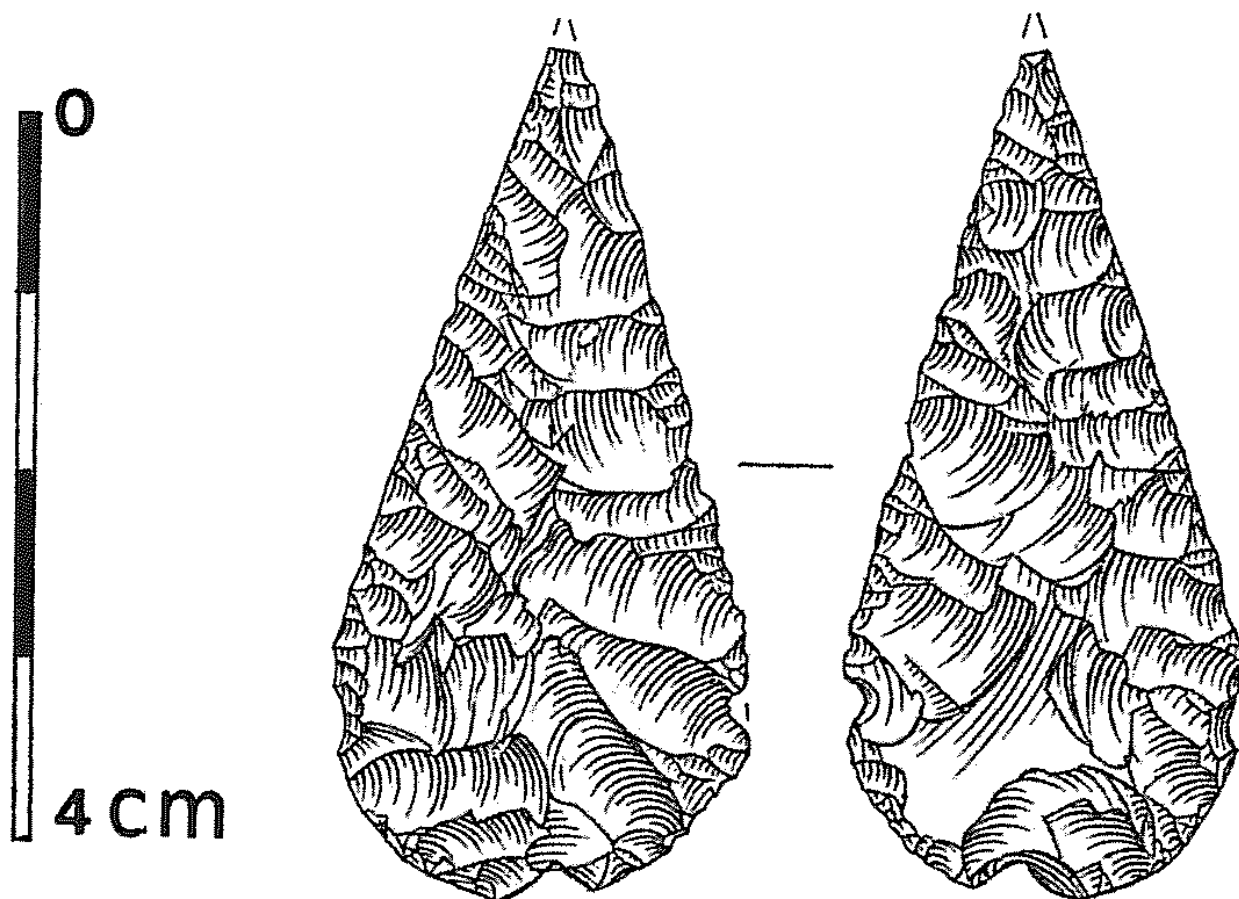


Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2007

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 151

SPRING 2007

CONTENTS

FROM THE PRESIDENT	1
HARLOW NEW TOWN 60 th ANNIVERSARY	1
LOCAL RECORDERS	2
MISSING COUNCIL MINUTES	2
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY	3
THE 11TH ANNUAL ESSEX PLACE-NAMES SEMINAR	3
OBITUARY: COLONEL SIR JOHN RUGGLES-BRISE CB, OBE, DU, TD, JP	4
THE RETURN OF THE FOREST	4
TILTY ABBEY MILL – A SERIOUS LOSS	5
COPFORD REVISITED	5
THE EPPING JAUNDICE OF 1965	9
A PAROCHIAL DISPUTE	10
A BOOK'S PREVIOUS OWNERS, AND THEIR ANNOTATIONS	13
ESSEX MATTERS FROM THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER	14
ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRAINING EXCAVATION	15
ESSEX HISTORY FAIR – SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED	15
PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND	15
PLEASE TAKE CARE!	15
ROUND TOWER CHURCHES	16
BOOKS FOR DISPOSAL	16
PROGRAMME COMMITTEE – VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!	16

EDITOR: SALLY GALE

Historic Environment, Environment and Commerce, Essex County Council, County Hall,
Chelmsford, CM1 1QH

Telephone: 01245 437513 E-mail: sally.gale@essexcc.gov.uk

Assistant Editor: Michael Leach

COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 6 JULY 2007

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

Cover illustration:

One of the Early Neolithic flint blades from the site at Lodge Farm, St Osyth. This illustration is taken from figure 42 of the volume below and is drawn by Hazel Martingell. The features and finds from this site have just been published by East Anglian Archaeology as EAA 117 Prehistoric Monuments and Settlement at St. Osyth, Essex by Mark Germany ISBN 978 184194 070 0 Cost £15.00

See <http://www.eaareports.org.uk/> for details of all publications including forthcoming reports such as EAA 120 Iron Age Warrior Burial at Kelvedon, Essex by Paul Sealey.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In a speech made at the Tate Modern on 6th March, 2007, Tony Blair claimed that his period in office had been a 'golden age' in cultural achievement. Whilst applauding the scrapping of museum admission charges, investment in regional theatres and the allocation of money to subsidise the arts, for which the Government is responsible, however, we cannot shut our eyes to a much less rosy picture at the local level, where cuts in local government expenditure are having a serious adverse effect.

In Essex, in recent years, the County Council has made the County Archivist redundant, cut its contribution to the Victoria County History by a half, closed the Essex Record Office branch at Colchester and imposed economies on its libraries service. The Dictionary of National Biography and national telephone directories have been removed from the shelves of most county libraries, the purchase of magazines was slashed – although this has now been partly countermanded following protests – and specialist library staff are no longer provided for specialist collections. The disposal of valuable historic volumes has long been a controversial issue.

In Waltham Forest, the Council has put forward plans for the closure of the William Morris Gallery and Vestry House Museum on weekdays and for restricted times for access to the archives. In Wandsworth, the Council is closing its museum. In central London, the Family Record Centre's census records are to be transferred to Kew in 2008. For the first time in its long history, the British Library has now warned that further reductions in funding could lead to the introduction of charges.

These developments are reflections of a threat which hangs over many local

historical services if there are further cuts in local government expenditure or the Department for Culture, Media & Sport itself is forced to make serious economies.

While it is of premier importance to provide financial backing for the development of sport and physical culture, it will be a sorry day if the support of historical services came to be regarded as less of a priority. We can, however, already see that the escalating cost of the Olympics may be allowed to hijack Heritage Lottery Funding, leaving only a pittance for other causes.

The fact that expenditure on Archives, museums and related services is discretionary is unsatisfactory, anyway. If we want our population – particularly the up and coming generation, to value their rich local heritage as a part of Britain's unique historic treasure house, we must do more to safeguard our museums and historical services.

More needs to be done to drive this home to our elected representatives, at both the local and Parliamentary level.

Stan Newens

HARLOW NEW TOWN 60th ANNIVERSARY

The establishment of new towns around London under the 1946 New Towns Act led to the designation of two new towns in Essex: Basildon and Harlow.

The idea of building new towns, or garden cities, was the brainchild of Ebenezer Howard, an idealist and social reformer, who set forth his ideas in his book, *Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, in 1898. The result was the formation of the Garden Cities Association, founded in 1899, which became the Town & Country Planning Association, and the foundation of

Letchworth Garden City in 1902 and Welwyn Garden City in 1920 – both in Hertfordshire.

Concern that uncontrolled London Sprawl would continue after the Second World War led to the Abercrombie Report of 1944, which recommended a green belt, on which building would not be allowed, all round London. Its corollary was that the expanding London population would be accommodated in planned new towns beyond the Green Belt, and this was the motivation behind the 1946 Act.

In west Essex, Harlow and Ongar were both proposed as possible new town sites, but Ongar was dropped at an early stage. Harlow was finally designated on 25th March, 1947, after a Public Enquiry, the master plan was prepared by Sir Frederick Gibberd, the architect and planner, and the first four houses went up in January 1949.

Harlow is therefore celebrating its 60th anniversary as a new town this year – although it is also a very old town, which was granted a market in 1218 and, long before that, was a Roman settlement with a temple on an Iron Age and previously a Bronze Age site.

Although, like all towns, it has its faults and some parts require regeneration, it is by and large a successful new town which embodies all the features of a garden city.

At the time of an anniversary, it is natural that the history of its development should be reviewed anyway. Proposals are, however, under consideration for the building of a further 16,000 homes under the East of England Plan and for regeneration of features which have been run down. Harlow Civic Society, which I chair, and other groups, have strong reservations about some of these proposals and – not surprisingly – the original aims of the Master Planner, Sir Frederick Gibberd, and the way in which

these were implemented are the subject of intense discussion.

For all these reasons, 2007 is a very significant year for Harlow.

Stan Newens

LOCAL RECORDERS

In a separate article, Dr. Ken Aberdour outlines the history of the Essex Local History Recorder Scheme, which he has been running as the co-ordinator, since the death of his wife, the previous co-ordinator, in 1977.

As he indicates, not only is a new co-ordinator required to supervise the system but, in many areas, new recorders are required to replace those who have disappeared from the scene.

We would like to hear from volunteers prepared to take on the task of recording current events in their own localities or prepared in any way to help to reanimate the scheme originally started by the late Donald Jarvis.

Stan Newens

MISSING COUNCIL MINUTES

It is somewhat embarrassing for a historical society to admit that it has lost a part of its own history. On checking the Society's own archives we have discovered, to our horror, that the Council minutes from 1971 to 1987 were missing. Energetic enquiries amongst past and present Council members have succeeded in filling some of these gaps, and we are very grateful for these. However we still lack any Council minutes between 1975 and 1981. If any member has any minutes from this period, the present Council would be

extremely grateful to receive copies.
Please contact the Hon. Secretary.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

The Committee met on 3 occasions under the chairmanship of Cllrs. Double and Manning-Press, with councillors and representatives of Essex Archaeology, Museums, Local and County Societies. A visit was made to the Museum of Power, Langford.

Mesolithic and Iron Age occupation has been found at Nevendon. A Bronze Age hoard of axes and gold sheet has been found at Margaretting. BBC1 Coast programme featured the Rolls Farm Tollesbury red hill. Further work at the Colchester Roman circus has revealed the eastern end and spina. Saxon fish-traps have been recorded off Pewit Island, Blackwater. A high-status 14th century barn has been surveyed at Great Saling. Boreham 2nd World War airfield, sites at Castle Point, Chelmsford, and Birch airfield have been documented.

Evaluation of Fossett's Camp, Southend, considered for development, has shown both prehistoric and Saxon occupation. Finds from the Prittlewell Saxon tomb have been conserved and are in storage awaiting display in a new museum building which has been promised. The rest of the site will be excavated before the road is widened. Southend Council had not replaced its Planning Archaeologist / Development Control Officer. Saffron Walden castle has had some preservation work.

The European Route of industrial Heritage (www.erih.net) has discussed possible sites in Eastern England in addition to Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mills.

The Essex Historic Environment Record

is available at <http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk> and is being more regularly updated. Brentwood, Rochford District and Maldon have been assessed for their historic settlements which will be used for development planning purposes. The Stour valley is being assessed for a better understanding of its historic environment landscape.

Chelmsford Museum is to have an extension built for which plans were now in preparation. Concern continued to be expressed at the lack of firm strategies for conservation of Colchester's town walls. Advice to farmers about management of their historical and archaeological sites continued to be popular. The exhibition "Marvellous Marshes" about the coastal environment was on tour through Essex.

James Kemble

THE 11TH ANNUAL ESSEX PLACE-NAMES SEMINAR

The 11th Annual Essex Place-names Seminar will be held on Saturday afternoon, 17th November 2007, at Essex University, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester (not at Thurrock as previously publicised). The Guest Speaker will be Dr. Stephen Rippon of Exeter University who will speak on "Landscape of Early Medieval Britain in East Anglia and Essex".

Tickets £5.50 (payable to "ESAH") from the Project Co-ordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, CM4 9JZ, enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope.

James Kemble

OBITUARY: COLONEL SIR JOHN RUGGLES-BRISE CB, OBE, DU, TD, JP

Sir John was born 13 June 1908 and died in 2007, aged 98. He had a long and distinguished career. After leaving Eton (1921-1928) he went to Alberta, Canada, to an uncle's ranch, but returned to England later in 1928 to join the Employers' Liability Insurance Company. He became Assistant Branch Manager in 1935, and proceeded to Manager in 1937.

Sir John's military career started as a TA gunner with the TA AA Regiment. He was commissioned in 1938 and called up for service in August 1939. Having served with distinction in various posts, he was demobbed in 1945 with an MBE (Military) and took command of the 599th Regiment (Essex), becoming Colonel.

In 1942 his father, Sir Edward Ruggles-Brise, died and Sir John took over the Spains Hall estate, dedicating much time to its improvement. He not only entered into a full local and county life, but was also Deputy Lieutenant of Essex in 1944, Vice-Lieutenant in 1947, and finally Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum from 1958 to 1978. As Lord Lieutenant he became involved (as Patron, President etc) with some fifty organisations connected with civil as well as military life.

He was passionately attached to and involved with Essex history and archaeology, and was elected President of our Society in 1958. When the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress was formed at County Hall, Chelmsford, on 13 June 1964, he was a leading figure, chaired the meeting and was delighted that this Society was involved in its formation. Though it was his birthday, duty called and he was there.

Again when the Society removed the Reverend Philip Morant's gravestone into the parish church at Aldham, and a memorial plaque was dedicated in the former church of St Mary-at-the-Walls, Colchester, he presided at the service held in each church. He was delighted that we had honoured our county historian in this way. Being Honorary Secretary of the Society at that time, it was a great privilege to have his assistance with the details.

On retiring from the Lord Lieutenancy, Sir John accepted the role of the Society's Honorary Life President. He was also the first patron of the Victoria County History of Essex Appeal Fund, again giving time to our county and its forward-looking organisations.

Sir John was held in much honour and affection by all of us who knew him and shared his kindly friendship and his beloved Spains Hall venue. We thank him for his support. He will be remembered as a true gentleman who always had time for everyone and met us with that wonderful smile, and a warm heartfelt greeting.

A memorial service is to be held at Chelmsford Cathedral in July when the numerous individuals and organisations that shared his long and devoted life to his beloved county of Essex will give a sad but grateful farewell.

John Appleby

THE RETURN OF THE FOREST

The Woodland Trust's plan to add to the much reduced remains of Hainault Forest has already been reported in these pages (EAH News Winter 2004). Showing a further leap of faith, the Trust has recently purchased three fields adjoining the M11 motorway at Theydon

Bois as the first step in establishing a link between Hainault and Essex's other ancient woodland, Epping Forest. Planting will start shortly, with the ultimate and ambitious intention of linking all the green spaces of north and east London.

TILTY ABBEY MILL – A SERIOUS LOSS

This is a Grade II* listed watermill, dating from the C18, but almost certainly on the site of the mediaeval monastic mill. Remarkably, it retains intact all its mill machinery and equipment, together with its outbuildings, one of which conceals a World War II pillbox. The main building, partly hidden by trees, is visible from the monastic site itself and is an important part of what is still a tranquil setting, in spite of intermittent intrusions from Stansted airport traffic. Council's attention was drawn to a recent planning application to convert the mill to residential use, necessitating the removal of most, if not all, of the mill machinery. While this would ensure the survival of the shell of the building, it was felt that it would be far better to find another use that would enable the mill machinery to be preserved, used or displayed. It was also felt that special attention should be paid to its important landscape contribution to the adjoining monastic site. A letter making these points was sent to Uttlesford District Council. Unfortunately English Heritage did not oppose the proposal and, in spite of representations from a variety of other organisations, planning consent was granted in February. It is not clear what will happen to the mill machinery, or whether a proper record of the interior will be made.

COPFORD REVISITED

While involved with the Copford church restoration in the 1980's and early 90s, I followed up various leads into the church's past. As invariably turns out, the more one discovers, the more questions arise waiting to be answered, until the whole project becomes one vast jigsaw with many missing pieces. Before they are forgotten or misplaced, I feel I should contribute my pieces to the general picture. One proviso, however, it is most important to separate known fact from what is speculation, even through highly probable. The temptation to indulge in wild surmise, however exciting, should be firmly resisted.

The 21st century demands written or visible proof before allowing the truth of any statement. It is only a little over one hundred years since literacy, in theory at any rate, became anything like universal. Before this, accounts of events were passed on by word of mouth from each generation to the next. Such information should not be discounted. When I came to Copford 40 years ago, I caught the end of this oral tradition which lies now, sadly, almost disappeared. When attempting to analyse and understand the motives and actions of those who came to Copford centuries ago it is as well to remember they experienced aspirations, responsibilities and prejudices as we do today.

From 995 when Ethelred of Bocking bequeathed lands at "Coppingford" to Elfstan, the then Bishop of London, until 1559 when Bishop Edmund Bonner lost the manor and with it the church to the Crown, it remained the property of London.

This church, there *may* have been a previous one but there is no evidence of this, was built in the first half of the 12th century: acanthus carvings round the north porch suggest post 1130: the tunic

sleeves on the soldiers standing sentinel each side of the most westerly window on the north wall are longer than those on the Bayeux tapestry (c. 1070's) but their helmets are pre 1150 when the shape changed.

These are the facts: there is good circumstantial evidence to arrive at a closer date. Who erected such a wealthy building and why, has always been asked. Stone was used in an area with no natural stone: the paintings were lavish in blues and greens - lapis lazuli and malachite, traces of the former were found during the recent restoration. All this was associated with great ecclesiastical buildings.

Professor Fernie, author of *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*, who spoke at the symposium on Copford Church at Essex University in 1994, thought that Copford church was built as a bishop's chapel. This was an era when bishops were vying with each other to create particularly opulent and unusual buildings. The small door on the north wall of the chancel is known as the priest's door; did this provide access from another building? No trace of such a building has been found. Very unusually the priest's room which was generally over the chancel stretched the whole length of the church.

The window high up on the west wall was originally a door - evidence of the hinges was discovered recently. Professor Fernie thought that the door led to a platform which could be used for preaching or the display of relics.

In 1134 Anselm, Bishop of Bury, was appointed Bishop of London but was never enthroned, probably due to a difference of opinion with King Stephen. He only retained the title for two years until 1136. Anselm was nephew of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury. ('Nephew' at that time was sometimes used euphemistically). Both Anselms

knew Rome; (the elder was Italian by birth) and became influenced by the culture of the time which showed Byzantine influence.

Abbot Anslem caused his sacristan, Hervey, to commission a Master Hugo - the title denotes a degree - who was a bronze caster, painter and sculptor, to oversee the artistic works of the Abbey. He would probably have had a number of apprentices helping him and learning from him. Among the artefacts attributed to Master Hugo were some massive gates with intricate bronze casting: these were considered to be particularly fine, but were melted down at the Reformation. He was also credited with the Bury Bible and it is here that we have a possible connection to Copford.

During my researches into the accounts of the church in various archaeological transactions, I found a mention of the Copford's paintings and their similarity to the illustrations in the Bury Bible. While taking a party round the church in 1994, I mentioned this saying I did not know where the Bury Bible was. After the tour, one member of the party told me that if I went to Bury in the next week, I could see the bible. It was on loan from Corpus Christi, Cambridge, where it had been kept since the Reformation. Of course I went The Bible was under lock and key in a glass case, only one page being visible. I was extremely interested, subsequently obtaining permission to view the Bible at close quarters in the Parker Library, Corpus Christi. The figures in the illustration bore a marked similarity to those in Copford; their stance, the flowing draperies and the elongated fingers. In particular the figure below Christ, in Christ in Majesty surrounded by Evangelists in the Book of Ezekiel is similar to our Jairus. I do not think pattern books are the explanation here. Even more striking was the colour of the Bury illustrations - blues and

greens almost psychedelic in their intensity, rarely having been exposed to light for four centuries. They give a real insight into how Copford must have looked originally, with scenes from the Bible covering the walls from floor to ceiling.

The restorers under Wolfgang Gartner and Tom Organ in the 1990's restoration confirmed that the outlines had been done while the plaster was still wet; a little later - probably within a few days - the plaster was rewetted and the rest of the illustrations filled in. This means that the paintings were executed at the same time that the church was built. Was it perhaps Master Hugo who executed the outlines, leaving his acolytes to complete the paintings? While there is no written proof of such an association, the evident similarity of the Copford paintings to the Bury Bible and the Byzantine influence found here seems to be strong circumstantial evidence to link Copford church's foundation with Abbot Anselm's tenure of the Bishopric of London 1134-1136.

While considering the newly-built church, mention should be made of the skin found on the north door, which had been originally in the south porch. It was the medieval practice to place a layer of skin - generally ox-hide, between the oak door and the metal hinge to prevent rust corrosion. In Copford it is human skin. Tests in London and Leeds medical laboratories carried out during the 19th and 20th centuries proved that it was from a fair skinned male, possibly a marauding Dane, although marauding seems to have taken place two centuries earlier. It has been suggested that it came from an older building. Was it likely that old material of this kind would have been used on such a new and expensive edifice?

This area of Essex had been under Danelaw until the Conquest, after which

the Norman kings regarded much of the country including East Anglia as their personal hunting preserve. Strict laws were enforced to protect the royal rights. Those of Henry I were translated in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by John Manswood. One of these regarding hunting deer, states "...he that do hunt a wild beast and doth make him paunt, shall pay 10 shillings: If he be not a free man then he shall pay double. If he be a bond man he shall lose his skin".

There is in Copford still a field known as Danesfield. Was the skin nailed to the door of the church in the 1130's from a fair skinned native of the region? Was he an outlaw, or just someone unlucky enough to be caught while supplementing his food supply?

If Abbot Anselm, a member of the ecclesiastical nobility was the founder of Copford's church as seems probable, the last Bishop of London to hold the office with all lands including Copford, Edmund Bonner, was an entirely different character. Of humble origin he rose to eminence through his own ability. After taking a law degree at what is now Pembroke College, Oxford, he eventually became chaplain to Cardinal Wolsey. He later was employed by Henry VIII on various missions, including one connected with the Kings divorce which Bonner supported, together with the idea of secession from Rome. He was rewarded with a number of Bishoprics culminating in that of London, which included the manor of Copford in its property.

Like Henry, Bonner always supported the Mass and the old forms of worship. It was the Protestantism of Edward VI and the introduction of Cranmer's new prayer book which aroused his opposition, resulting in the loss of all his privileges. On a more personal level perhaps he disliked the whitewashing of the Copford murals. Reinstated under Mary he

afterwards remained true to the old faith until refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy to Elizabeth in 1559 he was deprived of the Bishopric of London and subsequently imprisoned in the Marshalsea gaol where he remained, a prisoner of conscience, until his death on September 6th 1569.

Always a controversial figure, it is said that Bonner was buried as St Georges, Southwark at midnight to avoid hostile demonstrations. There is no written record of such a burial. In Copford however there has been an oral tradition that the Bishop's body was brought here, lying for a short while at Easthorpe on its way. Copford is said to have been Bonners favourite church and in his will he expressed the wish that he should be buried here. In spite of exhaustive searches both by myself and independently by the late Tony West, we failed to discover any will.

The strongest evidence that the Bishop is buried here is provided by the Rev. Rucke-Keene, who states in his hand book to Copford Church of 1898 that workmen preparing a tomb in 1809 for the Rev. Kelly, himself an interesting character, found a coffin with Edmund Bonner's name on. It was said to be left where it was found, but there is no written record of this. It must be remembered that the incumbent who would properly be the one to record any such unusual event, was himself being buried. Also Bonner had always been regarded with disfavour as Catholicism still was at that time. It should also be noted that Rucke-Keene was writing about 90 years after the alleged discovery, certainly while folk memory was fresh. It does not seem likely that such a story could have been fabricated without some foundation. The evidence added together, although circumstantial, seems to suggest that there is a possibility that Edmund Bonner's final

resting place is to the north of the altar in Copford church.

If the Bishop's body does indeed lie in our church, a more intriguing question should be considered. How did it get there? The ideas I put forward now are entirely speculative but could be given some thought. For centuries, until tar macadam in the 19th century revolutionised land transport, water had been the chief means of conveying goods especially those in bulk, across the country.

I personally think it is more likely the body would have been spirited away before any *initial* burial. A cart with a suspicious looking burden trundling through the streets of London, let alone the muddy ruts of Essex might have aroused comment. In the 16th century the Marshalsea in the Borough was much more accessible to the Thames than today. Fishing was carried out from most coastal villages, as well as main towns on the coast. Wigborough and Salcott, west of Mersea Island were known to be thriving fishing ports, the latter only a few miles overland from Copford. The whole operation would have been clandestine, presupposing Bonner sympathisers at both ends of the journey. The initial part of the undertaking may have been comparatively simple. Once on shore the body could have been taken by an inconspicuous fishing boat, perhaps manned by catholic sympathisers from the Continent used to evading unwanted interference from authority. The first stage of the journey having been negotiated, that at the end could have been more hazardous.

If the story about the Bishop remaining at Easthorpe is true, it could suggest that the whole operation was carried out in stages, possibly at night. In any case the then incumbent of Copford, John Pulleyn must have been in on the operation, as

well as the Rector of Easthorpe and at least some of the parishioners - perhaps even the whole village! If Bishop Bonner did in some way end here as supposed, it must mean that he inspired both love and loyalty in the village. Perhaps also there had been a reluctance to accept the new prayer book and, I am quite sure, considerable resentment at the obliteration of their familiar wall paintings.

It appears that after the first 150 years, the fortunes of the church were left to the parishioners. As might be expected, reconstruction and renovation were carried out during times of comparative material prosperity. A tower with its massive oak supports was out in places 1390-1400 when Chaucer published his Canterbury Tales. Just as Anselm employed the best materials and craftsmen succeeding generations have done the same. At the end of the 20th century the Parish Church Council decided to commission a top architect to oversee structural restoration and the best conservators for the paintings.

And so Anselm, Bonner and all the unsung forefathers of the village your endeavours remain providing continuity, beauty and stability, mirroring a desire for a more intangible excellence in an ever changing world.

Margaret Cornwall

THE EPPING JAUNDICE OF 1965

In February 1965, a student at St Margaret's Hospital, Epping, was taken ill with stomach pains and mild jaundice. Subsequently it was learnt that his wife, who lived in London, had had a similar illness at the same time. Soon after, a local hospital consultant developed similar symptoms and other cases

quickly followed. It became apparent that there was a small and rather unusual epidemic on hand. The cases were all clustered in the Epping and Ongar areas, and there was no increased incidence of jaundice elsewhere in Essex, or nationally. Blood tests on the victims gave results that were not characteristic of infectious hepatitis, and there was nothing to suggest any other common – or less common – medical cause of jaundice.

It was clear that an epidemiological approach would be needed to explain this localised and unusual outbreak. Various factors emerged that were common to all the cases. Adult couples in the same household both tended to be affected, but their children were spared. There was a strong bias to the professional classes amongst the victims, and all the cases – apart from the student's wife in London - lived in Epping or Ongar, or within a short distance of these towns. The isolated London case was clearly an important clue. Close questioning of the student revealed that he and his wife were fond of wholemeal bread, and that he had taken home a loaf that he had purchased from the Epping baker. Many other victims admitted a partiality to wholemeal bread, though they reported (not surprisingly) that their offspring would only eat white bread. This explained the absence of children amongst the victims, and suggested that the wholemeal bread was the possible cause, although this was (and is) a very rare cause of food poisoning. Small pieces of stale wholemeal bread were obtained from the kitchens of two of the victims, and analysis showed that these were both contaminated with an industrial chemical known to be toxic to the liver. Analysis of the wholemeal flour in the Epping bakery showed contamination with the same chemical. The bakery had a branch shop

in Ongar which sold bread from the same batches, and this clearly explained the second focus of the epidemic.

It took longer to work out how the flour had become contaminated. Analysis of the wholesaler's flour was negative, and there were no cases of jaundice from other bakeries that had been supplied from this source. Nothing was found in the Epping bakery to explain how this chemical had got into the bread. Attention then focussed what had happened to the flour between leaving the wholesaler and its arrival in Epping. After exhaustive enquiries it was found that the flour had been transported in a carrier's van which had also been used to deliver containers of industrial chemicals, one of which had spilt and leaked a week or so before the first reported case. Any contaminated packages had been returned to sender, but the seepage of the chemical into the brown hessian sacks containing the flour had not been noticed. After delivery to Epping, the sacks were stored in a warm place for a week before being used, and this interval would have allowed the contaminated part of the sack to dry out and become invisible before being up-ended and emptied into the flour bin. It also explained the delay between the delivery of the flour and the onset of the first cases.

Fortunately the illness was relatively mild and all the victims made an uneventful recovery. There were no more cases after the temporary closure of the bakery, apart from one man in Ongar who became ill about six weeks later. The victim had been away on a long business trip and his wife, knowing his partiality to wholemeal bread, had bought a loaf and put it into the deepfreeze to await his return, giving a distinctly twentieth century twist to this outbreak! The only reported non-human victim was a dog who had been fed

wholemeal bread crusts, and subsequently developed jaundice. Unfortunately attempts to obtain blood from this animal were unsuccessful, and resulted in the pathologist being attacked and bitten. On a happier note, follow up of the victims two years, and twenty four years, later showed no long term consequences from the incident. This outbreak illustrates the painstaking detective work required to trace the source of new or unusual diseases, particular in illnesses caused by food which may have travelled considerable distances and passed through many hands. The discipline is not dissimilar to historical research.

Michael Leach

Sources:

British Medical Journal 26 February 1966, 514-516

Postgraduate Medical Journal 1968, 44, 78-80

Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health 1992, 46, 327-328

Personal knowledge.

A PAROCHIAL DISPUTE

Letters to and from the archdeacon of Essex shed some light on a dispute between the Rev. W M Oliver (rector of Bobbingworth from 1838 to 1899) and his churchwarden, Mr Cure of Blake Hall. The archdeacon involved the rector of Stondon Massey as his personal intermediary, and dealt with this troublesome affair entirely by letter.

The difficulties seem to have been aggravated by the long-standing structural problems of the parish church. The vestry minutes reveal numerous repairs to the nave, including underpinning in 1842. The two tiered timber framed bell tower at the west end was also in very poor structural

condition; in 1818 a decision was made to pull it down, but it was still standing 20 years later when new plans were discussed to encase it in brick, and to cover the spire in copper. Mr Oliver intervened at this point and presented the vestry with the design for a new brick tower designed by 'Mr Burton' (probably Decimus Burton who was designing a new rectory in the neighbouring parish of Greensted) and he advanced £150 towards its construction. He also paid for six new bells. As a result, a new battlemented tower in yellow brick was completed in 1840 and the mediaeval timber structure was removed. It is possible that these early dealings with his dilatory vestry influenced his feelings about the parish's subsequent reluctance to update the church. In August 1863, he wrote to the archdeacon about his plans for restoring the chancel, which were '*in Mr Chancellor's office in Chelmsford*'. This was completed later in the year, but the nave, of course, remained the responsibility of the parish. Further correspondence indicated that the parish had made an undertaking to rebuild the red brick structure with its timber tracery windows to match the standard established by the rector in the chancel. Red brick was very unfashionable for churches at this date.

The storm broke just before Christmas 1863 with a complaint from Mr Oliver to the archdeacon that Mr Cure was making considerable alterations to the nave without consulting him or the vestry. On Boxing Day the archdeacon wrote nervously to his local intermediary, Mr Reeve (rector of Stondon Massey), mentioning the need for a faculty but asking him not to do anything '*which may aggravate any heat*'. Mr Reeve's report was not encouraging. Mr Cure had taken down the vestry within the nave and built a new one in red brick, on

the site of the former timber bell tower, as well as dismantling and reordering the pews without consulting the rector. It was clear that Mr Oliver wanted the nave to be brought up to the standard of his re-built chancel, as well as having a strong objection to the red brick vestry, about which he had not been consulted. A fellow clergyman had rubbed salt into the wound by commenting '*Well, Oliver, Mr Cure has built you a pig sty*'. The archdeacon conceded to Mr Oliver that he had the law on his side, and that he should have been consulted by his churchwarden, but added '*I venture to say to a brother clergyman (that) when peace is so desirable, much may be conceded*'. His letter to Mr Reeve was more direct; '*our great object must be to smooth over the difficulties and prevent a permanent breach between the two*'.

For a while, all went well. Mr Cure apologised to his rector and plans were submitted for the proposed changes in the nave. However, it was not long before his churchwarden brought up his own grievance. Mr Oliver's '*ornamental works*' to the chancel had taken place over Christmas – ceilings were pulled down, and pews were uprooted, including his own, part of which was taken by the new chancel arch. His new pew was too small for his family, and he doubtless felt very aggrieved about this. There had also been serious disruptions to public worship at an important time of year, with a significant shortage of seats. The archdeacon tried to mollify the rector by indicating that, though he felt that the pews were too high, he had no objection to the plans for the re-ordered nave, but it was too late. At the beginning of February, Mr Cure wrote to the archdeacon to complain that the rector had preached a condemnatory sermon, pointedly aimed at himself. He had read the '*awful denunciations from the 1st and 2nd chapter of the prophet Haggai*' while

nodding meaningfully in his direction. [This book, at the end of the Old Testament, opens with Haggai reproving the people for not rebuilding the temple]. Members of the congregation had '*felt their flesh creep*'. The parish was in a ferment and, more ominously, the wives of the two aggrieved men had had a meeting and made promises which their husbands could not possibly keep. Towards the end of February, in spite of the apprehensions of the wives, the rector and his churchwarden had a stormy meeting in Mr Cure's house to discuss the height of the pews, but it seems that neither dared to broach the subject of the sermon.

Some subsequent letters must be missing, but in early March Mr Oliver sent a copy of his sermon to the archdeacon. It has to be said that his attitude was not very conciliatory. He had been anxious for Mr Cure to hear his sermon which was '*preached for his good and benefit, for his instruction and edification*'. He intended '*to teach him Bible notions on church building, a subject in which I fear he is lamentably ignorant*'. He had agreed with Mr Cure five or six years earlier that they would rebuild the whole church, and share the expense; though he had set his own part of the church in order, little had been done to improve the nave. Frederick Chancellor's letter of the previous year was quoted as further evidence of the ignorance of his churchwarden. The archdeacon's reply was emollient – the rector was within his rights to preach as he had, and Mr Cure had not followed proper ecclesiastical procedures. However the vestry, on 24 March 1864, clearly sided with Mr Cure, and moved a vote of thanks to him for building the new vestry and for repairing the church.

At this point the correspondence ends and presumably the storm had blown itself out. All that remains is the

testimony of the building itself. The nave is still encased in late C18 or early C19 red brick, and the heavily battlemented vestry in the same material ('the pig sty') still stands at the west end. Part of the north nave wall collapsed at the end of the C19, but was skilfully rebuilt in red brick to match the rest. This repair is not discernable today. The only improvement of which Mr Oliver would have approved was the replacement of the timber traceried windows with stone ones to match those in the chancel – but these were paid for by Mr Oliver himself in 1902 after his retirement. The truth was, perhaps, that though Mr Cure lived in a grand house, the parish was poor, rural and sparsely populated, and was simply unable to afford what the rector would have wished.

A drawing of 1862 shows Mr Oliver at the reading desk of the three decker pulpit in the body of the nave. The large Cure family pew (shortly to be curtailed by the new chancel arch) is visible. Many of the congregation are standing, and within a couple of years the nave became even more crowded by the attendance of the navvies who were building the railway between Epping and Ongar. Overcrowding, as well as structural problems and a shortage of funds, must have been a challenge in this parish church, and it was unfortunate that the solution was in the hands of two men who found it difficult to work together, and had divergent opinions on the correct form of church architecture.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Archdeacon of Essex correspondence:
ERO D/AEM 1/5/8

Bobbingworth churchwarden's accounts
1820-1863: ERO D/P 127/5/1

Bobbingworth vestry minutes 1808-1911:
ERO D/P 127/8/3

Visit to Bobbingworth church on
3/6/1909: EAT xi, 2nd series, 175

A BOOK'S PREVIOUS OWNERS, AND THEIR ANNOTATIONS

First impressions were not promising. The front cover was made from a flattened shoe box, and the first pages were crumbling as a result of contact with the acidic card. The back cover was detached, the spine was badly abraded (but still showed faint relics of delicate gold leaf tooling) and part of the index was missing. However it was the Essex volume of Newcourt's *Repertorium*, printed in 1710, and worthy of rescue from annihilation. Careful examination showed that the detached back cover was in fact the original front board, covered with the decayed relics of a typical early C18 leather binding. On the inside was an inscription in blue indelible pencil, reading 'Ex Archiv. Prov. Angl. 1928', suggesting it had come from an ecclesiastical library or archive. Two partly overlapping armorial bookplates also survived. One is a heavily quartered but untitled achievement of C18 date, now identified as the marital arms of Ralph Standish of Standish, Lancashire (d. 1755). The other, of C19 appearance, indicates ownership by James Francis Anderton. Removal of the bookplates showed that Anderton had applied his name to the pastedown with an ink stamp before covering it with his personal bookplate.

The book itself was extensively annotated in ink, in two different C18 hands. The first (and earlier one) is rather crabbed, with a slight backward slope to the ascenders – perhaps written by a left-hander, if writing masters at that

time permitted such a practice. This must be the handwriting of the first owner, as the earliest entry is dated 4 February 1712, barely two years after publication of the book. A small number of entries, all later in date, are in a more flowing C18 hand, presumably made by a subsequent owner. The majority of the notes are updates to Newcourt's list of vicars and rectors for many (but by no means all) of the parishes, and often include the date, as well as the name of the presenting patron. Though the information recorded largely tallies with that provided later by Morant in his *History of Essex*, certain details, such as the exact date of induction, are rarely given. In particular, the university degrees of new incumbents are almost never noted. The latest handwritten date of an induction is 1740, suggesting that this was the point at which the amendments ceased, though very few parishes were updated as late as this. Both annotators made occasional corrections to Newcourt's printed list, or updated one of the footnotes on the subsequent careers of incumbents. Occasionally there is a more detailed note – under Brentwood, for example, he wrote 'Mr Rice Williams Chaplain - the Chaplain is p'sented by the Lord of Weald who pays him 5L per ann & he hath a house, garden & orchard & a little field'. Two other entries commenced with the note 'Holman writes that' implying that the writer had either corresponded with William Holman (d.1730), or had seen his unpublished notes on the history of the county. Elsewhere he inserted a correction of one of his own notes, noting Holman as the source.

Newcourt often left a blank space where he did not know the dedication of the church, and a number of these have been completed in the earlier of the two hands, and a few errors corrected. There

are also scattering of notes about the tithe, and the sales of advowsons, often including details or dates of deeds, suggesting that the writer may have had access to original documents. Occasionally the annotation is purely antiquarian - under 'Waltham Holy Cross, Abby' he wrote '*their Seal was on one side + a crucifix with this inscription: hoc est Sigill Ecclesie sancte Crucis de Waltham. On ye other side two heads facing one an other hoc carte foedus cum Tovi firmat Harold & is affixed to a lease made by Robt ye abbott 1536 of Sewerstonbery to Geo Stonor*'.

The annotations span 30 years, and seem to have been made by two separate owners, one of whom would have been the first owner of the book and probably one of the subscribers listed at the beginning of the volume. There are no clues to his identity. It is clear that his principal interest was in ecclesiastical matters, particularly in the names of later incumbents, and relevant matters concerning tithes and the ownership of advowsons. The entries were made at different times and in different inks, and are scattered throughout the county, though they only cover about a third of all Essex parishes. Judging by the detail given, the earlier of the two writers must have had access to official records, rather than relying on local knowledge. The variations in the ink and the handwriting of the updated list of incumbents suggest that the entries were made as the information became available, rather than being copied at one sitting from a later source such as Morant. A few of the notes are purely antiquarian in nature (such as that concerning the Waltham Abbey seal, quoted above). The owner with the crabbed handwriting had had either personal contact with the antiquary William Holman, or access to his manuscript. His principal interest was

ecclesiastical rather than antiquarian. It seems likely that Ralph Standish of Lancashire, whose bookplate was pasted inside the front cover, was not responsible for any annotations and was the third owner. Though he did have certain antiquarian interests, bequeathing a collection of coins and medals on his death, he was almost certainly a Roman Catholic as he had married into the Howard family and was implicated in the 1715 rebellion. It seems improbable that, living in Lancashire, he would have had the opportunity to access the type of records needed to annotate his copy of Newcourt.

Michael Leach

ESSEX MATTERS FROM THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

- a) Mundon church: cracks in the brickwork of the chancel have increased since the last report, and the church remains closed. Remedial underpinning should take place later this year, assisted by a 70% grant from English Heritage.
- b) Berners Roding church: this abandoned church, (when last seen by me it was almost totally smothered in ivy, and occupied by a barn owl), has passed into the hands of a charitable family trust, so its future should be assured.
- c) Victoria Hotel, Dovercourt: this early to mid C19 building has been gutted by fire, and is probably beyond salvation. However it has an important visual role in the townscape, and the quality of its replacement will be very important.
- d) Valentines Mansion, Ilford: the Heritage Lottery Fund have offered

nearly £2M for interior and exterior restoration of this Grade II* building.

e) A new tile works: the Cambridge Tile and Brick Company has been set up by the Cambridgeshire Historic Buildings Trust to ensure the continued production of the characteristic variegated peg tiles typical of the roofs in the Cambridge area. Further information can be found on their website on www.cambstileandbrick.co.uk.

Michael Leach

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRAINING EXCAVATION

Five day non-residential training courses will be offered by Birkbeck on their dig at Syon Abbey, Brentford, Middlesex in the weeks beginning 11 June, 18 June, 25 June, 2 July and 9 July 2007. These are suitable for beginners, as well as those with more experience. The fee is £185 for one week, and further details can be obtained from Natalie Ping, Archaeology Desk, Birkbeck Faculty of Continuing Education, 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DQ, or on 0207 631 6627, or via archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk

ESSEX HISTORY FAIR – SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED

Most members will know that this is held every other year. In 2006, it filled the town centre of Braintree, and provided a great opportunity for the public to meet the wide range of organisations involved in many different ways with the heritage of Essex. Paradoxically, though it was a great success, the inability to charge an entrance fee to the town centre has left

the organisation's funds seriously depleted. It is an excellent event for the county, and it would be a great loss if it were to lapse. The Society is looking for a member to represent it on the History Fair committee, and anyone keen to do this is urged to contact me on 01277 363106, or family@leachies.freeseve.co.uk, or by post at 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ.

Michael Leach

PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND

Though the first priority of this fund is always to subsidise the cost of the Society's publications, grants may be available to assist with setting up, carrying out or publishing members' research projects. Applications to the fund should include a synopsis of the planned project, and should be supported by two referees. Grants are not payable until the paper is in final proof (or the electronic equivalent) and are valid for three years. Anyone requiring further details should apply to the Honorary Secretary.

PLEASE TAKE CARE!

During one of the Society's visits in 2006, a table was seriously damaged when a member placed a hot teapot on the French polished surface, causing much worry and distress to both the owner and the Society's officers. The considerable cost of the repair was born partly by the Society, partly by its insurers. This is a reminder of the extreme care which members need to take at all times when visiting private houses, and the importance of warning

others of potential hazards during such visits.

ROUND TOWER CHURCHES

I have read your comments on round towers with interest. I have spent a lot of time going round Norfolk churches, especially those with round towers. The point you make about the use of the rod is interesting, but I am wary about using this as a basis of measurement. The Norfolk round towers vary in diameter from 8 feet to over 20 feet, with walls from anything from 2½ to 6 feet thick. None of them possess staircases and ladders are used to reach the upper stages. Some surviving ladders are of very early construction, just dressed halves of trees with the rungs carried through and pinned. The question of whether the towers are earlier than, or contemporary with, their church is difficult. Some are flat against the west wall, allowing for an entrance from the church. A lot of them show Saxon influences, such as double belfry openings, with true Saxon arches, and doorways going straight through without a knob. It is generally accepted that these churches were built between 1015 and 1115. I think it is fair to say that the round shape was influenced by lack of building stone. All the towers have three stages, bell chamber, ringing chamber and ground floor (the last, in the bigger towers, could have been used as a gathering place). It is difficult to differentiate between different building dates with flint, even the mortar will vary from batch to batch, but it is worth noting how crude the attachment of tower to church is. However it is still difficult to determine which was built first.

John Warbis

BOOKS FOR DISPOSAL

A small donation to ESAH will secure any of the following books. All are used but in serviceable condition, and are seeking a new home.

An Account of the Decorations of the ECC Council Chamber, 1939;
British Museum Publications – *Flint Implements*, 1975;
John Lord, *The nature and Subsequent Use of Flint* vol 1, 1993;
Shire Archaeology Series a) *Flint Implements of the Old Stone Age* b) *Mesolithic Britain* c) *Roman Roads* d) *Village Plans* e) *Prehistoric Pottery*;
Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain, 3rd edition;
Cecil Hewitt, *Church Carpentry*, 1982;
Derek Johnson, *Essex Curiosities*, 1973;
The Englishman's Pocket Latin Dictionary, 1955;
John Hough, *Essex Churches*, 1983;
William Addison, *Essex Heyday*, 1949.
Winston Ramsey, *Epping Forest, Then and Now*, 1992 (signed by author)

Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106.

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE – VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!

The Programme Committee, which meets twice a year to plan the annual programme, is seeking new members. Enthusiasm, but no special expertise, is the chief qualification, and the rewards of working with the present highly knowledgeable team are incalculable.

Please contact David Andrews on david.andrews@essexcc.gov.uk or the Hon Secretary.

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

NAMES AND ADDRESSES

Secretary	Membership Secretary	Librarian
Dr. M. Leach	Miss Ann Turner	Mr. A.B. Phillips
2 Landview Gardens	1 Robin Close	19 Victoria Road
Ongar	Great Bentley	Colchester
Essex CM5 9EQ	Essex CO7 8QH	Essex CO3 3NT
Tel. 01277 363106	Tel. 01206 250894	Tel. 01206 546775

Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2006 the projected value of the fund stands at £40,126.

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History
By: Cash/Cheques; Gift Aid Schemes; "In Memoriam" Donations; Bequests by Wills
Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to:

Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester C03 3NR
Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

DATA PROTECTION ACT

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 151

ISSN 0305-8530

Books about Essex

Bought & Sold

ALSO LITERATURE ART PHILOSOPHY HISTORY AND SCIENCE

Greyfriars Books

Rare & Secondhand

BOOKSHOP 92B EAST HILL COLCHESTER ESSEX CO1 2QN

(01206) 563138

www.gfb.uk.net

books@gfb.uk.net