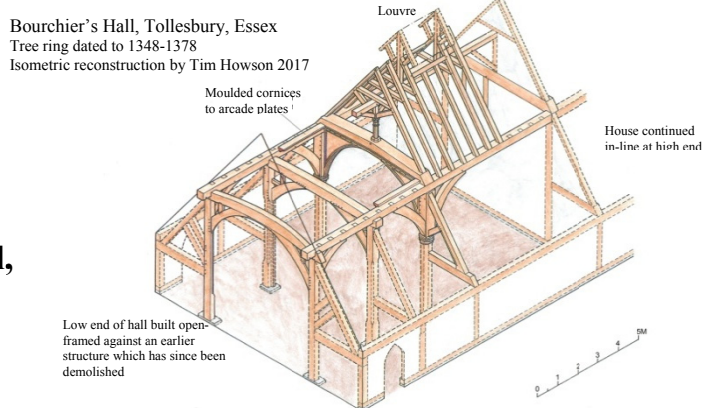




THE AISLED HALL TRADITION: our oldest timber-framed buildings



At Maldon Town Hall, Market Hill,
Maldon, Essex CM9 4PZ

PROGRAMME

9.25 **Chairman's introduction and welcome**

9.30 **English aisled halls and their affinities, 950-1150**

John Blair

The aisled domestic hall was an innovation in England around 1000. Perhaps it was spread from north-west Germany by commercial contacts, and a northern tradition later represented by the Norwegian stave-churches may lie in the background. Initially one of several alternatives, the aisled hall became dominant in England through the twelfth and much of the thirteenth centuries. It is interesting to speculate on conceptual links with parish churches, many of which acquired aisles from c.1150 onwards. As communal spaces housing both ritual and social activities, manor-house halls had something in common with parish-church naves.

*John Blair is an Emeritus Fellow of the Queen's College, Oxford. He has worked on church, settlement and landscape in medieval England, including both ecclesiastical and secular buildings, and is currently working on English medieval building culture in a north-west European context. His books include *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (2005) and *Building Anglo-Saxon England* (2018).*

10.15 **The aisled buildings database**

Nat Alcock

This resource for studying medieval halls and medieval and later barns is based on the Historic England lists, with other buildings added from a variety of sources. The talk will particularly examine distribution and dating of the buildings. The database has been compiled on behalf of the Vernacular Architecture Group and will be publicly available via the Archaeology Data Service; it should be uploaded in Spring 2024.

*Nat Alcock has published 15 books and over 60 papers on vernacular architecture, including the handbook, *Documenting the History of Houses* (2003), and most recently part-edited and contributed to *Cruck Building: a Survey* (2019). His work has included studies of cruck and base-cruck construction, and scientific dating of buildings. He edits the VAG lists of *Tree-ring Dates* published annually in *Vernacular Architecture*, and maintains the VAG databases of tree-ring dates, crucks and Wealden houses.*

10.45 tea

11.15 **Aisled halls of Essex and Suffolk**

John Walker

Essex has England's earliest surviving timber-framed aisled hall, the late 12th century manor house of Fyfield Hall. This talk will look at how aisled halls continued and changed through the 13th and the 14th centuries in East Anglia, after which the aisled hall tradition was carried on into the early 15th century by raised aisled halls.

*John Walker is a lecturer, writer and researcher on historic timber framed buildings. He edited the book, published by EHBG, *The English Medieval Roof*, and has published some 30 articles on various aspects of vernacular timber framed buildings.*

12.00 **Essex small aisled halls**

David Andrews

This talk will look at the study of Essex small aisled halls published by David Stenning in *Vernacular Architecture* in 2003, and attempt to reassess it in a local and wider context.

David Andrews is an archaeologist and historic buildings adviser who has worked for Essex County Council for 30 years. Prior to that he worked for the DoE in the Central Excavation Unit, and in Italy where he did research and ran excavation projects.

12.40 Lunch

14.00 **The development of aisled halls & chamber blocks in the 12th & early 13th Century** Nick Hill
This talk traces the development of aisled halls from the earliest standing examples in the mid-12th century to the architecturally ambitious structures of the late 12th and early 13th century. Evidence is accumulating that these early halls were accompanied by detached chamber blocks, which later became integrated with the main hall.

Nick Hill is an architectural historian with a particular interest in secular buildings of the 12th and 13th century. He has published articles on the aisled halls at Oakham and Leicester castles, and on the chamber blocks at Hemingford Grey and the School of Pythagoras (Cambridge).

14.40 **What's the Point of Passing-braces? And other difficult questions about medieval aisled barns in Suffolk built between 1250 and 1400.** Philip Aitkens
The Gipping Divide is now recognised as the cultural boundary of the two halves of East Anglia throughout the Middle Ages and beyond. It is the design of buildings that has provided the clearest proof of the differences between these communities. This talk is an attempt (perhaps the first?) to separate the design of the earliest barns in the two areas.

Philip Aitkens is a retired Historic Buildings Consultant based near Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk. Following a contract to provide Listed Building entries during the English Heritage Resurvey of Suffolk in the 1980's, he published an article in the Journal of the Historic Farm Buildings Group, Vol 3, 1989. The chosen subject was a discussion of the distribution and evolution of aisled barns over a 500-year period in Suffolk.

15.20 Tea/coffee

15.50 **Yorkshire's late-medieval aisled houses: what, when, where, who & why?** Colum Giles
Yorkshire's group of late-medieval aisled houses is unique in a north of England context. This talk will describe the buildings and ask who built them and why the aisled form was adopted.

Colum Giles worked for the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, publishing a monograph on vernacular houses in West Yorkshire (1986). He has recently published an article in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal on the county's medieval aisled houses.

16.50 **Discussion**

17.00 **Close**

Also in the hall will be the EHBG's cash bookstall of secondhand books for you to purchase

Cost: £35 (£30 members)

Tickets can be purchased from the EHBG website, www.ehbg.co.uk/series_of_talks.html

Or you can complete this **Booking Form for the EHBG Day School 29th June 2024** and return it to:

Essex Historic Buildings Group, John Walker, Marks Cottage, Stoke Road, Layham, Ipswich IP7 5RB
Tel: 01473 829774 Email: englishmedievalroof@hotmail.co.uk

I wish to book

..... places for EHBG members at £30.00 each

..... places for non-members at £35.00 each

I enclose a **cheque** payable to **Essex Historic Buildings Group** for £.....

and a **Stamped addressed envelope** for tickets. (Applications not including a SAE may be delayed)

IMPORTANT: Applications must be accompanied by a cheque for the appropriate amount, even if payment by a third party is anticipated, in which case you should make a note to this effect on your application form. Your personal cheque will then be held for a reasonable period and returned when the third party payment is received. **Please note that no cheque means no place.**

Name

Address

..... Post Code

Tel:

Email:

Please tick box if you would like to receive details of future EHBG day schools.