

**ARTIN CORNISH** walks on Galleywood Common at least twice every day. As a volunteer warden he reports to Chelmsford Parks Services and his 'Notes from a Warden's Diary' delight the readers of the GCA Newsletter. Here he ponders the history of our Common.

## Two thousand years on Galleywood Common

On Galleywood Common  
beneath an azure sky,  
I like to sit and think  
of times gone by.  
Of ancient Britons  
rubbing on their woad,  
watching the Roman soldiers  
on their road.  
With a club and sharpened spear  
They stood shoulder to shoulder  
with Boadicea;  
to repel the foe who had  
crossed the Channel,  
all dressed up  
in tin and flannel.  
Each one hundred men  
with their Centurion  
with his shield  
and leather skirt on.  
Of Charles the second  
in regal state,  
awarding his prestigious Plate  
for the fastest running horse  
to complete the  
gorse fringed course.  
With a saucy wink  
and a cheeky grin  
received a squeeze  
from his Nell Gwyn.  
Of Boneparte who, our shores  
did threat with his offence,  
and King George the third  
said 'build a stout defence'.  
But before this could  
be completed  
Nelson had the French fleet  
defeated.

So with a hip hip hooray  
they sold the spoil and clay  
to build a new  
Chelmsford railway.  
And in each hollow,  
they bunkers made  
for nine hole golf  
they played.  
Then in the early  
eighteen seventies  
Mr Pryor fell upon his knees  
and said 'cut down that oak,  
fell that birch,  
for I'm going to build  
St Michael's church'.  
And so the hill became  
hallowed ground  
and now the horses  
must go round and round.  
Then when murder struck  
at the Admiral Rous  
the landlord did not escape  
the gallows' noose.  
For judge and jury did prevail  
and he was the last man hanged  
in Chelmsford's gaol.  
But will the hunt still meet  
at the Horse and Groom;  
will men still drink  
in a log-fired room;  
standing around  
with their beers;  
will the church bells  
still ring in New Years;  
On Galleywood Common  
in two thousand years.

### GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**President** Ron White **Chairman** David Stacy **Vice Chairman** Colin Baddock  
**Secretary** Bob Villa **Treasurer** Graham Mundy **Programme Director** Ted Hawkins  
**Committee** Brian Hale Madeleine Howard Peter Roscoe David Stevenson Philip Walters

Comments or contributions to this Newsletter would be welcomed by the editor  
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# PAST TIMES

GALLEYWOOD  HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## RDC Records are lost

**W**hen the Rural District Council was dissolved in 1974, its records were transferred to Chelmsford Borough Council. At least that's what one would imagine took place. It's hardly credible that truck loads of documents were thrown on a huge bonfire, yet for all the access that we can currently get, that might just as well have happened. Searches at the Essex Record Office reveal no more than a handful of references to the old RDC.

In 1922 a planning application was submitted for the building of a Memorial Hall for Galleywood on the narrow plot on Stock Road opposite Twitten Lane. This would have gone to the Rural District Council as the Parish Council (Great Baddow) did not deal with these matters. In due course, the Council required an amendment to the material proposed for the roof. The story of the building is recounted on page three and it would be interesting to expand the account with some detail of what was being built. Sadly no records of the application can be found. If any of our members can fill in the gaps in this saga the editor would be glad to hear from them

### The History of Chelmsford 1066 - 1950

This ten week course is being run by the  
WEA at Trinity Methodist  
from 22 September 1.30 - 3.00pm.  
Fee £28 OAPs £21  
details from **Mr Bromwich** (01245) 355404

**Essex Chronicle**  
July 10th 1931

#### HUNDREDS OF EGGS COOKED

Hundreds of eggs packed ready for market, were baked hard when a stable, garage and barn were destroyed by fire, at Brick House, Galleywood, on Tuesday. Brick House is occupied by Mrs. Mary Unwin and her son, Mr. B. Wood.

When the flames were extinguished, members of the Chelmsford Fire Brigade ate some of the eggs.

It is believed that the fire was started through some children playing with matches in the loft of the stable, which was full of straw. The Brigade, under 3rd Station Officer J. Wakling, were soon on the scene. and had the outbreak under control. At one time a row of houses was threatened. Although surrounded by flames, and later drenched with water, several sitting hens refused to leave their nests.

The damage is estimated at several hundred pounds.

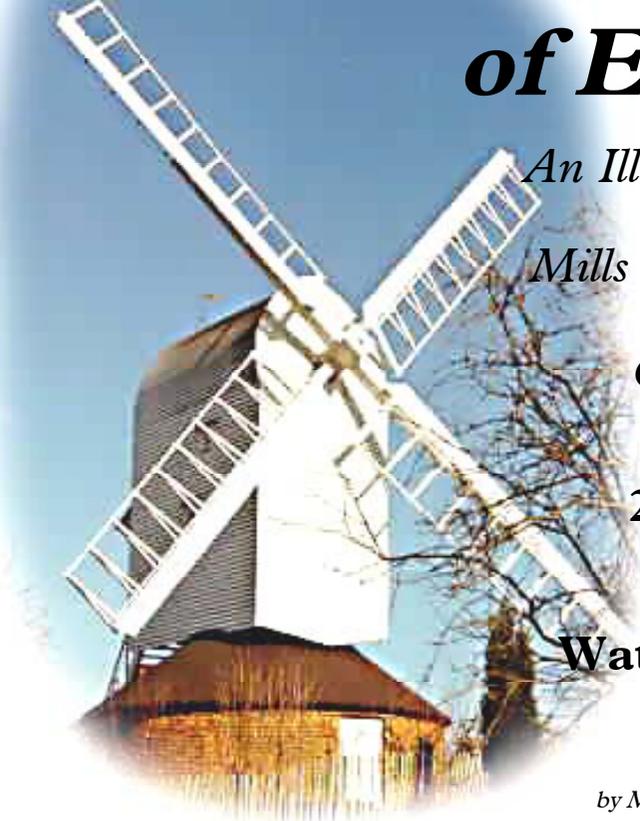
**Our next meeting**

# The Windmills of Essex

*An Illustrated talk by*  
**Geoff Wood**  
*Mills Support Officer*  
*for Essex*  
*County Council*

**Wednesday**  
**24 September**  
**2003**  
**Keene Hall**  
**Watchouse Road**  
**at 8 pm**

*Picture of Finchingfield Mill by Mark Berry of Windmill World*



## **DATES for your Diary**

- 19 November 2003** History of the Essex Police  
*Speaker from the Essex Police Museum*  
Annual General Meeting of the Society
- 3 March 2004** Golden Miller  
The National Champion that raced at Galleywood  
*An illustrated talk by Ted Hawkins*

## **The Memorial Hall that never was**

*CONTINUING OUR STORY OF THE PLOT ON STOCK ROAD*

SHORTLY after the end of the first World War, many villages set about the building of a Memorial Hall. Such a project was being talked about in Galleywood in 1921. The idea attracted much local interest and when Captain Forbes, who lived in Byron Hall, promised to give the land for the building, enthusiasm for the project spread around the village. A further boost to the idea came with the offer from Mr Keene of a loan at 5% to fund the construction. A committee was formed from members and trustees of the Cottage Garden Society. Capt. Forbes was elected chairman and the committee consisted of Messrs J. Jarvis, A. Firman, P. Lodge, E. Bates, A. Burrell, H. Whitcombe, F. Jarvis, A. Bird, E. Day and J. Overall.

The building plot (*Past Times No 2*) was let at the time to a Mr Brown who accepted an offer of £5 to give up his possession. In April, Mr Bird and Mr Burrell visited London and some building material was purchased with the aid of contacts provided by Capt. Forbes. A month later, Mr Brown offered to hand over the plot without any charge. A plan of the building was produced for submission to the Council, and in August a generous donation towards the construction was received from Chelmsford Race Course.

The prospect of a Parish Hall for the village had originally been received with much enthusiasm. Offers of help with the construction came flooding in and it seemed that there would be no shortage of volunteer help. Four months further on, as Christmas approached, it was evident that building was not progressing. An appeal went out to allotment holders for more help.

January 1923 brought a setback. The Council were unhappy with the 'Ruberoid' material proposed for the roof and insisted on corrugated iron being used instead. This was going to add considerably to the cost. The committee put out enquiries and agreed to accept the lowest tender. This came from the South Wales Galvanising Company and was for £30 - £40 (excluding nails and washers).

Fund raising continued during the following months. A rummage sale was planned during June, with a Whist Drive raising £12 and a concert £6.7s 6d. Meanwhile progress on the building was slowing down. Meetings of the committee were noticeable for the absence of the chairman and by early 1924 building work came to a stop. The deeds of the land had not been transferred and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to Capt. Forbes asking him to attend the next committee meeting.

The secretary noted in the minutes on 22 March 1924 'No reply has been received.'  
*Extracted from the Minutes of the Cottage Garden Society*

## *I remember . . .*

Looking back to when I was 8 or 9 years old, my Dad told me and my brothers about Baddow Park Hall which was just across the 12-acre field from Cannon Leys Farm where we lived. He told us about an underground tunnel which started in Baddow Park cellar, and ran under the ground all the way to Galleywood Common. Baddow Park had been used by the military for part of the 1939-45 war and was left in a derelict state, so we children could more or less explore at will. We talked about the tunnel to our friends, and practically all the children in Galleywood, armed with spades, went in search of it. We did find a bit of what we thought was a tunnel, but it was full of rubble, so we started from the other end, looking for an entrance on the common. The search kept all the Galleywood children amused for the whole of the six weeks summer holiday that year. Now, whether there was a tunnel under the common I still don't know, or did my Dad just tell us the tale to keep us amused and busy for a while? I'll never know now I suppose, because Dad, (Philip Chaplin) passed away some 30 years ago.



**JILL BELLAMY**