

Welcome

We hope you will find this Spring Newsletter interesting. There's news of a fantastic new oral history recording together with an update on our photographic archives, the new Beeleigh collection, information on local planning issues, a list of monthly talks and notice of our Annual General Meeting in May. As you may know, our Vice Chairman, John Came sadly passed away in February. John's funeral was held recently and a number of our members joined committee members at Chelmsford Crematorium and afterwards in the Cygnet Room where they were able to talk to family members.



Maldon Society Annual General Meeting Thursday, 2nd May 2024 at 7.15 pm

The meeting will be held in the Cygnet Room behind The Swan Hotel. This short but necessary meeting will publicly confirm our Officers and Committee Members for the year 2024/25. Our constitution allows for four Officers and up to ten other Committee Members as well as co-opted advisors.

The nominations are:

Officers:

Chairman	Peter Holmes	Vice Chairman	Jane Senior
Treasurer	Lindsey Wright	Secretary	TBC

Committee:

Dorreen Linton	John Rogers	David Fell	Janet Watson
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The committee also receive considerable support from Wendy Howell, Ian Linton, James Reece-Ford and Judy Lea for which we are extremely grateful.

New committee members are needed please

If you would like to nominate a new committee member (with their permission), or you would like to volunteer, please contact us by email maldonsociety@aol.com and we will send you a nomination form. Copies will also be available at our April public meeting or on our website. The completed form must be returned by Thursday, 18th April.

We also have a nomination form for Officers and Committee, for which we need a proposer and second.

The committee meets once a month on the third Thursday at 4 p.m. at a local venue.

AGM documents will be sent to members on Friday, 19th April.

Our AGM archive presentation – ‘A Fishy Business’

This presentation with photographs and voices will be on the subject of fish and fishing in Maldon: ‘A Fishy Business’. We will play several different Oral History extracts, including John Cosey and his wife Chris, the daughter of fishmonger Douglas Ball, shown here with her sister Judy. We will also show old photos of the fishmonger's and their family.



The presentation will follow our AGM.

Touchscreen updates – *Peter Holmes*

It's now a year since our 'new' touchscreen display was installed in the Maeldune Heritage Centre. Feedback from both residents and visitors has been really positive and would seem to justify the considerable investment in the new technology. In particular, people have commented on how easy it is to use, both to navigate the different subject folders and to set up slide shows of any given photo collection.

Over the past twelve months, the team of volunteers has made good progress with editing the various photo collections. Well over half have now been separated into the appropriate subject folders and where necessary, titles have been added to explain what the photo shows and where and when it was taken.

In addition to editing the existing collection, new photos are added, as when and when generous members of the public offer to let us scan their precious family photos so they can be loaded onto the touchscreen computer.

A recent addition is a collection of photos lent to us by John and Chris Copsey giving the history of Douglas Ball Fishmongers. I'm sure many of you remember the shop at 119 High Street, opposite the junction with Wantz Road. This business goes back several generations and was started by James and Margaret Balls when they were publicans of Rose and Crown pub and sold fresh fish from the back of the pub. When James died in 1900, women weren't allowed to be licensees so Margaret purchased the nearby shop to continue the wet fish business.

In time, the business passed to her son James and then to his son Douglas and his wife Ivy. Chris Copsey and her sister Judy (Douglas Ball's daughters) have kindly made an Oral History recording in which they relate stories of their early childhood working in the shop with their father.

The sisters also went out on the rounds in the old Ford delivery van, sometimes being allowed to ride on the mudguard with their legs round the headlamp! An excerpt from Chris and Judy's recording can be heard on our Listening Station in the Heritage Centre or, to hear the full recording, go to www.maldonorahistory.org



Douglas and Ivy Ball



119 High Street

Oral History – *Wendy Howell*

We continue to interview and record people who are recommended to us and therefore we are always pleased to receive names and contact details of anyone who agrees to participate. We have now completed 80 recordings, all of which are on the website www.maldonoralthistory.org

Quite recently, I interviewed Anne Jenkins, a remarkable retired Maldon teacher, aged 89, who recalled her years working at Maldon Girls' School. Anne was a newly qualified teacher when she came to Maldon in 1957, straight from college. She loved Maldon and found the other school staff very welcoming, although the Head Mistress Miss Thody was 'austere, old-fashioned but delightful'.

This is what Anne said about the Girls' School: "There were in fact three secondary schools in Maldon when I arrived. There was obviously the Grammar School, but the lower school was in two parts."

"There was the boys' secondary school and the girls' secondary school which had two separate Head Teachers. And the two schools did not intermingle although we shared some of the same premises".

"There are some delightful tales to tell of how we were not able to speak to the boys' staff and the children were not able to speak to each other, boys to girls and girls to boys."

"There was an imaginary white line down the middle of the field which was eventually painted in and the children were often found standing one on each side holding hands; they thought they were courting. In actual fact one couple did actually marry."

"The girls' and boys' schools were in one building off Wantz Road, and Mill Road. It was usual for the girls to use the Wantz Road entrance and the boys the Mill Road entrance".

"Because many of the girls were so poor, we tried to give them extra help and at Christmas we had class parties, with food and dressing up, and every child went home with a card and a little present from their teacher."

"One little girl, living out at Steeple, told me that she was very excited about going home that day as the electricity was being put in the house and her parents had told her that she could be the first one to switch on the light".

"Many other families did not have electricity and homework was done with an oil lamp. There were often no facilities for water or flushing toilets so school was quite a revelation to some of them".

For any new referral please ring 01621 857054



The High Street Spring 2024 – *Lindsey Wright*

- At 3 High St, Cal & Co has closed.
- Smugglers Cove planning application has been rejected.
- Temme English estate agent 21 High St, has closed and
- Maldon Books has extended into next door, now selling records.
- Talking Flowers has been closed by the bailiffs.
- Salero Lounge has opened after months of building works.
- The Limes B&B has won 'Best B&B' in a Channel 4 programme '4 in a bed'.
- Mrs Salisbury's has new 'greenhouses' in the left-hand courtyard.
- The Emporium continues with its closing down sale.
- Paparazzi has closed down. Sign suggests a new Italian restaurant may open.
- The new market opened on 12th October. There was a very good variety of stalls to start with, however, since Christmas the number of stalls has reduced.
- Silo has closed down in Wenlock Way.
- Annie's Cake shop opposite Wantz Road has reopened. Opening hours are 10.00-3.00 Wed-Sat.
- Gift shop opposite Post Office has been closed by the bailiffs.
- Hoskyn's Deli closed and
- Another beautician's has opened in the former Hoskyn's Deli.
- At number 138 there is a new barber's shop. It has been various clothes shops, although previously a florist's for many years.
- The Bridal shop in King Georges Place has closed, and re-opened as Anna-Love.
- Chutney House Indian restaurant has a new owner; now The Indian Chef.
- D'Lux beauticians has opened in the former Cancer Research shop.
- Halifax has closed. There is a help desk in the Town Hall on a Tuesday morning.
- Saltmarsh Interiors has opened in Kings Head Centre.
- Also in Kings Head Centre: Pamper Me Pretty running Children's parties.
- And Deli & Fizz is also there.
- Nat West bank has closed leaving just Santander in the High Street.
- Salty Dogs has opened and closed after its annual pop-up next to White Horse.
- A tattoo parlour is preparing to open after Salty Dogs vacated.
- Estate agent Home Local: although it appears to be functioning normally, there's no-one inside; notice on door saying they're moving to bigger premises. Nothing on their website.
- 14 High Street, new art gallery is preparing to open.

New Beeleigh Abbey photographic archive – *Jane Senior*



A popular view of the Abbey. (Dorreen Linton)



Christopher Foyle recording his Oral History (Judy Lea)

Following the death of Christopher Foyle in 2022 and the fact that Beeleigh Abbey gardens will now remain closed for 2024, we thought this was an appropriate time to update the existing collection of Beeleigh Abbey photographs.

These can be viewed on the Society's touchscreen at the Maeldune Heritage Centre. In due course, the updated archive will also be available on the touchscreen under the heading 'Beeleigh Abbey 2023'.

In October 2023, we invited members and non-members to be involved in this project by contributing photographs taken over the past two years, since the garden reopened post-Covid. The criteria was for images of architecture, landscape, crowds and ambience, but excluding close-ups of specific flora or portraits. Seven members and three non-members provided a total of 124 photographs. Although some photographs dated from 2018, we felt these would be of historic value and also showed the interior of the Abbey which the public would not necessarily have seen.

Judy Lea, previous Chair of the Society, who had a relationship with Mr and Mrs Foyle, the Garden Open Days and also with Chris Cork, the Abbey gardener, assisted with the selection process. Eventually, 74 photographs were selected and each contributor is represented in the selection.

Thank you to our 10 contributors and for Judy Lea's hard work making the selection.

Local History Week – 27th May – 2nd June (half term) **'Links in the Chain'**

The Society will be using the collections of oral history recordings at our listening station and photographic archives on our touch screen at the Maeldune Heritage Centre to explore many of the 'links' to Maldon's past. They include links to Maldon's residents, transport, the Maldon Embroidery, annual town events, heritage buildings, local businesses and our riverside community.

The 'Links in the Chain' theme will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Town Mayor's chain and robes. The event will bring together all the local heritage groups who will be using the theme to display their own 'links in the chain' at their venues.

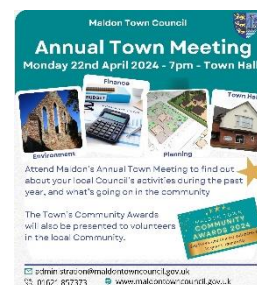
Children will have the opportunity to create their own Mayor's chain and their work will be displayed at our venues. Children's themed activity packs will also be available at many of the venues.



Maldon Town Council's Annual Town Meeting Monday, 22nd April at 7 pm

The Mayor, Andrew Lay, has invited our Society members to this meeting to find out about your local Town Council's activities during the past year and learn what's going on in the community. The Town's Community Awards will also be presented to local volunteers during the event.

To find out more you can contact administration@maldontowncouncil.gov.uk or visit www.maldontowncouncil.gov.uk



Proposed closure of St Peter's Hospital

Many of our members are concerned about the potential complete closure of St Peter's Hospital and the ongoing relocation of vital local healthcare services, including the midwife-led birthing unit, intermediate care and stroke rehabilitation and other essential out-patient services. You can find more details on the Planning page of our website - www.maldonsoc.org/planning

Two public consultations have been held in Maldon already and the process is continuing beyond the initial closing date of 21st March. The packed public meeting at Plume Academy attracted over 400 residents and there was another consultation meeting in the Town Hall on 19th March. Residents have also had the opportunity to complete both the NHS consultation document and Sir John Whittingdale's survey. We now all await the outcome of the consultation.

Planning - Friary House (East)

Essex Council Housing Department are again putting forward an application for the conversion of the listed building to seven apartments and more dwellings in the grounds. Judy has kindly written a report outlining the Society's objections to this application.

Maeldune Heritage Centre

If you visit the Maeldune Heritage Centre, you'll see that the Maeldune team have made many changes over the closed season. There's a fresh new look to the shop and exhibition areas and the Visitor Information Centre is full of 2024 leaflets and posters about events and clubs to join.

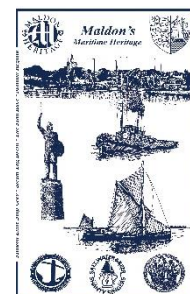
You'll also find a number of interesting oral history recordings on our listening station at the Centre and Peter and his team of volunteers have been working hard installing new photographs and editing the archive collection on our touch screen.

Maldon Heritage Tea Towels

A supply of the first of the Maldon Tea Towel collection will be available to buy at the Maeldune Heritage Centre from June.

The first collection will feature attractive images of our local maritime heritage groups.

This will be followed by Maldon's heritage buildings, gardens and open spaces and industrial Maldon. We hope you will support this interesting new local venture.



Maldon Society talks

Our monthly public meetings are held at the Cygnet Room, Swan Hotel, High Street, Maldon. The doors open at 6.30 pm with the meeting starting at 7 pm. Visitors will be requested to give a donation.

Talks for 2024

Thursday, 4th April - The Shaking Planet: Earthquakes including Essex – Adrian Wright

Thursday, 2nd May - The Maldon Society – Annual General Meeting and presentation from our archives

Thursday, 6th June - The History of Beckingham Hall – David Newman

Thursday, 4th July - Chelmsford in the Second World War – Tony Tuckwell

August – No talk

Thursday, 5th September - Development of the Thames Sailing Barge – John Rayment

Pre-registration

We are glad so many of you are enjoying our monthly talks. They're proving extremely popular and the Cygnet Room is regularly filled to capacity. So, we would strongly recommend our members to book early. Members are in the privileged position of having information in our newsletters on all the upcoming talks. So, please book ahead. You can reserve your seat by emailing maldonsociety@aol.com or calling 01621 853428.

Membership

Since our last newsletter, we have been rewarded with full audiences at our monthly talks and often with a waiting list. Our publicity is making both yourselves and the public aware of the wide range of subject matter we offer at the talks and we frequently gain new members at each monthly meeting.

Our membership now stands at 124. It is always sad to lose members but we thank you for your interest and support and especially for registering in advance.

Keep in contact with The Maldon Society

Does the Society have your email address?

It would help us to get in touch with you about future events and news.

Please contact us via the website to give us your details. Thank you.

Email: maldonsociety@aol.com Website: www.maldonsoc.org