



**WALKING CHRISTMAS 2013  
(BOOK 3)  
AND THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY !!!**



## INTRODUCTION

Having decided over the weekend to abandon my thoughts of travelling outside of the immediate Colchester town area, my planned bus rides were cancelled, and I have duly recorded the expected buildings I would have seen there and enroute in my section of “the ones that got away”.

## MONDAY 30th DECEMBER 2013

With a train trip now to Norwich booked for Wednesday, I decided that I would push on with the missing 16 in the local areas in the new week, but these were scattered a bit, and despite planning an order for these, a short cut between Harwich Road and Ipswich Road, ended up as long one, but in the wrong part of the area, so it was really a wasted hour, as I had also failed to locate the one situated at Parsons Heath either. It was a number 2 bus catch to Highwoods Square to locate the right place, for the St Lukes Centre. A number 8 bus was taken from there to Monkwick, then another long walk across to St Michaels.

Having elected to go on the 64a route, the 64 came first and went before it, but luckily in High Street, a 66 was instantly there to Rowhedge, so that deferred me from getting either the 1 or 2 back to the Harwich and Ipswich Road area. Having got off near the end of Old Heath Road, the church was right there opposite. Seeing the 66a about to leave just as I crossed the road, I waited for the 66 to return from Rowhedge. With the rain now heavier and myself getting colder, common sense then prevailed, and it was another ten knocked off my list, so I make it just six now to go, I then went home. However going out in the afternoon to return some keys saw another ticked off in Shrub End Road.



**Hope Church, Ventura Drive, Hythe, Colchester**

The Hope Church was formerly the Colchester Area Community Church and meet at the Hythe Community Centre. They are non-denominational church that is seeking to help followers of Jesus Christ apply God’s Word to everyday life.



**St Andrews, Forest Road, Greenstead, Colchester**

This is a Grade C small building of around about 12th century for the west part of the North wall of the nave. There was much rebuilding done to it in the 18th century. The West tower has bricks from the 16th century

**Personal view:**

This has just been seen going past on the bus, but our honorary priest, Nina Brown did spend some time in that parish in the recent years.



**Greenstead Evangelical Church, Magnolia Drive, Colchester**

Colchester's Elim Pentecostal congregation was formed in 1930. There was a temporary tabernacle built in Fairfax Road in 1931 and served until 1957, when the congregation moved to the former Strict Baptist Chapel in Stanwell Street. When that chapel was demolished in 1971 to make way for a new road, the congregation had a new church built in Walsingham Road. The congregation now meets at Greenstead Evangelical Free Church in Clematis Way. This is close to the Library and the nearby shops.



**St Matthews Church Centre, Harwich Road, Parsons Heath**

They are a warm and friendly group of people that welcomes people of all ages and all walks of life.



They seek to serve people from the local area through Sunday services, a variety of events and partnerships with others in the community. They are one of three churches in the Greenstead area, with the St Anne Ministry Team in North East Colchester. They are linked in with St Anne's in Compton Road and St Andrew's in Forest Road.

### **St Luke's, Highwoods, Colchester**

In an amendment to what appears in Book 2, this is situated at the Highwood Square area, behind Lighters and not at St John Close as previously stated.



### **St Margaret's, Stanstead Road, Colchester**

There has been a church here for almost a thousand years, in one form or another. Originally it was a small wooden chapel, it catered for those working in the Berechurch area (Berechurch means "Church in the Cornfields") to save them having to walk all the way to St John's Abbey to worship.

(1520) - St. Michael and All Saints Church is now a brick and stone building with an embattled West Tower. The original foundation is 14th Century, but it was rebuilt in 1500 and again in 1872.

Berechurch Hall, the mansion of West Donyland, is first mentioned as being acquired by Sir Thomas Audley, Lord Chancellor to King Henry VIII and Speaker of the House of Commons, after St. John's Abbey was dissolved. Members of the family built the little family church, where many of them are buried.

It is recorded that in 1537 the Parish of Berechurch numbered 37 people. Thomas Audley had a very dark side to his character. It is said that on his black marble gravestone, which is situated in another part of the county, it is written, 'That the stone was no blacker nor harder than his heart'!

(1960) - The post World War Two years saw a boom in building and the population of Colchester then rapidly increased with the influx of people then displaced from London. New Estates sprang up to the South. The Monkwick Estate was fully within the ancient parish of Berechurch, swelling the population to several thousand. As part of the provision for the new community a dual purpose Church Hall (church on Sunday, community hall mid-week) and Vicarage were built at the junction of Mersea Road and Stansted Road.

(1970) - The decision was made that a new church building should be built, but rather than hiring a construction company the congregation took on the bulk of the construction work themselves – yes, they built their own church!

The lorry driver's face was a study the day he and his load of 8,000 bricks arrived at the site of the new church, for waiting to unload the bricks were a group of eager housewives. "You're never going to do this yourselves!" gasped the lorry driver. "Why not?" retorted the group proudly. "We're helping to build the church."

And since that bitterly cold day the ladies of St. Margarets Church, near Colchester, Essex, have never once sat back and let their husbands do all the heavy work for their "do-it-themselves" church. Instead, they've put on their jeans and boots, rolled up their sleeves and got cracking with jobs like unloading lorries of bricks and timber, preparing the strips for the roof, and finishing off all the brickwork which their husbands learnt how to lay at evening classes.

"The men could only work in the evenings and weekends so it would have taken them far longer if they hadn't helped," said Violet Radley, an industrious corner-stone of the housewives' building corps. "It was their Vicar who suggested they unload the lorries because they always delivered during the day when their men weren't around. Altogether they've unloaded over 45,000 bricks, dozens of 24ft. long lengths of timber and eight half-inch glass doors. It took eight of them to lift each one!

"We had to ask that very first lorry driver how to unload his bricks. He told them how to hold three together like a wafer of ice cream. Then they formed a chain to the hut where the materials were being stored and passed them along. We won't say they didn't drop any bricks. But at least none landed on their toes!" Violet, a cheery forty-two year old with two teenage children. recalled their first "brickies" experience as they stood on the muddy building site beneath the church's skeleton frame with the main roof beams soaring into the sky.

In the hut, ten of the housewives were cutting the strips with an electric saw. Later, in her comfortable home a stone's throw from the site, Violet showed the photos of the completed model of the church. Its design is futuristic with a special triangular chimney for the light to beam through to the altar area. It will seat two hundred and fifty in a semi-circle.

At present, parishioners use a hall by the building site for both their worship and social events. The idea to build their own church came to Jean Sly, the Vicar's pretty young wife, in the middle of the night. She woke up her husband who thought the scheme crazy. But next morning, after going into the money aspect of things, he changed his mind. When the church is finished, by the end of next year, the bill should be about £15,000 – under half the normal cost.

"When I first heard Mr Sly say we would do it ourselves, I thought: crumbs we'll never manage," said Violet. Now she and the other ladies, there's a hard core of about a dozen, like to think that the men could not have managed without them. To protect her hands against the rough work, Violet started off wearing rubber gloves. But she got through so many pairs, that she settled for some old leather gardening gloves.

And to help her husband, Fred, a forty four year old electrician, who works nights on the site, to beat the cold during the wintry months, she knitted him a bobble hat and half-mittens without finger covering. The outfit was a huge success and Violet found herself knitting for the other men as well.

Like the other husbands, Fred is justifiably proud of his wife's achievements. "When I tell him what we've been doing on the site, he'll say, "That's not women's work". Then we both laugh and next day all of us housewives carry on as usual," said Violet, smiling.

Her son, Andrew, helped at the site too, and daughter Linda had made a neat purple and orange embroidered hassock, one of two hundred the ladies are sewing for the church. "All our families have been involved with the project. Even the babies and toddlers, as they're brought along to the site so that their mums can do some work;" said Violet.

The ladies' final task, apart from their continuous fund-raising efforts, is to lay glass mosaic on the floor of the altar dais and church entrance. "After it's all finished we'll have loads of our own decorating and gardening to do," said Violet. "We've not had a minute to look after our own homes." After 6 years construction the new building was opened in 1973, the existing dual use building becoming simply St. Margarets Hall.

**Personal view:**

In the early years, I once attended a wedding there.



**Orchard Church, Blackheath, Colchester**

They are a community of Christians based in Blackheath, Colchester, Essex. They meet every Sunday at 10:30am to worship, learn about and experience God in contemporary and relevant ways.

They believe in a God who is able ... able to heal, able to change circumstances, able to transform lives, and able to save. A God who is able to make a real difference to your life and to the lives of those around them, today, here and now! And so, as a Church they want to serve their community in whatever way they are able, with a message of hope, truth and love.

They are very excited about what God is doing in them, and through them and they would love for you to be a part of it. So what are you waiting for? Come and experience Orchard for yourself.

During one of our services at the church, people were encouraged to write down how God had been at work bringing about change in their lives.

A church is far more than just a building, it is defined primarily by the people in it and what they do. As such, you will not find much here about the church building – you'll have to come and visit to find out more about that!

They are a community of Christians, with a regular Sunday congregation of about sixty people, covering an age range from 9 months to 90 years and coming from diverse backgrounds too: students, teachers, factory workers, self-employed specialists, managers, unemployed, families, and many more!

As a community they aim to be inclusive rather than exclusive, which means that they are welcoming to all. They hope that you'll find them warm and friendly – there are opportunities at the end of their services for sharing tea and coffee and getting to know each other better, and there are many other activities throughout the week that you can come to and make new friends.

They also support **missionaries** working in other countries throughout the world.



**St Michaels, Berechurch Hall Road, Colchester**

St Michael's Church, Berechurch, is a **redundant Anglican** church in the village of **Berechurch, Essex**, England. It is designated by **English Heritage** as a Grade II **listed building**, and is under the care of the **Churches Conservation Trust**. The church stands on the south side of Berechurch Hall Road, near to the MCTC, the army prison camp, south of the town of **Colchester**.

#### **Personal view:**

This was the church that my father use to attend, and we believe that my grand father had a very leading role there too, as maybe the verger. The family also have a good painting of the building.



**St Barnabas, Abbots Road, Colchester**

Built on the site of a Victorian church, St **Barnabas** was built in 1949 to replace the original church which was in a state of disrepair. A small and friendly church, it has various services and masses during the week including a Parish Sung Mass on a Sunday Morning at 10am.

Old Heath is the parish to the south east of Colchester and is bordered by the River Colne and the Mersea Road. At its' southern boundary is Rowhedge and Fingringhoe and from the north it is approached along Military Road or Mersea Road. The Village of Old Heath (originally Old Hythe) has existed since Saxon times though it has largely lost its' village look now. Nevertheless there is a good community atmosphere and they are 'steeped' in history. A book published by Father Richard (The Vicar) and Patrick Denney (Local resident and historian) is worth a read and is available from Fr Richard , from the Post Office or from Red Lion Books in Colchester High Street.

The stream known as Bourne Stream which flows from Bourne Mill upper pond down to the river Colne marks the parish boundary between Old Heath and New Town St. Stephens.

The Saxons created the first Port for Colchester in a meander in the river between what is now Haven Road and Quay and the boundary with Rowhedge. What we now call 'The Hythe' was formerly known as 'the New Hythe' signifying the fact that Colchester's Port had moved up river.

The Parish Church (On Abbot's Road) was first established back in 1874 having previously been served from St.Giles which is near the Town Station. The old church was demolished in 1949 having been declared unsafe and the new church built. It is, to say the least, plain outside but undoubtedly beautiful inside and serves as a real centre for the community.

Bourne Mill sits on one boundary and Distillery Pond (so called because a Malt Distillery was located there from 1812) with its historic associations is firmly within the parish.



They have a Post Office, a Pub, a number of convenient shops, a thriving school, a Senior Citizens' Activity Centre, and three sheltered homes for the aged and a Community Centre. In addition to the parish Church (Church of England) there is a small Chapel known locally as the 'Tin tabernacle' which is a Congregational Chapel. Housing varies from the early developments in the 18th and 19th centuries to the developments along the Old Heath Road which are largely 1920's -1940's structures. A later housing estate grew up on Speedwell Road and further developments along Abbot's Road and now down by the Quay have increased their population to in the region of 6,000 people many of whose families have lived here for generations.

A large Industrial Estate provides employment. It is a good safe place to live and they are surrounded by the Military Ranges and open spaces and so keep their distinctive existence whilst being firmly and proudly a part of Colchester.



**Old Heath Congregational, Fingringhoe Road, Colchester**

Old Heath Chapel was erected in 1869 as an outreach mission for Lion Walk Congregational Church. It is largely of corrugated iron structure and was known locally as the 'Tin Tabernacle'.

The chapel was enlarged in 1888 and again in 1898. In the 1980s when Lion Walk became a United Reformed church, Old Heath became independent and retained its congregational status.



**Independent Temple of Light, 117 Shrub End Road, Colchester**

**31st DECEMBER 2013**

It was the last day of the year and once again a very early set off and I was off to knock three more buildings off my outstanding list which was now only five to go. Unfortunately it was to be going to the area where I got lost yesterday at the top end of Harwich Road and this time I caught the number 1 bus from Shrub End Road. I got off near the junction at the top whilst taking a call on my mobile phone at the same time. Unfortunately despite studying a map I still struggled to find the Parsons Heath Baptist church. It did say near the clinic and having spied a building I thought it had to be the one but the road to it was then muddy.

That done I headed down Harwich Road to go through Goring Road and what a long road that was and then down Ipswich Road I went and it was St Anne's church found. Now back I now went up Ipswich Road to locate the Salvation Army, that found and then it was back to Upland Road to get the bus. It was to be a very long wait in that area for the bus to arrive, with the rain coming down heavily at time. Finally after about thirty minutes at least and with full water proofs still on, I was feeling a bit warm now as a bit of sun was starting to peep through the crowd. So as I struggled to remove them with one leg in and one out there, the bus arrived and I was having to mount the bus, in an absolute muddle to the amusement of all the old people on it.

Having got to town I had coffee in Marks and Spencer, then an Iceland shop and collected my prescription from the chemist. Having just began to work at home, I answered a call of help and returned to the General Hospital to collect a prescription from a friend, and on the way there and back, I completed my task with the viewing of the last two buildings on my hit list, and it was task completed for Colchester.



**Wycliffe Baptist, Parsons Heath, Colchester**

The premises is used by the local councillors as a surgery. Parsons Heath Residents Association and a Weight Watchers Group. The present building has been on this site for well over one hundred years and consists of sanctuary, hall and separate wooden hut. The buildings are now showing their age and they will need to spend a large sum of money on repairs and to bring it up to the present legislative standards required for a building used by the local community. So they will definitely be getting on their bikes for the Ride & Stride.

**Personal view:**

A bit tricky trying to find this as I was looking in the wrong place for it. So I returned the next day and still I struggled to find it, there was a building behind the health centre, and the road to it was very muddy, so I just had to assume that was it.



**St Anne's, Compton Road, Colchester**

They are a warm and friendly group of people that welcomes people of all ages and all walks of life. They seek to serve people from the local area through Sunday services, a variety of events and partnerships with others in the community. They are one of three churches in the Greenstead with St Anne Ministry Team in North East Colchester. They are linked in with St Matthew's in Harwich Road and St Andrew's in Forest Road.



**Mount Zion Salvation Army, 328a Ipswich Road, Colchester**

Their aim there is a desire to be a spirit-filled, radical, growing church with a desire to save souls and actively serve the community and fight for social justice. They see everyone as equally valued. At Mount Zion they enjoy meeting together regularly for spiritual and social occasions. There is also an active house group network, varied prayer events and loads of coffee and evenings out.



**RAD New Life Centre, Walsingham Road, Colchester**



### **Seventh Day Colchester Community Adventist, North Station Road, Colchester**

It was a welcoming message on the Seventh-day Adventist church website. Whether you are visiting their website or our church they want them to feel part of the family.

#### **Personal view:**

I failed in my first attempt to find it, but on a website recheck, I found that it was behind the HSBC Bank.

## **AND THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY - ARDLEIGH**

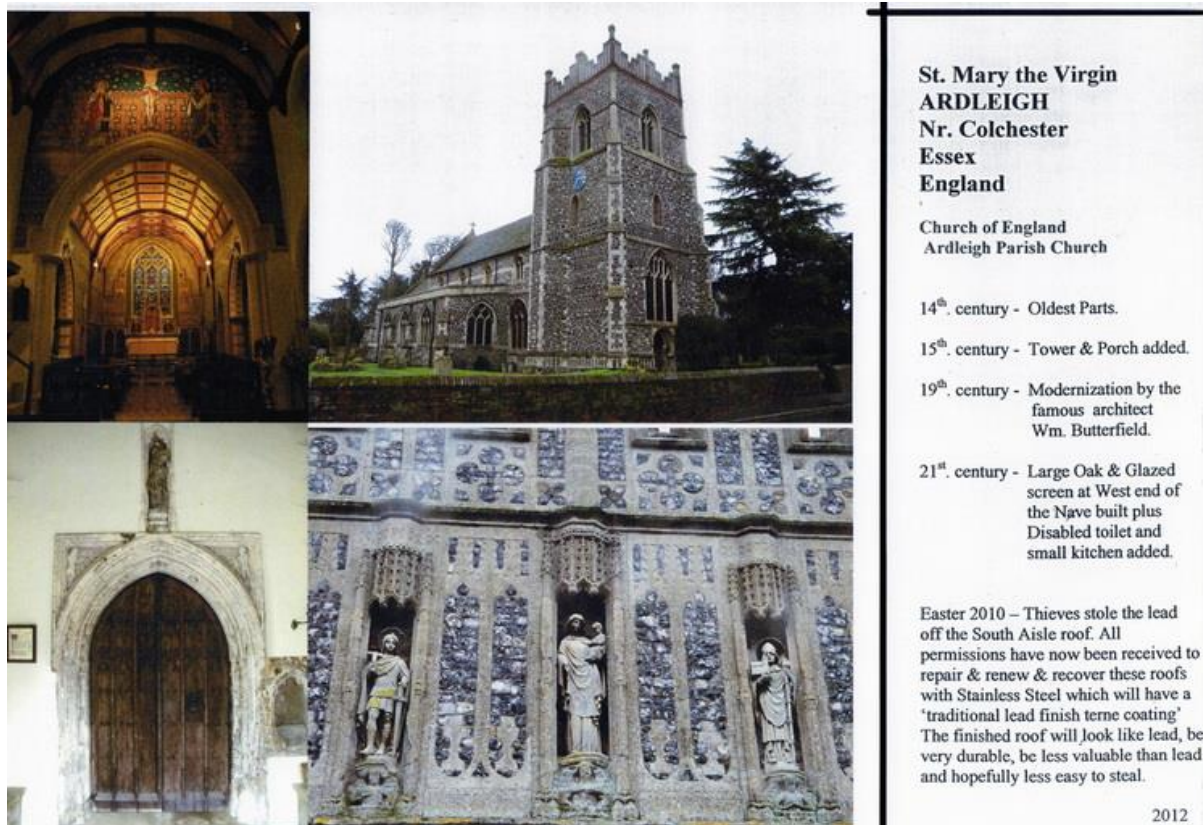


**St Mary's, Colchester Road, Ardleigh**

## **COLCHESTER**

Having set up a list from the internet, other places have cropped but were not put into my agenda, as spotted too late now. The new ones noted were – Colchester Christian Spiritual Church, Recreation Road, Old Heath, Christian Outreach, 13 Fowler Road, Colchester, Baha'I Faith – 25 Scythe Way, Prettygate and Unitarian Meeting, Trinity Centre and a few more too.





## CLACTON



**St Pauls, Clacton-on-Sea, St Paul's Road, Clacton-on-Sea**

In the late 1860's, the habit of taking holidays by the seaside was becoming popular and a group of London businessmen - noting that the coast in the then parish of Great Clacton was attracting its share of visitors - appealed for financial help to build a church to minister to the spiritual (and physical) needs of these people. The original St.Paul's was built in 1875 - a "temporary" building of cement-concrete, mixed with sand from the beach! - at a cost of about £1,200. However, the town developed so rapidly that the accommodation in the church quickly proved inadequate.

A chancel, transepts, vestry, organ chamber (in brick) and additional seating were added, and the enlarged building was consecrated in 1881, by the Bishop of St.Albans (in whose diocese Clacton then was). St.Paul's had become a parish in 1878.

As early as 1925, it was realised that even this enlarged building was not adequate for the work, which needed to be done. A decision was taken to rebuild and a Building Fund was opened. By 1939, plans for an ambitious new church were well advanced, but had to be shelved because of the outbreak of World War II. During the war, some damage was caused to the roof, ceilings, walls and windows - particularly when a V2 rocket exploded on the seafront by St. Paul's Road in early 1945. Essential repairs were effected, allowing services to continue uninterrupted.

A variety of circumstances - including building restrictions, the ill-health of the vicar and rising costs - contributed to the delay in embarking afresh on the scheme to rebuild after the war. Clacton Council gave outline planning permission for a new church in March 1962, followed by permission to demolish the old church and the building of a new one (designed by local architect and parishioner Roy Gould) in August 1964. In June 1965, the old church was boarded up about two-thirds of the way down the nave, and the eastern end was demolished to allow building to begin.

The existing western end served as the church during the 18 months of construction, and was finally demolished in the late summer after the new building had been consecrated on 15th July 1966. The final cost was £65,000. The stained glass windows from the old church were removed and stored for use in the new building.

The figures of St.George and St.Paul in the War Memorial window, the Madonna and Child in the Lady Chapel, three images of Christ in the west window and a further one in the vestibule ceiling were given their new settings under the direction of Rosemary Rutherford, who designed and built the East Window. The altar, lectern and communion rails (simplified and shortened) in the Lady Chapel and the Bishop's chair and choir stalls (renovated and adapted) in the new chancel all come from the old church - which provides a real link between the old and new St.Paul's.

The emblem of a Roman tent and crossed swords can be seen all around the building. The tent reminds us that Paul was a tentmaker, and the crossed swords are usually taken to symbolise the good fight he said he had fought, and which he encouraged others to fight. Some think that the swords appear because he was, as a Roman citizen, executed by the sword rather than being crucified.

The emblem is on the door handles, etched on the glass panels of the screen between the nave and Lady Chapel and on the inner main doors, and forms a feature of the candlesticks on the main altar and the cross and candlesticks on the Lady Chapel altar.



**Pier Avenue Baptist, Pier Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea**

In 1901, a small group of Christian workers, under the leadership of Mr Oatley, conducted evangelical services on the beach at Clacton-on-Sea. The town was growing rapidly, and several Free Churches had already formed, including Trinity Methodist Church, and Christchurch Congregational Chapel.

That autumn, about thirty of these workers met for prayer and fellowship at the home of Mr Horace Smith in Pier Avenue. Towards the end of the meeting, someone asked whether they would be interested in further such gatherings. A lady, (name unknown), then suggested that perhaps a Baptist Mission might be started in the town, as several of the group were Baptist by upbringing.

From such small beginnings, history grows, and the seed of what became Pier Avenue Baptist Church was sown. The meeting passed a resolution to form a committee to look into the possibility of starting a new 'Baptist' fellowship.

Further meetings were held that autumn. By the end of 1901, it has been agreed to form a 'mission' in the town. In January 1902, it was decided to establish a 'Church', and on 24th January 1902, four of the Church's founder members were baptised in Christchurch's baptistery (kindly lent for the occasion) by Rev. J E Martin of Erith. Later that same day, Mr Martin officiated at the formation of the Church, when seventeen founder members committed themselves to the new cause.

For the first chapel, soon, a plot of land in Pier Avenue was purchased. It was agreed to build a chapel as soon as possible so that regular worship could commence. This would be a small brick building, which (it was envisaged) would be replaced by a larger one in due course.

On 20th March 1902, a stone-laying ceremony was held at the site, followed by a Public Meeting at the town hall in the evening. The first chapel, seating 100, was completed by June. The opening services were held on 4th June and were conducted by Rev Thomas Spurgeon (son of the famous Baptist preacher C H Spurgeon of the Metropolitan Tabernacle). This original building is still in use as our 'Fellowship Hall' today. For several months in the summer of 1902, the Church was served by Percy Clements, a young student minister from Spurgeon's College in London. Mr Clements was to become the Church's first minister, and was formally inducted to the pastorate on 5th April 1903.

The Church's minutes record that the cost of the building scheme, including the purchase of the site was £1,830. This represents approximately £100,000 in today's money – a tremendous step of faith for such a small fellowship! Within months, however, the Church began to grow numerically, and the debt was soon reduced. Baptisms were held regularly, and the membership grew under the enthusiastic ministry of Percy Clements. During the summer months, when visitors flocked to the town, the Chapel was too small for Sunday services, and Evening worship was held at the Winter Gardens Hall in Wash Lane.

**Personal view:**

The church have a refreshment shop and it was where my late parents went on their visits to Clacton, and indeed took me there too when I went with them. On a visit there in 2012, I went for a coffee too, and kindly after my marathon walk in the summer of 2013 from Clacton to St Osyth, despite me arriving late, they found me a drink. Next time I went in October 2013, I did my best by arriving a lot earlier.



**Trinity Methodist, Pier Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea**

This is part of the Trinity Methodist Circuit which is covering Manningtree, Harwich, Brightlingsea, Elmstead Market and Clacton-on-Sea.



**Christ Church URC, Carnarvon Road, Clacton-on-Sea**



**Personal view:**

A few years ago when my hospital medical group were unable to use Sams Hall in Rosemary Road, due to the refurbishment work going on, we had to transfer our meeting there at short notice. We had the hall at the side of the church and we had competition as there was a wedding going on in there at the same time. In what was a very small room, we tried to keep our noise to a minimum as it was a very crowded room, when one of biggest ever attendances turned up to hear a talk by one of the Stoma nurses.

<b>FINGRINGHOE</b>
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**St Andrews, Church Road, Fingringhoe**

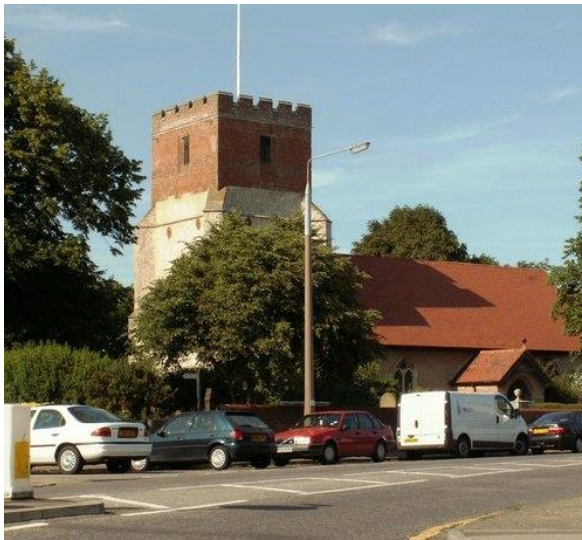
**Personal view:**

There are many links between, myself, our church and their church. Our curate Dick Handscombe, left Shrub End in 1960's to become vicar there. My mother did cleaning at the curate's house, and when I first went to the Colchester Royal Grammar School, I cycled to school with son Patrick who was a couple of years older than me.

<b>HARWICH</b>
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**Salvation Army, George Street, Harwich**



### **All Saints, Main Road, Dovercourt**

**The tower lighting** was installed in 2000 as part of a Millennium Project and sponsored by the Friends of All Saints' and partly funded by the Church Floodlighting Trust. The tower is illuminated on special occasions including Feast Days and at the request of parishioners usually to celebrate an anniversary or *in memoriam*.

The present building dates from the 12th century when the nave was erected. The chancel was built in 1420 replacing the former rounded east end of the church. The chancel arch was replaced by timber in about 1615. A major restoration was completed in 1897 when the original walls and fine timbered roof with its beautiful truss and king post were revealed. Although the porch is modern, it has a reset 14th century archway. The holy water stoup in the wall was discovered early in the 1900's.

The massive door is of oak with plain strap hinges and a stock lock of the 17th century. The tower is in three stages, the lower two of the early 15th century and the top of early 19th century brickwork. In 1993, the tower was stripped of its outer covering of deteriorating Victorian plaster and recovered originally with a Medieval-style mix of lime and horshair. The tower houses two bells, the tenors made in 1380 by William Burford and the bass bell made in Loughborough in 1572 by Robert Mot. The same firm retuned the bell in 1958. The tower clock was made before 1740 and was repaired in 1959 and in 1994 when the clock face was repainted and re-gilded. Also, in 1994, the mechanism was adapted to stop the clock chimes from sounding during the night. Early in 1941, during the Second World War, the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, visited Dovercourt and climbed the tower to anti-invasion defences.

In 1987 a new building was constructed to the north of the church with access from the nave by way of a 14th century doorway. This new building houses a vestry, kitchen, a small meeting room and a larger "family room" used for church functions. On the north wall of the family room hangs a modern tapestry of the Holy Family. The All Saints Lychgate was officially opened by Sir William Gatade on 22nd January 1899.

Made of English oak on a brick-base wall, the front had an entrance way of moulded oak posts and arched head. The centre upright has a horizontal piece framed into it, forming a cross with the words "Blessed are the dead which die in the lord."



**Central Church, Main Road, Dovercourt**

The Methodist church began to worship in the present sanctuary in Main Road in 1905. A small hall and facilities were added later. During the Second World war, both churches were much frequented by H M Forces stationed in Harwich. The two congregations had worshipped together on Good Fridays and during the 1980's had for a time joined together for evening worship. In October 1987 the building in Cliff Road was badly damaged by a hurricane. After sharing the building of St Augustine's Anglican church (now demolished) the URC, were invited to share the worship with the Dovercourt Methodist Church and to use their premises in 1989. Then in 1998 a church meeting agreed to redevelop the halls but keep the existing church and then finally in 2001 the work began. After a short time away, the people returned there in 2002.

**Personal view:**

This is the church where we hold one of our medical meetings every year. Our chairman of the group, Bill Hatch and his wife Iris, are heavily involved here.



**Kingsway Evangelical, Main Road, Dovercourt**





**Dovercourt Methodist, The Green, Main Road, Dovercourt**



**St Nicholas, Church Street, Harwich**

The church was built on the site of a previous church and consecrated in 1822. It is built in the perpendicular gothic style of Suffolk bricks with pinnacles and buttresses made of artificial material called coade stone. The window frames and slender internal columns are made from cast iron. It is a spacious building with many of the memorials from the old church within. Nonconformists were up in arms when a special parish rate was introduced by the then Churchwardens, to complete the work, which may account for the sub standard pews.



It is the civic church for the area and has a Mayor's box set at right angles to the main nave seating, with a rest adjacent for the mace. The Flight and Robson organ having been restored some years back, is in constant demand by organists from far and wide. During the Harwich Festival during late June, early July, the Church is used for a whole week of musical events. Also they host the Royal School of Church Music, on choir courses several times a year.

They are part of the Colchester 'Circuit' which has 12 churches and the 'Circuit' is in the Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire District. Our Minister, Rev Catherine Bowstead, has charge over two other churches (Castle and Highwoods) besides ours. It is the normal practice for Methodist ministers to move Circuits about every five years.

## MALDON



**All Saints with St Peters, High Street, Maldon**

For many people the church in any town is an important place - even if they never actually use it for its intended purpose, for it speaks of community and continuity. If you question that, see the public reaction to many places if someone has the temerity to suggest that 'their' church should be made redundant.

Why should this be? Often it has to do with the age, for the church is frequently the oldest building in the neighbourhood. It was the major meeting place for all sort of different purposes, a place of sanctuary and early warning of invasions, a market place and community hall as well as a place of worship. So often the church was the only imposing stone edifice in a locality when even the Lord of the Manor lived in a wattle and daub construction.

So even if the present building on the site does not owe a great deal to the original, because all churches have evolved throughout their history, it still remains a "special place." Historically it is a special place, but it will also have personal associations as generations have marked the significant events in their family lives here.

There is seldom a time in any week, winter or summer, when someone is not seen wandering around. This church very much belongs to Maldon - her citizens in homespun leather doublet, crinolines and tweeds, top hats and feather boas, double breasted suits and donkey jackets have knelt before its altars, slept through sermons, moaned at the choice of hymns and hymn tunes as well as beautified its fabric. Happiness, thanksgiving, sadness and tragedy have been shared here and you may wish to think about that as you wander around and consider some of the events behind the memorials.

You will see here some fine art and architecture, but above all we welcome you to a place of worship and the gathering place of God's people. It is a place of witness to the Christian Faith and all that it stands for. You will find this presented in many different ways as many generations have added to, taken away from it, repositioned or redeployed parts of its structure as the needs or tastes of the day demanded. It was their place in their time and the church has always been more about people than buildings; it is a place of refurbishment, where spiritual batteries may be recharged. It is a place of peace in the midst of many conflicts. It is the home of the people of God - as well as God's house.

So welcome to this place, let it speak to you and the particular needs you have at this time. Come again - for it may be that your needs then will be different from what they are now.

In 1215 the Lateran Council decreed that Monastic Foundations which had "appropriated" benefices, should provide resident, perpetual Vicars and assign adequate provision for their maintenance. It was soon evident that the endowments of the two parishes (All Saints and St. Peter's) were insufficient to make this provision and in 1244 the parishes were united and have remained so ever since despite all the dramatic changes in ecclesiastical structure that the following centuries were to bring. And we think that the uniting of parishes under one Vicar is a modern thing! Under the terms of the union All Saints was decreed to be the "mother church".

Until the 17th century services were held in both churches, when the nave and chancel of St. Peter's fell down and All Saints then provided for the needs of both parishes. St. Peter's Tower survived and remained the responsibility of All Saints Church Council until quite recently; what seems to be the church attached to it is in fact a building commissioned by Archdeacon Plume of Rochester in 1704 to provide accommodation for his library, which he had bequeathed to the town of his birth, on the upper floor and Maldon Grammar School below. The collection of books is one of the finest of its period and the Vicar of All Saints along with the Rector St. Mary's and the Head Teacher of the Grammar School (now the Plume School) continue to serve on the Library's Board of Trustees.

The Registers of both Parishes, St. Peter's dating from 1556 and All Saints from 1558 are in the custody of the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford. The Parishes were part of the Diocese of London until 1846, then Rochester until 1877, then St. Albans until 1914 and currently in the Diocese of Chelmsford. Having been in the gift of the Bishop of London, the Abbot of Beeleigh and a host of private individuals, the living has been in the gift of the Diocesan Bishop since 1903.



**St Peters, Market Hill, Maldon**

The Plume Library is to be found at St Peter's Church. Only the original tower survives, the rest of the building having been rebuilt by Thomas Plume to house his library (on the first floor) and what was Maldon Grammar School (on the ground floor).



**Maldon URC, Market Hill, Maldon**

The first record of a building on this site was in 1696 when a piece of land at the top of Market Hill was acquired by the Revd Joseph Billio, the first minister, and a "Meeting House" accommodating 400 was built for the Protestant Dissenters of the town. Such was the enthusiasm and fervour of Billio's preaching that the phrase "like Billio" passed into the English language. A portrait of him hangs in the church vestry. By 1800 the original building was found to be unsafe and was demolished, to be replaced by the present church. This building was enlarged throughout the century as the church continued to flourish, acquiring its present appearance in 1878 with the addition of the pillared portico, By this time it was known as the Congregational Church.

The building on the left, forward of the church, is the old British School building erected in 1843. The deep grooves in the brickwork either side of the entrance door were caused by the pupils sharpening their slate pencils. The Lecture Hall, also part of the British Schools until their closure in 1911, occupied the adjacent car park and was then used by the church and local organisations until its demolition in 1987. The monuments in the graveyard to the north and east of the church indicate the close links between business and non-conformity in Maldon during the 18th and 19th centuries. The congregation which meets for worship in the church today is known as the United Reformed Church, a result of the uniting in 1972 of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches in England and Wales.

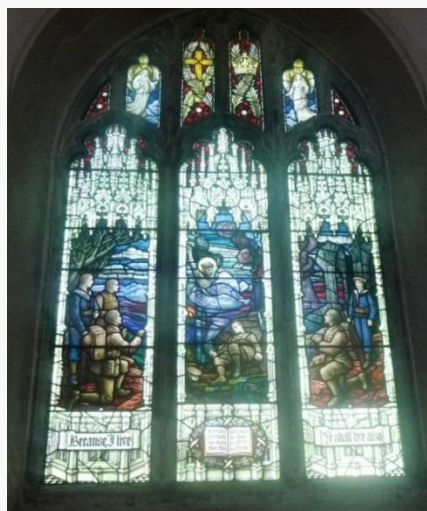
In 1999 the decision was taken by church members to refurbish the interior of the building by removing the Victorian pulpit and downstairs pews, and adding a kitchen, toilet and enlarged entrance area. The work was completed in 2000 and includes new heating, a carpeted floor and sophisticated sound and video systems. These now provide a comfortable and welcoming building, much in demand for concerts as well as regular worship.



### **The Salvation Army, Wantz Road, Maldon**

Welcome to Maldon, and most especially to the Salvation Army in Maldon. **History of the church:** Their Church Hall in Wantz Road was once a chapel but has been used by the Salvation Army for many years as our place of Worship and Christian Service. Though traditional on the outside, it has been fully refurbished within and is disabled friendly (Ground Floor only). They enjoy a wide range of worship and community activities throughout the week in our Hall, and welcome all within the Community to join with them.

**Corps Mission:** To introduce people to Jesus by welcoming them into a loving, caring, fellowship where they can find an expression for worship, evangelism and Christian service.



### **St Mary the Virgin, Church Street, Maldon**

A church has stood on this site since Saxon times. From the very earliest days, St Mary's has been a beacon, providing a point of reference for sailors coming up the Blackwater. Indeed, so important was the fourteenth century tower as an aid to navigation that, when it collapsed during the reign of James I.



In 1605, a petition was sent to the king asking for its rebuilding. The work was undertaken and completed in 1638. Originally, a beacon burned from the top of the tower but this was replaced, in 1730, by the famous white shingle spire which we know today. In the twenty-first century the tower may not be quite so important in navigational affairs, but the view of St Mary's from the Blackwater is still *the* iconographic image which most people remember of Maldon. Internally, the church keeps the floor-plan of the Norman church of 1130, with the addition of a nineteenth century south aisle. The outlines of the unusually large Norman chancel arch can still be seen and, at the west end of the north wall, an original Norman window exists. Internally, much of what one sees nowadays is thirteenth century. There is a fine fifteenth century window in the north wall and the remains of the mediaeval rood steps can be seen further along the same wall.

Between 1867 and 1886, substantial works were carried out in St Marys, including the restoration and re-ordering of the chancel, the addition of the south aisle and sacristy and, most significantly, the replacement of the roof, which now sits on massive Baltic timbers. This roof enhances St Mary's fine acoustics, making the church ideal for music. Although the rood screen was lost at the reformation, a fine rood now occupies a dramatic position above the chancel arch. This was brought to St Mary's from a redundant church in East London.

In the twentieth century the church continued to be enhanced with the addition, in the south wall, of the fine millennium window, commemorating the battle of Maldon in 991 (the battle, incidentally, which probably saw the destruction of the original wooden church). At the western end of the south wall, a door now leads to the beautiful Octagon, which houses a meeting room and other facilities. The twenty-first century has ushered in an exciting period of rebirth for St Mary's. Plans are under way for a major refurbishment of the building, taking in the tower, flooring, lighting and decoration. Perhaps most significantly, for future generations, a new pipe organ is to be built on the west wall of the church. This instrument will grace the church, aurally and visually, for many future centuries. Thus, the tradition of beautifying and maintaining an already beautiful church continues in a new millennium.

We invite you to visit our lovely church and discover all of the details mentioned above. Most of all, we invite you to come and sit a while. St Mary's is blessed with a rare peace and tranquillity, born of centuries of prayer. We wish you, too, peace and blessings during your visit.

## WEST MERSEA



**St Peter & St Paul, West Mersea**



It was at a spot only three miles across the Backwater Estuary at Bradwell-on-Sea that St. Cedd founded his little monastery circa 654, built the historic St. Peter's Chapel out of the remains of the Roman fort of Othona, and from there he evangelised Essex, the kingdom of the East Saxons. We feel it is probable that Cedd and his monks came across to establish the first church here at West Mersea, also dedicated to St. Peter.

Coming to the 10th century, the Saxon Ealdorman Aelfgar and his daughters, Aethelflaed (widow of King Edmund of England) and Aelffaed (widow of Ealdorman Brythnoth) by their wills, left properties in Mersea, Peldon and Fingringhoe to St. Peter's Church at Mersea, described as a 'Minster', i.e. a church serving the wider area. By 1042 the Mersea estates had reverted to the Crown, and by charter of 1046 King Edward the Confessor granted them to the Abbey of St. Ouen at Rouen in Normandy.

The Abbey founded a small Benedictine Priory here. The monks, no doubt using the Church and the Abbey, became Lords of the Manor. The historic 11th century tower may well date from that time, and if so, it is Saxo-Norman. Note the considerable use of Roman tiles and brick in it, from the Roman villa which stood near the site (of which pavements were found in the 18th century). Two small round-headed windows and the tower arch of that time remain.

The belfry louvres and west window are later. The heavily beamed floors inside the tower have been dated as early as the tower itself with very early examples of joinery. The nave and chancel were probably built in the 14th century and a south aisle added, later extended east in the 15th century to form a south chapel. Note the 15th century brickwork.

In 1415, King Henry V suppressed alien religious houses, including the Priory, and granted its properties of West Mersea, the Peet and Fingringhoe to Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury who endowed them on the College of Higham Ferrers, which he was founding at his birthplace. About this time the north porch was built or rebuilt, and the 14th century niche reset. The timber roof of the chancel with arched and moulded trusses is early 16th century (Tudor).

In 1833, the south porch was rebuilt as a porch and vestry, the north wall of the nave heightened in brick, buttressed and embattled, and the flat Georgian ceiling formed. Also the south arcade was rebuilt in brick and plaster. A west gallery had been erected in 1812, but removed in 1882 with other changes.

A photo of the church circa 1898 shows two north chancel windows of three lights in pointed style, but early in the 20th century all the windows in the chancel were replaced with perpendicular style stone frames, including a new east window at a new level. In 1925 the south aisle roof was rebuilt, the wall plaster all removed, and the niche for a piscina uncovered. In 1971 a Church Hall was built adjoining the south vestry. In the late 1970s and early 1980s the choir stalls, pulpit and old painted pews were replaced, as thank offerings, in, attractive light wood. Colourful kneelers were worked by members of the congregation, with individual and local designs. The pipe organ was updated in 2002 and 27 new digital stops added. The new memorial window was installed in the south aisle in August 2005. This is to commemorate the Fishermen and Oystermen of Mersea Island.

"History is all around us here Site of Roman villa - Saxon Minster Church - Benedictine Priory - Land Mark - Watch Tower - Place of Prayer, Preaching, Sacrament & Thanksgiving - Centre for the Worship, Witness and Work of the Church.

**Interesting features:** Fragment of late Saxon carving inserted near Vestry door. Font - Purbeck marble octagonal bowl of 13th century. Stone coffin lid of 13th Century in niche in sanctuary. Roll of Rectors 1 Vicars dating back to 1349. Painting on west wall - sacred monogram and rosettes; 15th century Five bells by Thomas Gardiner in 1717, two recast since Texts in 'Chippendale' cartouches above arches of the nave.

Fine Royal Arms of George IV, including Hanover; 1823, Brass 'Eagle' lectern and fine candelabra; - dates uncertain. Stained glass east window of the Resurrection, given in 1905 'Della Robbia' Lunette of 'Dead Christ with the Angels' circa 1907 Panel of 'The Annunciation' presented in 1955. Chiming apparatus on bells installed for jubilee year 1936. Choir Screen to commemorate the 54th Division (Territorial) 1914 - 1918 donated in 1937 Painting of St. Christopher (south aisle) presented in 1939 Lady Chapel, furnished with altar and ornaments in 1962.





Vestry and Sunday School Hall built south of the church in 1971 Book of Remembrance and case donated in 1974 New pulpit, clergy & choir stalls, mid 70s, Tower Screen donated 1979. (Picture Panels from old pulpit at the back of the church.) Memorial and Thank Offering pews donated 1980 - 1982 Mersea Smack weather vane installed on the Tower 1985 Statue of 'Peter the Fisherman' over the main entrance 1986 New treble bell cast and one recast (Whitechapel foundry) 1987 New Communion Table in chancel 1989.

Clock restored with new face 1990. Mezzanine floor and staircase in Tower 1990. Church Hall extended, new vestry & meeting room added 1992. Extensive re-pointing of exterior Tower wall 1996. Repairs to nave, north parapet and renewal of south aisle roof 1997. Three manual organ console, replacing previous 2 manual pipe organ, now with digital and Ope stops, in 2002. Memorial window installed in south aisle 2005.

