

News from Hadleigh Old School

Hadleigh Old School is the new name for the former school and revived concert hall in Bridge Street run by Ian Grutchfield and Matthew Hodges.

The first event will be **Memories of the Old School**, an open day for the public to visit on Saturday 12th September 2020. We are located at 3-5 Bridge Street at the north end of the town. We will publicise the day under the national banner scheme Heritage Open Days and follow their guidelines. Entry will be free. Refreshments will raise money for heritage schemes such as St Mary's/Deanery Tower. Historically Hadleigh Old School was once operated by St Mary's diocese, so we come full circle!

The day is a chance for former pupils of the boys' school to visit their old classroom. It is also an opportunity for music fans of the concerts and operas of more recent times. The building dates from the Victorian era and was a school until the end of the 1960s, it was then converted into a music venue for the four decades.

Records of the time when 5 Bridge Street was a school are stored in public archives. It is the day to day memories of school life that interest us, ie what it was like to attend in the first half of the twentieth century.

We have the advantage of a large archive of files from recent arts & musical activity at the Old School. However, there are gaps – we do not have an original music recording of the Catchpole Opera (McIntosh) nor a list of paintings exhibited or talk transcript for A Fascination of Flowers (Morris/Chatto). Both occurred in the 1970s.

Thank you to those who have already written to us with recollections or visited and shared their stories of school life or the Brett Valley Society of the Arts. Everyone is welcome - we cannot anticipate demand in these uncertain times – if we are busy then former pupils and their families, will be able to Q jump. Please mark the date, Saturday 12th September 2020, in your diary and look out for more details on timings and accessibility in next month's edition of this publication.

Hadleigh Old School will re-open for Music Arts and Entertainment in 2021. Watch this space.

Ian Grutchfield Venue Director & Matthew Hodges Proprietor