

# THE PENNY

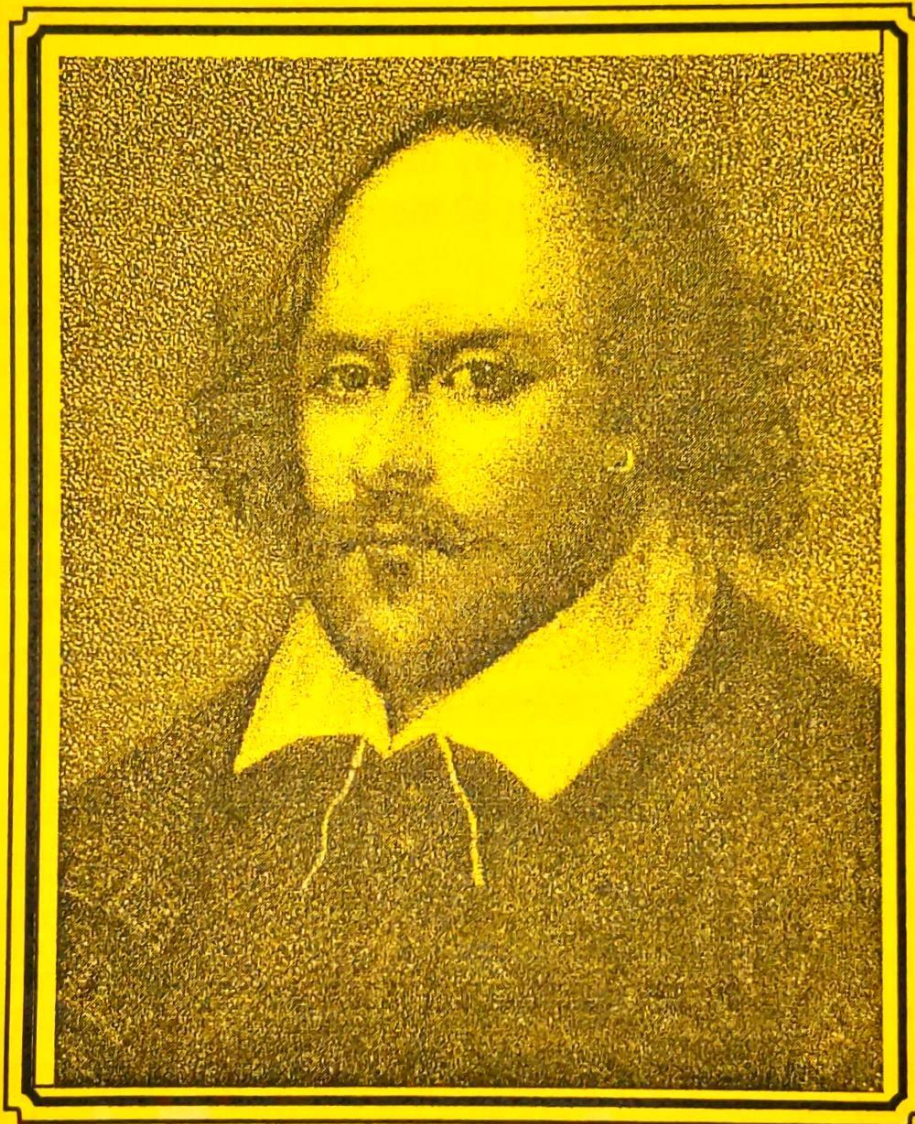


# FARTHING

ACCREDITED



The Maldon District Museum Association Newsletter



## Shakespeare in Maldon - P4

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## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

In very recent days I have received a letter from the national Museum Libraries and Archives Council [MLA] confirming that the Maldon District Museum has achieved and maintained full accreditation for our site in the Promenade Park.

This follows the examination of our most recent audited accounts, latest spending plan etc and speaking to conservationists that we have worked with in the past year. This is very pleasing as it means that we are reaching a high standard in managing the Museum and its collection but, as mentioned in my winter Chat, we are in a period of uncertainty made worse by the fact that we must agree a new lease with the district council within the coming 12 months as our last lease for 10 years was signed in May 2002.

The MLA has requested a copy of the new lease once it has been determined and accepted by us together with an updated loan agreement for the Maldon District Council collection that should run in parallel with the lease.

The MLA has pointed out that the accredited Maldon District Museum is a valuable learning resource for people of all ages contributing to personal identity and social cohesion. It has an impact on the local economy by encouraging tourism and plays a key role in caring for the UK's cultural heritage.

It concludes by stating that the MLA is committed to the continued recognition and promotion of this remarkable collection so that it can be fully enjoyed by many generations to come.

I am very proud of being chairman of the Maldon District Museum Association that is entirely run by volunteers, working to high national standards at minimal cost to the community although, of course, we are very grateful to all the help given us by Maldon District Council that enables us to carry out our task.

Due to illness I have not been to the Museum for the past 3 months so I have asked Christine Steel to provide a vice-chairman's chat to bring everybody up to date with happenings at the Museum and plans for the immediate future.

Thank you Christine and your band of helpers for all that you have done during the winter months!

**Paddy Lacey**

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*Penny Farthing is dependent upon your contribution.*

All articles, items, photos, comments and letters are welcome:

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**Last Date for copy for Summer Issue 5 May 2011**

# Thank you, volunteers, for your hard work this winter

Due to Paddy's enforced inactivity I have been asked to bring you up to date with the current activities and plans for the 2011 season.

As always, our trusty band of volunteers have been busy during the winter months, painting, polishing and cleaning. This is such a worthwhile task as so many visitors comment on the cleanliness of our Museum.

Maldon District Council have also re-decorated the ceiling of the long room and have provided us with a new front door, which I am sure will delight all the stewards! Judy Betteridge and Liz Willsher have been busy with setting up some new displays, although time has somewhat limited their effort this year.

Our newest display will be entitled 'On yer bike', an apt description featuring our penny farthing bicycle. There will also be smaller features, such as the Queen's visit to Maldon and a display of some of our latest acquisitions.

The stewards rota is well under way and will be sent out soon. As always there are a number of spaces to fill, so if anyone feels they would like to help, do let me know. I have tried to keep the duties to one a month, but that is not always possible, and I know some stewards do not mind

undertaking more.

As usual we have our spring stewards meeting at the Octagon on Thursday, 17 March at 2.30pm.

The mayor, Ken Smith, has kindly agreed to come and give a short talk about his year in office. I do hope as many stewards as possible will attend. There will be the usual visit to the Museum after the meeting.

Finally, I must convey my personal thanks to all our committee, stewards and members of the Museum for their continued support and commitment. Without this, our much-loved Museum would not function.

Here's to a successful season!

**Christine Steel,  
vice chairman**

The Museum will open this year from 2 April to 30 October, with days, times and admission prices the same as 2010 - open Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 2-5pm, Sunday and Bank Holidays 11am-5pm, £1 adults, 50p children.

We had 2,020 adult and 336 child visitors last year, with May the busiest month with 405 adult and 113 child visitors.

# Shakespeare in Maldon

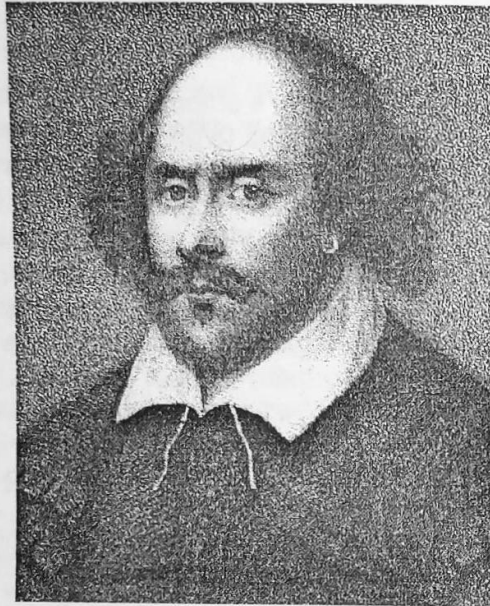
## Treading the Bard's boards in the Moot Hall

By Stephen P. Nunn

There is no doubt that Thomas Plume's legacy of 1704 constitutes an important chapter in Maldon's long and historic story. Beyond providing much-needed funding for the education of boys in the town's Grammar School (which eventually evolved into The Plume School in 1970), foremost amongst his bequests is his unique library, originally consisting of 7000 books and pamphlets.

As special as that collection is, however, there are some curious omissions and strange anomalies. My friend, the former librarian (from 1998 to 2001) and foremost Plumeian expert, the late Dr. W.J. (Bill) Petchey (1935-2001), discusses the mystery in his fascinating booklet 'The Intentions of Thomas Plume' (1985).

Bill highlighted the inclusion of second-hand copies, of duplicate works, but also of gaps in relation to the kind of biographical, mathematical and literary works that you would expect to find in such an extensive assemblage of the time. Nowadays things have



become all modern in the library and there is an on-line catalogue, but I must admit that I prefer my battered printed version, compiled back in 1959 by one of Bill's predecessors, Sidney G. Deed, former headmaster of the Grammar School (1912-1939) and librarian from 1947 to 1966.

Flicking through my copy I can understand Bill's line of enquiry. You won't find a single reference to the works of the world's greatest ever playwright – William Shakespeare.

Neither will you find anything by the poet that gave him much of his inspiration – the Roman writer, Ovid (43BC-18AD).

Shakespeare's own personal Latin copy of Ovid is now preserved in Oxford with an abbreviated signature on the title page – what a shame Plume didn't get hold of that one!

Although the Plume Library doesn't appear to be able to help us unravel Shakespeare, there are a number of links between Maldon and the Bard. We have, for example, a Shakespeare Drive on the Poets Estate. In addition the Blue Boar Hotel was once associated with the de Vere family – the Earls of Oxford of Castle Hedingham fame.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Earl, John de Vere, appears briefly in 'Richard III' and in part 3 of 'Henry VI', heroically declaring that; "...while life upholds this arm, this arm upholds the house of Lancaster". The idea that the 17<sup>th</sup> Earl was the true author of Shakespeare's works, however, is now dismissed by serious historians. We are also still fortunate to have well-patronised local productions in town, not

least those organised by the well-respected Mac Theatre Company, including their Shakespeare in the Park.

And for three seasons I helped organise Shakespearean events at nearby Edwin's Hall (re-built 1570), in old Woodham Ferrers. When the amazing William Foyle Library at Beeleigh Abbey came up for auction in 2000, it contained a first folio (1623) of Shakespeare's works, along with second, third and fourth folios and various individual plays – 'Julius Caesar', 'Othello' and 'Hamlet'. However, the strongest, most tangible association with Maldon is that the great man himself probably came here in 1603. To understand why he did so, we must look at his beginnings and the way that his artistic life unfolded.

I recently stayed in Stratford-upon-Avon and it was there, looking around the various attractions, that I was reminded of the events of his early life. He was born there, in Henley Street, in April 1564, and probably probably went to the local Grammar School, where he learned Ovid

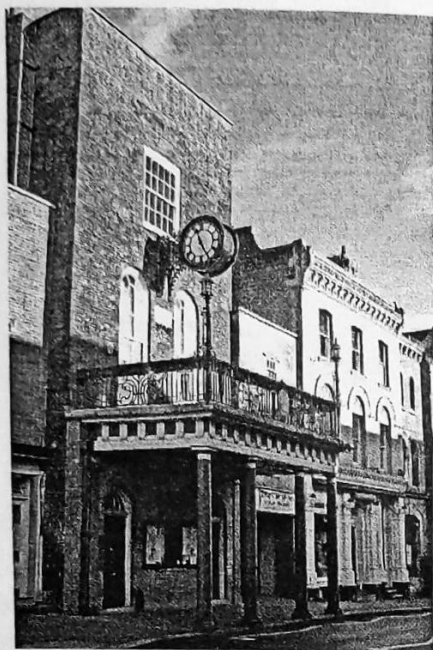
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## From Page 5

by rote. He got married to Anne Hathaway in nearby Temple Grafton in 1582 and, ten years later, left her and their children in Stratford to work in London – writing plays and performing.

Fame and fortune followed and he was part of a company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men. In 1603, with the death of Elizabeth I (on 24<sup>th</sup> March), James I ascended to the throne and the actors were re-named (under a Patent of 19<sup>th</sup> May) the King's Players. In the same year a terrible outbreak of plague struck the city – the severest for ten years – and so they decided to set out on a tour of the provinces. They visited Bath, Shrewsbury, Coventry, Ipswich, Oxford and, according to the records, the riverside town of Maldon.

As the roads were notoriously bad, perhaps they even arrived by boat, landing at the "New Wharffe" opposite St. Mary's church? At that time, apart from the Hythe area, the town centred on High Street, around the old medieval core and busy market place outside of All Saints'. There were three parish churches, a relatively new mansion house called 'The Friars' (c.1560), various inns



(including the 'Blue Boar', 'Saracen's Head' and 'New Inn') and rows of timber-framed tenements. There was even a stone market cross and a large wooden post where bulls were chained ready to be "baited" for the barbaric amusement of the locals.

At its very heart was the corporation's Moot Hall – "a fair house in the middle of town" according to John Norden writing in 1594. The building had started life as the private home of the D'Arcy family and was constructed sometime between 1420 and 1436. Then in 1576 it was purchased by the Corporation for £55 to serve

as their centre for local government. It was to this building that the King's Players came in 1603.

Enter the ancient court room today, and staring down at you from the wall is a striking portrait of a beautiful Elizabethan lady. Some historians believe it to be the young Queen Elizabeth by Zuccherò, but this is highly unlikely. So who is she and was she amongst the audience of the players that year? Maldon already had a reputation for performances and was the venue for many visiting players – a tradition which dated back to pre-Reformation religious dramas, like the one at Heybridge on "Whytensundaye" 1532.

Touring companies were expected to first perform before the Mayor, Aldermen and common council to (hopefully) establish a grant and a licence for local public playing. Perhaps Michael Henshawe, the town clerk, was present that day? He would die of the plague less than 12 months later. Next to him could have been the Bailiffs; John

Amory, William Burles and Ralph Breeder (d.1608).

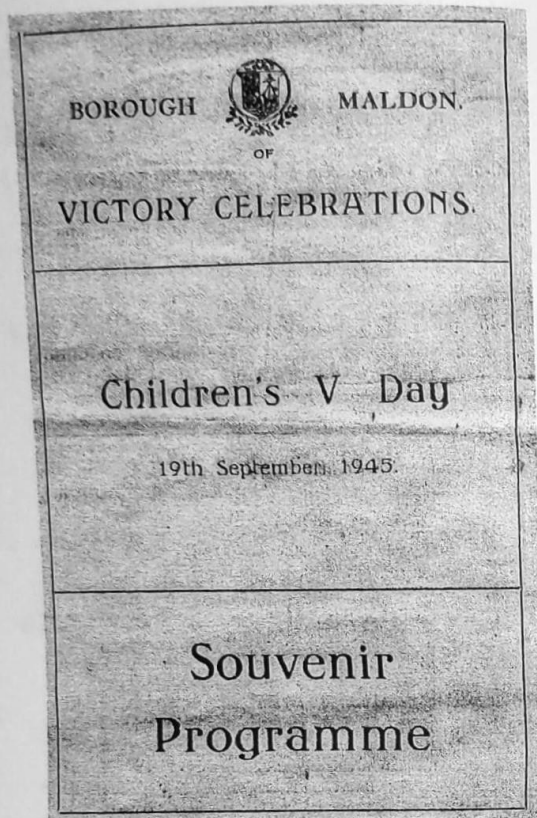
Payments or "rewards" to actors were meticulously recorded in the Borough Chamberlains' Accounts (now preserved in the Essex Record Office). An analysis of these between the years 1560 and 1639 reveals no less than 71 individual payments ranging from 3s (to Sir William Pickering's Players in 1566) to 20s (To Lady Elizabeth's Players in 1613). In 2003 I studied the original documents for 1603 and there was the entry I had been looking for. On page 5 of a small "roll" of 9 pages, under "Discharges – Gifts and Rewards", it reads "...and of xvs given to the King's Players this year". And who were the King's Players in 1603? Well, the actors included Richard Burbridge, Augustine Phillipps, William Slye, John Lowin, John Hemmings, Henry Cundell, Alexander Cooke and...one William Shakespeare!

I shared my findings with the broadcaster/historian, Michael Wood, when he was researching

**Continued Page 10**

# Maldon fun day helped youngsters celebrate war's end

It started with a film show at the Embassy and ended with Bertram the clown and Professor Bourne at the Parish Hall and Jubilee Hall - and in between there was fun for every child in Maldon who wanted to go along to the victory celebrations on the Prom. The date was 19 September 1945 - seen months after the war ended - and a great day out was promised for all. It started at 10.30 with a showing of 'Age of Flight' at the Embassy cinema; the next event was a tiny tots parade in home-made fancy dress at 1.45, followed by childrens sports. And, according to the souvenir programme, there were: "Swings, roundabouts and mat slide, pony cart and pony back rides, golf and tennis, pram dinghies on marine lake, motor boat, sailing boat and rowing boat trips on the river ALL FREE". Free transport was provided for children living in the 'outlying' parts of the borough and every child was given a commemorative badge. But far more important to the children of the town was that schools were closed for



the day, which would have been welcomed by every one of them. And it wasn't just the children who were given a special treat to celebrate the victory won earlier in 1945. According to the souvenir programme "A tea and first-class entertainment for the elderly people will be provided at a later date".

Were you one of those children who took part in those victory celebrations, or did your children enjoy the day. Share your memories with us for a future issue of Penny Farthing - and any memories you have of VE Day celebrations in Maldon.

## MALDON DISTRICT MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

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February 2011

### Renewal of Membership

On behalf of the Chairman and Committee of Maldon Museum may I thank you for your continued support of the Museum.

As last year we are enclosing a renewal form within this edition of the Penny Farthing. Payment of Renewal Fees is due by the end of May 2011.

The single Membership will be £10 and Family Membership £15. The Single Life Membership will be £90 and Family Life Membership £120.

*Please note this reminder does not apply to Life Members.*

We do value all our Members and rely very heavily on these subscriptions to fund our new displays. We would also welcome any reader who wishes to become a new Member this year.

We look forward to receiving your renewals, however, if we do not hear from you by 1 October 2011, due to rising administration costs, we shall, regretfully, have to remove your name from the mailing list for the Penny Farthing Magazine.

Please send all cheques and forms to me at the above address.

With many thanks

*Christine Steel*  
Christine Steel  
Membership/Stewarding Secretary

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his 'In Search of Shakespeare' for th BBC. I explained that somewhere inside or in the rear yard of our Moot Hall, William Shakespeare performed in one of his plays to impress the town's officials in the hope that they would be given leave to earn money from further performances before moving on to the next town.

We don't know what the production was of course, it could have been one of his "new" plays, 'Twelfth Night' (1600), 'Troilus And Cressida' (1602) and 'As You Like It', were popular at the time. For some reason I like to think it was the latter and to enhance those feelings I attended an RSC performance of it at the Courtyard Theatre in Stratford in August last year, and what a treat it was. Although I was a long way from home, I imagined I was in the Moot Hall in 1603, enjoying a play that had only been entered into the Stationer's Register three years earlier and first performed in

## Did you know?

A statute of 1542 decreed that every father had to furnish his sons and servants between seven and 16 with a long-bow and two arrows and to teach their use. At 17 it was every man's duty to provide himself with a bow and four arrows until the age of 60. Every parish had to maintain archery butts for practice every Sunday and holy day afternoons (hence Butt Lane in Maldon).

the newly opened Globe Theatre in 1599.

But unlike the Courtyard and the Globe, we don't have to imagine original surroundings here in Maldon, we still have the ancient architecture of the Moot Hall and you can still visit it. It is the jewel in Maldon's historic crown and really has gained light, life and colour over succeeding centuries. Why not call in for a tour during opening hours and know that you are treading the same boards that the Bard performed on all those years ago. You can experience a tangible reminder of William Shakespeare there because the old building certainly "earns a place i' the story" (Anthony And Cleopatra. III.xi.43).

*Stephen P. Nunn is a Trustee of the Moot Hall. Further details about visiting the building can be obtained from Maldon Tourist Information Centre on (01621) 856503.*

# A grisly find on the marshes

What started as a simple few hours wildfowling on the Dengie marshes one October day in 1949 ended in an horrific discovery that sparked a major murder investigation. Tillingham farm worker Sidney Tiffin was out shooting birds for the pot when he spotted a bundle 100 yards off the seawall, wrapped in felt and tied with cord. When the tide retreated he was able to recover what turned out to be an unimaginably grisly find.

Home Office pathologist Prof Francis Camps, who performed thousands of post mortems during an illustrious career and who lived just a few miles away, at Purleigh, deduced that the torso, with arms attached and in silk shirt and shorts, had been thrown out of a plane. He concluded that the strangely squashed torso had been in the water for two to three weeks, and had been put there 48 hours after the man had been stabbed to death. Injuries suggested the torso had been dropped from a great height after death - and so it turned out. Fingerprints - obtained by removing the skin from a finger - identified the torso as small-time crook Stanley Setty, a car dealer and generally unsavoury character from London. Camps' conclusion about the torso being dropped from a height led police to amateur pilot Donald Hume, another small-time crook, who was connected to Setty through dealings including selling black market nylons and forged petrol coupons.

Hume had hired an Auster light aircraft from Elstree; he headed out past Southend pier and, thinking he was well out over the open sea, ejected the trussed-up torso.

But Hume was adamant that two other men had killed Setty and then merely hired him to fly the parcelled-up torso out over the sea and drop it. Camps, however, knew that a great deal of blood must have been spilled at the place where Setty was murdered, so went to Hume's flat, ripped up floorboards to find blood that had dripped through cracks between the boards, went back to his laboratory and through experiment determined that three pints of blood must have been spilt on the floor.

Hume was tried at the Old Bailey for murder but there was a 'hung' jury, meaning a retrial was necessary. The judge at the second trial directed the jury to find Hume not guilty of murder but he was convicted of being an accessory in the disposal of the body, and was jailed for 12 years. He was released on remission in 1958 and, in an interview with the Sunday Pictorial admitted, in gory detail, how he had murdered Setty.

Reporter Victor Sims later described how Hume lay on a hotel bed in a country hotel and calmly described to him how he had killed and chopped up Setty. Sims recalled: "It was the most terrifyingly bloody day of my life."

Hume could not be tried again for the murder, and if tried for perjury could say the Sunday Pictorial's story was all lies, so he felt free to say what he wanted without fear of being hauled back into court. However, his freedom was short-lived, because Hume was soon back to his old ways, robbing banks in Britain and Switzerland.

He was jailed again in 1959 for killing a taxi driver in Zurich, and in 1976 declared insane and returned to Britain and confinement at Broadmoor, where he served 15 years before dying a lonely, confused old man.

**Kelvin Brown**

# Buckjumpers - more memories from the days of steam

By Charles Middleton

In my last piece I wrote about the J15s that were one of the mainstay steam locomotives of the Maldon Branch.

Another locomotive that was a regular at Maldon was the J 67/68/69 affectionately known as the "buckjumper".

These are also featured in the late Dennis Swindale's book '*Branch Lines to Maldon*'. Their origins date back to the 1890s and about 160 were built up till 1901 mainly for passenger work.

From 1902 to 1921 several rebuilds took place to allow them to be used for varying tasks such as passenger, freight and shunting duties. This explains the different class allocation. The last of this class survived in service until 1961.

They were classified as 0-6-0 which means three coupled wheels each side. With the exception of a few specialised engines, they were the smallest locomotives in general use on the Great Eastern lines and their part in railway history

should not be under-rated. Originally they were used to work passenger trains on Chingford and Enfield lines before they were replaced by the so-called Gobblers.

Buckjumper could also be seen on most of the branch lines in our region working goods trains and on shunting duties. They would often be used on passenger train duties. Apart from these duties they were the shunting locomotives used in all of the major shunting yards including the vast Temple Mills which will form part of the 2012 Olympic site.

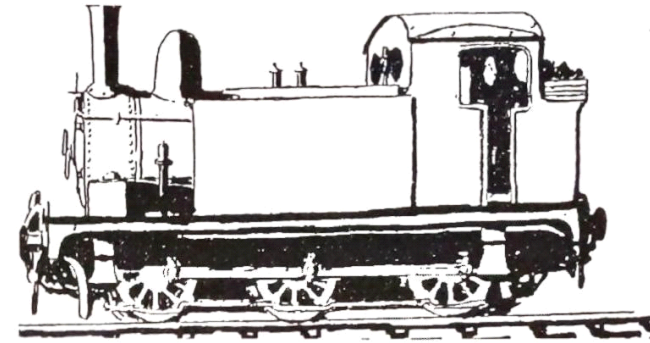
To give an insight into their uses here are some personal anecdotes. They all involve buckjumpers. My first tour of duty was as a fireman at Stratford Market in February 1947. In between shunting duties we had some respite and I fell asleep and my nose went on to a hot

pipe causing a difficult-to-explain blister.

Later that year I was shunting in Temple Mills. A shunter asked if we could clear some bales of straw from the yard, to which we agreed. However, the engine wheels slipped whilst shunting and provided the area with its biggest-ever pre-Olympics fireworks display. As a driver I had to take the 12 coaches for the Continental boat train to Liverpool Street. Unfortunately, there was a coal shortage at the time and reeves were being scooped up from piles on the ground.

It was just my luck to find myself with a coal bunker full of black dirt that was putting the fire out.

I only managed to get to my destination by stealing a lineside pile of wood that was ready for a job. However, I still ended up on the carpet for making the Continental train late which in turn made the boat late.



Another memory of this remarkable engine was on one shift when working a train of 50 wagons from Spitalfield to Goodmayes in the early evening rush hour. This had to be achieved at a high speed so we did not get in the way of any passenger trains. The buckjumper was more

than capable of this task. The most difficult journey with a buckjumper was from Liverpool Street with a goods or-summer excursion. As you left the terminus there was an opening on the right hand side which took you on to underground line via

Brunel's famous Thames Rotherhithe tunnel to New Cross. With limited height, space and smoke it could be a hairy journey as only a buckjumper was allowed on this route.

So there we have it. The humble Maldon buckjumper was part of a fleet of engines that were the backbone of the Great Eastern Railway whose only handicap was its small water and coal carrying capacity. If only they could have talked, what tales they would tell.

## Don't panic, Mr Mainwaring!

"Panic, undoubtedly, will be one of the many dangers with which a warden will have to deal during an air raid, particularly during bombing with high explosive and the more harrassing of the warfare gases," according to the Air Raid Warden's Reference Book published in 1940.

It told wardens: "Although panic, when allowed to go uncontrolled, can assume proportions that will endanger life, an additional and specific air raid danger is present in that a panic-stricken crowd will rush into the open air, thus laying itself open to attack from the air, either by machine-gun or a gross spray of persistent gas.

"Study of panic and its behaviour should be the aim of every warden, for if mass hysteria is understood, steps can be taken to combat it."

# Did Anne Boleyn walk on the riverside cliffs at Creeksea?

Forget the white cliffs of Dover, because Essex has its own cliffs, albeit brown rather than white: Creeksea Cliffs have been formed by erosion on a bend in the River Crouch, leaving cliffs of London Clay which occasionally give up fascinating finds. Sharks' teeth have been found on the shingle beach, together with gypsum (selenite) crystals; they are also occasionally found on the other side of the Dengie peninsula, on the beach at Maylandsea.

Like North Fambridge, Creeksea had a ferry for hundreds of years, linking the north and south banks of the Crouch. A statement of accounts rendered by Henry Crouchend, bailiff to Sir Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, Essex and Northampton, and Constable of England in 1266, says: "Six oak planks were bought to repair 'Le Farebot', nearly worn out."

Legend has it that Anne Boleyn once lived at Creeksea Place, and that her daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, spent time here. However, Anne was executed 33 years before the original mansion was completed in 1569 by Sir Arthur Herys (or Harrys), so it is obviously not possible, unless there was a previous house somewhere on the site.

However, Herys is known to have owned land or property at Rochford, where the Boleyn family lived (Anne's brother was Lord Rochford), so it is possible Anne visited Creeksea - once said to have been the home of a witch called Fanny Bird - before the house was built.

Queen Elizabeth is said to have used a subterranean tunnel from Rochford Hall to meet her soldiers at Creeksea, but although large Tudor drains have been unearthed over the years, no tunnel has ever been found.

Sir Arthur Herys was High Sheriff of Essex in 1589 and was one of the commissioners appointed in 1577 to enquire into piratical practices along the Essex coast.

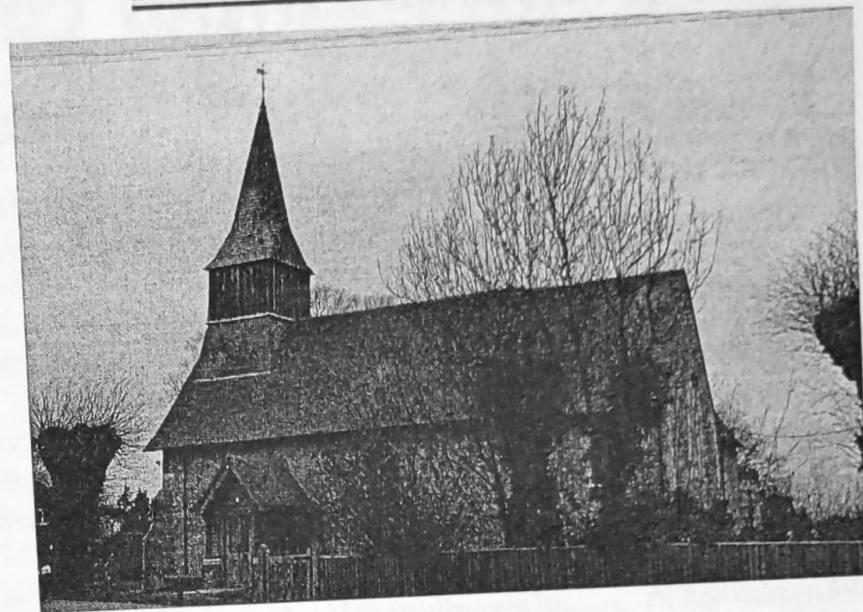
Creeksea Place eventually passed into the ownership of Lord Mildmay, who had been knighted by James I in 1617 and held a number of offices at Court, including Master of the Jewel House.

Creeksea Place is said to have been the place where Mildmay was arrested in 1660 and accused of being complicit in the 1649 execution of Charles I. He was sent to trial on a charge of regicide - being a person who kills or takes part in the killing of a king - for which he was stripped of his knighthood and estates and sentenced to life imprisonment. Mildmay, who had been MP for Maldon in 1625-28, and elected again during both the Long and Short Parliaments of 1640, probably counted himself more fortunate than the ten men found guilty of regicide who were ordered to be hung, drawn and quartered at either Charing Cross or Tyburn. However, in 1664 he was ordered to be transported to Tangier, but died before the order could be carried out.

Today Creeksea Place is a conference centre and venue for weddings.

**Kelvin Brown**

## Maldon's Historic Churches



### **St Margaret's, Woodham Mortimer**

There are traces still of a 12th century church, but St Margaret's was mostly rebuilt in the 19th century; the oldest remaining part is the Norman south wall of the nave, which has an arch.

The round font is 13th century, sitting on a medieval stem, and there are 17th century carvings on the pulpit and organ case, dating from around the same time as the altar table.

Elsewhere there is a restored 15th century window and a 17th century arch, but the church is almost entirely 19th century, with late 19th century stained glass in most windows.

One of the most interesting features inside St Margaret's is the brass in the chancel of an Elizabethan girl in pleated gown. Dorothy, the daughter of Giles Alleine, died in 1584, and is remembered in the inscription 'A little imp here buried is, her soul to Christ is fled'.

Also remembered is Peter Chamberlen, who lived next door to the church in imposing Woodham Mortimer Hall, a 17th century gabled house, and is buried in the graveyard.

The Chamberlen family descended from William Chamberlen, a Huguenot surgeon who fled from Paris to London in 1576. Peter invented the obstetrical forceps used in childbirth, but the family kept them a secret for over a century - apparently so they would not be copied by others.



# Essex plant's output could circle world ten times

Ford of Britain celebrates its centenary this year, and for much of that time the company has had strong Essex roots, with a plant at Dagenham, engineering centre at Dunton and head office at Warley. Work on the Dagenham plant started in May, 1929, when Henry Ford's son Edsel cut the first sod on reclaimed marshland. Construction of the site took two years



Car production was labour-intensive in the 1930s

with the first vehicle, a Model AA truck, rolling off the production line in October 1931. Vehicle assembly ended in 2002, but the site continued with an expanded engine facility making it a global centre of excellence for diesel engineering. Building on reclaimed marshland previously used for London's waste, presented its own prob-

lems, with 22,000 concrete piles needed to be driven 80 feet into the ground to support the building. Construction took two years and over a single weekend in September 1931 special trains carried 2,000 employees, their families and possessions, from the Ford plant at Trafford Park, Manchester, where vehicle assembly had begun in 1911, to their new life in Dagenham. A hospital, foundry, jetty and power station completed the site. Built at a cost of £5 million, the Dagenham factory opened in the depths of the depression and, although business

was slow at first, the press referred to Dagenham as a "magnificent gesture of faith in Britain's commercial future... a lighthouse of hope in a storm-tossed sea of industry." Before the war Dagenham built the unimaginatively named 8hp, 10hp, 22hp and 30hp ranges. It also built the Model Y (Popular), the first and only full size car to be offered at just £100. From 1939 war production took over with 360,000 light vans, army trucks, balloon winches, mobile canteens and Ford V8-powered Bren Gun carriers rolling off the lines. Dagenham was also responsible for 34,000 Merlin aero engines and 95% of Britain's vitally important tractor production. And all this took place as over



The last Cortina - the Dagenham plant built more than three million in 20 years

200 German bombs landed on the Dagenham estate. In the post war years Dagenham turned its interests to the revolutionary Consul and Zephyr range of cars. Major expansion in the 1950s increased floor space by 50% and doubled production. By 1953 the site employed 40,000. As the swinging 60s took hold, Dagenham moved on to a car destined to become one of the country's favourites: the Cortina. By the time the last Cortina left the line in 1982, the plant

had built over three million. By this time, Dagenham was already producing the Fiesta, introduced in 1976. In 1982 it was joined by the Sierra. By the time vehicle assembly at Dagenham ended after 71 years in February 2002, the plant had built 10,980,368 cars, trucks and tractors which, if placed end to end, would circle the world 10 times. Dagenham now builds up to a million diesel engines a year.

## Will global warming see the return of the feared ague to Essex?



Many thanks for the excellent magazine just received.

I was interested in the article on "ague" as, since moving to Wivenhoe 18 months ago, I have transferred from the Blackwater to the North East Essex Decorative & Fine Art Society and have been involved in church recording at the parish church of St Leonard & St Mary in Beaumont-cum-Moze.

Beaumont is a small village not far from Tendring on the way to Clacton, and Moze was a separate village down on the marshes of Walton backwaters. However, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the villagers of Moze gave up the fight against the mosquitoes and the ague and abandoned the village completely. In 1678 the Moze church was pulled down and some of the stones used to repair Beaumont Church.

Since 1959 the site of the old St Mary's Church, Moze, has been marked with a stone cross and Beaumont Church added the name of St Mary to its dedication.

With global warming I quite often wonder whether in due course we might see the return of the ague to Essex.

Ian Valentine

## Did you know?

Henry VIII's second wife, Anne Boleyn, was about to be beheaded at the Tower of London in 1536, when she said: "I hear the executioner is very good, and I have a little neck." She then put her hands around her throat and burst out laughing

Five years later, however, Margaret Pole, the 8th Countess of Salisbury, was less happy to meet the axe-wielding executioner, who chased her around the wooden block prepared for her at the Tower. The 67-year-old countess is said to have been dragged to the block, where her head was forced down and a number of blows required to complete the execution.

## For sale, £30 - that was the price of an Elizabethan house in Maldon

Essex is very fortunate in having some wonderful examples of late-16th and early-17th century mansions, farmhouses and cottages.

In Maldon, in Elizabethan times, there was an average of just 24 house transactions per decade and a study by the late Dr Bill Petchey showed the following house values in the town: 1561-70 £26.76; 1571-80 £26.19; 1581-90 £34.90; 1591-1600 £41.90.

Building costs were obviously very low. Fitting out what seems to have been a new room was described in 1588 by Langford yeoman Anthony Bret, who said it was "A true note of the charges which he did lay out in trimming of a chamber, in anno domini 1584." He detailed the costs as:  
*Paid to the joiner of Maldon for the half pace and making of the hearth in the same chamber, 5s 4d*

*To John Steven for three score ells of a canvas which doth hang the said chamber, 37s 2d*

*To the goodman Laye the painter for painting the cloths 51s 8d*  
*Paid to his wife for sewing the cloths*

*To the joiner for making the little door and for hinges which hang the door 2s 6d*

*(Pace was either a step or part of floor raised by it).*

When houses were passed on in wills, there was often a stipulation that various fixtures such as widow glass "shall remain" in the house - showing that it was not classed as an integral part of the structure as it is today.

In fact, when Maldon shoemaker John Marriage died in 1581 he left "to my wife Elizabeth my tenement in the parish of All Saints called by the sign of the Spread Eagle during her life. Provided she shall not remove any of the wainscot (ie panelling) nor the glass".

## Members' discount at Templar's Fayre

The Templar's Fayre is returning to Cressing Temple Barns on 7 and 8 May, and the organisers say that if you show your Museum membership card there will be a £1 reduction on the £5 adult admission charge.

The event promises to bring together craftspeople from all over Europe who specialise in creating anything from a suit of armour to a bone needle, plus musicians and entertainers.

# TIMES PAST

**1961 was a year of fast-moving political, social and cultural change, with the first man in space, the youngest president in American history and simmering tension between east and west bringing new conflict and confrontation**



## 1961

**Dwight D. Eisenhower left the White House, making way for new US president John F. Kennedy.**

The contraceptive pill for women became available in Britain.

**Around 1,500 CIA-trained exiled Cuban rebels attempted to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs; 1,173 were taken prisoner and were offered later in the year by Fidel Castro as an exchange for 500 bulldozers, but talks broke down. Castro then declared Cuba a one-party communist state.**

Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin orbited the earth in *Vostok I* to become the first man into space. US astronaut Alan Shepard became the second man – and first American - but he was only up for 15 minutes

**East German security forces sealed the border between east and west Berlin with barbed wire as Soviet forces began building the Berlin Wall to stop east Germans fleeing to the west.**

The first mini cabs and pelican crossings were seen in London.

**Spurs won both the FA cup and league title.**

Foreign Office employee John Vassall was convicted of spying for the USSR, diplomat George Blake was sentenced to 42 years for passing secrets and the trial of Canadian Gordon Lonsdale, also for passing secrets, began.

**The UK formally applied for membership of the European Economic Community.**



## ST. CEDD'S CHATLINE

By Liz Willsher

**New Year's Greetings for 2011 !**

Since my last "chatline" in November 2010 we have endured sub-zero temperatures and persistent icy roads and pavements, followed by milder and wetter conditions, even culminating in minor flooding. Hopefully that is behind us and can look ahead with optimism!

As is usual at this time of the year, the St Cedd's team and acting chairman Christine Steel are heavily involved in sprucing up the Museum and setting up new displays.

At this point may I put out an appeal for vintage cycle related items e.g; bells, lamps etc. to help with our new display 'On yer Bike!' Please contact Judy Betteridge or myself if you can help.

By way of a change this season we are devoting a small space opposite the entrance door to newly-donated items that have not been incorporated into a display.

As usual the behind-the-scenes work continues in the St Cedd's office. At present we are bringing to a conclusion a project which resulted from the award of a grant for conservation storage for costume and textiles. Conditions of the grant included a visit from a member of staff from the Colchester & Ipswich museums service to check standards, and a full report of our storage procedures and documentation which has to be completed very soon. This has meant many extra hours of work for accessions officer Judy.

Recently we have received some good news from the "Museums in Essex" organisation that some FREE conservation materials for art-work and documents may be available. A quick response from Judy with an e-mail of our wish-list has been dispatched, but at this point we do not know what goodies may come our way.

It has been a quiet period for donations but we were pleased to receive a school photograph of Maldon Grammar School staff and pupils of 1928. It is of very good quality and has been framed for display in the childhood room at the museum. The donor is the son of a fresh-faced boy in the front row.

We have missed the visits from chairman Paddy Lacey since his stay in hospital and subsequent convalescence at home.

He made sure that we would have plenty to do, however, especially Betty who hand-writes our register and record cards, by donating a large collection of documents including leaflets, guide books and brochures. These items cover, record or publicise a wide range of local places and events from recent years. This task has kept Betty busy for several weeks but, as usual, the team ensured that an ample supply of coffee and biscuits was available to fortify brain and muscles.

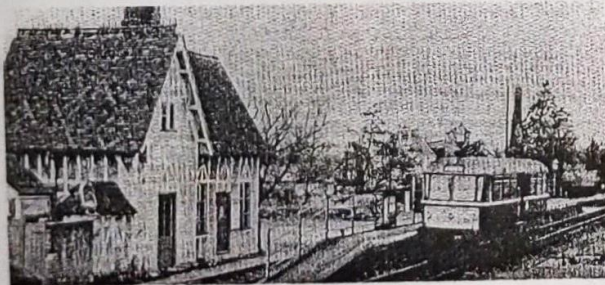
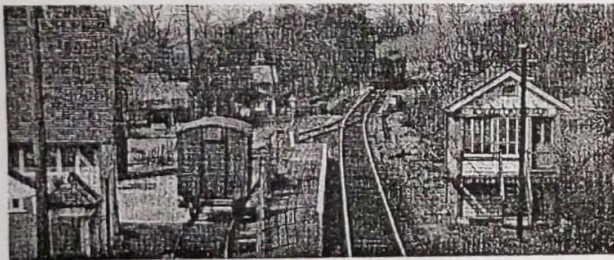
We all hope Paddy will be back to join us soon, but hopefully without a large cardboard box under his arm! Thanks also to Mags Simmonds for regularly joining us and assisting with whatever task arises on the day.

In no time at all it will be April and the doors of the museum will be open to visitors once more. **We hope to see you there!**

# Local rail history in pictures

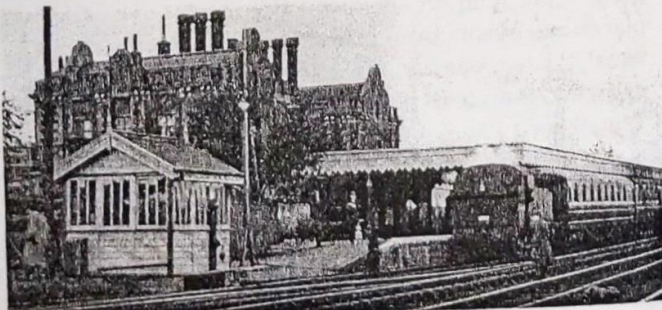


Len Wilkinson with one of the buildings from his model of Wickham Bishops station



Above: Wickham Bishops station with an approaching steam train and later diesel rail bus.

Right: Maldon East station in April 1957 - one of the local rail pictures in the Museum collection



Museum steward Len Wilkinson has published *'The Maldon to Witham Railway, a pictorial history'* - the result of 20 years of collecting photographs and a huge amount of spare time building an incredibly detailed 18-foot long model of the long-closed Wickham Bishops station. The line opened as the Maldon, Witham and Braintree Railway in 1848, with two intermediate stations - Wickham Bishops and Langford & Ulting. It closed to

passengers in 1964 and to freight in 1966. All profits from Len's excellent book, which includes scale drawings and a brief history of the line, and costs just £4.95, are being donated to the Museum.

It will be available from the Museum and is already on sale at Maldon and Witham information centres, Top Signs at Wickham Bishops and Wilkin's team rooms at Tiptree.

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*Curatorial Adviser* ..... *Nick Wickenden Esq*

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

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