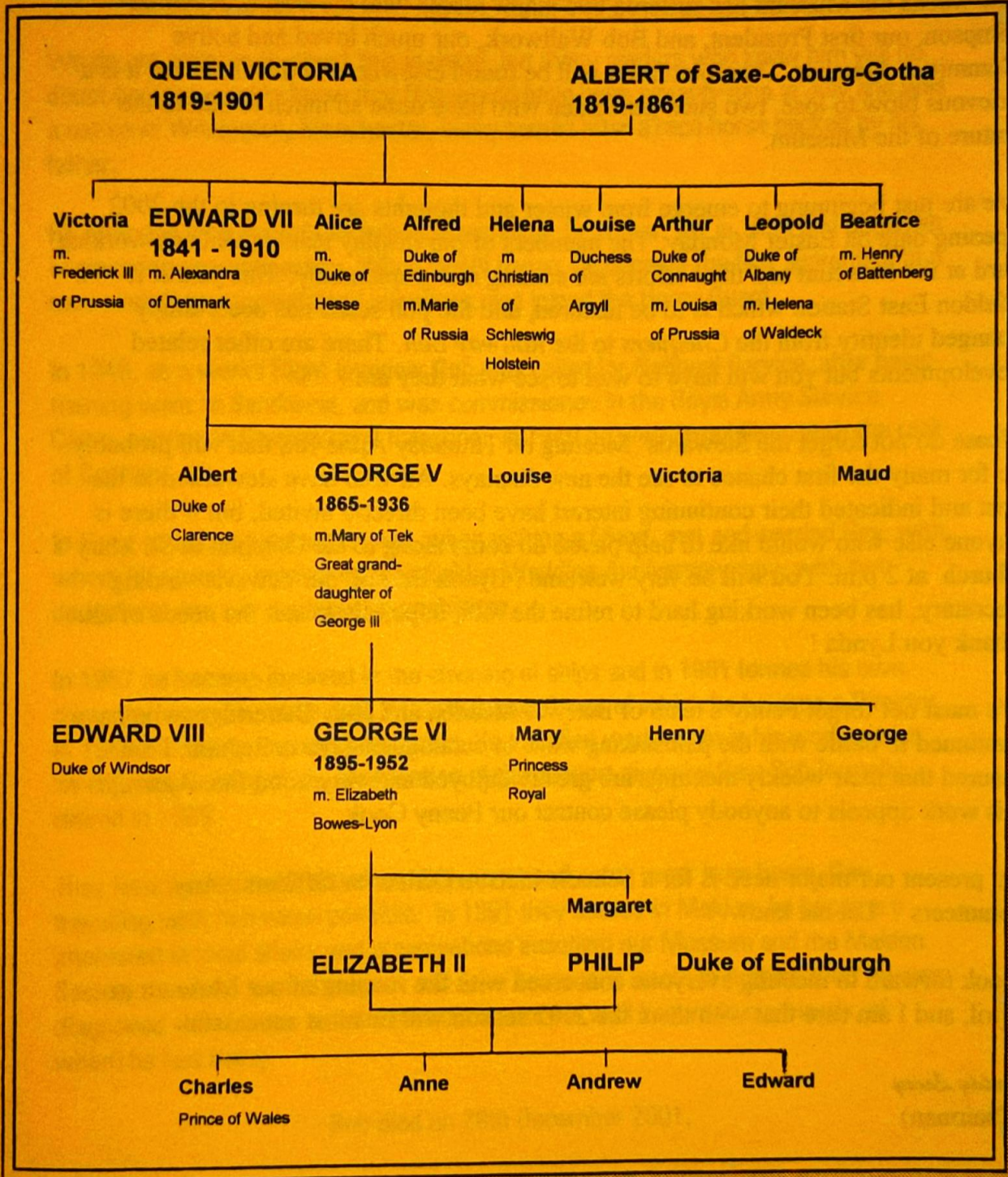


# THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association



## Your Chairman's Chat

I have to start with some bad news of which many will already be aware. In the past few weeks the Museum has suffered two major losses with the deaths of Arthur Simpson, our first President, and Bob Wallwork, our much loved and active Committee Member. Their obituaries will be found elsewhere in this issue but it is a grievous blow to lose two such gentlemen who have done so much to add to the stature of the Museum.

We are just beginning to emerge from winter and thoughts are turning to the 2002 opening date on Easter Monday. The members of our display team have been working hard at the Museum and their efforts are coming along splendidly. This year it is Maldon East Station which is to be featured, and the pub scene has accordingly changed identity from the *Chequers* to the *Railway Bell*. There are other related developments but you will have to wait to see what they are !

Please do not forget the Stewards' Meeting on Thursday April 4th; that will probably be for many the first chance to see the new displays. All who have stewarded in the past and indicated their continuing interest have been directly invited, but if there is anyone else who would like to help please do come along to the Octagon at St. Mary's Church at 2 p.m. You will be very welcome ! Lynda Barrell, our new Stewarding Secretary, has been working hard to refine the rota, hopefully to suit the needs of all. Thank you Lynda !

We must not forget Penny's team of Betty Chittenden and Judy Betteridge, who have continued to battle with the painstaking work of catalogueing the collection. I am assured that their weekly meetings are greatly enjoyed and very good fun. Again, if this work appeals to anybody please contact our Penny Cook.

At present our major need is for a Schools Liaison Officer or Officers. Any volunteers ? Let me know.

I look forward to meeting everyone concerned with the running of our Museum in April, and I am sure that with them the 2002 season will be most successful.

*Paddy Lacey*  
(Chairman)

## 'Bob' Wallwork

On the 8th January a congregation of family and friends, including many from the Maldon Society and Maldon District Museum Association, said farewell to Bob in a simple ceremony conducted by Mr Brian Whitelaw of the British Humanist Association who quoted from Bob's own account of his life, written in year 2000.

We do not propose to report this in detail, but many readers who knew him will no doubt be interested to know that Bob would have been seventy-nine in July and was a native of Withington, Manchester, being named after a race-horse backed by his father.

He attended local schools including Manchester Grammar, left in 1939 and began an engineering apprenticeship. When WWII began, he became the first apprentice at a new aircraft factory building Lancasters, and joined the Home Guard.

In 1946, as a works Flight Engineer Bob was called for National Service, after basic training went to Sandhurst, and was commissioned in the Royal Army Service Corps, serving in Germany and Palestine. In 1949 he was demobilised with the rank of Captain.

In civvy street he tried selling and, when visiting a friend, met and married Gay, with whom he recently celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, now with two daughters, one son, and four grandchildren.

In 1957 he became involved in the cleaning of ships and in 1961 formed his own company, soon to merge with a Dutch-British Group of which he became a Director. In 1960 the family moved to Loughton. He travelled world-wide in his work, which he enjoyed, writing of his appreciation of the support given by Gay. Bob formally retired in 1989.

They later moved to Halstead and Bob continued some work from home, Gay travelling with him when possible. In 1991 they settled in Maldon, he became interested in local affairs and organisations including our Museum and the Maldon Society. In all, he earned respect and soon became 'a local'. In August 2000 he was diagnosed with cancer and the rest of his story is well known to his friends, of whom he had many.

Bob died on 28th December 2001.

He had a favourite saying - "That was B..... Marvellous!"

## ARTHUR SIMPSON

*Life Member and Ex-President*

*21.11.1916 - 20.1.2002*

We are anticipating the receipt of a 'biography' of Arthur but in the event that it does not arrive before this 'PennyFarthing' goes to print, offer as a temporary replacement the contents of a postcard from Arthur's wife Renate, who, we are pleased to report wishes to remain on the register of Members.....

*"To all our good friends,*

*We write to tell you that our dearly loved husband, father and grandpa died after 10 days in hospital, following a severe stroke.*

*He has had a very good long life and we cherish many wonderful memories of him. To celebrate this, our card carries a picture by one of his favourite painters - full of young and carefree humanity. As some of you know, we have a larger reproduction hanging in our home.*

*The cremation took place on 25th January at Golders Green, in the presence of close family. We are preparing a short 'biography' of Arthur which we hope to send you before long.*

*With best wishes from us all"*

*Renate (and family as listed)*

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*The card and picture will be affixed to the notice board in the kiosk before Easter Monday, when we open.*

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**Meanwhile....**An excellent if brief obituary appeared in the **Maldon & Burnham Standard** of the 7th February and they will not object if we 'borrow' that report it was headed '**Marine biologist and history enthusiast**' -

A Marine biologist fascinated with Maldon's history has died.

Arthur Simpson, formerly of Fambridge Road, was well known for his work at the Burnham sea fisheries unit before his research of his home town's heritage.

The 85-year old, who died in London on Jan. 20, was director of the unit for a decade throughout the 60s before being head-hunted for an international post with the U.N.

Sent to both Cuba and the Phillipines to look at fisheries in developing countries, he returned with wife Renate and their three offspring in 1976 to the same house.

Children Ann, Robert and Stephen - known as Ludi - all attended the Plume School in the town, and Mr Simpson became involved in local groups.

Revitalising the Maldon Museum he also worked with the Archaeological Group, penning two leaflets on the clay smoking pipes of Maldon and the Carmelite Priory.

Wife Renate said he was also passionate about plans for a bypass, hoping it would not cut through the town centre, but remain outside the central residential area - as today.

The couple retired to London in 1984 but still kept their links with the area.

Mr Simpson was made first President of the revamped Museum in Promenade Park and cut the ribbon in 1997 to declare it officially open.

Members said he would be greatly missed and was an asset to the town.

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## Arthur Simpson and the Maldon Museum

The Maldon Museum was the brainchild of four members of the Borough Council in 1921. It was set up in a room above the old fire station in London Road where it covered items of interest from all around the globe, together with a great number of stuffed bird and animals. In 1938 when war threatened the old fire station was demolished to make way for a much larger facility the Museum was closed and all the artefacts went into storage where they remained for thirty years.

In 1968 a steering committee was formed to resuscitate the Museum. Arthur was involved in drawing up a constitution and negotiating with the Borough Council.

There was a continual search to find the catalogue of the museum archives and it was apparent that several of the more desirable items had "walked" during the long period in storage.

I imagine that Arthur was working abroad during the next phase of the Museum's existence when Mrs Backus took firm hold of the reins and, after organising several one off displays, established the Museum in the Matthew's building in the High Street. Cath Backus organised a punishing schedule of changing displays, occurring every eight weeks or so in part of the building whilst the permanent display covered the walls of the remainder.

Cath was very successful at setting up these changing displays but had no, or very little, interest in accessing and cataloguing archives possessed or donated although by this time the original catalogue had emerged from the depths of the Council office. I had set up a catalogue for written archives but apart from this the situation was dire. Arthur, recently retired, took up the challenge and began to review all that the museum possessed and catalogued each item. In addition to this he built an impressive rack system to hold the many items held by the museum that were framed. Around this time Arthur, with the help of Ken Stubbings, produced a linear illustrated history of Maldon that was placed in the Museum. This has recently been updated by the Archaeological group but continues to have a central role in the museum display.

In 1988 the lease on the Matthews building was not renewed, the business having changed hands and, after a period in storage, the Museum relocated to "Spindles" in Church Walk. Cath Backus was reluctant to pass the care of the museum on to others and was by 1995 again facing the problem of the lease ending on "Spindles" in Church Walk. There was a disagreeable AGM in 1995 at which a new Chairman and committee was appointed. The search for new premises began.

In 1996 we were offered a lease on the Promenade Lodge. The museum was reinvigorated and, after several mishaps, opened to the public in July 1997. Arthur was invited to be our first president at the AGM of that year. He attended the meeting wishing the venture well and then came to the official opening in August 1997

A wall display, relating to Arthur's research in to Clay pipes and their manufacture in Maldon, was assembled with the help of Garth Groombridge of the Archaeological Group. This was placed on the walls of our long gallery, the erstwhile ladies' convenience, in 1998 and it has continued to be a popular feature ever since. A year later Arthur prepared a wall display featuring his researches into the history of the Friary. This, too, continues to be much appreciated by our visitors.

Arthur's last visit to the Museum in 1999 was to meet up with Clarrie Devall to talk about Clarrie's proposed series of publications, relating to the Tidal Blackwater, of which one volume had been published in 1998. They had a splendid time reminiscing about trips on the river in the late 1950's studying oysters. Arthur did remark that he was continuing to research the history of the Blackwater fisheries from sources in London.

Arthur asked to stand down as President in 2000 as he was becoming increasingly frail. He was persuaded to continue for one further year into the new millennium and, finally retired at the last AGM when Derek Maldon Fitch, grandson of E.A.Fitch became our president.

We have been very grateful to all the help and support that Arthur gave to the Museum over the past 34 years and are pleased that he was happy with the way it has been developing.

Buddy

### "England Ruled by Foreigners"

It was surprising to think, in about 1900, how few of the men who held the destinies of England in their hands were - Englishmen. The Marquis of Salisbury and Lord Hartington were typical of the national character. Mr Gladstone belonged to every birthplace - save his own. The Duke of Portland was a Dutchman, one Hendrik Bentinck, Herr Van Dipenham in Overijssel, Baron H. de Worms was a German, Mr Ashmead-Bartlett belonged to the United States. Mr Goschen was of Huguenot descent, as was "the Christian Member for Northampton" Mr Henry Labouchere, and also Mr Shaw-Lefevre. The mother of her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria was a German. Her married sons and daughters, with one exception, espoused foreigners. The exception was a Scotsman. The Argyll alliance, however, could not be said to have been a remarkably happy one.

Leeds Mercury

### *From a Marriage Notice, 1814...Mr Isaac Hill & Miss Susan Ayer*

*As I walked out the other day,  
Through Concord Street I took my way;  
I saw a sight I thought quite rare -  
A Hill walked out to take the Ayer.  
And now, since earth and air have met together,  
I think there'll be a change of weather*

The Patriot 1814

## Stewarding Secretary

*At last a Volunteer Stewarding Secretary has come forward, and for better or worse brings the number of Barrells to three, albeit with one of them nowadays taking a back seat.*

*The volunteer is Lynda, wife of Colin, our Membership Secretary....and No!...there was no strong-arm persuasion. She has been co-opted by the committee pending the next A.G.M. and has already been involved in preparing the Stewarding Rotas for 2002.*

*You will already have received your copy of the finalised Rotas, which were prepared as far as possible in accordance with the wishes of all our participants. In the event of a problem, only if you find it impossible to 'swap' with a friend, or call on a 'stand-in', should you find it necessary to call on Lynda, who will in such circumstances be pleased to co-operate - Maldon 856840 (OR but only in desperation, try Len on 852749).*

### **WELCOME BACK !**

Very rarely do we have the pleasure nor indeed the opportunity of saying welcome back to someone who, having left Maldon, reappears from afar to renew his/her association with the Museum. We have recently been in the position of being able to do just this with the descendants of an old Maldon family, namely the 'Tydemans'; two new members in recent months include Nicholas of Sandy, Beds; and John, of Fingringhoe. A forebear is the bearded gentleman pictured by the early Maldon Fire Engine in the Museum long room, - turn right past the kiosk. Other members from afar still keep in contact, (using Chelmsford as the limit of our radius), from Southend-on-Sea; ; New York; Herne Bay; London; Bedford; Guildford; Acomb Park, York; Rotherhithe; and Auckland, New Zealand from whence we would be most pleased to hear from Terry Chapman, our one-time Chairman, that he had fulfilled his intentions of building and resettling since leaving here. Information of interest, from or of any ex-members would still be of interest, as, for that matter, of any current members would be, although we are not of a mind as yet to compete with the modern scandal sheets.

lib010202

## STEWARDS' DAY

*Just another reminder!— Stewards have already been notified by Lynda in her letter of the 20th January, of the Stewards' Gathering on the 4th April in the Octagon of St. Mary's Church at 2 p.m. followed by a preview in the Museum of the exhibits for 2002. Would-be Stewards, or anyone who has been unintentionally excluded and not already on the list will be welcomed but do please make yourself known to someone on the Committee, because, despite claims to the contrary - we do make the occasional mistake.*

1170660202

### **WATCH THAT SPACE!**

*By invitation, we shall be creating a limited Museum publicity display in the window of 125 High Street from the 17th March to the 5th April*

**WATCH THAT SPACE!**



### *Derek Maldon Fitch recalls.....*

*When he returned to Maldon it immediately became obvious that Derek Maldon had a brilliant memory for events and acquaintances, even from his early child-hood. We invited him to put pen to paper and record some of them... His first recollection appeared in Issue No.27; personality No.2 follows -*

Many years ago the writer joined a coach party consisting of 'The Friends of Historic Essex' organised by a friend of mine, Augustus Edwards the historian, better known by Old Maldonians who attended the Maldon Grammar School as "Gussy". He had taught history at the school for 20 years and left to join the staff of the E.R.O. as history adviser and lecturer which post he held until his retirement. Until he moved to Chelmsford he lived in the Spital Road with his wife, Dorothy.

On this outing we were going to a certain stately home. On arriving there I visited the gift shop and obtained a brochure of the house, and then walked along one of the terraces. Standing there on my own and enjoying the views across the estate I became aware of a tall man who appeared to have come from one of the entrances to the house. He came walking towards me smiling, and unusually, not introducing ourselves, we entered into a very long conversation. We discussed various topics - we were on the same wavelength and were enjoying one another's company when I became aware of the passage of time, and in glancing at my watch realised we had been talking for about half an hour. Turning to my companion I said "Well, John Russell, it is a good job that I looked at the time" "Oh dear, you knew who I was all the time" he said, looking rather crestfallen. "Not really" I said "but I happen to have your brochure with quite a good likeness of you on the back cover". "Would you like me to sign it for you?". "Can if you like" I said, and under the photograph he signed his name - Bedford. "And now I must go, John. I am with a coach party from Essex and it is approaching departure time. But whether you were John Russell or not I have enjoyed our conversation very much". Whereupon we said our farewells and I went walking off down the terrace of Woburn Abbey. Then I turned and we waved wistfully at one another.

As I made my departure I felt rather sorry that I had not left John Russell in anonymity since it was apparent that he had been wanting to speak to someone without it being known who he was - the Duke of Bedford. A very nice man. I should have liked to have met him again.

dmf020801

## DUNKIRK

Twelve months ago, in issue 24, we invited information on Dunkirk as a result of comments by Jack Gridley, ex-Maldonian, ex R.N.

The response has been, frankly, disappointing and our collection of photographs, artefacts, and in fact any information of consequence relating to the 'little ships' and their crews which left the Blackwater to join the armada of rescue ships at Dunkirk in 1941, is virtually non-existent.

We shall, therefore, be grateful to anyone who can come forward with anything of interest relating to this exceptional event. We have so far established that two vessels left Heybridge Basin after a service check, en route Dunkirk via Ramsgate, but we do not have the full history which we would like to place on record.

hb060202

P.S....

A member is reminded of an incident in 1942 when, as NCO in charge of a squad of cadets from Squadron 1207 (Maldon) Air Training Corps, visiting Bradwell for the week-end by invitation, he 'tossed up' with Colin Hull from Tiptree for the last training trip of the day, on each of which one cadet was carried as a trainee, but on this occasion one trip was cancelled as the weather was closing in. So the aircraft, a Boston(?), took off, and almost immediately crashed. There were no survivors. Colin's name is to be found on the Tiptree War Memorial, and on that by the entrance to the disused airfield.

Amongst other local R.A.F. casualties still recalled are - Aubrey Gilbert, Alan Ife, and Barry Lewis. (No doubt others will come to mind after this has been published, and can be included in due course. Your assistance would be welcomed.)

hb171101



# MALDON DISTRICT MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

*Calling all Members and Friends*

## **\*WANTED\***

**LOTS & LOTS OF GOOD QUALITY**

# **BRIC-A-BRAC**

**(but not electrical goods please)**

**for**

## **TABLE SALE**

**on**

## **BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY**

# **6th MAY 2002**

**FOR COLLECTION/DELIVERY CONTACT**

**MIKE BENNETT THROUGH MUSEUM,**

**OR ON (01621) 854659**

**>>>>>>Proceeds to Museum Funds<<<<<<**

**A few volunteers welcomed to assist on stall**

## The British Empire - Victorian Times

Queen Victoria was sovereign over a continent, 100 peninsulas, 500 promontories, 1000 lakes, 2000 rivers, and 10,000 islands. She waved her hand and 900,000 warriors would march to battle to conquer or die. She bent her head and at the signal 1000 ships of war and 100,000 sailors performed her bidding on the ocean. She walked upon the earth and 30,000,000 human beings felt the least pressure of her foot. The Assyrian empire was not so populous. The Persian empire was not so powerful. The Cathaginian empire was not so dreaded. The Spanish empire was not so widely diffused. The Roman empire was weak in comparison, and Greece was as a small village.

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### WASHINGTON'S DEATH.....

*George Washington died the last hour of the day, the last day of the week, of the last month of the year, of the last month of the last century (but one).*

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### Your Telephone Predicted

*In a publication dated 1664, was the following forecast:-*

"As glasses have highly promoted our seeing, so it is not improbable but that there may be found many mechanical inventors to improve our senses of hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. It is not impossible to hear a whisper a furlong's distance, it having been already done, and perhaps the nature of the thing would not make it more impossible though that furlong should be ten times multiplied. And though some famous authors have affirmed it impossible to hear through the thinnest plate of Muscovy glass, yet I know a way by which it is easy enough to hear one speak through a wall a yard thick. It has not yet been thoroughly examined how far octocousticons may be improved, nor what other ways there may be of quickening our hearing or conveying sound through other bodies than the air, for that is not the only medium. I can assure the reader that I have, by the help of a distended wire, propagated the sound to a considerable distance in an instant, or with as seemingly quick a motion as that of light, at least incomparably swifter than that which at the same time was propagated through the air, and this not only in a straight line, but one bended in many angles".

## THE CHANGING HIGH STREET

W. Geo. Ginn Esq., J.P.

### Part 1.....

To live is to change and this is as true of a town as it is of a person. With both, photos can provide the evidence but if we wish to get a long perspective on a town - say two hundred years - then we must have recourse to Directories. Unfortunately this early they didn't give street addresses - only towns - so for our first look at Maldon High Street we will take the town as representative of it.

Nothing is so revealing as a list of trades, so let us take a selection of those which, present in 1791, are totally absent today. Then there were eight cordwainers (boot and shoe makers) and four breeches makers, one hatter, a staymaker, a collarmaker, three peruke makers, together with a (clay) pipemaker. Additionally there was a tallow chandler, a soap manufacturer, a basket maker, and a chair maker, two coopers, four blacksmiths, two whitesmiths and a brazier. There were four each of watchmakers and hoymen (masters of a hoy).

All these are absent from today's scene although we can at least understand what they did, but what are we to make of the following? - three coalmeaters, one tidewaiter, one landwaiter, a coachmaster, a riding supervisor and a riding officer. Strange though some of their activities are to us today, I wonder what they would have made of some of our today's activities, say T.V. and motor mechanics, and computer programmers to name but a few of our modern tradesmen?.

By 1827 the number of boot and shoe makers had risen to thirteen and the smiths and farriers to seven, whilst ten coal merchants and four Boarding Academies had appeared, with the staymaker still in business. Sixty years later the shoemakers had been reduced to ten, and the Dame Schools to three, whilst a new phenomenon, the "Fancy Repository" had three adherents. The jobmaster - the man who hired horses 'for the job' which had been a feature of regency life still boasted one practitioner. Blacksmiths and farriers were on the way out with four, and the watch-maker had similarly been reduced to a single practitioner.

A hundred years later the High Street was beginning to take on some of its present-day characteristics, but the bootmakers were still much in evidence (seven), only now joined by five boot repairers. Blacksmiths had shrunk to two, and the Fancy Repositories to two also, but the watchmakers and jobmasters had actually increased to three and two respectively. By the outbreak of the second world war there were only a handful of these old-style shops left, and the High Street was taking on

today's shape which even as we read is still changing. The diminution of these traditional establishments meant that gradually the sole trader living above his shop gave way to multi-stores, and the upper storeys became progressively empty, and the evening streets even emptier.

But other and more subtle changes were at work in the sphere of corporate functions. Traditionally the High Street had been the seat of all the town's officers of all sorts, but this had all changed by 1939 when they had become largely concentrated in Hill House on Market Hill. Before then the Moot Hall stood as the embodiment of municipal authority, and the Borough Council's officers were all close at hand. At No.47 the Town Clerk, the Borough Engineer, Accountant & Financial Officer, and Sanitary Inspector could all be found. The Rating Officer and Collector of General and Water Rates was located at No.17.

The move to Hill House could be said to have completed a revolution which had been going on all the 20th century. As the Victorian era was drawing to a close, the town's officials, nearly all located at different offices in the High Street were all part-timers. The Town Clerk was Frederick Henry Bright the Solicitor housed at No.53. He was also clerk to the Port Sanitary Authority, and the Maldon Joint Hospital Board, clerk to the Dengie Magistrates and to the Commissioners of Taxes for the Dengie Hundred, and to the school attendance committee. One of the Rates Collectors was Samuel Charles Spurgeon of No.29. He was also collector to the Borough's water department, collector of poor's rate for St. Peter's District, Registrar of Marriages, and Collector of Land and Income Tax, all in addition to his trade or calling of auctioneer and house agent. The Moot Hall housed the Police Station and both fire engines were kept at No.75. To all this could be added the mayors, aldermen, and councillors of that time, the majority of whom had High Street addresses.

Towering above all these activities and palpably representing them stood D'Arcy Tower which every year in May was the focal point for the town's elections. As late as 1974 it was the custom for the count to be held in the Jubilee Hall, and the Declaration made from the balcony of the Moot Hall, when one third of the total number of councillors were elected. It was a stirring annual function. The Mayor, dressed in his robes and preceded by the Macebearer ringing a great handbell would present four new Councillors to the town. No matter how late the hour, ten, eleven, or even midnight if recounts were necessary, some thousand people would be assembled to hear the result, completely blocking the High Street. It was customary for the four newly elected candidates to stand on the Mayor's right and the unfortunates on his left, so that before the Mayor could

announce the result, everybody knew it, and a great shout would go up composed in equal parts of triumphant cries, and deprecatory hootings.

It was an enthralling moment and it echoes yet in my mind, but that is all that is left of it. Then the town was truly a community. Now the town has been emasculated by absorption into the Maldon District Council and the introduction of the impotent Town Council with its puny powers and responsibilities

Not surprisingly nobody seems interested any more in the election results. All these changes described here have had one result - in both the literal and figurative senses the High Street has fallen silent.

WGG071001

### INFORMATION PLEASE

*We like to believe that most of our names, addresses, and information reported, is correct, but we have uncovered errors which nobody pointed out because 'we took it for granted that someone else would comment'... but someone else didn't! so.....please, if you spot an error, please do say so.....and thanks!*

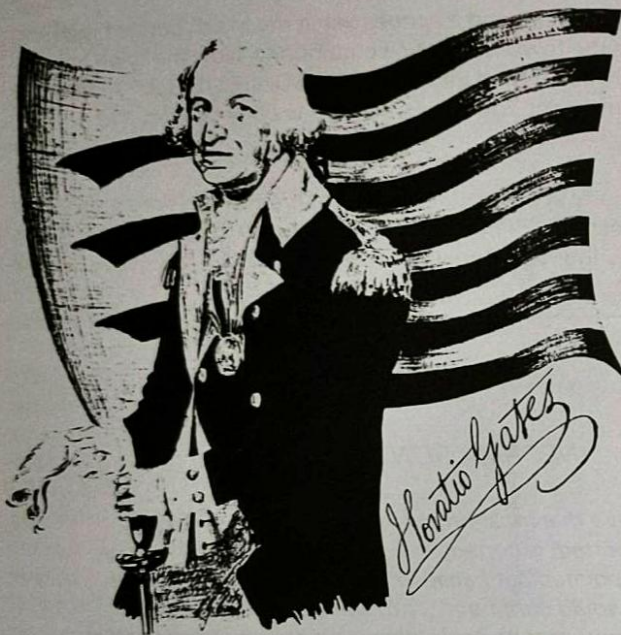
### PROGRESS?

Anyone who viewed the museum premises when we first moved in, complete with muddle, mess, and the need of a coat or two of paint, must agree that there could be little or no comparison with the house as it now stands, neither building nor its contents. Before any comment can be made, there must surely be one thing to do, and that is to "come and see for yourself".

The improvements in the last year or so have been fantastic, thanks to the encourageing grants and the never-ending efforts of the members of our super working party. Much time and effort has been put in over the years, but none has matched the efforts of the recent years; the results speak for themselves. Do have a look round....an inspection would be well worth your time.



One of our famous Maldonians . . .  
**Horatio Gates**



Drawing by E. J. Creek

Horatio Gates

**HORATIO GATES** was born in Maldon. The exact date of his birth is not known but works of reference give the year as 1728.

He entered the British Army and was serving as a lieutenant under General Cornwallis in Nova Scotia at the age of 21. As captain of a 'Company of Foot doing duty in New York', he joined General Braddock's army in Virginia and took part in the attack on Fort Duquesne and was wounded. It was after he had returned to England and had retired from the army with the rank of Major that he decided to settle permanently in America. His old friend and comrade-in-arms, George Washington, lived in Virginia and the estate called Traveller's Rest which Major Gates chose as his future home was also situated there

*and Gate Street was named after him!*

With his wife and son he sailed from Bristol in 1772. As a planter in Virginia, however, he was soon to be disturbed by the outbreak of the American Revolution. Horatio Gates, by now a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Virginia Militia, espoused the cause of the Colonies when, in 1775 they declared their Independence. He was appointed, by Congress, Adjutant-General.

General Gates experienced many vicissitudes during his subsequent military career but is most celebrated, as Commander of the American Army, at Saratoga. There Burgoyne, the British General (portrayed in George Bernard Shaw's play "The Devil's Disciple") was forced to surrender. In his retiring years the General sold his Virginian plantation (which later was to be incorporated within the boundary of Jefferson County, West Virginia) and resided in New York. He died there, in 1806.

- \* There are other links with America and also with Canada and Australia.
- \* The Reverend Lawrence Washington, great-great-grandfather of the first President of the United States, is buried in Maldon.
- \* One of the Pilgrim Fathers, sailing in 1623 three years after the 'Mayflower', came from Purleigh.
- \* Malden in Massachusetts takes its name from our Maldon, as does Maldon in Victoria, Australia.
- \* There was the colonial Fort Maldon on Lake Eryie, now Amherstbury in Ontario, Canada.
- \* In Melbourne, the State Gallery of Victoria has one of the finest art collections in the Southern Hemisphere acquired by the Felton Bequest, founded by Alfred Felton who was born in Maldon.

**OSEA - BACK TO BASICS**  
*from 'The Daily Graphic', February 1st, 1904*

**THE PIONEERS OF OSEA ISLAND.....A visit to the Relief Works**

"Well, I'm glad to see you gentlemen, I'm sure, though it's not the kind of day to come to Osea Island; and you can see how it is for yourselves - a man comes to us on a day like this and his heart sinks into what's left of his boots and he wants to go home". So said Mr Occomore, the foreman, who represents Mr Charrington and the Mansion House Relief Works on that lonely island on the coast of Essex, in the Blackwater River, when the *Daily Graphic* artist and reporter knocked at his door on Saturday afternoon.

A storm of wind and rain had beaten on them during the whole of the ride in the dogcart of the postmaster of Heybridge; they had had to wait three hours for the tide to go down, so that the island could be reached by the gravel road laid across the vast expanse of dreary mud flats; they had heard at Maldon that when they got there they would be up to their knees in mud; and the weather got worse and worse as the day wore on. It was not an alluring prospect, certainly, and the experience sank so deeply into the mind of the artist that he has recorded it in a portion of the accompanying sketches.

The time of waiting was profitably spent in a call upon Mr. Spurgeon who is the agent of Mr Charrington, the owner of Osea Island, at his office in Maldon High Street, and a few moments' conversation with him showed how real and how important a matter was Mr. Charrington's scheme for the development of the estate by the employment of those East End Londoners who cannot find employment elsewhere and whose families are in immediate need of relief. The men who are allowed to go to the relief works at Osea Island must have been householders or roomholders for twelve months in the East End; their case must be one in which immediate relief is necessary. The Mansion House Committee, having received such a man's application sends him to Osea for a month. There he has free board and lodging, for which he has to work at road-making, ditching, or whatever else he is wanted to do - but no money (except sixpence a week, which he cannot spend on drink, because there is none, except water, in the island). To his wife goes 10s.6d. a week, and to each of his children 2s.. That is the reward for his labour. There are men who don't think that is good enough, and they go back from Osea after a few days, strong in the determination to continue the contemplation of a starving or semi-starving family. But the majority stay their month, some longer. One case there recently was of a man who complained that he only got bread and butter for breakfast. "Why, I can get bread and butter in London without working," said he. "Then you're a lucky man" said Mr. Spurgeon, "and you'd better go back to London." And back he went by the next train. Those who stay the month, and are favourably reported upon by Mr. Occomore, are allowed a few days' absence to see their people and then may return.

.....cont'd

The rules and regulations drawn up by Mr. Charrington for the government of his island are framed on philanthropic lines. The first runs thus:- "No house or other building upon the island shall be used or occupied as licensed premises for the sale or supply of intoxicating liquors, either to the public or members of a club or society, and no house shall be used as a shop or business premises unless sold as a shop plot." The second is as follows:- "No iron building, caravan, circus, show, round-about, fair, or other structure shall be erected, placed, or held upon any plot, nor shall any noisome, noxious, or offensive trade be carried on upon the same."

Mr Charrington's main idea is that the island can be made a pleasure resort for the people of Maldon and elsewhere without the attraction of drink. The whole mile and a half by a mile which constitutes the island of Osea will be temperance land. In addition to this he has determined that the work to be done on the island shall be done by those who want work and cannot get it, and to whose families the relief thus afforded will help to keep the wolf from the door in these days of depression and distress. That is, briefly put, the whole scheme of the relief works of Osea Island.

The rain and wind were still beating and blowing when the hour of low water arrived, and the journey over the mud flats of the Blackwater could be undertaken. The postmaster's pony splashed gallantly through it, and after following the line of black piles, draped with seaweed, which marked out the road, the island was reached, and all trouble and discomfort were forgotten when once the acquaintance of Mr. Occomore was made. "Come in, and have some tea; I'm just about making it" said he, "and when you've got warmed up a bit we'll go out and have a look round. You'll find the going very soft." So we had a pleasant quarter of an hour in the cosy little frame-built addition which Mr. Charrington has made to the old farmhouse which stands in the middle of the island, and where he himself occasionally stays. Mr. Occomore is foreman, postman, superintendant and dispenser of castor oil to the relief works colony; he wears big boots and a woollen jumper; he has a shrewd face with a firm jaw and a twinkling eye; and he is ready at any time of the day or night to settle any question which may arise. He took us out into a sea of mud to the huts where the men lodge; roomy huts with bunks one above another, as on board ship, with a stove in the centre, and plenty of good bedding; then into the dining tent where some of the men were finishing off what seemed to be a good substantial meal; and then to the great new hut which is being prepared for the accommodation of 120 more men.

That is proof enough of the success of the experiment, but the best proof, as Mr. Occomore rightly judged, lies in a letter which had been sent to one of the men now on the island. The man, weary apparently, of work and well-doing, had written to his wife in the East-end to say he was coming back. She replied, begging him to stay where he was, for the money which she got regularly "came in very handy" and then she went on to give him a long list of their children's clothes which she had been able to get out of pawn. That, indeed, tells the story of the relief works of Osea Island, better than anything else can do.

*(The original extract from the newspaper was donated by Miss J. Eve to the Museum in 1927)*

## Another Octagonarian !

*We had planned to use a copy of an excellent photograph of our Museum Display Team at work in 'The Bull' at Great Totham demolishing what appeared to be an equally excellent lunch if the display of glassware is an indication of satisfaction. Disappointment however, as the high gloss of the photo was not approved by our copier, so we must fall back on words.....*

*If and when you tour the Museum, if you have not already done so, you will not miss the replica of the Maldon East Station, patiently constructed by member Geoff Albury, a very modest but able model engineer (who pairs extremely well with our Mike Bennett, not the subject of this little article).*

*A photo would have been the answer to those who will say "Who the heck is Geoff Albury ?" Well, Geoff has turned a cheery eighty years of age and his celebration lunch was on the 3rd August 2001. His age does not dampen his enthusiasm, and he will not thank us for even mentioning his name, which we would not normally do as those who deserve our appreciation are always loath to be acknowledged, but with Mike's own approval we are pleased in this instance to place on record our admiration and thanks for all Geoff's efforts. We wish him "A long life, and many happy returns !"*

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### UNDER 60 ?

If so, then you would be unlikely to remember the local Co-op mobile meat van which would today probably be classified as unhygienic although it seemed always to be spotless. Just a memory jogger ! Again...we had a photo, but it would not copy at all satisfactorily

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### MODEL LINER

We believe that it was in 1961 that the 'Bentall Apprentices' constructed a most impressive model liner and between them pulled it round the Carnival route for that year. What happened to it after that seems to follow the same route as the old Maldon Town Band instruments...viz: disappeared into thin air. From memory - it was surely too big to be exhibited in the Museum grounds? Anyone with information please?.

*It is unavoidable that the 2002 copy of the '3-fold guide will be basically similar to that for 2001 but for readers of the 'PennyFarthing' herewith a foretaste—*

**"Not all Members have been, nor indeed are able, to visit the 2002 Exhibitions in their Museum. This 'A5' copy of the '3-fold' guide as handed to all visitors gives a 'canned' summary of what will now be found in 'The Museum in the Park'**

**WELCOME to the Maldon-District Museum Taxi Rank** with its collection of memorabilia from the days of the horse-drawn 'bus that served the Kings Head & Blue Boar to and from the station through to Patten's Model T with the Ben Handley, Dykea and Bennetts (car hire and taxi) firms.

**(To avoid any risk of damage please leave your hand luggage at the desk. Thank you.)**

**Turn right from Reception into the Long Hall** with its wall displays depicting the story of Maldon throughout its long history, and **tools of trade** as used by local craftsmen. The 'snug' contains a cask rack and well-used items from local pubs, and the replica **shop front** contains exhibits from local sources & High Street shops now sadly closed. This area is completed by the 1877 "Pumper" **Fire Engine**, well preserved over the years, and at last again in its rightful home, with pictures of the old **Fire Brigade**.

Nearby is the old 'Penny-Farthing' and the **Kathleen's Kitchen trade bike**,

**Through the open doorway into the replica of a typical '39/45 cottage living room....**  
....as used by a war-time wife with her **domestic items** ready for her. Note the cupboard beneath the stairs, containing further wartime memorabilia.

**Check the wall as you move on to ...**  
**The Margery Allingham Collection** of artefacts, books and photographs displayed under the watchful eye of Albert Campion.

**Into the front hall to foot of the stairs.....**  
On the wall a display of **Pitsaws** used by woodmen in forestry work, and by shipwrights as portrayed by Constable. See the models illustrating the use of these saws

**Stay on the ground floor and pass into room 3 by the foot of the stairs, the Cath Backus Room.** Here is a **Victorian Pram**, **period clothes**, and many other items familiar to 'Great-Grandma', with a **Victorian Spinal Trolley** from St. Peter's Hospital .....  
**and EXTRA....the Queen's Golden Jubilee exhibition**

**Climb the stairs and go round to the left,** en route noting the various wall exhibits including **early rifles** and **weaponry**, and notably the **replica waistcoat** of Edward Bright of local fame. Also a descriptive layout of the **Carmelite Priory**, and a large picture of the 'famous' **Maldon view**.

Turn right into room 8, to memorabilia of **John Sadd & Sons Ltd.**, to whom, per the Rugby Group, we are indebted for the fine display of **scale models of ships** made by JS&S during 1939-45, including the well-known **MTB 796**, and other related exhibits. See a **Joiners' Shop** from the last century, with bench and tools of the trade.

**Cross the landing to room 9, containing** a Special Exhibition showing the History of **Maldon Swimming Club** from 1906 to 1966 with **Cups, Photographs, Artefacts** and a model.

See too, the history of the Market Hill '**Workhouse**' (the 'Spike'), and a small display of the history of **Osea Island**. Here also are artefacts depicting the history of the '**Hippodrome**' and '**Embassy**' Cinemas and exhibits showing the history of **Maldon Schools**.

Here also find the **Coin and Medal** collection.

**Out of room 9 and look across the stair well to the small landing where, (be careful on the stairs) on the left find the Natural History Room** with its mixed collection of **birds, fish, and animals**, each with a local connection of some description - even the **stuffed alligator!**

See also exhibits about the **Oyster Fishing Industry**.

**Please retrace your steps carefully down the stairs.**

Thank you for signing the Visitors' Book if you have already done so, or for doing so when you do!

**( Osea information can be seen, by request, in a folder held in the Kiosk)**

**Ha! Ha!**

A writer of comedies was giving a banquet in honour of his latest work, at which a jovial guest gave the toast: "The author's very good health ! May he live to be as old as his jokes !".

**Your Hon Membership Secretary says.....**

"The Association's year ends and subs are due for renewal w.e.f. 1st April. The subscription for the year again remained unchanged at the last AGM and is unchanged on the Renewal notice enclosed for your convenience with this Penny- Farthing. It was noted then that subs would be reviewed this year. Any decision at the 2002 AGM will become effective April 1st 2003.

Thank you to all who have assisted by renewing promptly this past year, and to those who renew promptly in the year ahead."

Colin B

**Maldon District Museum Association**

~~~~Registered Charity 301362 ~~~~  
President - Mr. Derek Maldon Fitch  
Vice President - Mr L.J. Barrell

**Committee - to A.G.M. 2002**

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

*Vice-Chairman ..... Tony Tullett.....*

*Hon. Secretary.....Daphne Daniel....*

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

*Membership Sec:..... Colin Barrell.....*

*Committee(Co-opted)..Lynda Barrell..*

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

*Committee.....Ray Brewster.....*

*Committee.....Penny Cook.....*

*Committee.....John Daniel.....*

*Committee.....Molly Middleton.....*

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

~~~~~  
*Curatorial Adviser....Nick Wickenden Esq*  
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(Answerphone when museum unattended)*

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**Please note that opinions expressed are those of the individual contributors, and not necessarily agreed by the Association**  
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