

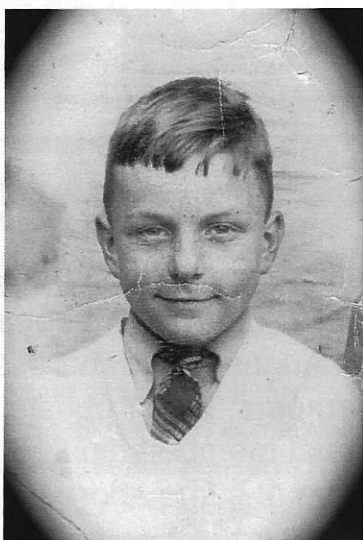
A historical map of the Lexden area, showing a river, a bridge, and various landmarks. The text 'Lexden History Group' is overlaid on the map in a stylized font. Labels on the map include 'Corn Mill', 'Stephan Bridge', 'Stephan Farm', 'Lexden', 'Kawthorpe', and '50M'.

# Lexden History Group

Autumn Newsletter Issue  
No: 18, September 2010

## Lexden History Group Open Day

Saturday 25th September 2010



10.30 am to 4.30 pm in St Leonard's Church Hall,  
Lexden Road, Lexden.

Grand Opening at 11am by Councillor Sonia Lewis,  
Mayor of Colchester, accompanied by the Town Watch.

## Programme of Events

### 8th September

"Spitfire Summer Essex and the Drama of 1940" by Dr Paul Rusieck

### 25th September

Lexden History Group Open Day 10.30am to 4.30pm  
St Leonard's Church Hall

### 13th October

Films by Bernard Polley

### 10th November

"Top 10 since 1950" by Ray Spiller  
(This will be Ray's second visit. His first was an overwhelming success, so do not miss this entertaining and informative evening!)

### 8th December

Christmas Party - entertainment by "Small People" Ticket only

## Meetings

Lexden History Group meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7.45pm in St Leonard's Church Hall, Lexden, except August when there is no meeting. Entry £1 for members, £3 for guests, refreshments included. Annual membership £15 for single, £20 for family living at same address.

Web address: [www.lexdenhistory.org.uk](http://www.lexdenhistory.org.uk)

# Editorial

A big welcome back to all our members after the Summer holidays.

Our annual Summer BBQ in Carol and Tim Holdings lovely garden in Spring Lane was a great success. The raffle organised by Jackie Bowis raised £58 which will go towards the cost of our Christmas party. Thanks to all the Members and Committee Members who helped out and enabled the afternoon to be so enjoyable.

LEXDEN HISTORY GROUP 2011  
CALENDARS ON SALE NOW.

They will be available at the September meeting. As only 50 have been printed don't leave it too late to buy one. All the photographs are in sepia and the calendar has a lovely old world look about it. I am sure they will sell out very quickly. Ten copies are already spoken for. They will probably cost around £7.00 each.

Soon it will be the time for us to set up all the exhibits for our Open Day. Please can you help? We need you to see if you can lend anything

of local interest to be displayed at our Local History Open Day on Saturday 25th September.

This will be our second Open Day. The first one in 2006 was such a success, that it will be a hard act to follow, but with all our members contributing to the displays, we should be able to exhibit many items of historical interest for the general public to see.

We are fortunate in that our former Social Secretary, Sonia Lewis is now the Mayor of Colchester and she has kindly

agreed to open the event at 11am with the Town Guard present. We know all our Members will support this important Club event.

*Lexden History Group Calendar 2011*  
[www.lexdenhistory.org.uk](http://www.lexdenhistory.org.uk)



*Lexden Street looking East, early 20th Century*  
© Lexden History Group 2010

Our President, Andrew Phillips, will be giving a presentation during the day, and on past performances, should not be missed. Our Archivist, Bernard Polley will be showing some films of historical interest. So all in all a day to look forward to.

Jane Thornhill

## President's Page

On a still, warm, June evening I took a walk at sundown. Along the footpath from the end of Park Road which skirts the playing fields of three schools I watched a fox, harried by crows, amble across the field and sit, watching the twilight. Arriving at Lexden Park, via the woods, where, until recently, three species of woodpecker and five species of tit might be seen, and owls still hoot at night, I crossed the old Endsleigh playing field and sat by the pond – a pond and green space which Lexden residents fought to preserve. It was now dusk and perhaps 20 duck, which feed at night, were very busy, grunting away in communal satisfaction, occasionally rising out of the water to snap at insects. Moorhens cackled. Overhead, international airliners crossed the fading sky, port and starboard lights winking. Then the first bat appeared, dancing above the water, and, as it became more dark than dusk, they were everywhere – Pipistrelle bats. Only nowadays, you have to make sure they are not Soprano Pipistrelle, since DNA and high frequency sound analysis has demonstrated the existence of two species, where once we thought there was one. There is so much about the natural world we still have to learn.

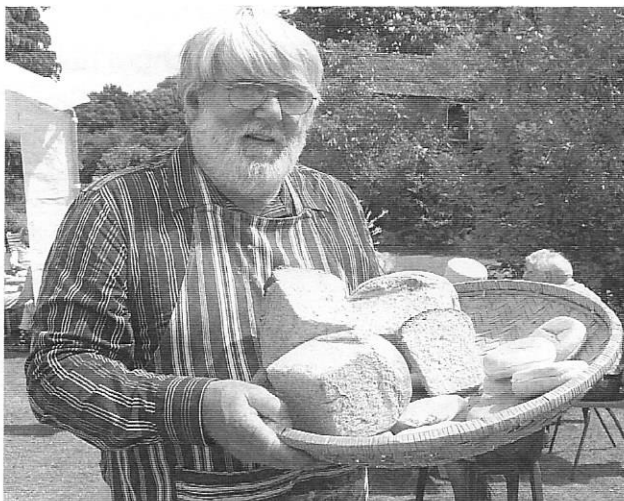
Lights shone brightly from the houses of Lexden Park, and I wondered if Fletcher Mills, who built the core house and dug the pond 185

years ago, watched the bats, as the rhododendrons were planted, and the new trees grew, and a barren pool of water attracted ducks, moorhens, insects, moths, and more bats. Probably he was quite used to bats. Nature was closer then. There are now countless people living in Lexden who have never seen bats fly on a summer's night: possibly some living in Lexden Park. Once Nightingales sung in the shrubberies of Lexden Road; Barn Owl might be seen ghosting across the road; cuckoos could be heard on a summer's dawn as one lay in bed; swallows swooped round the bridge by the mill in some numbers. And have any house martins nested in Lexden this year? One could go on. Our leafy lanes are under siege.

Is this about local history? I think so. At all levels of government unthinkable relaxations of safeguards are becoming thinkable. There is still a lot of green goodness about the community we are fortunately enough to live in. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Our society should be ready, along with others, to stand up and fight for Lexden's green heritage.

Andrew Phillips

## Tim's Exceedingly Good Bread Recipe



People have been asking me for my bread recipe, so here it is. Experiment with the quantities as I guess it when doing 12 loaves. (eight large and four small)

Here is the smaller version for two large loaves:  
1/3 oz salt  
2 lbs flour (2/3 wholemeal and 1/3 strong white)  
1 double sachet yeast  
1/2 tablespoon sugar  
1/2 tablespoon olive oil.

The dough when mixed must not be too dry. It should tend to stick to you.

Start with about 1/2 pint of warm water in a large mixing bowl or bread pancheon. Add the flour, olive oil and salt and a mixture of sugar and yeast

dissolved in about 2 tablespoons of warm water, not too hot.

Knead thoroughly "stretching" the dough by pushing it down in the middle of the pancheon from each side. Do this till exhaustion sets in (you are getting off lightly as making 12 loaves is more

exhausting!)

Leave till the dough is at least double the size. Knock it back, brush your double lined bread tins with olive oil. Divide the dough in half and put the individually kneaded balls of dough into each tin.

Prove again in the tins in a warm and draught free place. When the loaves have doubled in size bake in a hot oven for over an hour. Ovens vary so check briefly and occasionally.

N.B. avoid knocking or banging the tins when lifting into the oven as the dough will instantly deflate and spoil the bread. Be very gentle!

Tim Holding

## LEXDEN NATIONAL SCHOOL.

The Old School House was built in Spring Lane in 1842 and was known as Lexden National School. Miss Stannard used to be the

Spring Lane school had become so overcrowded that a temporary school for infants was opened in the building in



teacher there and she rented accommodation in Church Lane. She lived to be 100 years old. It must have been a successful and happy school as the above photograph shows the pupils of the 1896/7 academic year who had attended at least 400 times out of a possible 419.

However, by 1928 the

Straight Road which was then the Gospel Mission Church.

The old school was closed down in 1930 on the opening of the Lexden Council School, which had been built and furnished at a cost of £15,000. The opening ceremony was conducted by the Rector of Lexden, the Rev. S.L. Dolph, who was later tragically killed by lightning.



There were eight assistant teachers, some of whom had

Many signs of the existence of the school



transferred from the Lexden National School in Spring Lane, when it closed.

During the war soldiers were temporarily housed in the Old School. Before the end of the War, Henry Collins (the Lexden painter) and his wife Joyce were bombed out of their London home and moved into the small flat that formed part of the School buildings. Later, Joan (Henry's sister), and Cliff Gallifant bought the main school building in 1945 and lived there after their marriage until 2003.

remained, including the cupboards and children's coat pegs. The block of outside toilets was still standing and was put to many uses by the family, including bicycle shed, tool shed etc. The Old School continues to be appreciated by its new occupants and remains an important feature of Spring Lane and Lexden Village.

(With thanks to Joan Gallifant and Bernard Polley for information and photographs.)

## Classic Cars in Family Photographs

identified.  
Carol  
recalls that

I am grateful to Carol  
Holding for sharing photographs  
from her family album. The first  
is from the 1920's and the  
tallest lady on the left is Carol's  
mother. Unfortunately none of  
the other ladies can be

her parents purchased this car  
on their marriage in 1920 and  
thinks that it is a Ford, but  
more on this below.

The large photograph  
opposite shows the same car  
on a trip to Germany in 1932  
with a bunch of cousins and a  
young woman, who might have  
been a nanny or au pair. This  
must have been a very reliable  
car because Carol's parents  
had a collapsible caravan (see  
the photograph below) which  
they towed on tour on the  
Continent behind this car. So  
when this photograph was  
taken the car would have  
served the family for 12 years  
and they had sufficient





confidence in it to travel abroad, something that few people did in the 1930s.

As to the car's marque, if it was a Ford, it would have to have been a Model T or a Model A. According to Nick Baldwin's "A-Z of Cars of the 1920s" the Model

Between 1919 and 1926 Morris produced the Cowley and Oxford models. The Morris Oxford was available as a four seat tourer and of course sported the famous Morris "bull nose" radiator. Looking at the picture with the cousins, the car



T was produced between 1913 and 1927 and the Model A between 1928 and 1931. At this period there were many small manufacturers, but Ford, according to Baldwin accounted for 41% of all cars registered on British roads in 1919. However a rising and successful manufacturer was Morris, who in 1924 overtook Ford's production in Britain.

would appear to have the Morris bull nose, so my vote would be for the Morris Oxford. If anyone thinks differently I should be glad to hear from him or her.

Many thanks to Carol for granting access to her family's photographs.

Bob Thornhill

## My Classic Cars

(continued from last edition)

Bob Thornhill

At the time of owning The Duchess, we subscribed to "The Automobile", a magazine for pre-1960 cars, which used to organise trips to France and we did a couple of them. The participants would assemble at somewhere like Portsmouth for the ferry to St Malo and then with a detailed route map follow a leisurely course to a hotel with dinner for the night and then on the next day another leisurely motor to the next hotel.

These trips were really enjoyable particularly as some people came with truly exotic motors, such as one participant with a 1920s Voisin, a notable French car of the period.

Another came in a 1930s Morris which had a most weird set of indicators to show which way you were going at a roundabout, but the fact that they did not catch on tells its own story.

One of the French trips we did was to visit Montléhry, which was the first purpose built race track in France. Hitherto races had been from city to city or around the streets, as is the Monaco Grand Prix to this day. Montléhry is near Paris and Versailles, but is no longer



considered safe enough for present day racing. The track surface is now very rough, there are some very tricky bends and high concrete bankings, which if the driver gets them wrong he could launch himself and his car into space. The visit was organised by a French motor club - L'Automobile Club de l'Oust and participants with pre-war cars were permitted to circulate on the track. It was not racing, but one driver with a racing car from 1910 was circulating at some speed and going right up to

the top of the banking. He later admitted that you could not get up there, and stay there, unless you were doing 100mph.

The other most enjoyable use of the Riley was to

attend the Goodwood Revival Meeting. This is held every year at the old Goodwood race track where there are motor races for cars mainly from the 1950s and 1960s, with evocative marques such as BRM, Lister Jaguar, Lotus, and Cooper Climax. These cars are worth tens and hundreds of thousands of pounds, but are raced as if their cost was of no concern. People who attend are encouraged to wear 1940s/50s clothing. There are flying  
(continued opposite)

## Committee

### Chairman

Dick Barton: 01206 573999  
[bab@bartonlex.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:bab@bartonlex.fsnet.co.uk)

### Vice-Chairman

Tim Holding: 01206 576149  
[Carol@cholding.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:Carol@cholding.orangehome.co.uk)

### Secretary

Liz White: 01206 522713  
[alangwhite187444@hotmail.com](mailto:alangwhite187444@hotmail.com)

### Treasurer

Bob Thornhill: 01206 523767  
[bob.thornhill@ntlworld.com](mailto:bob.thornhill@ntlworld.com)

### Membership Secretary

Jackie Bowis: 01206 561528  
[jbowis@hotmail.com](mailto:jbowis@hotmail.com)

### Social Secretary

Susan McCarthy: 01206 366865  
[susanmcc1@cooltoad.com](mailto:susanmcc1@cooltoad.com)

### Magazine Editor

Jane Thornhill: 01206 523767  
[j.jane.thornhill@ntlworld.com](mailto:j.jane.thornhill@ntlworld.com)

### Archivist

Bernard Polley: 01206 572460  
[heath86end@aol.com](mailto:heath86end@aol.com)

### General Members

Sonia Lewis: 01206 579950 [sonialewis@waitrose.com](mailto:sonialewis@waitrose.com)  
Peter McCarthy: 01206 366865 [susanmcc1@cooltoad.com](mailto:susanmcc1@cooltoad.com)  
Ian Bowis: 01206 561528 [jbowis@hotmail.com](mailto:jbowis@hotmail.com)

displays from Spitfires and Hurricanes and if you attend in a pre-1960s car you receive very special treatment. On registering for tickets you give your car make, year and registration number and are sent a special sticker to place in the windscreen. When driving into the track amongst the hundreds of modern cars, the Marshals direct you out of the traffic stream and to a special car park for all the older cars. This is where you can see some splendid vehicles and one feels very special at parking amongst them. It really makes the visit extra worthwhile.

We have had other classic cars, but that is another story. Now that everything has a health warning I should also warn that owning classic cars can seriously damage your wealth.

Summer BBQ



The secret of that added flavour

The Riley RMF at Goodwood  
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