



Issue 5 - January 2001

LEIGHWAY

The Newsletter of the Leigh Society

An eye to the future and an ear to the past in the heart of Leigh

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Well, who would believe the millennium celebrations were a year ago? But here we are in the year 2001. The Society, Heritage Centre and 2 Plumbs Yard Project have had a very busy year in 2000 and in the words of someone else 'you ain't seen nothing yet'.

This edition of Leighway is packed full of interesting and informative items and I would particularly draw members' attention to the article on conservation areas and the role the Society plays.

So sit back and enjoy.



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CHAIRMAN'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Looking back over the past year the Society has done well. The Heritage Centre has been well patronised and certainly well manned by our willing band of helpers. Nevertheless we need some more to join us - can you help?

Your Committee members have met monthly and arranged a busy programme.

Carole Pavitt has lead the way on Plumbs Cottage, the Christmas Comicals and the Leighway. Anne Price has dealt with the social events with great success and is already into items for 2001. Lyn Davies and John Porter have entertained several hundreds of school children with talks and demonstrations at the Heritage Centre, which has been well looked after by Iris Williams in her capacity of stock controller and Val Hulme who organises the helpers' rota.

The busy and demanding job of Society Secretary as always, has been admirably dealt with by Margaret Buckey.

So on your behalf WELL DONE ALL.

We now, with your help, look forward to a bumper 2001.

With all best wishes for the new year

Frank Bentley



CHRISTMAS COMICALS

The Comicals were a great success, with 100 tickets sold and fine performances by many members of the Society we managed to raise about £500 towards the restoration of Plumbs Cottage. Many people expressed their enjoyment of the evening and hopefully we can do something similar next Christmas.

DEAR DIARY

Please note the following dates in your diaries for Society meetings in the coming year.

14 March	An Archaeological Theme Rosemary Arscott
7 April	Race Night - details enclosed
25 April - AGM	and slide show on Old Leigh
12 May	Quiz - details to follow
16 May	A Merry Peal - Bellringing Margaret Arthur
September	Outing to be arranged
17 October	Purfleet 's History is Explosive - Alan Gosling, Purfleet Garrison Museum
14 November	City Pubs Gardens and Churches Sue Sincock
December	Xmas lunch to be arranged

The Race Night and Quiz will be in aid of Plumbs Yard

OSWALD GRAY



Sadly, last September a number of the Officers and Committee attended the funeral of dear old 'Ossie' as he was affectionately known to his friends in the Society.

Ossie had had a long association with the Society, being a founder member and fund raiser and was instrumental in bringing the Heritage Centre into existence as with his legal background he helped to draw up the lease with Southend Council. He continued to serve as a Trustee and member of the Committee for many years and to man the counter and keep the museum open.

His pleasant manner and sense of humour made him popular with us all but after he and Wyn moved to Shoebury a few years ago, he had to give up his active involvement in the Society. He kept in touch though and we saw him from time to time.

Actively involved in the Town's life, he had been a member of the Leigh Seafront Action Group which campaigned for many years against the famed 'Road to the West' which kept us all busy but we had a lot of fun. He was also Chairman of the Pier Society, member of the British Legion and a helper with Meals on Wheels.

We miss him and extend our sympathy to his family.

Margaret Buckey

Blood and Fire - The Salvation Army Colony, Hadleigh

In 1890 General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, bought farmland and properties in Hadleigh. He planned to start a farm almost in the shadow of the much loved Hadleigh Castle. His idea was to help some of the homeless, jobless men from the East End of London.

The Salvation Army owned many acres of land in Leigh, some was utilised for the building of houses on the Marine Estate and the area up to Station Road. Part of the agreement when buying a lease for the land was that it should not be used as a public house. There is no pub between Hadleigh and the Elms.

At the farm colony in Castle Lane over 3000 boys were trained during the early part of the century. They lived in dormitories or cottages on the site and were taught farm management, market gardening, pig rearing and even brick making. After six months they were encouraged to pass on their newly learned skills. Many went abroad to Canada, Australia and New Zealand to start a new life.

At the beginning of the 20th century the farm was thriving and in 1901 the men were delighted to find water being laid on to the Colony from one of the nearby wells. To commemorate this event a great marble drinking fountain was erected for the workers.



The colony continued to flourish until the seventies when farming became more mechanical and less farm workers were needed. Fewer recruits were coming forward and so the training centre was closed.

It reopened in 1991, still as a training centre, to help the less fortunate to learn various skills and take their place in society. Many of the trainees are the long term unemployed or those with physical or learning difficulties. They are taught carpentry, in the well equipped workshop, catering, computing, life skills, numeracy and literacy. They are also helped to find employment. The centre has won several awards including the Royal Anniversary Trust Challenge Certificate in recognition of a 'Long-term benefit to the Nation' project.



In August 2000 the colony celebrated its tenth year by holding an open day. Dignitaries and visitors had the opportunity to buy some of the toys and garden furniture made by the trainees, to walk around the workshops view the exhibitions and ride around the fields in tractor drawn carts. A service was held and the symbolic unveiling of the old drinking fountain which has been carefully restored.

There are great plans for the colony. Part of the land is to be given over to growing organic vegetables. They hope to open refreshment facilities for the public, a heritage centre and a large new Citadel. These new developments will mean the old Citadel opposite Safeways must be demolished but the new modern buildings will be an asset to the colony and to the community of Hadleigh.

Mavis Sipple

THE ANCIENT MARINERS OF LEIGH The Haddock Family

Many of you will know of the 15th Century memorial in St Clement's Church to the Haddock family of Leigh.

Admiral Sir Richard Haddock (1629-1715) was perhaps the best known member of the family. He commanded the Earl of Sandwich's flagship the 'Royal James' at the Battle of Sole Bay in 1672 and for his bravery was presented to Charles II. At his audience with the Merry Monarch the King removed a silken cap from his head and set it upon the head of Richard Haddock and from that time onwards he held many offices. He was knighted in 1675, appointed Commander at the Nore in 1682 and from 1683 to 1690 he was First Commissioner of the Victualling Office. From there he became Joint Commander in Chief with Admiral Killigrew and Sir John Ashby in the expedition against Ireland. He died in 1715 and is buried at Leigh. His eldest son, Richard, was Comptroller of the Navy from 1734 to 1749.

His third, and, youngest son Nicholas (1686-1746) became Admiral of the Blue in 1744 after distinguishing himself in reprisals against the Spanish. He represented Rochester in Parliament between 1735 and 1746.

When he was dying he called for his son and said to him:-

'My son, considering my rank in life and public service for so many years, I have left you but a small fortune, but it is honestly got and will wear well; there are no seaman's wages or provisions, nor one single penny of dirt money in it'

Source - Essex Worthies, William Addison



Sir Nicholas
Haddock

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the committee and officers of the Society

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TRINITY HOUSE

(from the notes of Joyce MacConnell)

A series of fires over the centuries has left researchers with few records of Trinity House but the date generally accepted as its foundation is 1514. Under a charter of Henry VIII the Brethren of the Guild were licensed to appoint one master, four brethren and eight assistants annually.

One well known master was Samuel Pepys and several Leigh men held high office. The tablet placed in St Clement's Church in 1906 by the Elder Brethren bears witness to this connection. The tablet names some even before Henry VII's Charter so it is clear that there was an earlier organisation of seamen.

The responsibilities of the Guild varied over the centuries. Trinity House at Deptford was given the right to erect sea-marks by act of Parliament during Queen Elizabeth's reign. These sea marks consisted of such things as trees, woods, mills and other conspicuous buildings along the shoreline and there were penalties for interfering with them.

Trinity House received fees or payments for their services which were referred to as 'ballastage', beaconage, bouyage and lastage. The 'age' in each of these relates to payment of a fee.

Ballastage was derived from the dredging up of sand and shingle from the river bed to keep the channels open, a duty later taken over by the Conservators. These dredgings were then supplied, under coercion and on payment of a fee, to masters of ships as a means of keeping them steady when unladen.

Beaconage and bouyage were superseded by the light dues which were later collected by Customs and handed over to Trinity House for the maintenance of its lights and lighthouses. Lastage was connected with loading of vessels.

In the early days the mariners when not undertaking voyages were encouraged to take on duties in the ports in order to keep them out of mischief. They were licensed for this by the Guild. By the early part of the 19th century the Brethren were concerned with ballastage, pilotage, lights, examination of masters and sub-lieutenants in pilotage, almshouses and pension, as well as the general running of the organisation and its ceremonies.

Eventually Trinity House became the general lighthouse authority for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar. It provided aids to navigation such as light houses, light vessels, buoys and beacons. It is the principal pilotage authority in the United Kingdom and is also a charitable organisation for the relief of mariners and their families who are in financial distress.



The Memorial in St Clement's to Robert Salmon - Master of Trinity House and Sheriff of London.

The Trinity House memorial tablet commemorates many other members of the Salmon family as well as Haddocks, Goodlads, Chesters, Bundockes and Moyers of Leigh

HUSH HUSH WHISPER WHO DARES

The origins of the Lawless or Whispering Court of Rochford are the stuff of legend. So the story goes, in about 1620 the Lord of the Manor, came home from travels abroad to find his tenants plotting to raise a commotion. The Lord confronted his treacherous tenants and as a penance required them to meet every year on the first Wednesday after Michaelmas to do homage for their lands in a whisper.

But what are the true origins?

In the time of the local historian Philip Benton the Court had turned into a shortened ceremony with dinner and drinks. At midnight the Chairman, accompanied by his guests, proceeded to Kings Hill at Rochford, following a man carrying a heavy stake across his shoulders, alight at one end, with followers carrying torches. There at the 'whispering post' the Chairman read a proclamation from a roll, calling the names of the tenants to pay their rents. Absence meant a double payment.

Unfortunately the early records of the Court are lost and the earliest surviving mention of the Court is 1760 and of the 'whispering post' 1772. But the origins seem to stem from much earlier. In 1285 Edward I under the Statute of Winchester, required the whole of a hundred (we are in the Rochford Hundred) to give satisfaction within 40 days for robbery or murder, or to answer for the bodies of the malefactors. The intention was to give statutory powers against thieves, road brigands, receivers and concealers of malefactors, about setting watches in the country... and the cutting-away of woods by the King's highways.

This ancient court was held up to the end of the 19th century. Somewhere in the distant past a poem commemorating the Court was written and was translated as follows:

This Court of our good Lord, the King
To name of Lawless answering
Shall at the self-same spot unite
According to an ancient rite
When every field is silent found
And silence brooks the pole around
The whispered business that is sped
In dismal charcoal shall be read
And when the cock shall crow his warning
Of the near approach of morning
When the shrill summons sounds at last
Atoning for transgressions past
The Lawless Court, with humbled air
Shall for their monarch breathe a prayer
He who comes not here with speed
Shall repent him of the deed
Quick, let him take his secret way
The Court may not his coming stay
Yet his hand no light must bear
Darkling he must journey there
Thus mid darkness they alone
For past errors must atone
Then 'ere breaks the dawning day
Steal silent from the spot away.



Whispering Post

MORE MEMORIES FROM OZ

Brian Axcell sends us another letter from Australia of his memories of Old Leigh.

At first we had no air raid shelter (later on we had an indoor Morrison shelter, great for doing jigsaw puzzles on the big flat steel plate on top or making model boats).

We had the so called gas cupboard under the stairs, this is where we slept of a night time, often thought that if we had a gas attack and sealed the door we would die from lack of air.

Cockle boat Resolute (Cecil Osborne) loaded with cockles was hit just forward of the engine room bulk head on the port side (Dad skipper at the time) by a Navy patrol boat. Their excuse was that they were looking at the chart!

With cockles shovelled on to the starboard side to bring the damage area above the water line the Resolute made it to Leigh. The skipper of the patrol boat said he would report it to the Pier Head (Southend) which was HQ of the shipping on the river.

Gilbert Harvey, Commodore of the Fishing Fleet, rang the Pier Head but the collision had not been reported.

A mine landed in West Leigh Avenue and did a lot of damage. Heavy air raid one night, thousands of incendiary bombs were dropped, some went off, next morning it looked as if it had snowed incendiary bombs.

It must have been about this time that we went back to school. We had old registers to write in, cut into three, and old exercise books cut in two. We started those books from the back so we had the clean side to write on.

Pencils, rubbers etc were very hard to find. I can remember seeing carpenter's pencils with no wood on, they broke very easily.

Mulberry Harbour sections towed down river - one went ashore at Thorpe Bay and broke its back.

PLUTO (Pipe Line Under The Ocean) - that was a sight that was - a huge drum like a drum of wire towed down the river, it was the cross channel fuel line for the invasion of Europe.

Brian



Brian's dad,
Steakey Axcell
aboard the Resolute

No doubt Brian will be interested in the recent campaign to bring the Resolute back to Leigh. She was built for Cecil Osborne by Heywards at Southend in 1927 for £375 and was one of the Dunkirk 'Little Ships' skippered at the time by Eric Osborne.

The flotilla of six boats from Leigh left from Southend bound for Dunkirk on 31 May and between them ferried about 1000 men to the waiting big ships. On her return to Ramsgate on 1 June the Resolute landed 40 men.

LO 57 - The Resolute

A display of pictures of the Resolute when she visited Leigh several years ago can be seen in the Heritage Centre

OPERATION PLUTO

Seeing Brian Axcell's mention of PLUTO it struck me that some of our younger members may not know of this amazing wartime achievement.

Although Brian remembers seeing the great drums being towed out to sea the official story of Operation Pluto was not released until 23 May 1945 when the existence was then revealed of an oil pipeline system across the bed of the Channel to the continent.

Hailed as an all British triumph of engineering and seamanship PLUTO solved one of the most pressing problems of the war and enabled 1 million gallons of petrol to be pumped daily from a few weeks after D Day through to France and on in to deeper Germany and thus supply the entire requirements of Monty's armies. By VE Day over 120 million gallons had been transported.

Tankers discharged the oil at British ports and it was then conveyed across country through a network of pipelines to cleverly concealed coastal high-pressure pumping stations, staffed by the RASC, and thence into the submarine pipeline.

The pipeline itself was 3 inch steel tubing which was laid under the supervision of the Royal Navy by ships of all sizes in Force Pluto manned by the Merchant Navy.

For paying out the tubing was welded into continuous lengths of 30 miles or more and wound on floating drums (as Brian mentions) known as 'conuns' which were 40 feet in diameter, 60 feet long and weighing 1600 tons and could carry 70 miles of pipeline.

500 miles of pipeline were laid between Dungeness and Boulogne alone. Other stretches went from other points.



Towing across the Channel on floating drums



BRIDE AND BUNDOCK

Many of you will have these two well known local books on your bookshelves. Well hang on to Bundoock or get a copy if you can because it is now out of print and Phillimore the publishers say they can no longer run this title. They do say however, that they are commissioning another book on Leigh which will be out in 2002.

Bride too has had its ups and downs and has been out of print for a little while. Now, however, the Borough Council are carrying out a reprint which should make it available in the next couple of months.

If you don't own either of these books your bookshelf is sadly lacking. Bride is a fount of information on Old Leigh and is used by local school children a lot for various items in the National Curriculum. Bundoock contains many wonderful pictures.



Don't forget our first meeting of the year on 14 March at Wesley Methodist Church Hall, Elm Road. Entry 50p members, £1 non members

PLANNING AND CONSERVATION AREAS

Those of you who live within the Leigh Conservation Areas will have received a conservation area handbook recently from the Borough Council. As members will know the primary aim of the Society is in respect of the Leigh Conservation Areas:

To promote high standards of planning and architecture in the Leigh Conservation Areas and to secure the preservation of features of historic and public interest.

This short piece aims to explain to members just what conservation area status implies and how it affects those of you who live in one.

The designation of conservation areas is a matter for the local planning authority (Southend-on-Sea Borough Council).

Conservation area status gives a broader protection than listing of individual buildings and takes into account the special character of the area including the historic road layout, the mix of uses and buildings and trees, among other things.

Within a conservation area the local planning authority has additional controls over demolition, minor development and the protection of trees.

Conservation area consent is required to demolish wholly or substantially any building within a conservation area. Hence the need for consent to demolish the unsightly sheds on Strand Wharf. Generally, there is a presumption in favour of keeping buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area is a criminal offence.

Normally, there are certain minor developments which can be carried out without the need to obtain planning permission. However, the Council has the power to make an Article 4 Direction which removes those rights of 'permitted development'. You will, therefore, need to obtain permission in advance from the Council. Article 4 Directions have been made for the Leigh Conservation Areas and restrictions will apply, so it is wise to consult with the Council on any proposals you may have. You should also be aware that if development is allowed there may be requirements to use specific materials so the cost of development can be higher than normal.

The conservation area legislation acknowledges that trees play an important part in the character of an area so anyone proposing to cut down, lop or top a tree, even if it is not covered by a tree preservation order, has to notify the Council first. They will then consider the contribution the tree makes to the area and may make a tree preservation order to protect it.

If you do go ahead and carry out development for which you should have obtained permission first then you run the risk of the Council taking enforcement action against you to rectify the breach of planning control. There can be hefty penalties if you do not comply and the Council prosecute you. You do, however, have a right of appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment against a refusal of consent or an enforcement notice, but be aware this can be a long and sometimes costly process.

The Society is consulted on all applications within the Conservation Areas and on occasion on applications outside our area but which may have an effect on it. The most major of these recently has been the application for the redevelopment of Shoebury Barracks. Over the last few months we have also considered the following applications

26 Cliff Parade - application for use of clear glazed windows - no objection subject to overlooking guidelines applying

32 Seaview Road - new front bay window, demolition of porch, new entrance doors and rear balcony - no objection

3 Alexandra Road - single storey rear extension - no objection

18 Broadway, Co-op - projecting box sign and new internally illuminated fascia sign - no objection.

41 Hadleigh Road - pruning of beech tree - no objection

115 Broadway - change of use of shop to a solarium - no objection.

7 Leigh Hill - removal of bay window and insertion of doors and balcony - no objection visually however the form of the window was out of keeping with other fenestration and should be made smaller. There was also a small extension to the rear to which there was no objection. This was for an outside toilet. It was also suggested that the existing clapboard cladding was out of place and should be removed.

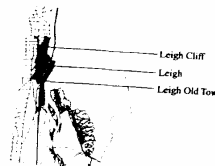
58 Broadway - satellite dish - no objection

We have also been consulted on the proposals for the redevelopment of the site of Junipers in the Old Town. This is a very important proposal which the Society will be considering very carefully.



Junipers

With respect to the redevelopment of Shoebury Barracks - this was a major development which although in outline contained a master plan for the proposals. It was agreed that the Borough Council be informed that the Society considered this to be a major development with implications in the wider area. Whilst the mix of development would appear to be reasonable the Society wished to express its concern regarding the traffic implications of the proposals and urged that a full Traffic Impact Assessment be undertaken. Also this is a site of considerable local importance and the Society also urged the preparation of an assessment of the environmental effects of the development. The Society asked to be kept informed of the progress of the proposals.



The three Leigh Conservation Areas

A FLORAL WALK ROUND LEIGH

Once again Peter Whitelam leads us on a flower strewn ramble through Leigh.

It is surprising how many can be found in Leigh itself outside of Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve.

In the churchyard, among the tombstones, there is Wild Clary with spikes of two lipped flowers and nettle like leaves. I have difficulty in finding a mature specimen as the grass is cut so often. In the library gardens there is a dark leaved evergreen tree on the left which drops red berries in the Autumn. It belongs to the Heath family and is the Strawberry Tree, though the fruit is more raspberry like. Down the Aromatic path behind the Library is a tall tree with tiny opposite leaves and a strange pod. It looks like a member of the Pea family but I cannot name it. Can any one help? Through a lane opposite the Post Office there is a line of small shrubby plants with small daisy flowers, which have the strange name of Shaggy Soldier. In the late Stanley Jermyn's Flora of Essex he states it can be found in Rectory Grove, Leigh.

He divides the County into 57 ten kilometre squares, and this plant has only been found in ten of them. Down the lane beside The Carlton, I found a true woodland plant, Green Alkanet of the Borage family with small bright blue flowers, white eyed, and nettle like leaves. Going on to the cliffs opposite the Bembridge, I came across a member of the Geranium family, Sea Storksbill with little five petalled pink flowers and typical geranium fruit. Just before Gypsy Bridge in a small hollow, for the last two years, I have found a little cluster of Snowdrops and Sweet Violets. They are under a large Field Maple, which has clusters of delicate upright yellow flowers, surprising for such a big tree.

On the cinder path beside the Bembridge there is a mass of Horsetails, very ancient non-flowering plants. Within the railway fence there are masses of wild flowers which deserve proper study but I will only mention a few. There are a number of patches of Goats Rue of the Pea family, two or three feet high with spikes of white or pinkish flowers. A larger plant is Bristly Ox-Tongue with Dandelion like flowers. The leaves are covered with whitish pimples and the pappus is rather like a little crown. Just before the cinder path widens out by Bell Beach, there is a lovely patch of variegated poppies, which are obviously garden escapees. By the old Leigh Station, now the Sailing Club, tight in by the wall there is a member of the crucifer or cabbage family, Eastern Rocket with the usual four yellow petalled flowers. The distinguishing feature for many crucifers are the pods, which on this plant are thin and very long at about 4 inches.

Up the steps from New Road to Laurel Court on the right hand side there is a good clump of Red Valerian with round heads of small red flowers and opposite leaves cupped round the stem which look as if they could hold water. They are also up Leigh Park Road, where I have seen a white form and no doubt many of us have them in our gardens. Another plant to be found by the steps is Pellitory of the Wall, a small plant of the Nettle family although nothing like them. It has untoothed small leaves with a bright red stem and tiny green flowers. Often in the cracks of paths or walls.

In Billet Lane there is a plant with the unpleasant name of Bastard Cabbage, another crucifer with yellow four petalled flowers. Like Eastern Rocket it can be identified by its distinctive pods, which are very much like tiny chianti bottles. In the Flora of Essex, Jermyn states that it is to be found in Billet Lane, Leigh, which is good confirmation. Another interesting plant to be found in the hedges at the top and bottom of the Lane is the Duke of Argyll's Tea Tree. It is a member of the Nightshade family but was wrongly identified by a plantsman working for the Duke, and rather cruelly the name has stuck. It is an aggressive plant with nasty thorns and poisonous red berries, which grows much quicker than the Hawthorn hedge round it.

In my own garden at the top of the Lane there is a pernicious little weed, Yellow Oxalis, a member of the Wood Sorrel family. It has bright yellow flowers and purplish tinged leaves and the brown pods explode when they are ripe, sending seeds all over the place and especially into the lawn. My reason for including this plant is that in the Flora of Essex among the 14 sites where it can be found is Marine Parade, Leigh.

Turning down Belton Way East, on the retaining wall immediately on the right there is a nice patch of Ivy-Leaved Toadflax, a tiny spreading plant with mauve and yellow snapdragon type flowers. Further down, up the first flight of steps, is a handsome Walnut tree which fruits well. On the left hand side there are many specimens of Goatsbeard, a tall plant of the Daisy family with the nickname of Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon, because the yellow flowers close around lunch time. It has a larger pappus than a dandelion and is of a soft brown colour. There is also its close cousin, Salsify, a Herb with larger dull purple flower heads. I have also found in the kerbside a cross with purple outer petals and yellow inner ones. Another herb to be found on both sides of the road is Fennel of the Carrot family. A tall plant with a mass of small yellow flowers in an umbell, it has a lovely strong smell. This must end my floral walk round part of Leigh on Sea



Fennel



Goat's Rue



Pellitory of the wall



Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon

BRUBS BRIDGE



A SON OF LEIGH

There cannot be many people in Leigh who have not, at some time, heard the name Brubs Bridge. To many it is a personal remembrance of a kindness quietly done or an encouraging word. Brubs was truly one man of whom it can be said never a bad word is spoken.

Brubs was the only surviving son of Frank and Lily Bridge. Frank, of course, operated trips out on the Peggy and ran a shop selling fisherman's requirements in the Old Town which is now the Rock Shop. Lily was the sister of S F Johnson (Doodle) who was Mayor of Southend.

Brubs' christian name was in fact Henry, but his nickname came early in his childhood when his elder brother Walter could not pronounce brother properly and the name Brubs was born.

Walter sadly died of TB despite Frank's valiant efforts in carrying him out over the mud to get the good air.

As a lone child Brubs was devoted to his mother and even after his marriage he visited her twice a day and took her out in his lorry when he toured sites for Leigh Building Supply.

As a youngster Brubs had been a trace horse boy at Leigh Building Supply, looking after the extra horse needed to carry bricks and other merchandise up the steep hill at Benfleet from unloading at the wharf. Later he became a lorry driver and eventually ran the whole business.

Like his father, Brubs was a staunch Methodist and ran the boys class at New Road and was a lay preacher

Many people will remember Brubs, the entertainer, with the Mount sisters, and his involvement in concert parties entertaining the troupes.

After the war my own father, Charlie (Bunter) Palmer, his cousin, worked for Brubs on Bell Wharf.

At the time of the floods Brubs was there ever ready to help those in dire distress.

To me, as a child, Brubs seemed like a giant with a gentle touch. He was the best man at my Mum and Dad's wedding in 1951 and was always part of our lives until his untimely passing.

Brubs with Peggy Mount

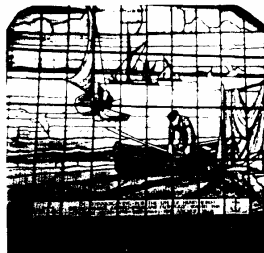


Brubs as Widow Twankey



How do you record the life of such a man? A man with many talents, winning ways and a great heart - it is difficult, but I believe Brubs has two very fitting memorials in a humble bench in the Old Town which bears the simple inscription 'Brubs Bridge - a son of Leigh' and in a dedicatory window in New Road Methodist Chapel with another simple inscription

This article was written by Carole Pavitt who is grateful for the assistance of Brubs' wife Mrs Eunice Bridge



His anchor held



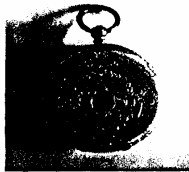
THE TRAIN NOW STANDING...

This imposing looking lady is Eliza or Elizabeth Tanner. Eliza was born in London in 1834 The daughter of Richard Tanner, a mariner of Leigh. In 1853 she married Samuel Brewer at St Barnabus' Church, Lambeth although both of them were then living in Leigh. Samuel was a local tradesman and butcher. Eliza was the school mistress at Leigh.

In 1855, at the age of 22, and no doubt because of her educational status in the community, Eliza was called on to perform the civic duty of giving the welcoming address to the Chairman of the railway company upon the occasion of the arrival of the first train at Leigh.

As a memento Eliza was presented with this gold watch and chain which is now in the possession of her great granddaughter Rosalyn Bonnett.

Stuart Brewer
Great Grandson of Eliza



WOOL GATHERING

Mrs Jean Young has a keen interest in local crafts and has written to enquire if any member has knowledge about the production of pictures embroidered in wool. An example is shown below. Unfortunately a black and white picture cannot do justice to this vividly coloured artwork.

The work was done in long stitch and made by local fishermen. Mrs Young says that several of these pictures are still in existence and it is believed some were worked by a member of the Turnidge family. It is thought they were taught by an elderly lady whose name is sadly unknown.

If anyone has any more information on this subject Mrs Young would be most interested. Information can be passed to Carole Pavitt via the Heritage Centre and she will pass it on to Mrs Young



If anyone else knows of other lost local crafts Leighway would be delighted to hear of them

PUTTING ESSEX ON THE MAP

In the second in his series on map makers Gordon Davies looks at John Norden (1548-1626) - a second great Elizabethan.

John Norden was born in Somerset. He was an attorney with a passionate interest in history. Unlike Christopher Saxton he was given only a meagre allowance for his projects and he died in obscurity.

His chief scheme was to bring out a series of county histories, with maps, entitled 'Speculum Britanniae'. This failed through lack of patronage when only five counties had been completed. His maps were the first county maps to show roads.

A copy of Norden's Map of Essex was published by the Essex Record Office and shows rivers and early roads, including those from Chelmsford through 'Rayley' and the Maldon road through Rochford to 'Pritwell'. Leigh appears too.

Norden does not depict such an indented coastline as Saxton or his successor John Speed. In the sea, particularly off the 'Tames' mouth, can be seen ships of the period and various artistic, but highly improbable, denizens of the deep.



Extract from Norden's map of Essex, reproduced by kind permission of Essex Record Office and Essex Countryside



COUNTY WORD SEARCH

D L S U F F O L K E N
R E T S E C U O L G A
O T E S R O D Y O R K
F R E S S E X L F P Y
S N D K D F E F R C B
M Y E R R U S T O K R
L A V O N V S W N R E
E G O S T R U R O X D
M A N C H E S T E R C
C O R N W A L L R N F

Gloucester	Suffolk	Norfolk
Essex	Sussex	Surrey
Devon	Avon	Oxford
Derby	York	Cornwall
Truro	Manchester	Dorset