

THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association



From your Chairman

I find increasingly that the speed in which time passes is truly alarming and it seems hardly possible that our closed season is nearly at an end. I am sure that this too will be the sentiment of our hard working display team as they continue their work on the new season's exhibits. It was said back in October that there would be less to be done this year as the railway exhibition, which has proved very popular, was to be continued for at least a further twelve months. However, this has not proved to be the case and there are imaginative plans taking shape at various points in the museum. I shall not disclose any details but I hope that all who attend the stewards' meeting on Monday 31st March will be pleasantly surprised, as the new displays are unveiled. One difference that I must mention, will be that our friends from the Margery Allingham Society will not have a display this year, but it is hoped that they will return with an even stronger presentation in 2004, which is a special year for them. Lynda, our Stewarding Secretary, has been busy producing the 2003 rota and would wish anyone not suited by the allotted dates, in the event of difficulty, to make contact with her so that adjustments may be made. The major strength of our Association is the quality and enthusiasm of our volunteer Stewards so if you are not already a Steward and would like to join this happy band please let Lynda know. You will be welcomed.

Best wishes!

Paddy Lacey

Your Membership Secretary.....

wishes to remind us all that the Museum Year runs from April 1st until March 31st; that Renewal Subscriptions (subject to AGM confirmation) will be £7 single or £11 double; and thanks us all very much for our anticipated cooperation. The "year" for new members joining after 30th September will last until the succeeding March twelve month. (i.e. 18 months/subject to AGM confirmation)

We regret to report yet another loss to our Membership; namely that of **Mrs Frances Burrells** at the age of eighty-seven; she will be remembered by many as a member of the 'shoe-shop' with that old Maldon High Street name of **Burrells**, boot and shoe retailers and repairers, managed latterly by Frances and her husband. Frances was born on the Causeway, a pure Maldonian born and bred. When the shop closed, the Museum was pleased to receive the tools of trade offered by her.

COMPLIMENTARY COMMENTS

(from the Maldon & Burnham Standard dated 14th November 2002)

'Little Museum in the Park gets a feather in its cap'

MALDON'S little Museum in the Park can now hold its head alongside the nation's grandest collections.

The former gatehouse to Promenade Park with its small rooms dedicated to local industries and worthies has been granted full registration as a Museum by Resource, the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries - which could lead to bigger and better displays and extended opening hours.

At its meeting next Tuesday, Maldon District Council's community services committee will hear that the achievement of registration will greatly improve the Maldon District Museum's potential for gaining future funding.

Registration is also a feather in the cap of the District Council because, as a performance indicator, it increases the number of registered museums in the district.

Committee members are told in a report from Dr. Paddy Lacey of the Maldon and District Museum Association that the association had been congratulated on the museum's responsible management.

The association is now in a position to apply for a major grant from the Heritage Lottery/Museums Council.

Priorities recommended by the museum registration scheme include improvements to the care of collections and increased public access.

Footnote from the ^{OUR} Editor - "Let's not overlook the efforts put in by the many directed by the few. Without them we would have achieved nothing".

and more from the Maldon & Burnham Standard

(dated 21st November 2002)

Museum Honour

BURNHAM'S Museum on the Quay has gained full registration alongside Maldon's Museum in the Park.

The Maldon award was announced last week. Now the tiny Burnham Museum, housed in a former boatshed, can also hold up its head with the best of British collections.

The award will be presented to museum staff during their stewards' Christmas lunch at Burnham Sailing Club on November 30th.

STOP PRESS !!!!!

Please note the "Provisional" date of 31st March for the Stewards' Assembly has now been confirmed. We meet at the Octagon at 2.30 pm. It will be appreciated if Committee members can be there a little earlier - say 2 pm.



Tiptree St. Luke's
C. of E. (Cont.) School

Church Road Tiptree Colchester Essex CO5 0SU

Headteacher: Mrs. W. Enguell

Phone: (01621) 815456 Fax: (01621) 819887



Examples of the thanks and encouragement received after recent school visit

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Lacey,

As a sign of appreciation
for the special contribution
you made to our day in
Maldon.

Kind regards,

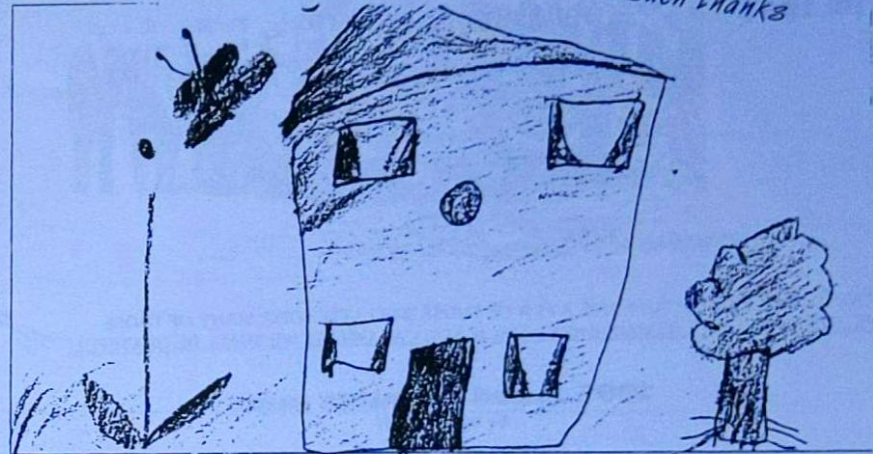
Delia Cooke,

Carol Carlsson Browne,

Sue Basker and the
Infants at St Lukes.



Selected at Random from several such thanks



This is the museum
at Maldon.

Dear Dr and Mrs Lacey
I liked the
museum I sketched
Maldon.

I liked the old
clothes.

I liked the
shells.

Love HAYLEY

Dr and Mrs
Lacey

47 Mill road
Maldon

Essex
CM9 5HX

IN 1964

JOHN SADD & SONS LTD.

75th Anniversary.

ADMISSION TO CELEBRATIONS

to be held on

Saturday, 5th September, 1964

on

The Causeway Playing Field, Maldon.

At 8 p.m.

(TICKET NUMBER) 1495

AND ALTHOUGH WE CAN NAME A FEW OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED, MANY OF THOSE PICTURED OPPOSITE REMAIN INCOGNITO. IF YOU CAN OBLIGE WE SHALL BE GRATEFUL.

1967.....and the rains came

by Iain Sherriff

It rained on Sunday June 25th 1967. A light drizzle at 12.30 p.m. developed into a downpour by 2.30 and then exploded into a two-hour thunderstorm. Meanwhile the London to Southend road was flooded at Brentwood roundabout, 50 yachts capsized on the north Kent coast; all around was chaos..... except at Warley. At the Ford Motor Co. at Warley the Essex round of the LDOY competition proceeded apace despite the weather.

While the rain began we watched Mr. G. Long of Proctor and Gamble manoeuvre in test No.3. He won class D with a creditable 38 penalty points. Later - and during the deluge - Mr E. Moye of SPD Ltd., in class E1 came home with 30 penalty points. Mr A. Campbell of Shell-Mex and B.P. Ltd in the next class came close with 49 penalty points. For the next hour these three worked feverishly on class average in an attempt to decide which of them was overall champion.

Alas, none of them could claim the honour - it went to Mr. B. Phillips of J. Sadd Ltd., who had 38 penalty points and showed the best improvement in class average. Mr Phillips completed the course in the worst possible conditions, when mirrors must have proved almost useless and opening a cabin door invited death by drowning! Conditions apart, the new Essex area champion was a worthy winner.



Another reminder - for those who are still with us....

Bentall Works Cricket Club - c.1950

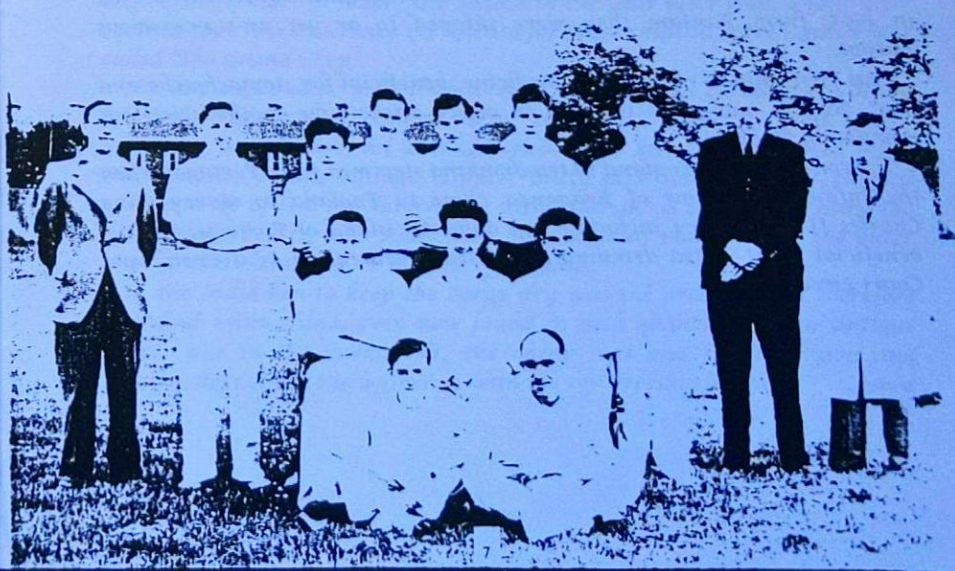
--from left to right and back to front--

Jack Newton; Fred Taylor; Hefn Roberts; Dick Filby; John Nicholls; Charlie Freeman;

Jim Raper; Charles Bryant; Bob Norton;

Alan Frost; Len Barrell; George Wombwell;

Ken Nunn; Vic Colbear.



The Romance of Tea

[Borrowed from notes compiled by Cathi Backus in 1982]

Romance may seem to be an airy-fairy and unsuitable word to apply to something so commonplace as tea. However, the truth is that there cannot be any commodity on the grocer's shelf which has such an ancient history and has been produced and distributed all over the world with such courage and determination.

The taxing of tea has made it a powerful fiscal weapon over hundreds of years and indeed this very taxing was, as every schoolchild knows, the cause of the Boston Tea Party leading to the loss of the American Colonies.

Tea has been beloved of philanthropists and temperance movements, a boon to smugglers and a power in the sustaining of a nation at war. Fortunes have been made and lost through it and the whole world of the buying and selling of tea, its roots firm in the city of London, the legendary Mincing Lane and dockland and over all the great East India Company. It is a tale of historical fascination.

The Chinese knew the existence of tea plants some 5000 years ago; in the 7th to 3rd centuries BC drinking tea was already a favourite among the people, considered as a source of living interest (quotation). But practically, the history of tea goes back to the 4th century AD. By 650 AD farmers in most provinces of the Chinese Empire had a few bushes on their little holdings. The only other country where tea drinking took root was Japan. No knowledge of tea reached Europe before the 16th century.

By 1596 the Dutch were firmly established at Bantam on the island of Java. To Bantam the first shipments of tea from China were transported in 1605; from Bantam they were shipped to as yet un-tea-conscious Europe.

Teas first gained repute as a medicine, beneficial for stomach-ache and gout. By the mid-1960's tea sold in ounce packets by apothecaries was popular in Holland.

The conversion of England to tea-drinking stemmed from Portugal when the Infanta Catherine of Braganza came to England to marry King Charles II, her dowry including not only the island of Bombay, but the beneficial habit of tea drinking, practised in Portuguese aristocratic and Court circles.

.....cont'd

The first dated advertisement for teas was in September 1658 "by all physicians approved" sold at the Sultanese Head 'Cophce House in Sweetings Rents, Royal Exchange'.

By the late 1650's tea was selling at between 16s and 60s per pound. Its medicinal benefits were claimed, among other things, for Headache, Stone, Gravel, Dropsy, Liptitude, Distillations (whatever they may have been), Scurvy, Sleepiness, Loss of memory, Looseness or Gripping of the guts, Heavy Dreams, and Colic proceeding from the wind.

In September 1664 the East India Company wrote off the first order for tea from Bantam, a hundred pounds weight of the best tea procurable and it would appear that the first tea auction was in March 1679 - 3 cakes of Dust of Thea sold for £1.11s., and at the turn of the century annual imports were between 70,000 and 100,000 lbs until by 1703 one ship alone, the Kent, carried 65,000 lbs. This vessel at 350 tons was one of the great East Indiamen.

The sailings of these ships in the form of a fleet of from three to six (later many more) were geared exactly to the monsoon winds of the Eastern Oceans and the cycle of the Chinese tea crop. Leaving in January they would round the Cape of Good Hope and with the southwest monsoons behind them (May/June onwards) could reckon to arrive off the China coast by August/September.

Given the obstructions of Chinese officialdom, far worse than storms or pirates, the Captains would sail for home in December and their teas might be entered for the September or December sales of the following year, though more probably the March of the year after that, a four-year cycle in fact. The clearance certificate for these ships to leave Canton was called "The Grand Chop".

The late 1840's saw the first chapter in the brief but thrilling era of the fabulous "Clipper Ships". One of these, "Lightning", American built, logged 436 miles in 24 hours, an average speed of 18 knots, a fair speed for a modern liner. A 'late vintage' Clipper, "Cutty Sark" (1869), 951 tons, carried 1,200,000 lbs of tea. An interesting little sidelight is that if necessary the chests were beaten into place with huge wooden mallets until the outer ones firmed themselves to the line of the ship.

In the Indiamen to keep the cargo dry was the problem, and therefore blue and white china, even now found in such quantities in our antique shops, was in the lowest tier, the cheap teas and finally Hyson and Gunpowders above the waterline with the top dressing of silk.cont'd

The storage of tea in conjunction with these docks was in the Curtis Street Warehouse, a great building of six floors extending over 5 acres, a building to create surprise and wonder.

Many tea names became household words; Mazawattee, Brook Bond, Twinning, Ridgeway, Jackson, the list is indeed vast and the history of these remarkable men and the firms whose names became synonymous with tea are too complex to enter into here, though their wares live on in (this) exhibition.

Much thanks must go to Jacksons of Picadilly, Tweinings, Ridgewayss, the India Tea Company, the Shri Lanka Tea Centre, the Tea Council and Wedgewood for their generous help.

These notes were compiled by Ex-Chairman Cath Backus mainly from a splendid book on Tea - "Tea for the British" by Denys Forrest, Chatto and Windus, 1973.

Latchingdon's First Cup of Tea.

from The Essex Review, Vol. xvi

Henry Laver: "More Recollections of By-gone Essex"

My grandfather, John Laver, who lived at Latchingdon, married somewhere about the year 1770, or earlier, a Miss Rush, of Tile Hall, in the same parish. From one of his visits to London during his early married life, he returned with a surprise present for his wife in the shape of a pound of tea, for which I have always understood he paid more than a guinea. His gift also included the necessary equipment for brewing and consuming the tea, namely a set of cups and saucers, a tea-pot, and a tea kettle; nor did he forget to add a tea-caddy in which to store the costly herb. These I am told, were the first tea-things that my grandparents possessed. The kettle I have often seen; it was very similar to those still in use in China, and possessed a handle jointed in every part to fall over sideways.

On one occasion when the wife of the groom was about to give birth to a child, my grandmother, as in duty bound, went over to see if she could be of any assistance. When all was safely over she told them she would like to treat them each to a cup of tea - the new cordial of which they had heard, but had never seen or tasted. The groom was ordered to fill the kettle from the water butt, there being no well upon the farm, which was situated almost entirely upon a belt of London clay. He was gone so long in search of the water that one of the women was despatched to look for him. She found him slowly trying to fill the kettle by the spout from a jug. Never had he beheld such "a queer pot" before, nor had he the slightest notion that the lid was removeable. It was certainly the first time that tea was used in Latchingdon parish, but within a few decades "the tea pond", carefully protected from pollution became an institution at many of the houses.

PURLEIGH



PARISH MAGAZINE.

ONE PENNY.

RICHARD POOLE, PRINTER, MALDON.

-1890-

Purleigh Church Explained

Museum members may be interested in a beautifully illustrated book recently published by the Friends of Purleigh Church. It has been written by Steven Potter, the well known local historian and chairman of the committee that raised funds for the extension to the church that is due to be opened at Easter. The book deals with the development of the church building and also of its fixtures and fittings. The editor of the Penny Farthing has found an earlier publication associated with Purleigh amongst the Museum archives that is reproduced here.

PURLEIGH'S CHURCH EXPLAINED



by
Steven
Potter



Published by The Friends of Purleigh Church
Based on original research with full references provided
52 pages with full colour laminated cover
8 black and white photographs
36 colour photographs
Price £5 (plus 50p postage)
All proceeds go towards maintaining this historic building

Obtainable from the
Museum Book Stall

or

By post from the Museum

or

'phone Maldon (0621) 828270/740568

JIM FISHER - BANDMASTER

Not a Member of our Museum Association but nevertheless another public-spirited local worthy of mention, Jim Fisher, aged eighty-nine, an ex-printer, passed away in December when he was given a grand send-off by members of our local Salvation Army at their Wantz Road Citadel.

Jim was born in Rettendon, moving to Maldon aged seven, so can almost claim to be a genuine Maldonian. He succeeded his father as Bandmaster and held that post himself for about twenty five years. He is succeeded by wife Marjorie and family.



MALDON DISTRICT MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
CALLING ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS YET AGAIN

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LOTS AND LOTS OF BRIC-A-BRAC

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MONDAY 5th MAY 2003

**FOR COLLECTION/DELIVERY CONTACT MIKE
BENNETT THROUGH MUSEUM OR A MEMBER
OR ON (01621) 854659**

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

A few volunteers welcomed to assist on stall

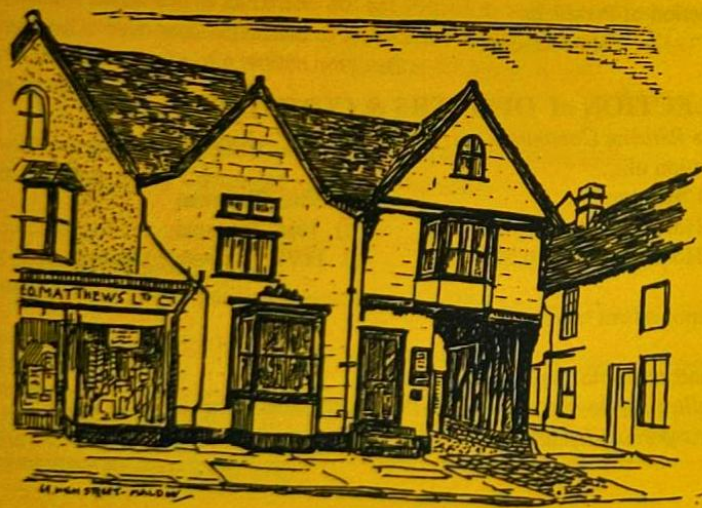
DIARY DATES 2003/4

DATES WHICH ARE WORTHWHILE RECORDING WITHOUT DELAY.....

STEWARDS ASSEMBLY.....(Provisionally) Monday 31st March
in St. Mary's 'Octagon' @ 2.30 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS..... all in 'St.Cedds' at 7.30 p.m.
(unless otherwise advised).....

<u>Tuesdays</u>	<u>2003</u>		
	8th April	13th May	10th June
	8th July	12th August	9th September
	14th October	11th November	9th December
	<u>2004</u>		
	13th January	10th February	9th March



An earlier Museum, before 'Spindles,
and before 'The Museum in the Park

The Maldon Wonder Apple

In "The Penny Farthing" No.24 we introduced the subject of Apples.
The following copy is of a letter referring to just that.....

Telegraphic Address: "LAXTON, BEDFORD."

Telephone: BEDFORD 2198

LAXTON BROS. BEDFORD LTD.,
NOVELTY RAISERS, NURSERYMEN, SEED MERCHANTS.
FRUIT TREES. ROSES. STRAWBERRIES. SMALL FRUITS.

NURSERIES: GOLDINGTON ROAD, BEDFORD.
OFFICES: 63, HIGH STREET, BEDFORD.

Directors
E. A. L. LAXTON, E. W. H. LAXTON

BEDFORD.

EALLSE

26 October 1932

Mr Simpson,
The Bungalow,
Queens Avenue,
Maldon, Essex.

Dear Sir,

Will you please say if you have any trees of the
Maldon Wonder Apple to dispose of and the price of it.
Are you prepared to sell Grafts of same?

Yours faithfully,

LAXTON BROS. BEDFORD LTD.

The Walnut

As early as the end of the sixteenth century the walnut was common in the fields by the English highways and in orchards near London. It is not, of course, a native of Britain, having most probably been brought from the Caucasus by way of Italy, where it must have been grown at an early date, since Varro, writing nearly a century before the Christian era, mentions it as then a familiar tree.

Lemon 1890

OH! I HAVE SLIPPED THE SURLY BONDS OF EARTH

and danced the skies
on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue,
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark or even eagle flew -
And while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space
Put out my hand and touched

THE FACE OF GOD

P
High Flight by Pilot Officer Gillaspie Macgregor
No. 422 Squadron SAAF, killed on December 11, 1941.

Copyright
1941

*The late Will Spencer-Garr, another quiet gentleman...
passed away on January 25th at the venerable age of 82.
A member of our Museum Association he was also an active and
knowledgeable member of the Archaeological Group. Brother of
member Mrs A. Groombridge, he will be sadly missed by his many*

MORE MEMORIES ?.....

A few weeks ago, by invitation of the mother of member Frank Collings (also a steward) we met his mother with, notably, two lady friends, later joined by two resident gentlemen of the House of Retirement. Frank's wife Margaret was also in attendance to organise refreshments, whilst another member took the necessary notes (few of our memories are *that* good nowadays). A most interesting couple of hours and after all that we are open to criticism, correction or whatever, and would indeed welcome it as this is all going down to posterity.

Frank's mother Phyllis has now reached her centenary, which is probably more than most of us will do, so the least we can offer her, most sincerely if belated, is **many happy returns**. There are still some of us who are pleased to claim that we still remember her over seventy years ago; perhaps strange to relate but her sons also seem to wear quite well.

Recollections, as they were recalled, with very few embellishments.....

Do you remember Mrs Barker, the infants' school teacher, and how sharp she could be? The infants were mixed in those days. Can't remember the Head's name! No, Mrs Cater followed later; she was a Miss Boutwell. She liked the little girls; she wasn't so keen on the boys. Mrs Osborne followed much later.

The children used to do country dancing, and round and round the Maypole. That was done from about 1914, up until about 1935.

What about Dr Isaac's School? It occupied the first two houses in Lodge Road. The boys all wore top hats and went to All Saints' Church,

The shops in front of All Saints' when demolished made quite a clearance. There was Mr Brock the snob; he also sold sweets. The London Central Meat Company opened a shop there and my mother said "Don't you shop there - not foreign meat - must be English!". When Ben Volta's father first came he used to go out with no shoes on his feet but he made beautiful ice cream.

A tailor once worked in the cottage extension beside the entrance to the old fire station in London Road, near where the Raymonds, Eric and Olive lived and the Duke of Wellington was nearly opposite, where the church hall is now. Mrs C only remembers going in there once with friends when 'The Smiths' were in residence, for a glass of lemonade or something. The Smiths owned the row and housed their relatives in it but in recent years the cottages were purchased by and expertly renovated by Ron Foreman, plumber.

Remember George Woodward the disabled snob?; his father, we think it was, used to push him from the lower part of the town all over the place, and there wasn't much of father but he was himself a very good mat maker and repairer.

Then there was Cyril Curtis, in a similar disabled condition, whose friends used to

push him around; he could look as smart as the next when he felt so inclined.

What about the baker in North Street who delivered hot rolls? Where would you find any fresher?

Another name for a milk roundsman was 'Bond'; Phil Bond, Remember? No, not 007!

Talking of walking, a member's mother used to talk of walking from Cold Norton Hall to the Infants School at Latchingdon and it was easy to take that with a pinch of salt, but now we have an account of a three-year walking to Stevens Farm at Woodham Mortimer daily for milk so we are surely obliged to believe it.

Discussion for a while centred on Churches in remote areas and it was concluded that, although we have little on the subject in the Museum, there must, in almost every Church area, have been a village or Hamlet, now derelict or completely non-existent.

And talking of bells our members were reminded of the Fire Bell at the Moot Hall, and the Knife Grinder on a bike, but that we suspect is not all those years ago. Maybe 1940?

Anyone remember a Mr Harmer (no, not our late Police Inspector) - this one, so it was rumoured, was caught signalling to the Germans during the '14/18 war, but that is uncertain, and it's all a bit of a mystery. Either way it is believed that he was captured for his trouble. More information welcomed on this!

It's all rather easy to slip onto unusual characters and for a while we nearly did, but a particular one of whom we were reminded was Sidney Wooder, Butcher, who was, as far as we can discover, just a pleasant, respected, sociable local, keen to be on good terms with everyone, and only too pleased to give a hand where-ever possible. Anyone know what happened to him? He seemed to vanish like the genie he might have been.

Which having said rumour has it that a family in London Road entertained Oswald Mosley and even 'Lord Haw-Haw' - or perhaps this is stretching things too far? Would make a good article though! More information?

Mixed bag coming up!.....

Brights Solicitors house is remembered as belonging to the Misses May;

The Baker with the horse and cart was Tattersall;

Tedder Thorpe it was who kept goats in Mount Pleasant, it is believed for milk;

Russian Tallow and Brown Paper for Bronchitis;

Ernie Challis had the 'top end' of the Grammar School alongside Fambridge Road as his nursery.....(and when he was bad he was horrid!; good nurseryman though.

Jack Eaves cycled in from Battlesbridge;

Dumplin Dick it was who lived in an old shed, over the railway bridge into Beeleigh down towards the river; what happened to him?

That, we trust, may set at least the old Maldonians to thinking, and if anyone recalls any small item worth repeating we shall be delighted to receive it.

lib 171202

The Gold Rush Years of the Roarin' Fifties

Recounted in a History of

Maldon and The Tarrangower Diggings



Fabulous Gold Mines and Gold Nuggets . . . Geese,
Goats and Chinamen . . . Taffies and Cousin
Jacks . . . Pageants and Processions . . . Theatres
and Pubs . . . Terror and Tragedy . . . Sport and
Pleasures . . . Matchless Panoramic Views . . . Bush
Flowers and Kangaroos . . . Pioneers and Brave
Women.

WITH SIXTY ILLUSTRATIONS

PUBLISHED GOLD CENTENARY YEAR

1953

Price 5/-

Conservation Materials

Colchester Museums are happy to sell conservation materials onto other museums at cost - so you get the benefit of "in bulk" prices without having to buy large amounts. They have calico for costume bags, low acid card boxes (mainly smaller sizes), and polystyrene crystal boxes. For further details contact: Anne-Maria Bojko: 01206 282 933 (direct dial) 01206 282 931 (main office) anne-maria.bojko@colchester.gov.uk

Registration Success

Four museums in Essex have recently achieved full Registered status under Resource's Registration Scheme for Museums and Galleries, Phase II. They are:

- Burnham on Crouch Museum
- Maldon District Museum
- North Weald Air Field Museum
- East Anglia Railway Museum

All of these organisations are run entirely by volunteers. Registration is a minimum standards scheme, which measures museum performance against accepted professional standards. It also provides the museum with general eligibility for grant-aid offered by Resource and Area Museum Councils or their successor bodies, and is taken into account by a wide variety of other funding.

William Green & Sons,
— Ltd.,
Rayleigh
Flour Mills,

MALDON - - - ESSEX.

ALSO

Gold Belt Roller Mills, Brantham,
Manningtree, Essex.

Manufacturers of BAKING and SCALING
FLOURS, and MILLERS' OFFALS.

Breeders of Pedigree Suffolk Sheep.

All Flours Guaranteed Unbleached and Unadulterated.

The above have been awarded over 100 Prize Medals and
Diplomas of Merit at London and other Exhibitions.

Phone: Maldon 44. Telegrams: Green, Miller, Maldon.

30

Congratulations are in order

Congratulations to Ami Gillingwater, a recent graduate in Ancient History, who has been working in a voluntary capacity with our Accessions Team for the past 6 months. Ami has obtained a post at the newly renovated Ranger's House in Greenwich, that houses the Werner collection, a treasure trove of Old Master paintings, Renaissance jewellery and other beautiful objects.
We wish Ami every success in her chosen career.

Greens Flour Mills Ltd. from 1896 - 1989

by Bernard L. Lewis Esq., C.B.E., J.P.

Part 2 of 2.....

Franklins had a very good trade, which was usual in those days for packet self-raising and plain flour. It was marketed under the Mothers' Choice label and was for a time a good seller. We had at Maldon, eight women and one mixerman covering two shifts. Eventually one was faced with a large capital investment in modern packing plant and it was decided to slowly drop the packet trade altogether. Now very few millers pack flour into small bags. Mothers' Choice became so popular that our original brand name 'Cornard' was dropped.

In Station Road, facing the mill, are four cottages all in a row, very small but comfortable, each with downstairs bathroom and flush toilet. They were built in 1936 for £300 each by Hardy-King the local builder. When I came to Maldon in 1947 they each had one cold tap in the kitchen, together with a copper boiler. The wives used to "boil up" on Friday evening with a tin bath on the kitchen floor and that provided their weekly bath. Night soil was collected by the Council lorry twice a week and what an ordeal that was. Incidentally, the mill staff had no washing facilities nor toilets - all that was provided was a urinal trough running into the river and a bar and 'long drop' as a toilet. No canteen, not even a kettle for boiling water was provided. Today we have a very fine canteen and a toilet suite which has a shower unit - how we have advanced in these past few years.

Alan B. Baker, who had been the National President in 1954, contracted Typhoid Fever in 1959 and was very ill for a long time; in fact he never really recovered, and died in Colchester in July 1966. A fine man and a good friend taken too early.

In the first remodel in 1948 the break dressing had been left alone, but in 1955, again using E.R. & F. Turner & Co. of Ipswich, a super sifter was installed on the top floor. This machine was only fair and gave a lot of running trouble; compared to today's sifters it was useless.

However, we soldiered on. Our parent mill, Edward Baker Ltd of Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk, had a Turner's Mill of similar size, i.e. ten sacks per hour, and was mainly in the biscuit and packing flour trade. I think it had five customers, Chiltonian Biscuit Co, Peak Frean; International Tea Co; Jas Limmer & Co; and Crawfords. All this trade was unprofitable and we decided, in 1967, that the obvious road to take would be to double the capacity at Maldon and close down the Sudbury mill. This turned out to be the finest decision taken because it released a fine building for a project that Hugh Baker had in mind - i.e. extrusion process of fish foods, cat and dog foods, which eventually came under the well-known OMEGA brand label. This was all done under Hugh Baker's direction.

Included in the sale to Edward Baker were the two Thames Sailing Barges "Mayflower" and "Ethel Maud". In early 1950 we installed motive power, Kelvin 44 hp - two cylinders and they were good. No longer did you run out of wheat through either no wind, or gales. The skippers of these craft were a special breed of seafarers. Only £9 a week was what they got for their troubles - in those days there was no overtime payment. The mate was paid £4. They lived on board all the time.

One rather unfortunate period in our history was in the late 60's and early 70's in building up the bread flour trade in the London area. Flour factors were used to this end. One such firm.

Hunt Runchman Ltd (Morris and Podmore) of Kennington, helped very considerably. One large customer was A Leatherdale & Sons of Kennington Lane SE11, run by the son of the founder, Peter Leatherdale. All went well and eventually it was agreed that Greens should take a 51% holding in the company. For a short period things went well. Greens put in a flour bin to hold 15 tonnes and it was agreed to finance a new Spooner travelling oven. With hindsight, the worst thing we did.

The peel ovens were taken out for scrap. At the start up it was obvious that the bread was never going to be the same quality and sales fell in consequence. Yes, we saved money on labour but having lost out on quality it was a bad deal. This preyed on Peter and he eventually had a very serious nervous breakdown and never returned to the business. On paper it was a good business, 18 shops retail and 6 wholesale rounds. There were 120 employees and the sackage each week was 120. We bought when inflation was 25% - wages rocketed and control of the workforce was impossible. Very soon, although we tried four General Managers, Morley, David Baker, Dick Madle and finally a Mr. Scruby, the business was unmanageable and on 31st August 1973, we closed it down.

Henry Simon and Thomas Robinson were each asked to provide a plan for Maldon for a 25 sk mill using pneumatics; the previous plant had been an elevator mill. Robinson's were awarded the contract £75,000 which included the removal of every bit of the old plant with the exception of the dust collector (and that was increased in its capacity) and six of the roller mills.

On the 28th July 1968, I stopped the mill and cut the BR belt drive - work then started. The man in charge was Bernard Liddel and he and we got on very well together, so essential in a job like this. He lived in a caravan and I had arranged for the rest of the men, all tradesmen, to be in the Swan hotel. In fact, we took over the hotel for some six weeks. To cover our sales, Cranfields, Wrights, and Marriages supplied flour.

The stop had been planned to be four weeks, and surprisingly enough this was achieved. After the usual clean out for one hour, flour was saleable and the whole move from start to finish was voted a great success. For some years we continued to supply the ex-Sudbury customers but one by one, for various reasons, they disappeared and we set about doing what the mill was designed to do, namely bread flour.

In the course of time John Sadd & Sons, our neighbour, emptied the four cottages facing the road, and we eventually did a land swap. We took the land made vacant by the removal of the cottages which squared off our property and made safer the exit into Station Road. A new office was built on the new land and we were able to pull down the old bungalow type office which had been built in 1896; it gave room to develop a warehouse; this move took place in June 1972. Later on, a fresh piece of land was purchased from John Sadd, widening the property, and upon this a new office block (Wernick) was built and let to an engineering firm for several years until Greens were expanding and took over the block for our own use.

In 1981 it was decided to increase the capacity of the mill by the addition of 1st and 2nd Break Le Coqs and the necessary lifts, and increased motors. H.P. Robinson's made an appalling mess of this - so much so that when the mill was restarted it took less feed than

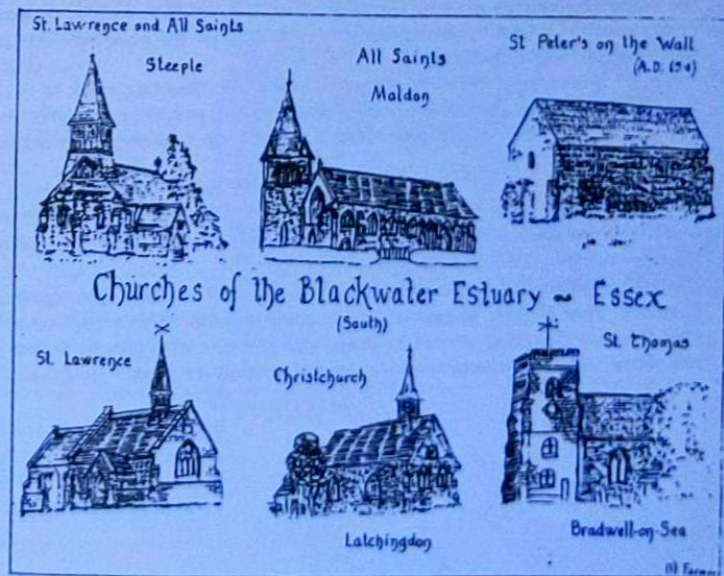
before. In fairness, and after much rowing over the telephone, they put the matter right and we succeeded in running at about 30sks per hour. Since that time much fine tuning has taken place and we are producing 36 sks per hour, for this we are grateful for the hard work put in by Lawrence Potter our Mill Manager.

Transport is an interesting study. As said earlier, the mill delivered flour by horse and cart so the area of delivery was restricted. Flour for a distance was sent by rail from Maldon East Station which was within a hundred yards of the mill.

After the second world war the mill had three vehicles - a Dodge and two Seddons. The drivers were Bennett, Amor, and Charlie Whiting. For years there were no repair bills as George Bennett was a super mechanic and looked after the three vehicles. One must remember that the maximum speed limit then was 30 m.p.h. so moving parts were not overworked. The fleet today is two Rigid Tankers of 20 tonnes capacity, one Tanker Trailer with its own blowing equipment, one 32 tonne ERF Unit, and 10 tonne flat platforms.

During the 1980's one was constantly updating both the mill and the office, keeping abreast with modern computerisation. This, together with an excellent and loyal staff, made Greens one of the most modern and efficient mills in the country. This, and particularly company success at Sudbury in the manufacturing and marketing of dog food under the brand name OMEGA, led eventually to the business being sold to Harrison and Crosfield plc, via their subsidiary Pauls of Ipswich, in September 1989.

Bernard Lewis served on the Executive Committee of N.A.B.I.M. for a number of years, and was National President in 1985, following in the footsteps of Alan Baker who was President in 1954.



ERRORS of History
as recorded by Don Lemon c.1890

1. William Tell was a myth
2. Coriolanus never allowed his mother to intercede for Rome
3. Blondel, the harper, did not discover the prison in which Richard III was confined.
4. Nero was not a monster; he did not kill his mother, nor fiddle over burning Rome
5. Alfred never allowed the cakes to burn, nor ventured into the Danish camp disguised as a minstrel.
6. Fair Rosamund was not poisoned by Queen Eleanor but died in the odour of sanctity in the Convent of Godstow.
7. The Duke of Wellington at Waterloo never uttered the famous words 'Up Guards and at them!'.
8. Charles Kingsley gave up his chair of modern history at Oxford because he said he considered history 'largely a lie'.
9. Chemists have proved that vinegar will not dissolve pearls nor cleave rocks, in spite of the fabled exploits of Cleopatra and Hannibal.
10. Charles IX did not fire upon the Huguenots with an aquabus from the window of the Louvre during the massacre of St. Bartholomew.
11. The siege of Troy is largely a myth, even according to Homer's own account. Helen must have been sixty years old when Paris fell in love with her.
12. The crew of Le Vengeur instead of going down with the cry of 'Vive la Republique!' shrieked for help, and many were saved in English boats.
13. The number of Xerxes' army has been grossly exaggerated, and it was not stopped at Thermopylae by 300 Spartans, but by 7,000, or, as some authors compute, 12,000.
14. The Abbe Edgeworth frankly acknowledged to Lord Holland that he had never made the famous invocation to Louis XVI on the scaffold: "Son of St. Louis, ascend to Heaven".
15. Philip VI, flying from the field of Crecy, and challenged late at night before the gates of the castle of Blois, did not cry out "It is the fortune of France." What he really said was, "Open, Open: it is the unfortunate King of France".
16. Voltaire, on being asked where he had heard the story that when the French became masters of Constantinople in 1294, they danced with the women in the sanctuary of the Church of Santa Sophia, replied, calmly, "Doubtless: it is a frolic of my imagination."
17. There is no evidence that Romulus ever lived, that Tarquin out-raged Lucretia, that Brutus shammed idiocy and condemned his sons to death, that Marcus Scaevola thrust his hand into the fire, that Cloelia swam the Tiber, that Horatio defended a bridge against an army.

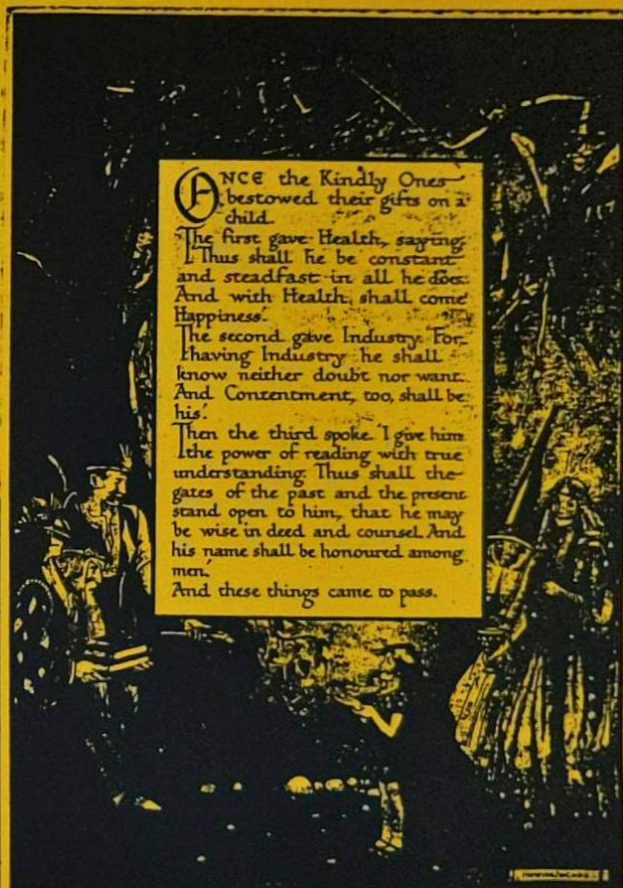
New Museum Web Site

Maldon District Museum has launched its new web site at www.maldonmuseum.fsnet.co.uk It gives information for visitors about opening times, how to find the museum, and describes the displays. It even gives a mention to one famous inhabitant of Georgian Maldon, Edward Bight – the Fat Man of Maldon. Check it out for good, simple ideas on how museums, even small independent museums, can use the internet.

Books for Loan

Museums in Essex Committee has a small lending library of reference books for museums in the county to use. There are titles on all aspects of museum work including: care of collections, documentation, preventative conservation, marketing, audience development, volunteers, funding, learning and access. Slim volumes can be posted to museums within Essex, heavier volumes will need to be collected from our offices at Essex Record Office, Chelmsford.

For a full list of titles contact Miss Glynis Evans, 01245 544 666.
glynis.evans@essexcc.gov.uk



The Illustration by
HELEN JACOBS

The Fable told by
ELIZABETH FRASER

ONCE the Kindly Ones bestowed their gifts on a child.
The first gave Health, saying:
Thus shall he be constant
and steadfast in all he does:
And with Health, shall come
Happiness.
The second gave Industry. For
Having Industry, he shall
know neither doubt nor want.
And Contentment, too, shall be
his.
Then the third spoke. I give him
the power of reading with true
understanding. Thus shall the
gates of the past and the present
stand open to him, that he may
be wise in deed and counsel. And
his name shall be honoured among
men.
And these things came to pass.

Maldon District Museum Association

—Registered Charity 301362—

President - Mr. Derek Maldon Fitch

Vice President - Mr L.F.Barrell

Committee - to A.G.M. 2003

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

Vice-ChairmanTony Tullett.....

Hon. Secretary..... to be advised

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

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

Committee.....Lynda Barrell.....

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

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

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

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

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

Committee.....Elizabeth Willshire.....

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

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