

**Spring 2017**  
**Edition 36**

# Small Beginnings

The Newsletter of the former pupils of the old Barling School is published for the benefit of all ex-pupils, staff and friends of the school

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## Reunion Lunches

A group of us meet for lunch every few months to catch up on news, socialise and plan the main reunion events. We meet at the:

**Castle Inn, Little Wakering**

**Our Next Lunchtime Get-together**

**Saturday 8th July 2017**

**12.15 p.m.**

**Anyone with an interest in our school or area will receive a warm welcome.**

## Foreword by Richard Kirton

As you will remember, New Year 2017 began with the really sad news of the death of Laurie Street.

Laurie was both Chairman of Great Wakering and Councillor of Barling Parish Councils. He will be sorely missed since he really was a community spirited man, dedicating much of his time on behalf of his parishioners. He sat on many committees including the Allotment Society, Sea Wall Defences, Parish Plan and Neighbourhood Watch.

I have had the privilege of working with Laurie on various Newsletter and Website articles. He was very passionate about boating and, in particular, a sailing barge called the *Cygnets*, which to this day is moored at Snape Maltings on the River Alde. An excellent article by Laurie can be seen on our original website titled '*Cygnets Barge*'.

Thank you Laurie, for your very valuable contribution through the years, from all of our group members.

## ***Our Meeting at the Castle Inn on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017***

About thirty of us met up for another lively and very friendly lunchtime at the newly-refurbished Castle on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Gordon Chittock and Pauline (Tilbrook) King had come 80 miles, from their home in Suffolk, to join us. And Les Gilkes drove down from St Osyth, over 60 miles away. We were very pleased to see newcomers in the persons of Robert Mount and partner Sheila (from Cornwall) and Roger Burroughs, farmer from Foulness.

Again we were saddened to learn of recent deaths: of Donald Kemp, Phyllis (Powell) Mount and Shirley (Lubbock) Gibson. David Bailey reported on our financial position and Richard Kirton about the website and newsletter.

We had decided last year that we would pay for the rebinding of one of the Old Barling School log books, the substantial tome that covers 1901 to 1950. That has now been done and the handsome, newly-bound volume will be presented to the school during the Summer Term.

## ***Tributes to the late Laurie Street***

*By Peter Griffiths*



Along with a good number of our group, I was among the nearly 150 people who went to Laurie Street's funeral at Southend Crematorium last Wednesday. The West Chapel was packed, with many standing.

The service was taken by Reverend Alan J Hurd from Great Wakering church. He described Laurie as having been born 'between' Little Wakering and Great Wakering and he mentioned Laurie's attendance at our old Barling School, then Great Wakering School, then Rayleigh Tech.

We were told about Laurie's years of National Service, when he became a dog-handler in the RAF, and his subsequent career in the Essex and Southend Police. Reverend Hurd also listed many organisations, including the two local councils, to which Laurie had committed his time over the years. He spoke of Laurie's interest in the sea, both in its peaceful moods and its destructive ones, as with the 1953 floods, to which Laurie organised a memorial on the sixtieth anniversary.

Appropriately, we sang the hymn 'Eternal Father' with its refrain asking for protection for 'those in peril on the sea'. We entered the chapel to a recording of 'Sailing' by Gavin Sunderland and left to 'The Dambusters'. It was all a very fitting tribute to a man who will be sadly missed, especially in our villages. Cheers, Laurie.

Laurie was a stalwart Friend of Old Barling School and on behalf of our group, Peter Griffiths sent Laurie's widow, Judith, a card of condolence on behalf of us all and he has included a list of all of the tributes that he had received on the following page.....



## Individual Tributes from Laurie's Friends

"So sorry and shocked to hear the sad news about Laurie, my thoughts go out to his family"  
*Janet Rodmell (nee Mead)*

"I will always remember Laurie from school days. Sadly, we never met again, but I will always remember walking home via the creek with him. I think we smoked a Woodbine on one occasion and neither could stop coughing"  
*Geoff Bell*

"So very sad to hear the awful news, we will miss Laurie very much, he was a true gentleman. Also, we will miss his amazing knowledge and stories about the Village"  
*Jeanne Richardson (nee Prior) and Rob Richardson.*

"Laurie, I thank you for your wonderful articles, your memories will live on through the generations"  
*Richard Kirton*

"So Sad an end for Laurie. . . He was a fount of local knowledge due to his work in local politics - I'll miss that"  
*Mick Prior*

"Graham and myself were sorry to hear the news of Laurie's passing. We send our condolences to his wife and family"  
*Val Ridley (nee Mott) and Graham Ridley*

"Shocking news. All those big names who died in 2016 will be in good company with Laurie"  
*Lynne Askham (nee Marshall)*

"I was so sad to learn that Laurie has died. I shall miss his company immensely, along with his encyclopedic knowledge and love of our villages"  
*Peter Griffiths*

"Very sorry to hear about Laurie's death. I knew him from school days"  
*Betty Coleby (nee Mitchell)*

"Laurie will not only be sadly missed as a kind and caring human being, but also for his enthusiastic contributions to the sum of local, historical knowledge"  
*Bill Pavelin and John Pavelin*

"It was with great shock and sadness that we learned of Laurie's death. Am so glad that I caught up with him at the 2015 reunion. Please pass on our sincere sympathies to his loved ones. His contributions to the website brought back so many memories. He will be greatly missed"  
*Tony Alps and Margaret Alps*

"Laurie will always be remembered as a fountain of much appreciated current and historical local knowledge"  
*Dave Lee*

"Sorry to hear the sad news about Laurie. Another fine Wakering gentleman leaves us and will be sorely missed in several activities in the village"  
*Doris Bracci (nee Chapman) & David Bracci*

"Please forward my deepest condolences to Laurie's family. During his lifetime of service to the community he has touched many lives and will be deeply missed by many"  
*Yvonne Flower (nee Hubbard)*

# 'Roger Burroughs'

## One of Foulness Island's Established Farmers

Article by Richard Kirton



Pictured from left to right are Bob Stephen from the Rochford District Community Archive Group, Roger Burroughs, David Bailey and Barry Hale.

Roger Burroughs met us at Landwick Gate at 10am on Sunday 22nd January 2017. Sporting his 'Claas' cap, Roger took us on a slow drive in his Toyota V8 4.5 litre Land Cruiser down the island's main access road towards Church End.

Roger is very passionate about his Toyota Land Cruiser which he bought

from English cricketer Graham Alan Gooch complete with his Registration Plate, 'H15 BAT'. Graham was a renowned international batsman who captained Essex and England. Roger later purchased his own plate, 'SI RRB' to reflect, jokingly, that one day he might be knighted Sir Roger Burroughs.

Foulness Island has five working farms, producing wheat, barley, hay, peas and linseed. Roger Burroughs is a farm tenant of both Tree Farm at Courts End and Quay Farm at Church End. Moses Isaac Frederick Burroughs, his wife and their four sons came from Latchingdon to Foulness Island on October 12<sup>th</sup> 1945, the day that Roger was born and took on 2300 acres of Foulness farmland. His Aunt Doris, who lives in Goodmans in High Street, Great Wakering, will be 100 years old on the 2nd October 2017.

Roger was a conventional farmer for 15 years, rearing 150 beef cattle, 130 sheep clones and turkeys and chickens, with Marsh, the butcher in High Street Great Wakering, being his closest customer. By 1986 he ceased farming livestock and concentrated on his arable crops which included wheat, peas and barley. Roger had the opportunity and tenacity to survive and decided to diversify and create a new business as a contractor and Haulage and Transport provider, licensed to operate vehicles under a National license for goods transport. Roger has always had a passion for heavy machinery and he needed to purchase a few items of machinery.

As we drove towards Church End, Roger gave us a detailed account of the activities that he has been involved in through the years as a farmer and contractor on Foulness Island: an island which portrays the illusion of peace and tranquillity; a landscape of patchy dams and dykes dotted with fencing and vast, strange military engineering works, many lookout stations and concrete blocks; an island with an ancient granary in a severe state of disrepair along with many brick watch towers, rusting structures, glass-fronted chambers and heavy machinery. Along the route, we moved alongside many birds including Little Egrets, Heron, Partridge, Pheasant and Brent Geese and we actually felt quite at home in their presence.

## Quay Farm

As we reached Church End, Roger turned left towards Quay Farm on the western side of the island. On the road, which runs from the church to Quay Farm, we passed a field on the left where four pairs of houses once stood. After the floods of 1953 and since they were built of wood and lath and plaster they never dried out and were demolished. The farm is tucked away in the north-west corner of the island, close to the River Roach and opposite Wallasea Island. The road leading down



to the Quay used to be the only public right of way where the grain used to be carried and loaded onto boats. People would also catch a ferry from the Quay to and from Burnham, Wallasea Island and Potton Island. It was quicker and more convenient to go to Burnham to shop than travel to Southend. Roger created some large fields for his wheat by filling up the ditches.

Built around 1800, the fifteen-roomed farmhouse now stands derelict and fenced off. Roger took on the tenancy in 1986 and put forward a proposal to rebuild the house. There are 74 steps from the back door to the toilet and there is a dormitory on the back which was used to accommodate seasonal harvest workers whilst employed on site. In 1986 Roger celebrated his 40th birthday here along with 120 guests.

Before the floods, Quay Farm was part of a community with its own Church, Public House, School, Shop and Post Office. The community had to pull together, since the island was self-contained, with access to the mainland being somewhat restricted. David Bailey sent me a 3-fold brochure depicting a potted history of Foulness and 12 of the old buildings, but was not sure where it came from, only that it is very old. It showed how small the community was at that time. The community was dealt another blow with the closing of the George and Dragon public house and then to make things worse, the village hall was demolished on 24th January 2008 because of rotten wood. It was no longer cost effective to replace it because visitors to the island had diminished because of the access rules to the island.

Quay Farm is now only used for storage purposes, in fact on 30th June 1986 the tanker MV Kingsabbey sailed off course and cut through Southend Pier between the old and new Pier Heads. Roger was asked by Southend Council if he would store the surviving massive timbers made of Greenheart because they sink in water. They are piled up at Quay Farm to this day, only to supply anybody who needs to replace the odd rotting timber or two.

## Tree Farm



Leaving Quay Farm, we proceeded east towards Tree Farm at Courts End, this being Roger's working farm and business premises. He moved here in 1976 and in 1988 he needed to raise money for Great Waking Rovers Football Club and hosted a successful Rock & Roll Night with over 650 guests who consumed 1688 pints of lager and bitter. We went into his large barn where he stores some of his grain and bales of hay, which were stacked up ready to be shipped off to Holland and Algiers. More noticeable were his large toys, a Combine Harvester next to large state of the art tractor along with other heavy machinery such as the Fertiliser Spreader.

Much more of this heavy machinery including a Bale Grab machine, and Concrete Crusher, Concrete Mixer, generators and pumps adorn his farmyard and other barns. Outside the large barn stands an old granary and the concrete moulds which are used to make concrete blocks.

He took us into his office and quite noticeable to me were some pictures on the walls which were painted by Ron Clapp, who lived next door to me in North Street, Great Waking, until he died. His style is quite unique and his paintings of local scenes are well known throughout the local villages. There are many other pictures and photographs on the walls, including one taken of the two bridges over Havengore before the old one was demolished.

We then went through the barn to his white weather boarded house and Roger explained that the east facing side of the house shown above is dated 1633 and the west facing side 1976. There used to be a house at the back, which was the workers' quarters, with a passage-way through to the kitchen. Roger built and re-cladded the west facing side of the building at a material cost of £22,000, taking 5 months of his life. The kerbstones between the house and barn were from Porters Grange, when they cut through the underpass, and from the front of the Kursaal.

Even though Roger is very busy with running his business he still finds time to be involved in very active roles in the running of various local organizations including:

### Great Waking Rovers Football Club

Roger is Lifetime President of Great Waking Rovers Football Club at Burroughs Park, Little Waking Hall Lane, Great Waking, Essex. Burroughs Park was constructed in 1985 on the site of 104 disused allotments which the local council gave to the club. Roger is a former player (age 14 to 24) and Burroughs Park was named after him in recognition of his assistance to the club. The ground has floodlights and also boasts a clubhouse and tea bar. The highest attendance ever recorded was 1,150 for a pre-season friendly against Southend United in 2006.



The club was formed in 1919 by soldiers demobbed after World War I and finding employment in the local brickfields. They first played in the Southend & District League, where they played until 1982, being the league's most dominant club, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1982 they

switched to the newly formed Southend & District Alliance Football League, but this league folded in 1989. At this point the club decided to make the step up to intermediate level and join the Essex Intermediate League. The year 2019 marks the 100 year anniversary of Great Wakering Rovers Football Club and Roger has plans to celebrate that year in style.

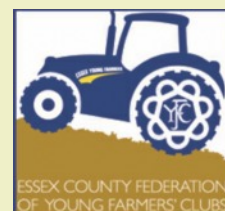
### **Rochford Hundred Agricultural Society**

Roger was President of The Rochford Hundred Agricultural Society in 1995, the same year as its fiftieth anniversary. For many years now he been involved in the organisation of local Ploughing Matches and two of these matches in 1984 and 1995 can be seen on YouTube, both hosted at Tree Farm, Foulness Island, Essex.



### **Essex Young Farmers**

Roger was President of the Essex Young Farmers in 2001 and 2002. They are a youth organisation made up of 16-26 year olds and, despite the name, you don't have to be a farmer to join; absolutely anyone can be a member! Essex Young Farmers is run by its members, for its members, so everyone has the chance to have a say in what goes on. With 10 clubs across the county there really is something for everyone, be it organising events, playing sports, fundraising for charities or simply enjoying the social side of it all! I have only touched upon some of Roger's activities through the years and hope at some time in the future to have the opportunity to interview him further.



## ***Victor Tharp remembers the late Phyllis Mount***

Victor Tharp is 91 years old now and following the sad news of Phyllis Mount (Powell) wishes to share his memory of her. Phyllis's family lived in the end cottage of the Old Post Office Cottages in Barling Road which were about three hundred yards up from Barling School next door to Ted Horner's small holding. As a child I lived in the other end cottage, with the Cornwell family in the middle one. Phyllis being about five years older than myself used to come to my house to sleep with me and get me up in the morning as my Aunt who reared me was out early working. Such memories !! There is a photo of the Cottages on the Web Site which I subscribed some years ago.

Thanks for the also sad news of Donald Kemp. Yes I remember him well. He myself and Michael Street (Laurie's older brother) were all in the same class.

I realise that my musing will not be of great interest to anyone not of my age but I felt I needed to thank you and all the others who devote so much effort in keeping the Site flourishing.



## **'Broomway' article to appear on French TV**

Leaving Foulness Island for "England"  
The road across the Maplin Sands



Marie Courcenet, a researcher for a new daily cultural French TV programme on the TV channel Arte, contacted Peter Griffiths on 16<sup>th</sup> February. She was working on an article about the Foulness Broomway and was asking if she could use two photographs from our websites.

We were able to assist Marie and I am pleased to say that she replied to thank us for the research and information that we provided her with. She said that the scan of the photograph that I sent her was just perfect and that she would be sure to credit Friends of Old Barling School.

I believe that the programme, called "Invitation au Voyage", will be available for viewing in English on Arte's French website: <http://www.arte.tv/guide/en/?country=GB> or in French at <http://www.arte.tv/guide/fr/071100-007-A/invitation-au-voyage> once it has been broadcast on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Response by Robin Nicholls**

Robin forwarded the news of the upcoming French programme to his ex-Great Wakering family members for general interest and two of them replied with memories of their own. Their memories are posted below. Robin's cousin, Joss Wiggins, worked for the 'fisheries (ECC)' and knows the Broomway well. Should you plan to expand on the maritime aspects of Great Wakering, Joss would be a good contact. He is well respected and was awarded an MBE for his lifetime's work. Another cousin of Robin, Geoff Webb, is another important member of the clan! 'Uncle Joe', who is mentioned in the memories, is Joe Wiggins, the father of Joss Wiggins. They lived at 250 High Street opposite The Exhibition Inn.

### **Geoff Webb's Memories of the 'Broomway'**

I recall the days when Mick Salmons and I went band line fishing off the Broomway. We'd dig lugworms on Shoebury beach at low tide on a Friday after school, then early on Saturday morning go to the Stairs to walk out along the Broomway to beat the tide coming in. We would set 100 hooks, cover the bait with sand/mud then retreat. When the tide was going out, we'd start again. If the time of the tides was right we would spend the whole weekend doing that.

The nice bit was walking out to get the catch and re-bait the line, unless we had caught eels, which could mean that the fishing was finished for the weekend as we brought in the line to untangle it. Uncle Joe had a book about fishing methods and we were soon tying one end of the line to a range post and the other end to a float, that way we were fishing at all depths. It was nice to catch codling and bass for a change rather than eternal flatfish. Then we'd put the float in the centre and tie both ends to posts to make a triangle.

We used to sell the fresh fish as we pushed our bikes up the High Street but occasionally had some left over to eat.



Now that's what I called fresh, a taste I re-found only in Brightlingsea when Joss caught and cooked Bass for us. The eeriest thing was walking out in the fog. The Brent Geese feeding on the eelgrass sounded like a group of old ladies having a chat, as they ate the grass oblivious of us two walking along the Broomway. I did it again when the children were small.

## ***Joss Wiggins' Memories of the Broomway***

Geoff, I enjoyed your recollections regarding band lines and the Broomway. Like you we also had great fun setting our band line off either Wakering Stairs or Asplins Head - followed by the anticipation of what we might have caught. This often meant an early start so as to get there before the gulls help their selves to a meal.

About 5 years back I joined a Hume family ( Pearl's mother's side) memorial walk along the Broomway from Wakering Stairs to Fisherman's Head ( Foulness end) to remember more or less the only means that their grandfather and his generation had to get from the Island to Wakering and Southend to get shopping etc. One day their grandfather's shopping included a wall mounted pendulum clock which is still keeping time on cousin Lesley's wall. The family walk included over 50 relatives.

With work I was fortunate to use the Broomway to access the sands to carry our cockle surveys twice a year for over 25 years. First survey attempts were by foot with Pearl! - came down foggy and Pearl's father George was waiting at Fisherman's Head when we got back ashore (We had a compass, so were fine!). Next I fitted out old motorbikes for the surveys and then we moved on to quad bikes. Surveys covered over 20 square miles of the sands in a grid covering around 400 samples. This was fun and interesting although I can't say I miss the early morning starts, mostly leaving Brightlingsea around 4am to 6am so as to get the low water on spring tides, which in these parts always works out to be early mornings or evenings.

## ***Geoff Webb's Reply***

The walk talked of by Joss reminds me, I used to have a black wooden chest that was one of the surviving artefacts of the days my great grandmother was trapped by the tide getting back to Foulness on the Broomway. The horse perished and the cart ended up as driftwood, but great grandmother survived. The only other survivor was the wooden chest full of her rather wet clothes, that washed up on Foulness somewhere later.

I still have a black wooden chest in the shed, full of old tools, but it is probably not the original. I won't get rid of it though, just in case. And it serves to remind me of that story too.

Gavin & Graham are coming today and among other things will sort out and empty the shed, so I may end up donating the wooden chest to one of them, if they want it.

I recall my paternal granddad, who lived and grew up on Foulness with his sister Mercy, talking about his courting days, when there was another sea road like the Broomway from the Island to Ipswich, where his girlfriend (later my grandmother) lived in nearby Shottery. But being so far away the journey could only be done very quickly at certain times on horseback. Anyone heard of that one, or was it just a story romanticised? My granddad Webb was well known for his foolhardiness (he had a Humane medal for saving a drowning man's life), as well as his story-telling!

What people used to do for a cuddle eh?

## Waking Sports and Activity Centre

In September 2011, Great Waking Sports Centre closed, leaving the community with no access to sports facilities. Now, great new sporting opportunities have been created at Great Waking Primary School, thanks to a National Lottery Award. Awards in excess of £72,000 have funded improvements to the school's sports hall, including a sprung floor.

A climbing wall has been added and outside existing hard areas have been converted to provide two floodlit ball courts. The sports pavilion has been refurbished with new changing room and showers. You may know of some groups of people in the village who could benefit from all of the activities on offer. There are also other great facilities including:



- Badminton Court £10 per hour
- School Hall from £20 per hour
- Netball Court / Playground from £10 per hour
- Field / Football Pitches (5,7,9 a-side pitch sizes) from £10 per hour
- Climbing Wall (own instructors) from £25 per hour
- Bouncy Castle Parties £100 for 2 hours
- Climbing Wall Parties from £130 for 2 hours

All parties have the use of the Dining Hall with tables and chairs for their own refreshments.

Telephone: 0770 859 2013

Email: [sports@greatwaking.essex.sch.uk](mailto:sports@greatwaking.essex.sch.uk)

*Richard Kirton*

## Website Statistics Report

As you can see from the report below, first time visits are still higher than returning visits and is probably reflected by the fewer articles appearing on the website. There is always a delicate balance between publishing to the website or our 'Small Beginnings' Newsletter. The Website Statistics Report is automatically generated on a weekly basis and is still a valuable tool.

### Weekly Stats Report Summary: 03 April 2017 - 09 April 2017

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Total	Avg
<b>Pageloads</b>	45	32	18	39	8	24	27	<b>193</b>	28
<b>Unique Visits</b>	18	12	14	13	8	21	11	<b>97</b>	14
<b>First Time Visits</b>	12	11	13	9	8	20	6	<b>79</b>	11
<b>Returning Visits</b>	6	1	1	4	0	1	5	<b>18</b>	3

*Richard Kirton*

## ***Villages Websites***

Our new website - Barling and Wakering Villages Plus - is expanding all the time, as site-manager Richard Kirton adds new photos frequently. If you have any pictures showing people or places in the area, please do get in touch. We would love to add them to the thousands already there.

It is easy to get from the new site to the old one and vice-versa.

The new one can be reached here:

<http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/plus/index.html>

The Original Website can be reached here:

<http://www.barlingwakeringvillages.co.uk/index.html>

*Peter Griffiths*

## ***Situations Vacant***

We are still looking for a volunteer (or more) to edit our newsletter. It has been suggested that the job could be split, with one person being responsible for content and another for layout. So, if you would like to help, please don't be shy in offering your services, even if only for one or two editions.

*Peter Griffiths*

***Please share  
your stories  
and  
experiences  
with our  
members. They  
will be  
delighted to  
hear them.***

## ***Contacts***

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