



Essex Record Office

e-bulletin

September 2012

Welcome to the September edition of the ERO e-bulletin. In this edition:

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- Recipe books
- Twentieth-century Oliver Twists
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- Special offer - save 25% on our autumn conferences
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News

3 days to go until our Discovery Day!

It's all hands on deck as we put together the final preparations for our Discovery Day on Saturday 8 September. We have behind-the-scenes tours, displays, a helpdesk, a local history marketplace, and a keynote speech from historian and television presenter Dr Nick Barratt. Everything is free, but places on the tours and at the talk are limited, so you can guarantee your place by pre-booking on 01245 244620. In the meantime, you can watch four videos recorded with Nick Barratt exclusively for Essex County Council on a recent visit, on the ECC YouTube channel, for expert hints and tips to help with your research.



See videos of Dr Nick Barratt's hints and tips [here](#).

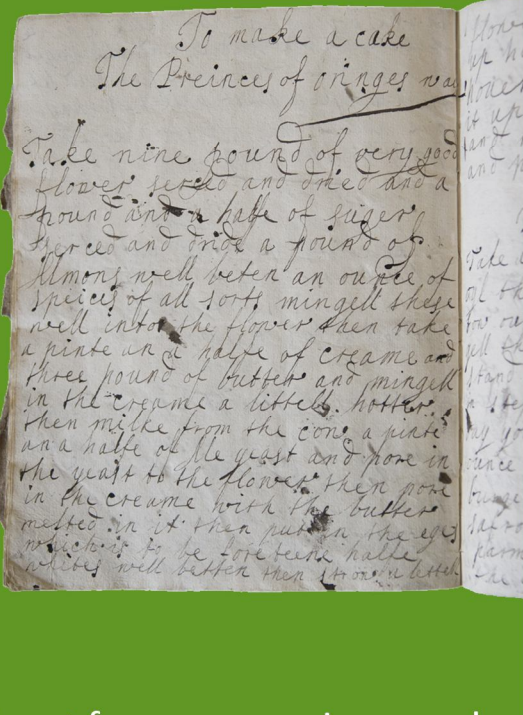
Document of the Month: 18th century builder's notebook



Our document of the month for September is a notebook belonging to James Deane (1699-1765), a carpenter and builder from Colchester. The book contains designs and detailed, meticulously-costed specifications for houses, cottages, barns and other farm buildings, a malting office and kiln, a 'pigeon house', a green house, and even a fountain, as well as a lengthy discussion of 'smoaky chimneys'. The book will be on display in the Searchroom throughout September.

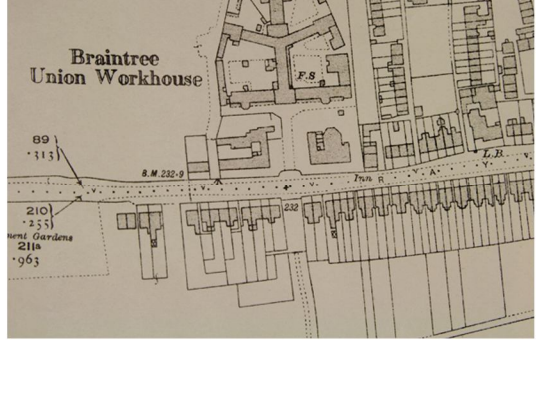
Recipe books

As the popular BBC series The Great British Bake Off begins again, it is the perfect time to delve into the archives in search of historic recipes. Keep an eye on our blog for a special series of posts exploring the recipe books in our collection, from the 1600s to the 20th century. We have begun with the earlier recipes, and some of the cakes described are monster constructions, involving 6 pounds of flour and 8 pounds of currants, while others, such as pound cake or macaroons, are far more recognisable to modern eyes. Recipe books also often include instructions for making medicines, especially those which it was hoped would ward off the plague.



Read the posts published so far [here](#), and look out for more coming soon!

Twentieth-century Oliver Twists



Archivists have recently catalogued the surviving records of St Michael's Hospital in Braintree, and of the committee which ran both it and the Julien Courtauld Hospital (A/H 19 and A/H 20 respectively). St. Michael's Hospital was the former workhouse for the Braintree Poor Law Union and many of the records deposited relate to the period before and just after the creation of the National Health Service, when the Hospital still maintained people due to poverty rather than illness.

Many of the records have to be closed to researchers as they contain confidential information regarding patients, although staff may be able to release information to next of kin. One exception is the minutes of St. Michael's Staff Welfare Committee (A/H 19/1/1/3). In December 1947, the Committee discussed complaints by male residents concerning insufficient food. It was suggested that this was due to a lack of understanding by long term residents of the effects of rationing. At an earlier meeting in October of that year, the Committee had discussed the possibility of using whale meat in stews and meat pudding and decided that it would be a valuable addition to the diet when people had acquired a taste for it. To modern readers, this would suggest that the quantity of food wasn't the only problem for residents...

First edition Ordnance Survey Maps

Do you have Essex ancestors in the 1871 census? If so you could try and see if you can reconstruct the route the census enumerator took on his rounds to find the house in which they lived from the 1st Edition 25" Ordnance Survey series of maps.

The maps date from the early 1860s to the late 1870s with the majority of the county having been surveyed in the mid-1870s. Their scale is 1:2500 or 25 inches to the mile and much interesting detail, including wells and hedgerow trees, is shown.

Those that the ERO have are held in the Searchroom but unfortunately we only have maps that cover approximately two-thirds of the county in our collection. However, recently we were given the sheet (68-2) which covers Billericay. Is this of use to your researches? It's in great condition and if you would like to see it, it is available in the Searchroom.



Do you know of any sheets that could fill gaps in our collection? We'd love to hear from you.

Special offer - save 25% on our autumn conferences

This autumn we are hosting three informal conferences, each providing a fascinating insight into a different aspect of Essex's unique heritage. Tickets for each conference are £20, which includes a buffet lunch, and you can now save 25% when you book all three conferences together, for £45 rather than £60.

Essex-on-Sea
Saturday 22 September, 10am-3.45pm

Workers of the World Unite!
Saturday 13 October, 10am-3.45pm

A Night at the Opera and a Matinee at the Flicks: Theatre and Cinema in Essex
Saturday 24 November, 10am-3.45pm



You can read more about the conferences [here](#).

Forthcoming events

We have a packed autumn events schedule, with workshops, conferences and talks to keep you entertained and informed, and to help you with your research. See a full list of our events on www.essex.gov.uk/EROevents.

Unless otherwise stated, all events must be booked in advance – please telephone **01245 244 620**.

ERO Discovery Day – in conjunction with Heritage Open Days

Do you enjoy a good story? The Essex Record Office contains nearly 1,000 years worth of stories about Essex people and places. See behind-the-scenes on tours of the archives, and learn about how the ERO can help you with family, house or local history. Featuring a special keynote speech by media genealogist Nick Barratt.

Saturday 8 September, 10.00am-4.00pm

Free, tours and tickets for Nick Barratt's talk can be pre-booked on 01245 244620

Discover: Maps

Join members of our Searchroom team for a practical session that will explain how to use some of the many different kinds of maps that can be found in the Essex Record Office.

Thursday 20 September, 2.00pm-4.00pm

£10, book in advance on 01245 244 620

Essex-on-Sea

The sea has played an important part in the story and history of Essex, providing employment in industries such as ship building, ferries and oyster fisheries as well as pleasure activities at the Royal Yachting clubs and seaside resorts. This special one-day conference will look at the diverse history of Essex and the sea.

Saturday 22 September, 10.00am-3.45pm

Tickets £20 including buffet lunch and refreshments

Searchroom tour

This forty-five minute tour will show you how to get the very best from the ERO's Searchroom – it's ideal if you are just starting your research or perhaps want to go beyond using microfiche and microfilm. We will also offer some tips on how to use our online catalogue, Seax.

Wednesday 26 September, 10.30am-11.15am

Free, but advance booking essential

'How not to dispose of a body'

An informal lecture by Doug Newlyn for the Essex History Group. All welcome.

Tuesday 2 October, 10.30am-11.30am

Free, small charge for tea and coffee

Discover: Parish registers (1538-present)

Parish registers contain information of great value to the family historian, but they may seem daunting if you have not used them before. This session will explain what you might expect to discover in parish registers and how to get the best from them.

Tuesday 2 October, 2.30pm-4.30pm

Tickets £10, book in advance on 01245 244 620.

Discover: Family History Sources (1837-present)

Get to grips with the basics of family history in a session for beginners. Discover what civil registration documents and the census can reveal about your ancestors. We will also look at Internet sources.

Saturday 6 October, 10.30am-12.30am

Tickets £10, book in advance on 01245 244 620

Discover: Workhouse Records (from 1834)

Do you have an ancestor who spent time in the workhouse? This session will look at why and how workhouses came into existence, what life was like as an inmate and also consider surviving Essex workhouse records.

Thursday 11 October, 2.30pm-4.30pm

Tickets £10, book in advance on 01245 244 620

Keep up with ERO

We welcome your comments on this e-bulletin and all other aspects of the ERO's service. If you have a comment or a suggestion about how we could improve, please e-mail us at ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk.

If you no longer wish to receive the ERO e-bulletin, please reply with 'Unsubscribe e-bulletin' in the subject line.



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