

SHALFORD NEWS

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MRS MAY LANGFORD

researched by Margaret Sparks

May was born 17th December 1910 to James and Alice Holmes at Water Hall House, which at that time was three cottages, the family occupied the one nearest the river and at the other end was May's Granny. There were six older brothers, the youngest was eight and the third eldest was 20 on the day May was born. Their father worked for the elderly Mr King of Valley Farm, but to secure his future he accepted the offer of a job by Andrew Goodchild. The family then moved to Wades Garden, next to Iron Bridge Farm and May, now aged 6 was able to start school walking by the foot-path past Nicholls farm. Previously the walk from Water Hall Lane to Church End had been considered too far for a small child. On February 14th 1916 the school log notes May Holmes and Fred Dawson were admitted to the Infants' department. Heavy flooding that month caused two of the teachers to be stranded across the river; May recalls, "One was a Miss Ashby of Codham Mill, whose father controlled the flood gates."



May in her garden (2002)



Shalford School about 1921 - May is first left on the second row

Leaving school at 16 May went to Wickford to work in a cousin's family grocery business for a year until her Mother's illness necessitated her return home. May took several jobs locally; one was at Ironbridge Farm where the Strachey family lived. Amongst the many guests entertained at that time by Mr Strachey who was Minister of Food were Bob Boothby M.P. and Professor Joad, of BBC Brains Trust fame. May looked after the Ravilious family who later also lived at Ironbridge and she still remains in touch with Anne, daughter of the late Eric Ravilious, the wartime artist. Through her employment May met other well-known people, namely Noel Coward at a lunch at which she assisted, and the late Queen Mother's niece, Nancy Bowes-Lyon, who was living temporarily nearby at Prayers Thorn with her American pilot husband.

May met and became great friends with Olive, (her future husband's daughter), when Olive who worked in Panfield came to lodge with May's family. After her father died they all moved to live at Hill Farm Cottage, Braintree Road where Olive's parents, Mr and Mrs Frank Langford visited them until 1953 when Alice Holmes and Olive's mother died. 1956 May married her friend Olive's widowed father, Frank who worked in Chatham dockyard, was a local preacher in Gillingham

and taught Greek to students preparing them for College.

May now in her 96th year rarely leaves her home in Gillingham where together she and Frank lived and which now she shares with her companion Jean. May loves to chat with Shalford friends and recall her many happy memories of the village, which she still calls "home" after all these years. Very much in contact with Shalford May has been a keen supporter of Shalford Local History Society and FOSTAC.

OLD COUNTRY SAYINGS....

Cribbed from various sources
by Andrew Overall

When a cow tries to scratch its ear, it means a shower is very near.

When it clumps its side with its tail, look out for thunder, lightning and hail.

Onionskin very thin, mild winter coming in. Onion skin thick and tough, coming winter cold and rough.

Dew at night, next day will be bright.

Shalford School - End of Term Report

by Gillian Disley, Headteacher.

PE and Games... a successful active year in which Shalford's Sports Day was blessed with fine weather and good team rivalry. Pupils came 1st in the Small Schools Cluster Sports Day. Despite being a small school Shalford team were placed 2nd in the Braintree Schools Multi-skills competition at Tabor, some pupils were chosen for the Multi-skills Academy. Thanks to the Braintree Secondary Schools staff, who under the Sports Partnership Programme, have raised the sport profile in primary schools.

Science... In the Tabor Science Olympiad, the Year 6 team of Sam Brown, Holly Gibson, Jessica Ludlow, and Jon Newman came 1st in both sections and retained the trophy for the second year.

Music... the older pupils have been inspired, thanks to the Tabor Music Staff.

Community Link... In the Summer Horticultural Society the class of vegetable gnomes was well supported. Participation in more local events is planned.

Special Events... this term children enjoyed a display of Birds of Prey. Pupils supported Farleigh Hospice with a fundraising. The whole school enjoyed an outing to the Sealife Centre, Southend.

Health and safety... Wethersfield Fire Service brought a fire engine to school and fire personnel explained fire safety to every class.

Reading... All pupils spent a most profitable morning with the Staff from the excellent Library Service.

Environmental Studies... the children have plans to improve outdoor facilities, including refurbishing the pond, creating garden plots, an outdoor seating area, and building a pergola, which can be used as a classroom plus a new adventure play area. The recently formed Grounds Project Committee will continue to look for outside funding; particular thanks to Mrs Lawes who helped to secure a £3000 grant from the Ford of Gt Britain Trust.

KS2 SATS... Year 6 pupils did well in tests and achieved the targets set by the LEA before transferring to Tabor School.

Future Plans... more grant applications are in the pipeline; a joint venture with Tabor Science Department to apply to the Royal Society to fund specific science investigation is planned. Next term pupils will write requesting donations of gardening items and tools.

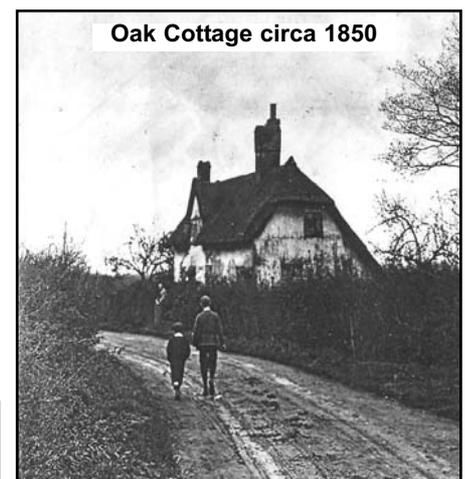


THE HALFWAY SHOP

(aka Oak Cottage, Panfield Road, Bocking.)

based on Mary Brace's write-up

Following the article in the previous Shalford News requesting information on the history of their home Mary and Graham Brace report that they have received interesting responses and know the shop, now the large shed in their back garden, was on the front left of the cottage. The shop, sold sweets and drinks, was a stopping off point for children going to hire boats at Codham Mill. Mrs Langford, (see Page 1) remembers the shop selling goats' milk and apples from the orchard. The old photograph below, lent by Mr and Mrs Beal of Panfield, shows the cottage, circa 1850. Mrs Scott lived here, 1963-1983 having bought the cottage in a dilapidated state from the Nicholls sisters, one of who married Jock Archer, the milkman. Recently on a visit to Oak Cottage Marvin Scott and his mother informed the Braces that the cottage's front door was from The Bull, Bocking following its demolition, a bressummer taken from The White Hart, Braintree and another beam from a 17th century Bocking house. Thrilled with all the information they have received Mary and Graham continue to piece together the history of Oak Cottage, of which they consider themselves the privileged custodians.



DIRTY HANDS ACTIVITY!

By Sue Martin

On April 11th 2002 I started work as a garden volunteer at The Marks Hall Estate, Coggeshall. Initially I worked with one other volunteer, but am now in a team of six, who, with the staff, do a variety of tasks both in the gardens and arboretum.

Why volunteer? In return for a few hours of my time, usually 9am to 3.30pm on Thursdays, there are many rewards; it is a lovely place, such peaceful and beautiful sur-

roundings. The Staff, always willing to share their expertise, have helped improve my plant knowledge and this encouraged me to study and obtain the Royal Horticultural Society Certificate in Horticulture at Writtle College. Volunteers provided with protective clothing, lunch when the Visitors' Centre is open, free participation in the Membership Scheme and occasional training. I have even done a basic tractor-driving course!

What do we do? In all weathers we work on many diverse tasks, weeding in the gardens and around the arboretum trees, and mulching,

planting, pruning and cutting back are regular tasks. Other jobs are more seasonal such as decorating the Visitors' Centre for Christmas or preparing the Memorial Site for the Service held each March in remembrance of the glider pilots who flew from Earls Colne airfield.

I always enjoy Thursdays at Marks Hall, returning home tired, grubby but hopeful that I have contributed a little to making it a special place.

NEWS IN BRIEF

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT... Fred Talbot, whose wife Audrey died earlier this year, thanks all those who donated towards the £400 sent to the CREAMER Fund in memory of Audrey.

GOODWILL AT CHRISTMAS... Harrods we read opened up its Christmas display in August, so it's not too early for Marguerite Sillett to announce that from mid-September information will be available of this year's Christmas Boxes Scheme for Deprived Children. Details from Marguerite 851535. Can last year's total of 164 boxes be bettered?

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY... the Best Kept Garden Cup was awarded to John and Irene Bahr. An outing organised by the committee to Wisley was well supported and there are plans for other outings in the future. The Plant and Table Top Sales introduced this year have proved successful.

WEA... the new 10-week course "People and their Environment" tutor Adrian Wright, begins on September 18th. Old and new members are welcome, please go along to the first meeting, which is a free "taster" evening. Tel Chairman, Sue Morton 850626 for further details

VMHC ... the hall will shortly be emerging from its chrysalis-like appearance to a beautiful butterfly as the re-painting of the outside walls gets underway. George Turner of Great Dunmow has completed a very satisfactory re-rendering of the walls and, after some deliberation, the new colour chosen will be Primrose Yellow. It is hoped this will give the building a fresh, light look to help it stand out as a village landmark. At the August meeting Bruce Roberts was adopted as Chairman, later demonstrating an admirable hands-on approach to the job by volunteering to help paint the hall. Look out for him on that ladder! Charlotte Lewtas VMHC Secretary is now also the Hall Booking Secretary, **tel 851003 or e-mail clewtas@konekt.co.uk**. The hall is ideal for family celebrations and fundraising events; special discounted rate for Shalford residents, apply for rates. Don't forget, the Village Hall is your hall for your use.

SHALFORD PARISH COUNCIL... recently welcomed the newest Councillor Jenni Harrison who lives in Barryfields. The Chairman, Christine Fowler, reported that Anne Tee resigned in July as Parish Clerk after 9 years' service; an application form plus job specification for this

The FOSTAC Saga by David Cobb

A strange acronym, FOSTAC, but now so well known in N E Essex, it's bound soon to appear in one of those swanky dictionaries:

Fostac /fostac/ vt, E Ang, perhaps a variant of fossick(q.v.) "Sorry, bor, can't make tennis nex' Sa'urday, oi bin fostacked to make a speech agin." attrib. retired Essex librarian.

Fossick /fosek/ vt, Aust. 1. to hunt for gold 2. to find valuable things in unexpected places.

Actually, of course, it stands for Friends of St. Andrew's Church, a self-help organisation. When we saw that Calendar of Events 2005-2006 what did we all do but boggle and hope? Twelve major social events in the space of ten months-how could a small, scattered village achieve so much? Yet, all but one of these events took place.

I don't suppose the organisers thought of it that way, but over the year they provided food and exercise for the body, mind and soul. It began with ears being filled with joyous music: Trillium's snappy combination of flute, bassoon and clarinet: quickly followed by Felsted Jazz Band: then a Christmas Concert: another by Chelmsford Cathedral choir; and finally music from Peter Mayo and Passing Notes, that topped off the hog roast and mediaeval junketings in the churchyard.

But it was not only the roast hog that kept our taste buds ticking: there was Indian food to accompany the slide show of Mrs Wisby's visit to India (so then the eyes also had their fill): St Andrew's Night (a double celebration of the Scottish patron and the name saint of our church) saw us tucking in to Nan Stevenson's authentic Scottish menu in portions apt to cause the belt line to "gang agley". Appetites unjaded, we reassembled at Ringers for a Valentine's Day lunch. In November The George were our host for a quiz, the chance to exercise our brain cells. There was to have been a mini-marathon on Easter Monday, but somehow that never took off

Late in July, FOSTAC organised a triumphant conclusion to the year's activities, with a weekend of Art, Photography and Flowers spanning two sites-the Church and the Village Hall, flowers donated by parishioners with personal memories of ceremonies in the church made the place beautiful. There was a competition for local photographs from which FOSTAC hopes to produce a calendar.

Thanks to this jovial whirl of activity FOSTAC has raised funds towards providing the church with kitchen and toilets, but no less important we have had a glorious chance to appreciate manifold talents and fund of good neighbourliness that invigorates our little community. Well done, FOSTAC, and thank you all for it!

salaried vacancy can be obtained from Christine, tel 851088 as soon as possible.

ST.ANDREW'S CHURCH...church services are held at the following times

1st Sunday in the month,
Family Service 9.30am

2nd Sunday
Holy Communion (sung) 9.30am

3rd Sunday Morning Prayer (1662)
9.30am

4th Sunday Holy Communion
(1662) 8.00am

5th Sunday United Benefice Service,
see Notice Board or Vicar for time and place.

Parishioners unable to attend church but who would like Holy Communion should contact Rev Colin Wilson tel. 01371 810307. If a lift to Services is required please contact the Vicar, or

Church Wardens, Margaret Smith 850488 and Roger Singleton 850918

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH MAGAZINE...£2.50 yearly subscription buys 10 issues delivered to your door! Contact the Editor, Anne Tee tel 850975 for details. Written contributions for inclusion in the magazine are welcome.

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH CHILDREN'S HARVEST WORKSHOP... will be held from 10am-Midday on Saturday 23rd September in the Village Hall. Children from 3 to 11years old are welcome for a morning of fun on a Harvest theme. Entrance free. Under 5's to be accompanied by an adult. More details from Janet Nicholls 851317

Continued on next page.....

Avoid it Like The Plague.

By Dorothy Gardner

Reports of infections such as "bird flu" spreading in various parts of the world nowadays cause alarm and an intensive search for means of protection. It is nothing new.

657 years ago the summer was a dreadful time. In July the plague, later known as the Black Death, reached its peak, killing huge numbers of people nationwide. No-one knew what had caused it or how to treat it, and those contracting it very rarely recovered. The infection spread rapidly in towns and so many died of the "Great Mortality" that burying the bodies was a major problem.

A number of Shalford villagers had relatives in Braintree, whom they may have seen regularly on market days, if not more often. When the sickness struck in the summer of 1349 Shalford people stayed at home and discouraged visitors especially from the town, where the plague quickly spread. Many of Shalford relatives died of the infection and are recorded in the burial register of St Michael's Church, Braintree. Shalford was just far enough away to be isolated and no deaths are recorded in the village.

1349 was the worst year, but there were recurring outbreaks during the next thirty years. Shalford labourers did not gain the advantage that survivors did in many areas, where a shortage of people to work the land resulted in fields being sold off very cheaply and in labourers being able to demand cash wages.

As so often throughout history, Shalford escaped involvement in the major events taking place in the country.

More News in Brief

FOSTAC... has raised over £7000 in its first year of fundraising towards building the proposed toilets and kitchen in the church. The fundraising events for 2006/7 are planned and will be published later this month, please contact Sue Morton tel 850626, or any other committee member for membership details. The "Shalford Calendar" showing the winning photographs in the recent competition will be produced and available in time for Christmas.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB... any bric-a-brac, jumble, cakes etc. would be gratefully received for a Rummage Sale in the VH on October 28th. Contact Peter Monk tel 851103 or Pauline Rawlinson 01376 321450 if you wish to donate any items.

BENDLOWES TRUST... this year's August coach outing organised for Shalford's over 50's was to Saffron Walden, where half the party stayed to do shopping whilst the other 15 visited Audley End House and Garden. A good time was had by one and all!

CREAMER FUND... Thanks to the public's continuing support the Practice Nurses now use a collection of small items, all bearing a label "Donated by the CREAMER Fund"; see how many you can spot on your next surgery visit. The fund has purchased R.A.T. computer software, which calculates the Warfarin dosage at the surgery for patients who have had an INR blood test; the Dispensary has Dosette Boxes for those who need help with their medication. Donations for the Tombola, the proposed Garage Sale and the Christmas raffle would be very welcome, contact Jean Murphy 851147

HARVEST FESTIVAL in HUBBARDS BARN... this combined faiths event in the restored 400-year-old barn is at 6.30pm on Sunday 24th September. The Bocking Brass Band will provide the music, refreshments will be served and a warm welcome is extended to everyone. Further information, please tel 01371 850488.

WILTSHIRE REVERIE

by Brian Beard

Beyond the garden gate the meadow shimmers
in the summer haze
and cattle graze or look for shade.

We flew a kite there, you and I, and nettles stung you
when you went to free the string.

The shallows rippled where we watched the minnows
dart among the pebbles and we floated paper boats
in dappled light below the willow trees.

There was a place where vixens screamed
beneath a shark-white moon
and badgers had their secret sett;
a barn owl kept a silent vigil
in an oak.

We watched a skylark in the blue,
oblivious of the thudding boot, the ranting voice
consigning millions to their deaths-
no inkling then of what we might be called to do.

Your bomber never did come back
so you won't know
they mean to build a superstore;
the planners say we need a business complex too.

Here in the garden Tortoiseshells still come
and bees seek out the Buddleia.
But time is short, the house is up for sale;
I feel I may be gone
before the swallows go.

National Prizewinner. Published 2000 in Writing Magazine

Please note that the Winter copy deadline is Friday 17th November.

The Editors welcome articles of village happenings/events, ideas and photos. Please contact Jo Crow tel: 850101 or e-mail pinelodger20@hotmail.com Brenda Hanley 850480 or e-mail hanley.millfields@btinternet.com Writers' names and addresses are required with articles. .

Diary of Events

SEPTEMBER

Wed. 6th W.I. Meeting
'Pyrography' Speaker Sheila Gunson
V.H. 7.45pm.

Sat. 9th VHMC. Annual Fete 2pm on
Playing Field

Thurs. 7th-14th Horticultural
Autumn Show Entries to 1, Braintree
Road or 'Ringers' Hulls Lane, tel.
850496. See schedule

Sat. 16th Horticultural Society
Autumn Show, V.H. 2.30pm.

Mon. 18th CREAMER Fund.
Afternoon Tea and Old Tyme Sing-song,
URC Hall, Wethersfield. Donation £1,
ring Jean Murphy 851147 to book.

18th WEA "People in their
Environment" 7.30pm Congregational
Church, Shalford Green

Thurs 21st Parish Appraisal
Meeting VH 8pm

Sat. 23rd St Andrew's Church
Children's Harvest Workshop. Village
Hall 10-12 noon for children, 3 to 11.
Under 5's must be accompanied by
adult. Free Entrance.
Details Janet Nicholls 851317.

Sun. 24th Harvest Festival
Hubbards Barn 6.30pm Refreshments.

Fri. 29th Macmillan's 'The
World's Biggest Coffee Morning' VH
10-Noon Bring and Buy, Cakes, Raffle.
Details Sally Prime 850242 .

OCTOBER

Wed. 4th W.I. VH 7.45pm
'Cooking with Turkey, an Industry
Overview' Speaker Mr Paul Kelly.

Thurs 5th W.I. County Style Day
on "Silk" VH 10.3-30pm Non Members
welcome. Tel: Anne Tee 850975 for
booking details

Fri. 6th PCC Harvest Supper.
VH 8pm 3 course meal. £7.50. More
details tel Anne Tee 850975

Sun 8th Thanksgiving Harvest
Festival Service 10.30am and 6.30pm
Congregational Church, Shalford Green

Fri. 20th 'Cambodia' slide show
by Jacqueline Wisby 7.30pm VH.
Admission free, donations welcome to
be divided between National Epilepsy
Assoc. and VHMC

Sat 21st Horticultural Society
Autumn Plant and Table Top Sale. VH
2.30pm

Sat 28th Friendship Club
Rummage Sale VH 2pm

Fri. 27th W.I. Ploughman's
Quiz. VH 7.30pm £5 per person, teams
of 6, supper included. Bring own
drinks. Tickets Hilary Shead tel 01376
321783.

NOVEMBER

Wed. 1st W.I. AGM.
V.H. 7.45pm.

Sun 12th Royal British Legion
Remembrance Service 10.30am
Congregational Church, Shalford Green

Neighborhood Policing

Shalford's designated neighbour-
hood policing officers are, PC
Peter Carter and community sup-
port officer Will Gladwell. They
are members of Sgt Clive Walls'
team, which covers rural areas
around Braintree. Their prime
role is to take a special interest in
their designated village, patrol the
beat and maintain contact with
residents, rather than being desk-
bound.

Contact the Shalford officers for
routine calls by mobile phone on

07791 402113

if not on duty, or number
engaged, messages can be left
and will be returned. There is 24-
hour back up from mobile
response officers from other parts
of the police service e.g. CID,
Dog Units, and Force helicopter.

IN EMERGENCY, e.g. crime in
progress, **DIAL 999**

PARISH APPRAISAL

By Jenni Harrison

By now you will have received a leaflet
telling you about the Shalford Parish
appraisal process and know that the
questionnaire will be designed and circu-
lated in late 2006, the results of this will
be used to reflect your views, wishes and
expectations of Shalford in a published
document. Many Essex parishes have
already completed this process so that
they have a document, which outlines
their community's views and important
aspirations. This document can be used
to give weight to any activity, which the
Parish Council may undertake on behalf
of the community, and also for reference
by other organisations/interested parties
such as Braintree District and Essex
County Councils.

In Shalford work has started and some
volunteers have come forward, but more
people are needed so that the document
truly reflects the views of the whole
community. Don't worry if you have but
little time or think you have no experi-
ence to offer. What is important are your
views, your attendance at an occasional
meeting, or your becoming a volunteer
team member. Watch the village notice
boards or log on to the village web site
for more information and regular
updates

The next meeting is at 8pm at the
Village Hall on Thursday 21st
September.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Freshwell Health Centre

01371 810328

Outside surgery hours

TEDS (Emergency Doctor)

01279 461502

Vicar Rev'd Colin Wilson

01371 810309

Brooks Newmark MP

01376 512386

Email: newmarkb@parliament.uk

Parish Council Clerk

01371 850975

Shalford VHMC Chairman

01371 850622

VHMC Booking Clerk

01371 851003

Police (Braintree Station)

01376 551312