need is the



Washington Chemical Co., Ltd.,  
WASHINGTON STATION,  
COUNTY DURHAM.

Official Price Booklet on  
application to Dept. P.G.



This reminder of food rationing dropped out of a recently acquired 1937 Annual!

# 'BRANCH LINES TO SOUTHMINSTER'

by Dennis Swindale

Copies of this booklet have recently been added to those stocked by the Museum. Unlike Maldon, railway tracks still run to Southminster, thanks in a large part to the presence of the nuclear power station at Bradwell and the need to remove spent nuclear material by rail.

Not only has the Great Eastern branch survived but it was electrified in 1986 and now forms an essential part of the local transport network.

The original booklet was first published in 1981 and Dennis Swindale, well known in Maldon, was revising and updating it at the time of his death in 1995. The task has been completed by members of the East Anglian Railway Museum and the new edition, published in 1997, contains updated text and many new photographs. It is available at the modest price of £3.95p.

P.J.L...Sept 1998



Shipped in good order and well conditioned by  
in and upon the good Ship called the *Garibaldi*  
whereof is Master for this present Voyage *Albert Dock Hull*  
and now riding in this Port, and bound for *Albert Dock Hull*

*Cono Superphosphate in bulk*  
*French Origin*

being marked and numbered as in the margin and to be covered in the like manner and  
well conditioned at the aforesaid Port of *Albert Dock Hull*  
(the Act of God, the Kings/Armies, Fire and all and every other Damages and accidents of the Seas  
Rivers & Navigation of whatever nature or kind soever excepted save risk of loss so of as Ships are  
liable hereto) unto *order*

Freight for the said Goods @ 5/6 per ton of  
20 cwt delivered, with *10/6* twenty one shillings  
gratuity to the Master, and also *10/6* in a  
for Charter Party dated *4th January 1909*

In Witness whereof the Master or Purser of the Ship hath signed these bills of lading all of  
this tenor and date, the use of which *Bills of Lading* are published the other *1* to stand void.  
Dated in Antwerp, the *22* *January* 1909  
*J. Charrington*

*weather*  
*working days left*  
*for discharging the*  
*whole cargo at*  
*Charleston*  
*21-11-09*

## A BILL OF LADING dated in ANTWERP 1909.

This is the Ship-Master's detailed receipt for goods consigned to him -  
the good ship called the 'Garibaldi', Master J. Charrington, superphosphate in bulk.

Donated to Maldon District Museum 1997 by Miss Beryl Claydon, grand-daughter of J. Charrington.

## Accessions Officer 'Penny' says.... 'Please help!'.....

Dear Members and Friends,

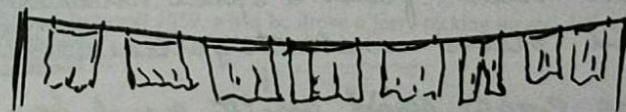
As I'm sure you already know the Museum will be closing on Sunday 29th November and reopening on Good Friday 2nd April 1999. It is of course during this period that all the planning and hard work will have to be done by the Committee and Museum Friends in preparation for the new season.

This is a plea for help of any kind, primarily for the donation of dust covers, old sheets, towels, or bedspreads and similar, with which to cover displays for the winter. Also, and equally important, for anyone with DIY, artistic or sewing skills, to supplement our existing force of volunteers and help this local Museum to become even more attractive to our visitors.

Please help if you can, and contact me on my number 852511 or on the Museum 842688 (both numbers with answerphone), throughout. The Museum will be periodically manned until 29th November.

The Accessions Team wish all our friends the Seasons Greetings and hope that we will be able to make even more new friends by working together during 'the closed season'.

Penny Cook...Nov. 1998



Thank you Bob Orth, for the loan of motoring equipment of bygone days; also for the photograph of the Fire Pumper and frame. Bob has other interesting items we hope to show in due course.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING. [WAR-TIME] MRS CAFFIN'S.

4 oz. bread crumbs. 4 oz. flour (McDougal's)

4 oz. suet.  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt.

1 heaped teaspoon mixed spice.

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground ginger.

3oz. brown moist sugar.

4oz. grated carrot. 4oz. grated apple

$\frac{1}{2}$  oz. home candied orange peel.

$\frac{3}{4}$  lb seedless raisins.

2. reconstituted dried eggs.

Sufficient milk to make it all.

Method. Put fruit, peel, grated

apple and carrot, into a bowl.

Mix in spice and sugar.

Cover with a cloth & leave 12 hours.

Next day. Mix together flour,

salt, bread-crumbs and suet.

Then add fruit & spice mixture

and blend well together, add

the eggs and milk and beat

thoroughly. Then place the

mixture in a well greased

basin, cover with a greased

paper, tie a cloth over and

steam for 8 hours.

THE HERO OF MALDON EAST

by Tony Wallis

WHY is it that our modern day railway system doesn't seem to inspire the same feelings of affection as it did several decades ago?

Are we just a bunch of old romantics, viewing the past through rose-coloured spectacles, or was there a very real sense of pride and service felt by those who worked on the railways in whatever capacity in those post-war days?

Men like Gordon Hopwood and his father, who between them served nearly 60 years on the line between Maldon and Witham. They cared, even in Gordon's case to the point of risking his life on one never to be forgotten day, and it was through people like this that the railways ran so well and even now brings back fond memories.

When Mr Hopwood began work at Maldon East station in 1951 the goods yard was a hive of activity. Bentalls farm machinery, based down the Causeway in Heybridge, was being sent by rail all over the country. And Goldhanger Fruit Farms also sent a large amount of canned produce from the station.

Some times the goods trains were so long one engine could not move the train from stationary, so a second engine had to push from the back of the train to get it moving. Some goods trains were called Kingsmere specials because they were all loaded with canned fruit from the fruit farms.

When Gordon Hopwood began at Maldon East he was an engine cleaner and then a fire raiser until 1959, when he drove a lorry picking up and delivering goods.

He worked at night looking after the engines, coaling and filling them with water and maintaining steam pressure. On a Saturday night the engine fire would be let out, to be relit the following night.

It was very dirty work coaling the engines, and there were certainly no mod

cons like showers. To clean up before going home Mr Hopwood and his fellow workers had to get a bucket of water, strip off and then wash down.

Although the steam locomotives - mainly Class J68, F5, and 515 - were used in the 1950s on the branch line from Maldon to Witham, they were nearing the end of their time. Eastern Region was phasing them out rapidly with diesel engines. The first diesel passenger train ran on June 14, 1956. The last steam hauled goods train, with a J15 as motive power, left in 1961.

When the D800 diesel engines arrived the crew, being used to steam engines, had some trouble getting used to handling them. Mr Hopwood can remember one crew not being able to move one such engine because the parking brake was stuck on.

But it was before the advent of the diesel age that Mr Hopwood became a railway hero. In the early hours of Saturday, August 13 1955, he was attacked trying to stop two men breaking into the booking office at Maldon East. He had seen a light in the booking office and when he walked across to check saw the men rifling through parcels and boxes.

Mr Hopwood, then aged 32, challenged the men and rushed at one of them, managing to get the man on the floor before he was attacked from behind and hit with a blunt instrument by the other raider.

The two intruders then raced away down the platform towards the level-crossing gates at the Causeway, never to be seen again. Bleeding profusely from head wounds, Mr Hopwood got to his feet and when he reached the platform was met by the stationmaster, who had heard the commotion. He called police and ambulance and Mr Hopwood was taken to hospital in Chelmsford to be treated for his injuries, which were not serious.

The stationmaster was quoted by the following week's Maldon and Burnham Standard as saying: "Mr Hopwood was certainly very brave to go in there and

attack the men."

Two months later Mr Hopwood's bravery was recognised when he and his wife went to London for a special lunch with British Railways (Eastern Region) officials. He was presented with a cash reward and certificate, which he still has today, by the region's general manager.

The branch not only looked after its brave and loyal staff. It certainly looked after its commuters, and perhaps this is one of the real reasons why that era and that line is looked back on with such affection by many who used it. It was not unknown for the train to stop and pick passengers up along the line if they were late and could not make it to the station in time to catch the train. Can you imagine what would happen if the same thing was attempted in this day and age?

Mr Hopwood can also remember a professional gentleman catching the early morning train wearing pyjamas with an overcoat on top and his suit in his case, which he changed into en route to Witham.

As the dreaded Beeching axe fell on Maldon East (the last passenger service ran in September 1964, the last freight train in April 1966) Mr Hopwood moved briefly to Colchester before leaving the railways for ever. The end of an era for Maldon, and for the Hopwood family.

Mr Hopwood's father had worked for 44 years on the permanent way. He lived at Langford station house between Maldon and Witham and would walk the line between the two towns checking the track to ensure it was safe.

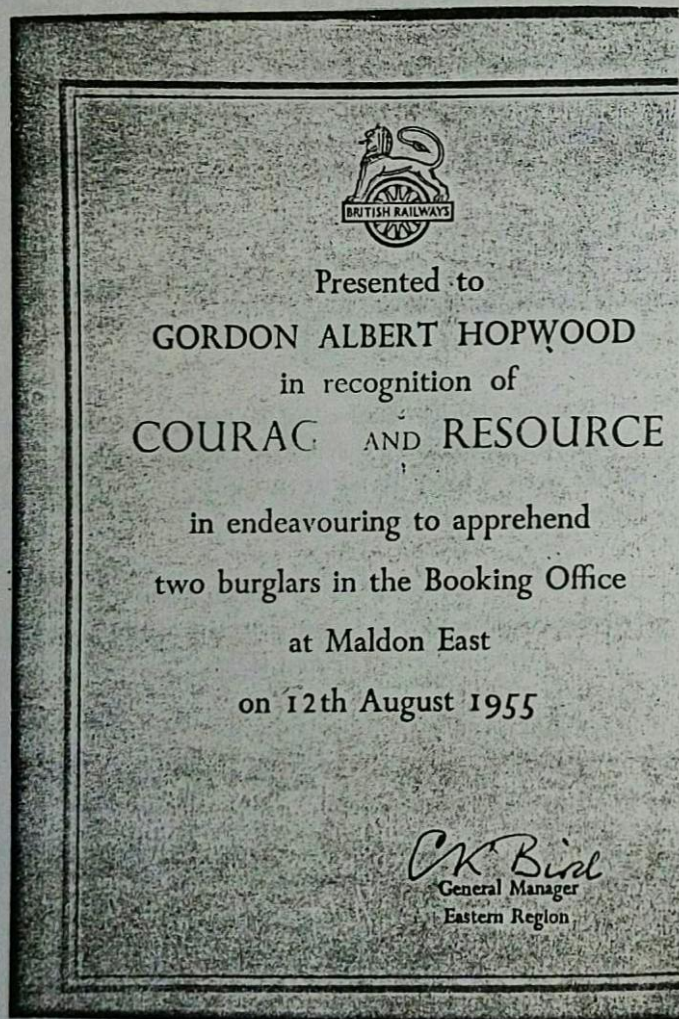
Gordon Hopwood did keep one link with the railway until well after it closed. He lived in the crossing keeper's cottage (see photo). He was offered a flat in Heybridge and moved from the crossing cottage, which was pulled down.

The goods yard shed where he had worked was sold to Brooker timber



merchants. The Maldon East level crossing is now the start of Maldon bypass along the path of the old route from Maldon East to Maldon West station.

And for Mr Hopwood all that are left are memories, many happy and one painful from the day he became a hero. He still has the certificate and the newspaper cuttings to prove it!



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'THE TOWERS'

*A framed laser print of an original pen and wash sketch by  
Mr J. C. Playle*

*has been donated by him to the Museum Association and is  
acknowledged with our thanks. (Oct. 1998)*

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*The following narrative by Mr Playle accompanied the picture....*

'THE TOWERS'

*'The Towers', built in 1873 by Edward Hammond Bentall, was designed by the Chelmsford Architect Charles Pertwee, but it incorporated many of Mister Bentall's own ideas, notably heating by hot air ducts and vents. The house, in an Italianate style, was built with large reinforced concrete blocks and was supposed to have been the first concrete house in Europe. It cost £65,000, a considerable sum in those days.*

*Set in a beautiful landscaped garden, complete with lake, and a large cylindrical bird tower built amongst the fir trees, the whole estate, approximately 10 acres, had its own entrance gate house and was surrounded by a 12ft high boundary wall.*

*Artistic decorators and craftsmen were shipped over from Italy to authenticate the interior decor. It was covered into 16 flats in 1950 and in the late fifties the whole estate was obliterated to make room the the present housing estate.....a sad reflection on our times !*

EDWARD HAMMOND BENTALL (1814 - 1898)

*Son of WILLIAM BENTALL, of Goldhanger; yeoman farmer and founder of Heybridge Ironworks 1795, an industry which gave employment to many people in the Heybridge area for 150 years, took over the firm which then became, in 1836, 'E.H.BENTALL & CO. LTD.' A brilliant engineer and businessman, he built much of old Heybridge mainly to house his employees....'Well Terrace' for his foremen, 'Wood Field Cottages' known as 'The Flat Tops', 'Barn Field Cottages', 'Stock Terrace', 'The Roothings', and for himself 'The Towers'.*

Mr Bentall was Liberal M.P. for Maldon 1868-1876. He was a non-conformist with interests in many subjects such as archaeology, astronomy, ornithology, and yachting. He designed the yacht 'Jullanar' and with its revolutionary design and rig she was the fastest boat of her class (1875). Her successor 'Evolution' was however a failure. He was founder-Commodore of the 'Blackwater Sailing Club'. He was also the first Club Captain of Maldon Golf Club in 1891.

In 1889 the firm was taken over by his son EDMUND ERNEST BENTALL who continued his father's policy of expansion and by 1900 had started to make motor cars. About 100 were made before production ceased. Unfortunately, due to the engine cylinder design, they contravened the government horse-power tax. Nevertheless the firm used its engine design experience to make and sell thousands of small paraffin and petrol engines.

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### SITUATIONS VACANT

**Cleaner(s)** for light Museum duties for two or three voluntary hours per week. Please contact Penny (Cook) - 852511.

**Stewarding Secretary** to supervise duties, and arrange for the 1999 season. Please contact Len (Barrell) - 852749.

**Caretaker**, for occasional opening/closing duties. Suit retired person living locally. Please contact Paddy (Lacey) - 828001



### REMINDER TO TEACHERS

#### AND PARENT/HELPERS

Classes/Groups of School Children are welcome to visit the Museum by prior arrangement at mutually agreeable times outside normal opening hours.

Arrangements can be made through our Schools Liaison Steward Mrs Cherry Ponty, 01376 571002.

On Tuesday 27th October Paddy & Bob collected from Witham, by prior arrangement, an extra special visitor who last came to Maldon in 1944; his name was John Ramshall and he came with his wife Brenda to visit the Maldon District Museum with the intention of presenting a plate depicting the Motor Torpedo Boat MTB 796, built by John Sadd and Sons and completed in 1944. John was one of the first to board the completed ship, at the age of seventeen.

John Ramshall is Vice-Chairman of the East Midlands Branch of the Coastal Forces Veterans Association, which next year celebrates its Silver Jubilee and has commissioned 500 plates to mark the occasion.

The Museum was opened in the afternoon to receive John and his wife by members of the Museum Association who steered them through the exhibits to the 'Sadd and Sons' room and the model MTB with which John was very impressed and moved by his memories; he later reminisced with interesting accounts of action on board.

He in turn presented the plate for display with the model, and put names to most of the crew members depicted in a crew photograph of 1945.

This memorable day was rounded off with a private dinner as guests of members Judy and Tony Tullett, then over-night at 'The Swan', with a tour of Maldon the following morning before being taken by Mike to Witham en route home to Long Eaton, Notts.

Bob W...Oct98



John 'Tiny' Ramshall presents Commemorative Plate on behalf of the Coastal Forces Veterans Association on 27th October 1998



The Women's Royal Voluntary Service

On 16th May 1938 the Dowager Marchioness of Reading was asked by the Home Secretary to form an organisation to mobilise women on the home front for useful war service. Her organisation was first called the Women's Voluntary Service for Air Raid Precautions but soon became the Women's Voluntary Service for Civil Defence and had, by the outbreak of war, 165,000 members.

This year being the 60th anniversary of that event the Women's Royal Voluntary Service in the Maldon District asked me to research our history over these 60 years and form an archive of the material available.

In so doing enough material was gathered to form a small exhibition of papers, posters, photographs, letters and press cuttings. In addition I was able to talk to some older members who remembered the organisation from the early days which furnished me with personal memories of important/ amusing/ local experiences also, through our Area Office, obtained badges and uniforms from the early days together with books which added to the material available.

The WRVS is very grateful to the Maldon District Museum and the Burnham District Museum for the chance to show a part of our archive material during this summer and we hope that it has proved interesting to those who have visited both museums.

In 1939 Lady Reading approached Mrs Cecil Blind in Maldon and Mrs Eloise Warwick-Smith in Burnham to form WVS groups. Olive Berridge tells me that there were three groups, namely Maldon Town, Maldon Rural and Burnham on Crouch.

They were, in common with WVS all over the country, involved in issuing gas masks, collecting anything useful to the war effort, running a mobile canteen and setting up a canteen in the United Reform church for servicemen away from their homes, assisting in air raids, making warm garments for servicemen, dealing with evacuees and later issuing orange juice and milk. In fact where there was a need they acted to resolve it.

Their motto is on a small plaque from the WVS era, "Not why we can't, but how we can"

Over the 60 years the organisation has played a part in the events of the district. It added Royal to it's name in 1966, started the Meals on Wheels service, took part in emergencies and evolved from Civil Defence to Care in the Community. Our volunteers play as vital a part in the life of Maldon District as they ever did. There are approximately 500 volunteers, 10% of which are men now, but the need is great and we are always looking for willing volunteers for the work is still there to be done.

Today we run Day Centres, Darby and Joan Clubs, Luncheon Clubs, a Meals on Wheels Service, A Books on Wheels Service, A Social Car Service and assist at emergencies when required by the Local Authority.

In another edition I hope to tell more of the history of the WRVS in Maldon District.

Molly Middleton... Nov '98

STOP PRESS.....

Now dealing with our Press coverage is Mrs Molly Middleton who recently joined our Committee and will be pleased to receive any item of interest which will help her to publicise the museum, and give us a higher profile for '99.

**Many older members will remember Stephen Tydeman, our Mayor throughout the war years. His son has recently been back to Maldon; the visit resulted in the following 'label' to accompany another display -**

STEPHEN TYDEMAN  
FATHER OF  
STEPHEN GARWOOD TYDEMAN

The Reverend Garwood Tydeman of Wokingham, son of Stephen Garwood Tydeman, has kindly loaned these four exercise books.

The earliest is dated 1862 and written in an impeccable hand by Stephen, who later became Captain of the Maldon Fire Brigade, the gentleman with the full growth of whiskers depicted in the photograph (courtesy of grandson John) mounted near our Fire Pumper. Stephen was by trade a Plumber and Decorator who retired about 1911, living at what is now 44 Fambridge Road.

The other three books, two in a most presentable hand, the third illustrating artistic ability, date from 1894 by Stephen Garwood, still remembered with respect by many older locals, as forthright, trustworthy, and a keen 'local' who became Mayor of Maldon for eight years from 1937 to 1945, thereby covering almost the whole period of the second World War '39-'45. His wife was his very able and popular Mayoress. Stephen Garwood was very active in various other local pursuits, being also a Justice of the Peace. He died in 1971.

Stephen Garwood had three sons - Gar, Bob, and John, all of whom grew up in the family homes (at 44 or 46 Fambridge Road, as they are now numbered) and all at this time still survive him, with Bob living nearby.

L.F.B.....October 1998

Parcing.

When quitting the neighbourhood Pempsey had left behind him fifteen cohorts.

When	Verb, Singular, Number, First Person
Quitting	Indicative Mood.
The	Adjective, Distinguishing.
Neighbourhood	Noun, Common, Singular, Numb Third Person, Gender.
	Objective Case.
Pempsey	Noun Proper, Singular, Number.

Stephen Garwood Tydeman

Commenced Jan. 30th. 1894

Finished

## Museum publicity attracts shoppers

HISTORY moved into fast-forward to remind modern-day Maldon of the attractions of their District Museum and times past.

A colourful gipsy caravan of the type used by travelling people for centuries attracted hundreds of shoppers visiting the local Tesco supermarket at Fullbridge on Saturday.

It was the latest attempt by the go-ahead Maldon District Museum committee to publicise its attractions and bring in more supporters and visitors to see its historic exhibits at its Promenade home in Mill Road.

The caravan was rebuilt by well-known Maldon man and museum committee member, Mike Bennett, after he acquired the chassis and other bits and pieces some seven years.

Mr Bennett now takes the lovingly restored old caravan to shows and exhibitions up and down the country.

But on Saturday it became a mobile office for the museum committee who stacked it with leaflets and other literature and sold them to the admiring shoppers to raise funds and publicise the museum's attractions.

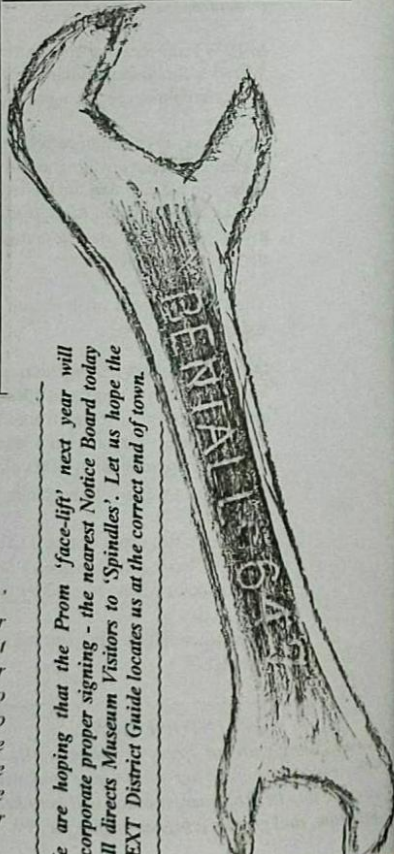


Mike Bennett with his restored gipsy caravan and Judy and Tony Tullett, promoting Maldon museum.

*A selection of unusual views of Maldon sketched by Chas. Grigg Tait from our collection of his works, has been displayed, and others will be featured in the future.*

### ANOTHER 'OLD BOY'

Our Hon Sec was pleased to meet yet another 'old Maldonian' in the shape of Michael J. Clark of Woodham Mortimer, for many years a local resident and still remembered, as it transpired, to at least two other 'Old Maldonians', our Vice-Chairman Len B. and Steward Betty Chittenden who received from Michael, an ancient but interesting Atco Kick-start Motor Mower, of which Tony F (Hon Sec) has the identical model! Two 'official' Plough Spanners cast with the Bentall name had earlier also been presented by him; we patiently await the arrival of the Bentall plough to suit - or for that matter, any other interesting Bentall products.....!



*We are hoping that the Prom 'face-lift' next year will incorporate proper signing - the nearest Notice Board today still directs Museum Visitors to 'Spindles'. Let us hope the EXT District Guide locates us at the correct end of town.*

## UNCLE SAM'S MINSTRELS

*How many readers remember the Concert Party which performed in a white painted wooden 'seaside theatre' on the site adjacent to the 'Steamboat', now occupied by the childrens' playground? - No?...we thought not! It was over fifty years ago. However, there are those who are still interested, and Len B. was recently involved with another series of coincidences which could be of interest to students of such things. We can do no better than to copy his reply to the lady enquiring after knowledge of her actual Uncle Sam.....*

Dear Mrs Parker,

### 'Uncle Sam and his Minstrels'

About six weeks or so ago someone called at our Museum which was then in the course of preparation for reopening yesterday, 28th March. The visitor brought in a photo similar to the photocopy you have enclosed, with the inevitable question "does anyone remember the Minstrels, and does the Museum have anything on them?". Could there possibly be a connection with your own enquiry, or is this a most unlikely but interesting coincidence?. If no connection, then someone else is chasing the same history and we may yet hear more.

In fact, most of our museum volunteers are 'foreigners', very few having been in the area for more than forty years, but we do have a few 'lifers', born and bred here, as were both my wife and I, having both been here for seventy-odd years. So all we have are memories, as we regret that there appears to be nothing in our artefacts.

That's the deliberate background to this reply, as there is a series of unlikely coincidences to relate. So the initial reply to the visitor's question was that we would investigate.

When later approached, I personally remembered Uncle Sam and I believe 'Uncle Ken' who either preceded or followed him. Both performed in the wooden, curved-roof playhouse, open sided above about four feet, with canvas side curtains to close off certain performances. The building seated, from memory, an audience of about one hundred, and both Uncle Sam and Uncle Ken were frequently begging spectators to come in and pay for a seat. When there were performances with the curtains pulled back one of the performers would walk round the outside with his collecting box, and that's when the outside audience just melted away of course. Even at the vintage age of about twelve or so it was apparent that the Minstrels in Maldon were unlikely to make a fortune and either Sam, or Ken, or both, packed up suddenly and unexpectedly and left, not, I believe, due to the 1939 declaration of war. Was it Uncle Ken who had lost his left hand in the previous war?.

The Minstrel Show playhouse was sited on a grassed area adjacent to the (then) tennis courts and putting green, with Last's Tea Rooms behind it, about a hundred yards from the 'Prom' main gates.

When I told my wife about the picture she confirmed my own memories -as did a few genuine old Maldonians of our own generation-, and she suggested that I contact Rosa Last as she might have pictures or recollections of the Minstrels, having lived behind them for some time. Rosa is also of our age, but neither of us knew her married name nor even is she lived locally now, and I had not even spoken to her or of her since war days.

That's all several weeks ago; then your latter arrived, and the answer is still negative!

That same day I called at an Antique/Second Hand shop on my way home from the museum. On the top shelf of a glass cabinet were about six presentable Black Minstrels each about nine inches high, priced at £99 the group, and I was immediately interested but tried to conceal that for obvious reasons. I just might go back for them! However, in the course of conversation I mentioned the Minstrels on the Prom and asked what/who he (the owner) knew about them, which was nothing and nobody from that era. I said cheerio, walked outside and there, unbelievably, was Rosa Last walking in front of me...after fifty odd years. But she was no help although she just 'might come up with a few photos'. We now await the next coincidence.

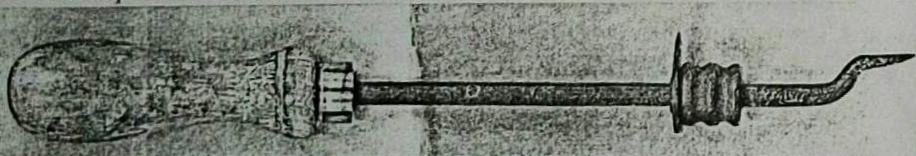
So that's a useless reply, because we have nothing useful. We would of course be pleased to share your own information if it is not copyright, to file it for posterity, and if that's a bit direct it's the only way to get artefacts and records. We will pass onto you any fresh information which may yet come our way.

Meanwhile, we hope the foregoing proves to be of some little interest, as there is still some doubt in my own mind as to whether these coincidences are actually occurring.

Best Wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

.....LFB June 1998

*Ed's p.s....If anyone has more memories or photographs or posters on the Minstrels, then do please share them with us.*



*Whatever can this be for in our Victorian room?*

.....*IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME*.....

*Chairman Paddy Lacey*

A very big thank you to everybody who has kept the Museum in the public eye throughout the Summer Holidays, who have enabled the Museum to keep open each day during Carnival Week and over the Bank Holiday weekend in addition to all our scheduled times; also to those who have hosted special openings for groups such as those from the Bental Staff Association at Kingston-upon-Thames and the Blackwater Sailing Club, amongst others.

Thank you to Mike Bennett who, almost single-handed, provided a Museum presence in the wind and rain-swept Carnival procession with his splendid Gipsy Caravan which made a further appearance on Bank Holiday Monday as a static attraction outside the Museum.

On the last week-end of the school holidays we were honoured by the presence of Major Ray Brewster and his friends from Captain Johnson's Company of the Lifeguard Afoot, who gave demonstrations of 17th century life in and around the Promenade Lodge; it was much appreciated by Museum visitors. Thank you Ray and the 'Sealed Knot': we look forward to a repeat visit.

The Museum has featured regularly in the local press with accounts of these events and the progress of Bob Wallwork's researches into our Motor Torpedo Boat and subsequently into the WW1 history of Osea Island. Sadly too, the theft of first world war medals from the wall of one of our display areas was head-lined; the medals were of great sentimental value to Tony and Judy Tullett who had loaned them to the Museum.

Our security has been reviewed and additional measures will be introduced but we realise that the best protection for the artefacts we show is the vigilance of our Stewards who must tactfully insist that all bags are left at the kiosk whilst the Museum is viewed; not an easy task at busy times.

The W.R.V.S. have provided us with an excellent temporary exhibition celebrating their 60th Anniversary, which combines well with our Margery Allingham display. It is a pleasure working with other local organisations: it serves to strengthen links with others in our community.

In all, we have enjoyed a successful summer thanks to everybody's efforts, and given much pleasure to all our visitors, as the comments in the Visitors' Book testify. We have learned from our experience and hope to provide an even better Summer presence next year.

.....Paddy Lacey, Hon Chairman...Sept. 1998





**SCHOOL REPORT**  
by Cherry Ponty



One morning in May thirty infants in bright blue blazers from St. Francis' Primary School arrived hand-in-hand in crocodile style outside the Museum for the first school visit of the summer. To ensure that the children could see the exhibits and avoid congestion, the class was divided into three groups each complete with a Museum Steward and a School Assistant. These groups then rotated around three different sections of the Museum.

Much interest was shewn in the Natural History room, and in Mr. Bright's girth which was measured with tape, and within the circle of nearly seven feet, ten small children could easily fit; the Committee has agreed to a replica waistcoat being made for the children to wear in the future.

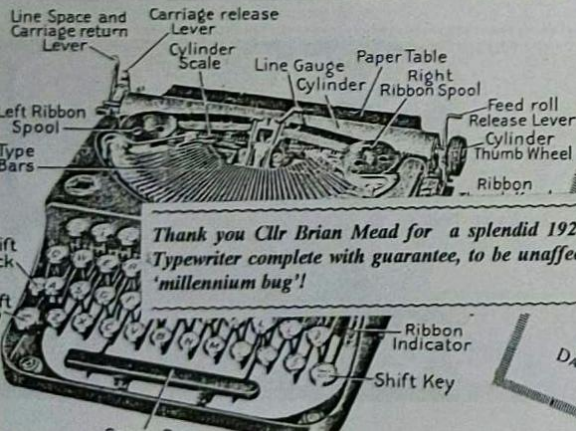
During the Summer Term it was decided to circulate all schools in Maldon and the surrounding districts with information about the Museum and offers of assistance with any school projects or topics within the National Curriculum. Realising that most schools had already arranged outings and visits for this year we expect more requests in 1999.

We did, however, not only have a number of school visits during this summer of 1998, but a pack of Cub Scouts came one evening, and on another came children ages three and four years from Purleigh Play Group. The latter were considering all things 'old' as their project for that week and the interest shewn was quite amazing for a group so young. The group was asked to look for a bicycle in the Victorian Room; after a short time a little girl said "I know where it is, it's the Penny-Farthing up there". She was rapidly followed by another little girl who spied the bonnet in the cabinet... "There's the bonnet, my Mummy is making me one like that to dress up in on Friday".

It should be stated that the behaviour of the vast majority of visiting pupils was faultless; they did great credit to their schools and staff and it was a pleasure for our small band of 'Schools Stewards' to receive them; the assistance of our own stewards must be acknowledged with gratitude.

I personally think our Museum has much to offer the youth of the area and every effort will be made to ensure that school visits are both fun and educational.

Cherry Ponty...October 1998



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

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

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

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

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

Committee.....Patrick Preece.....

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

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

Co-opted.....Molly Middleton.....

Co-opted.....Cherry Ponty.....

Curatorial Adviser....Nick Wickenden Esq

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

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

*Marion Wells, Town Centre Manager, visits our Museum.*



SEASONS GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.  
FROM PRESIDENT, COMMITTEE, AND THE EDITORIAL  
TEAM

*...and to Terry and Rod in N.Z. - we're waiting for that article!*

*FortyFourEightyFour Productions, Farnbridge Road,  
Maldon*

*Views expressed are those of the individual contributors.*