The COLCHESTER ASSOCIATION for the PROTECTION of PROPERTY Established 1783



The COLCHESTER ASSOCIATION for the PROTECTION of PROPERTY

Dear Fellow Thieves

Every year at the AGM of The Thieves, a report is made by the secretary as to whether any prosecutions have been undertaken by the Association in the past year. For over 100 years, the report given by a succession of secretaries, including myself, has been that, alas, no prosecutions have been made. Notwithstanding our failure to prosecute housebreakers and thieves within the liberty of the Borough of Colchester for over a century, we can nonetheless be proud of our Association.

We were founded nearly 250 years ago. At about that time, many similar Associations were founded up and down the country, mainly in areas with large numbers of horses, cattle and sheep. The overwhelming majority of those Associations have, alas, fallen by the wayside over the years and, so far as I am aware, the only other similar Association still in existence is in Newmarket, commonly known as "The Felons".

We have kept going through two World Wars and other conflicts and also have survived the pandemic, only having to cancel our annual dinner on one occasion. The fact that the Association is still in excellent health is a tribute to the dedication of many to the Association and, in particular, to Josh Warren and his father John, both past chairmen, who have produced this and the previous booklet.

This booklet is also a tribute to the poetic brilliance (or otherwise) of those members of the Association making membership proposals. Of late, proposers' enthusiasm had had to be tempered somewhat with brevity but many past proposal verses surely rank alongside The Iliad and The Odyssey as works of truly epic proportions.

I salute all past and present Thieves and, all being well, future generations to come.

Kim Kennedy

The Association was formed on 2 December 1783 at a meeting in the Moot Hall. A group of tradesmen formed the 'Colchester Association for the Protection of Property and the Prosecution of Housebreakers and Thieves Within the Liberties of the Borough of

Colchester'. The object of the Association was self-evident in its title and an annual subscription of 11 Shillings was required of its members from which prosecutions were financed. Members were also required to pay one half of any damages awarded to them into the funds of the Association. The first prosecution came in January 1784 when a man was sentenced to a public whipping for stealing a pair of sheets from a member. The Association's historical books and records are held by the Secretary. In modern times, prosecutions have of course passed into the hands of the law enforcement agencies, but the Annual Dinner, held since 1805, has, except during the two world wars, been held regularly. Membership currently stands at just over 190, and election to membership is by proposal in verse at the Annual Dinner. The Dinner itself has become one of the principal local functions, attracting speakers eminent in Government, Law and the Armed Services.

RECENT PAST CHAIRMEN

1946 - 1976	G.T. WRIGHT	2001	D.M.E. GREEN
1977	J.F. GORDON	2002	B.C. GANT
1978	E.H. MARKHAM	2003	R.F. WEST
1979	P.T. JACKSON	2004	J.A. PARSONSON
1980	C.R. WRIGHT	2005	R.A. JACKLIN
1981	B.A. BURN	2006	D.J. LONDON
1982	D.A. WYATT	2007	A. AMOS J.P.
1983	S.G. GRANT	2008	J.A. WELLERD
1984	S.H. JACKLIN	2009	R.S. PORTER
1985	J.H. WHEELER	2010	R.J. WARREN
1986	G.M.W. MILSOM	2011	R.G. LINDSEY
1987	P.C. BENHAM	2012	P.W. GEORGE
1988	D.R. FAIRS	2013	R.A. CHAPMAN
1989	B.C. BENTLEY	2014	M.W.H. COOKSLEY
1990	R.G.R. CHAPMAN	2015	K.P. BENTLLEY
1991	J.C. CROSS	2016	J.N. CLARKE
1992	R.J. PORTER	2017	J. WARREN
1993	G.R.C. DEAN	2018	K.N.R. KENNEDY
1994	L.C. DRINKELL	2019	D. MURTHWAITE
1995	K.F. LEESON	2020	E.R. COWIE
1996 -1997	A.H. FROST	2021 - 2022	J.H. SHELDRICK
1998	D. HOLT	2023	C.J. ANDREWS
1999	W.R. PARTINGTON	2024	P. MILSON
2000	B.A. SMART	2025	M.J. FITCH



ARTICLES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF PROPERTY, AND THE PROSECUTION OF HOUSEBREAKERS AND THIEVES WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF COLCHESTER AND THE LIBERTIES THEREOF ESTABLISHED APRIL 1800

- I. That the Members of this Association will, at their mutual Expense use every reasonable method to apprehend and prosecute HOUSEBREAKERS and THIEVES of every Denomination, who shall commit any Depredation on the Property of any Member of the said Association, provided such Offences are committed within the Liberties of the BOROUGH of COLCHESTER, excepting only SHEEP STEALERS, who are to be entirely excluded from the Notice of this Association.
- II. That this Association admit of Three Classes of Subscribers, vis Single, Double, and Triple according to the kind or kinds of Property they may wish to be indemnified in the Expense of prosecuting any Offender for the Loss of; that is to say, that the Prosecutions for Single Subscribers shall be confined to Depredators of every species of inanimate or dead Property, such as Stock in Trade, Household Furniture, Utensils, etc. that the Prosecutions for Double Subscribers shall be extended to Depredators of every kind, of animate and inanimate, or live and dead, Property, (Sheep only excepted), such as Horses, Swine, Poultry, etc. as well as Stock in Trade, Household Furniture, etc. and that Prosecutions for Triple Subscribers shall be farther extended to Persons who may obtain Goods under false Pretences usually called Swindling. But provided it shall be the wish of any Single Subscriber to become a Double one by being indemnified for the Prosecution of Swindlers he may be so privileged, upon paying the additional Subscription, and expressing it to be for that particular purpose.
- III. That every Single Subscriber do, on its own Admission, pay the Sum of Ten Shillings and Sixpence, every Double Subscriber the Sum of One Pound One Shilling, and every Triple Subscriber the Sum of One Pound Eleven Shillings and Sixpence in order to support the fund for carrying on the Designs of this Association.
- IV. That in a Firm or Partnership of two or more Persons, in order to obtain Indemnity in the Expense of Prosecutions for the Loss of Property, each Partner shall become a Subscriber; otherwise, such proportion, only, of the Expense as may be equal to the share or shares of Person or Persons who are then Subscribers and belong to such a Firm shall be paid by this Association; provided, that it cannot be made, bona fide, to appear that such Loss was the private Property of the Person or Persons then subscribing.
- V. That a Treasurer shall be annually chosen by the Subscribers, into whose hands shall be paid all Monies for the establishment of the Fund; and also a Secretary, who shall keep the Books, and under direction of the Committee (when necessary) manage the Affairs of the Association.
- VI. That every Member shall be considered eligible to the Committee; and upon any extraordinary occasion, the Treasurer shall use his own discretion in requesting (by the Secretary) the attendance of such Subscriber as may be deemed most conversant with the nature of the business to be brought before them; and any Member, not less than three, shall be empowered to act as a Special Committee and give directions how to proceed upon such an emergency; provided, nevertheless, that the said Committee shall be open to any of the Subscribers who may choose to attend.
- VII. That when any Member of the Association shall be robbed of any part of his Property (except as beforementioned) by the Housebreakers or Thieves of any denomination, he shall take all prudent means to apprehend the Offender or Offenders and give Notice hereof to the Secretary; and he shall forthwith call a Meeting of the Committee (if necessary) who, upon investigation thereof, are empowered to give such a Direction and shall be deemed needful for the effectual Prosecution of such Person or Persons as shall be suspected to have committed the said Offence at the Expense of the Association No Allowance shall be made for any Meeting of the Committee for transacting the Business of the Association, exceeding the sum of Five Shillings.

- VIII. That the Association Dinner shall be ordered by the Treasurer, for the Members of the Association, on the first Tuesday in May at 4 o'clock and that a meeting of Subscribers be held on the same Day, at the Dinner-house at 3 o'clock; at which Meeting the Treasurer and Secretary for the Year ensuing shall be elected, the annual Subscriptions received, the accounts examined, and the general business of the Society transacted, except the Election of new Members which shall take place immediately after Dinner. That a note be sent to every Member of the Association informing him or her of such Meeting, and that every Member (ladies excepted) who shall not attend the Dinner, shall pay Two Shillings and Sixpence towards the expenses thereof.
- IX. That the Treasurer and Secretary shall be elected by a majority of the Subscribers, attending at such yearly Meeting.
- X. That after settling the Accounts of this Association at the Annual Meeting, the Balance in the hands of the Treasurer shall be stated, and such call be made upon the respective Subscribers as will raise a sum equal, at least, to one Year's Subscription at the rate above mentioned, of all the Members then in the Association.
- XI. That every Subscriber of this Association shall pay his respective Subscription to the Treasurer or Secretary, at the said yearly Meeting, or shall pay or send the same to one or other of them, at his own house, within twenty-one Days from such Meeting, or shall be excluded from the Benefits of this Association.
- XII. That no attorney, or solicitor, shall be employed to conduct a Prosecution at the Expense of this Association; nor any Innkeeper be entitled to furnish a Dinner for the Association at his house; until he or they have been Subscribers three successive years; provided also that, there are no such Members, in which case the Appointment shall rest with the Committee.
- XIII. That when any Member of this Association shall prosecution to Conviction any Offender or Offenders at the Expense of the said Association, and thereby become entitled to Reward by Act of Parliament, the same shall be disposed of as follows, vis:-
- 1st The Expenses of the Prosecution shall be defrayed.
- 2nd The Party robbed shall (if it will admit) be indemnified his Loss.
- 3rd The Surplus (if any) shall be added to the Fund.
- XIV. That every Candidate for admission into this Association shall be nominated by a Subscriber and valeted for or by the Members attending at the Dinner; that no person shall be admitted unless a Majority of the Subscribers present shall decide in his or her favour; and that every new Member who shall not attend the Dinner, (Ladies excepted) shall, in addition to the Admission-money pay Two Shillings and Sixpence towards the Expenses of such Dinner.

Mr. George Bawtree, Treasurer Mr. Edgar Church, Secretary



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves

To be a Thief what better man
Than my pal Livesley Adrian.
Another lawyer actually,
So being a Thief comes naturally.
A Liverpudlian lad is he,
And when upon his mother's knee
To support the Reds he did decide,
A passion which has never died.

A football fan of real aplomb, Bill Shankley, Paisley, Ian St John Are all his heroes in the season, And Toshack, John and Kevin Keegan. A golfer, too, of some renown He's been the captain of the town. He gives the ball a mighty whack. He's got a useful handicap.

When young our friend to Shenfield went,
His father's job down south was sent.
At Brentwood School you bet a dollar
Our hero was a super scholar.
Then off to Uni at Exeter,
It's great for law – there's none better.
A good degree he did attain,
Then back to Essex came again.

Smith Morton and Long became the place Where Adrian was a familiar face. In Halstead first, then Colchester, A really ace solicitor.

A commercial litigator, he
Is at the very top of tree.
To partner he quite quickly rose,
And often to the courtroom goes.
So good was he, he climbed to judge,
At least part-time, I'd best not fudge.
On other days at Birkett Long
He's Chairman, for Chris Holmes has gone.

Judith for years has been his wife,
They lead an upright Christian life,
At James the Less, a leading light,
They serve the place with all their might.
Four children, they complete the picture,
Nick, John, David and Rebecca.
At Braiswick Holt they all do live.
But I would ask you to forgive

Me for so long a puny rhyme I'm running out of blank blank time. At too much length my point is made, I give you my friend – Legal Ade.



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves

It seems rather apt that the Council Chief Should now be formally named, a Thief For he steals our cash and shirts from our backs All in the name of Council Tax.

A father of four, he was raised in South Hants
And followed the Saints when Southampton were champs.
A job with Hants council then led him to Bucks
The county with Aylesbury, famous for ducks.

Then on to Essex and Suffolk as well Before he to Colchester his service did sell, He looks after those who clean up our streets And when our time comes, our burial he meets.

From museums to dustbins, planning and loos
He even grants licences so that we may all booze.
The Returning Officer is also his job
He can't count, but be sure, it makes him a few bob.

To be our Town Clerk takes plenty of muscle To cope with the torrent of mail from Bob Russell He harkens our Councillors and then does their bidding And cleans up their mess: I wish I was kidding.

At present he's embroiled in a terrible faff
That's right! You've guessed it, I refer to the VAF.
Now he's been given the most awful of frights
They've put him in charge of the Christmas time lights.

But, to make a good Thief I know he'll work hard Mr Chairman, Gentlemen, Adrian Pritchard.



This is at least the second time,
I've had trouble dealing with a rhyme,
For Faulkner, there's no rhyme or reason,
In Winter, Spring – or any season.

There's really only one thing worse, And that's to have a NATURAL verse, Pity the Thief, when duty calls, Who has to propose a HUNT or HALLS.

It's all in people's minds, you know, You only reap what others sow, I digress, but what else can one do, As you struggle to fill a minute or two?

Would you BELIEVE it – Alan was a banker, (His mother's fault, I'll have to thank her) Since retiring he now spends his days, In the theatre or on waterways.

So, as I reach a sticky end, To you, fellow Thieves, I do commend, ALAN FAULKNER – Author, Poet and Wit, What a pity – there's no rhyme to it.



A military man was his dad who came to Colchester when Alan was a lad. Canterbury Road Junior School he went and passed his 11 plus, then to the Northeast Essex Technical where the rest of his education was spent.

His first job was with the Post Office delivering telegrams but didn't have to hike.

He was provided with a BSA motorbike.

The telegram became old hat, BT with the telephone made sure of that.

After 35 years with BT he felt retirement was due
And a new career he would pursue
A professional gardener he became
It was a new and exciting game.

He was a Magistrate for many years dispensing justice with his peers. Gentlemen this is Alan's history in brief I'm sure you will agree he will make an excellent THIEF.



It was on a local golf course ... I can't recall the date,
That I began to realise this man's a candidate.

A Natural captain you could tell ...

"Right chaps" he said "Give 'em hell,
And to teach each of you I say GOOD LUCK
Just how you win I don't give a damn".
The sun shone down and all looked right
Until the sky grew black as night,
The thunder clapped, the lightning flashed,
The rain came down as on we splashed.

"That's it" I said "I've had enough"
My opponent's game ... life can be tough.

At the clubhouse we all stood dripping wet, Looks as if we've lost and yet ... We're one man short, must be the skipper, Until " Hi Guys ... I'm feeling chipper". He looked disgusting ... a real disgrace, Completely dry and not a hair out of place.

"Hope you've done as well as me,
Their chap lost one and three".

We shuffled and sighed and finally muttered,
"Sorry Alan we lost and we're gutted".

But then in the corner we spotted a chap,
An off-duty copper it happened to hap.
"Your skipper tells porkies" he said with a smile,
"I should know ... I won by a mile,
"I should know ... I won by a hile,
I've known him for years through thin and through thick,
Impressing the girls with the size of his wallet,
Things have got better since he left our village,
Only one theft and no rape or pillage".

"Now lives in Braiswick that's what I'm told, Retired I gather but he's not all that old, His interests are golf and sometimes tennis, But frankly my friends the man is a menace, A lecher, a fibber, con artist too, Leave well alone, is my advice to you".

Fellow Thieves that's it – I rest my case, It is perfectly clear the man's a disgrace. He's just what we need – he can con, lie or swindle, I've no hesitation in proposing ALAN TINDALL.



Please say "Hi" to my son, he is Andy, as a child he just loved, Andy Pandy He moved off to sixth form that was handy As dad worked down the hill with friend Sandy.

Off to Leicester Uni he went,
Sad and lonely
But he met lots of good friends
And hot handy (thymes with something else)
He revised hard and long
And success came along
Mum and Dad were so pleased to say
"Congrats Andy".

He's now senior player in recruitment you see,
And director in charge and that's handy
If you make him a Thief he'll thank all you big chiefs
And say thanks to you all from Andy
That's simply dandy.



Gentlemen, believe me, I have no idea, What I was doing on Clacton Pier. I know I'd been troubled and really quite sick, Standing there helpless and feeling my age.

What fate had decreed that I should be there, With a cold east breeze ruffling my hair. "Something's afoot" I said feeling blue, A dog's potent message stuck to my shoe.

"A curse on all canines" I howled in dismay, Then a voice said "That's lucky just step this way". The speaker was swarthy with black shiny hair, And from a doorway beckoned me there.

"GENTLEMEN" said the sign over the door.

I know what you're thinking – He's been there before.

But the sign said more than I could see,

'YOUR FUTURE FORETOLD BY GYPSY ROSE LEE'.

"I can tell by your face that you have many a care, And they won't go away by just standing there. Let me help you find the answers you hunt, There's no need to stand there looking afraid".

She parted the curtain and I stepped inside, Feeling quite nervous 'tho I'd nothing to hide. "My God you look tired. Thoroughly knackered. Take a seat – no, not that one. It's just been lacquered.

"Sit there for a minute – you're still looking pale, And then when you're ready tell me your tale. In the meantime so we know just where we stand, Just pop a tenner into my hand".

"It's like this you see", I started to tell her, I want to make a Thief of an honest feller". "Good God" said Rose, "That's a new one on me, Just tell me about him and we'll see what we'll see".

"He's a well-known surveyor but despite that quite bright, And now Senior Partner with the firm of Fenn Wright'. "STOP!" said the gypsy ... her face all suffused, "He once turned me down and I wasn't amused".

"Estate Agent, Surveyor – it beggars belief. Take it from me, he's ALREADY a Thief. Now bugger off home I've no time to waste on People like you – or ANDREW CRAYSTON".



An esteemed veteran, with twenty-four years of service under his belt, In Royal Signals, Provost Staff and White Helmets, his feats are heartfelt.

From the dust of Afghanistan to the rhythm of St Helena's street, Even a stint as a cop ensuring order's beat.

> Now seeking a new path, a venture bold and grant, To join the Thieves, an honour he will understand.

With skills forged in duty, and discipline true, He brings loyalty, stealth and cunning to pursue.



Ben Carver I must propose to you. He's moved around a lot, that's true His dad in the army got shipped around But in Colchester a home he's found.

Just missed out on dual nationality, When his dad was posted to Germany. That extra passport would be really handy, If Brexit doesn't end up quite so dandy.

He married his wife Jem late last year. They met at the start of his legal career. Our young Ben a solicitor he's become, Doing property work as a rule of thumb.

He's dabbled in Fencing, Airsoft and Paintball, But his wife and his job, they top it all. So let's get it done with no further palaver. As a Thief I commend Ben Carver.



Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Guests and Fellow Thieves

I hope I get through this without a glitch As I proudly introduce my son Benjamin Charles Fitch

He has achieved so much whilst he's been on this earth
So here I go as I tackle this verse
Following School and Uni too
he then joined the Marks Tey Radio Family Crew.
What he doesn't know it's not worth knowing
as he helps the business keep on growing.

At only nineteen he fulfilled his dream to own a VW camper van With a pop and a bang he quickly became a mechanical man covered in grease with the engine out he could fix it there's no doubt

His love of mechanics has taken him far

He's now the proud owner of a classic American Car.

A family man with wife Maria, two young children Arthur and Isla who could wish for anything finer
So members as requested I've kept this brief
I propose my son Ben the third generation Fitch to become a Thief.



Born in nineteen forty-seven,
In Surrey, under an English Heaven.
A Barclays man tried and trusted,
With verve, good humour, well adjusted.
Barclays sent him to Australia.

He returned successful, not a failure,
To London Town and deals anew,
He and Linda moved to Kew.
Rowing is his life's delight,
A "do it yourselfer" day and night.
A traveller too, to France and Europe.
Catch him in his office, not a hope.
To Stratford St Mary he has repaired.
To take the sparking Suffolk air.
With lovely views over the Stour,
Constable Country will never sour.
E has become a "Suffolk Boy", and even drives a Tonka Toy.

Fellow Thieves, lest this ditty should become a drag. Please welcome with acclamation, BERNIE PRAGG.



Brian Wright is thought, and it's my strong belief, He's a worthy chap to be a Thief.

An Essex man for many a year, but born and bred far north of here. Yorkshire and Harrogate in his early years, and from there he came south, with no fears.

An honours degree in applied sports coaching, he was our Robin Hood in disguised clothing. An archer of great skill he did perform, National coach and East Anglian Champ, for him just the norm.

A free man of London and a fine livery man, but Freemasonry is huge for him and upwards he goes.

A writer of note on 11 Masonic books, this is a man whose work simply flows.

His work was at Ford for many a year, diesels his thing and he had no fear.

Now retired, and two daughters he has, his five grandchildren just love to be with his fishy prized koi, But he has to keep saying, they are no toy, they're just for looking and definitely not cooking.

A man with a big beard as I am sure you have seen, Brian will no doubt be a splendid Thief. So fellow Thieves, I hope you agree too, as I present Brian Wright to all of you.



Mr President, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves, etc.

I introduce to you a man with lots of ribbons and the odd gong
Obtained in various theatres of war with much aplomb
Wearing tartan trews was his mode of attire
Until his war wounds forced him to retire.

His next move was to fulfil an ambition He decided he wanted to be a politician. So it was to Stockton North in '97 he turned, And by his own admission he crashed and burned.

His next career he had in mind was a solicitor,
And in this he became a well-known local practitioner.
With Goody Burnett as a Senior Partner he rose to fame,
Becoming a well-established household name.

In his life he is a thwarted thespian,
So is now helping the Mercury as a custodian.
He serves in the role of a trustee,
After all he is a man of the Community.

I give you Bryan Johnston.



Mr Chairman, Mayor, Members, I'm pleased to propose,
With privilege and pleasure – in amateur prose,
Two men of distinction – both very well known,
You'd write to the short one – while the tall one you'd phone.

But rhyming their names – just where could I start, With a difficult one like that of Bryn Smart, I tried with an H – a P – and an F, Gave up in despair with what I had left.

If it could be done, what would follow it then, Was the very real problem of one Leeson Ken, So a short rhyme about them, I hope you'll agree, Will gain them admission for just a small fee.

My first is a lawyer – he sails and shoots guns,
The family is local – one of ELLI'S SONS,
He schooled at the Gilberd – Bryn Smart is his name,
He's fathered four children tough Rugby's his game!
No vice save sex, fine wine and good food,
A "Thief" will you make him in case I get sued!

My next the big man – Ken Leeson is his name, His private parts now public – he's had a rapid rise to fame, From the Army and the GPO, he's progressed like a bomb, And very highly qualified – this Boss of Telecom.

A married man – two grown up sons – lives in Fitzwalter Road,
For a Regional Director – it's just the right abode,
You'll see him on the TV – in some disguise it's true,
He's the one who comes up from the sea, when they call "It's for you".

Together they sit there – waiting for your acclaim,
Their wish is to be real "Thieves" – not just guests again,
So this rhyme with their names in – I hope you will agree,
Can confirm as new members – my friends – WIG and BUZZBY.



May I introduce young Carl Amos
To rhyme with this, I was at a loss
A family man
Picture this if you can
Has a business of which he is the boss.

His father known to all here
A Thief for many a year
Like father like son
When this poem is done
I hope you'll all give him a cheer.

At golf he's a quite handy chap He plays off a 9 handicap Golf Club Newton Green He's there often seen Finding bunkers or some such mishap.

His forte is office supplies I'm sure it will be no surprise That business he studied It's quite clear, not muddled That as a Thief he now should rise!



Pardon me for shouting this poetical roast.

But my proposal is as deaf as a post.
Charles McKay is a wonderful guy.

And as an IT director he'll make your business fly.
Make him a Thief and I know he'll be proud
As long as you all shout very loud!



From Exeter University, and a Masters at Kings, Now at Grant Thorton doing "audit things". A marathon runner, and a fast bowler too, I have an exemplary person to introduce to you.

To Dedham one day I hope he can aspire, So I can stop cooking ... and finally retire. My friend, my son, and with much great aplomb, I introduce you to Charlie another MilSOM.



I'd like to introduce Chris Andrews
To some of you this is old news
A local born lad
In the Army his Dad
Gave many a soldier the blues.

When Chris chose a career in Law John Fowlers did open their door I said we will train thee And though it will pain me We'll pay you so that you're not poor.

A solicitor since oh-oh-eight He didn't have too long to wait His rise meteoric Some would say historic He is now a Partner, first-rate.

Chris mainly does Probate and Wills
It's not work that's brimming with thrills
But one thing must be said
When you work for the dead
They seldom complain of their bills.

Chris works all the hours that our God sends
In Mersea he rests when the day ends
A chap loyal and true
Thoroughly decent too
Likes to spend spare time relaxing with friends.

I've already introduced Chris So I'll finish off by saying this A good Thief he would make Though at his charging rate Some would say that he already is!



Of Yorkshire stock, but Essex bred, Young Chris was school-ed at Felsted. Then, because he was good at rugger, He went on to Barts, the clever fellow.

Married to Fi, they very soon made, A beautiful daughter they christened Sinead. And as all medics must have own "ology", Chris decided that his was Urology.

The founder of CHAPS, Chris is first rate, At raising awareness of that gland, the prostate. Inserting a finger where a finger didn't oughter, Has helped many a patient again to pass water.

And (though no relevance to those at this function), Chris is an expert in erectile dysfunction. So rise up fellow Thieves, and let's give relief, To Christopher Booth and acclaim him a Thief.



Chris Clarke my son it is my belief is a worthy chap to be a Thief. An Essex man for many a year but born and bred far north of here. Southport his home in early years and from there we all travelled, I think with some tears. His school he boarded with not a female in sight yet he just loved the life he would often cite. Our response was school is to learn, girls are for later, keep your head down and be no procurator. He now travels the World, plastic bottles to sell, He's great at his job but I must not dwell. His life has a plan, well that's how it's looking, I'm proud of this man and even his cooking. Now a good Essex boy he likes a great deal, He's crafty and skilful, and always has zeal. A great home he has built just by Fordham Heath, He is a man on a mission with much self-belief. He's a family man with two fine children, he offers them caring, and a great deal of sharing. His house is so busy twenty-four seven, if it were me I'd now be in heaven. But I'm pleased to say he complains very little, but when he does, he can be a bit brittle. A sportsman he is and very active he's been, football he coached and success he has seen. The London Marathon he's run, his character came through, it's another box ticked and another job done.

Chris will I'm sure be a splendid Thief, one day I hope he'll be chief Thief.

Until that time I hope you will, accept my boy for now and 'til,

Chris I have done my confessing, I give you my blessing.

Fellow Thieves, I hope you will too, I present Chris Clarke to you.



Some might remember that last time, I racked my mind but found no rhyme For Aldir (Mike) – I was beaten, But just got by with modest cheatin'.

This time round I'd avoid the error, No rhyme-less nights filled with terror, No problem verse over which I'd hanker, My guest this year is first a banker.

But that's not all – he's a musician too, Plays guitar with Harlequin, (who?). I can even use his first name Chris, Knowing he won't think I'm taking a liberty.

And so, fellow Thieves, to me befalls, The Honour, in these hallowed halls, A Poet's dream – it never palls, To find a rhyme for a man named Halls.

Fellow Thieves: I commend to you, Chris Halls.



His Great Grandfather was a Kent Master Plumber, (some for a start would say that was a bummer), Who came to this town in Nineteen Thirteen, Having previously served his country and Queen.

This plumber formed a business in twenty five, From a back garden shed not far from The Hythe, He was C H Lindsey joined by CR his son, Starting a plumbing firm still second to none.

Times are hard said CH to his boy, Best get some work from the "Hoy Polloy", Work rolled in to their relief, And very soon after CR was a Thief.

War broke out twas a fight good and proper, So CR joined up as a town special copper, Plumbing by day and patrolling by night, Colchester streets with his rifle and light.

Peacetime again and soon I was embroiled, So for CH Lindsey I also toiled, Over forty long years improving and transitioning, From plumbing and heating to more air conditioning.

Now I have a son, who's a bit of a ginger, For the milkman I'm sure he was a dead ringer, He's very good at golf and a skier as well, But how to find time now is hard to tell.

Most of his schooling was done in this town, At Colchester Boys' High, that place of renown, Then off to college and varsity too, Learning a trade as engineers do.

Don't join us, my boy, I said to my son, It's bloody hard work and not much fun, But today he is our Commander in Chief, And from tonight, I hope, a Colchester Thief.



I present to you a chap named Chris, His surname Meadows, I tell you this, Colchester born was this young man, A life in law always his plan.

He studied hard in the big City, It all paid off so feel no pity, At Westminster Uni his degree and his Masters, He did well in both, there were no disasters.

A solicitor now, this box is ticked, Probate is the type of work he has picked, So he'll help you sort out your dearly departed, A far cry from the bar work where he started.

Our Chris resides in Brightlingsea, Goes hiking, enjoys ornithology, His partner a teacher at CCHSG, At the end of tonight a Thief he will be.



You may have seen him at the keyboard in church or at a Rotary recital You may have seen him in Lexden Road on his bicycle You may have seen him in the Lakes at the top of a fell You may have seen him in his Tesla, going like hell.

Colin made his career with Charles Stanley in London, I hear And a very successful Stock Broker that is clear He now turns to Colchester and work of a charitable kind Age Concern and Beacon House come to mind.

Colin and Sue have children and grandchildren galore
All of whom they adore
An ideal Thief Colin Bennett would make
So bring him in for goodness sake.



Tonight dear Thieves, I wish to present A man to which I hope you'll give assent Raised with brothers and sisters in county Donegal From labourer to reservist this man's done it all.

In London he traded in corporate tech networking Computer, servers, databases and security, just the thing He learned all he could but felt to a degree A desire to be his own boss in his own company.

Now we move to Colchester and wife called Ailish Gave him daughter's Alana and Aoife (not a rhyming man's wish) Day to day running a business now named as Rio IT He provides support and consultancy for the community.

In the times he's not working he has some distractions
Gliding, drumming and publishing books all have their attractions
So please would you grant me some blessed relief
Put your hands together to welcome Colm Coyle as a Thief.



This evening, I am delighted to introduce to you,
A veritable numbers Guru,
A Colcestrian and amicable chap,
Young in years but firmly on the map.

This gentleman has lots of energy for work and play,
And puts in long hours everyday,
Off he goes sky diving and hiking whenever he can,
Whilst being a partner of Griffin Chapman.

He revels in his charity work and fun with Colchester Colne Round Table,
He rolls up his sleeves and is most able,
He is an organiser of the Colchester Half Marathon but does not run,
Preferring to watch while sitting on his seat.

For his holidays he enjoys taking his young nephew to Center Parcs,
Time to relax and meet other bright sparks,
Your support of my nomination would bring great relief,
I am pleased to propose Dan Aldworth as a Thief.



Mr Chairman, dignitaries, fellow Thieves and guests,
In my prose tonight I will do my best,
This evening, I would like to propose,
A friend of mine who I've known of old.

From Copford-shire in Colchester he was born and bred, A policewoman no less, he eventually wed, With this next secret I share, he shan't be too jolly, Unfortunately for her, his school nickname was Floppy!

From junior to senior many accounts he has managed, However, with the City lifestyle his liver he's damaged, His appearance in the Evening Standard I haven't yet mentioned, With golf, skiing, cricket and rugby, he's a self-proclaimed legend!

At times he can be seen as somewhat eccentric,
But his moral fibre is always authentic,
But my fellow Thieves please do not be conned,
May I present my friend, and a gentleman ... Mr Daniel Mark Vipond.



Now if you've read that Tom Sharpe book, Of Wilt who lectures learners, You'll know about that College man, Who tries to make high earners.

His students lead him by the nose, He's never quite the Master, His friends and family do so too, His life's a real disaster.

By contrast now please welcome here, A College Principal, You'll know his ship is run quite tight, Results are good as well.

Ten thousand people pass through each year, Many are professional, There's business, healthcare, music, and Degrees too for the obsessional.

He's got a Board of Governors, To keep him on his toes, But what he does when we're not there, Only the Almighty knows.

He's keen on soccer too you know, A Colchester fan be he, He hoped we'd beat that Everton, But now it be Chelsea.

He also likes his pint of ale, Or maybe three or four, And when you make it five or six, He's still not on the floor.

And now please warmly welcome, This wee known local Chief, Into the company here tonight, He'll make a worthy Thief.

So who's this man we talk about? But first you need to know, Not Cluff, or Cloff or even Cloo, Of course its Danny Clough.



This poem's about Darin Shaikly It's really been troubling me lately There is so much to say We could be here all day And some of the rhyming is shaky.

Wishes he'd tried much harder at school
But clearly he's nobody's fool
Wheeler dealer since young days
He's shown that hard work pays
And business is good as a rule.

City messenger life was not funny Showed an aptitude working with money Ended up Head of Trading But the interest was fading And now he does property, Honey.

Some running he's done in the past His marathon time, pretty fast Has four kids and a wife And a pretty good life And as a Thief he joins us at last.



The man I now propose to you Has been my son for thirty years He's tall and bright, an IT whizz And very fond of ales and beers.

Sea scouting's how he learned to sail
And worked the wind in all its might
And ever seeking thrills anew
He grew a passion for his kite (16 ft across!)

Then off he went to UEA Before a three month stint at sea When home he met and wed Hollie And now with Jacob they are three.

His sense of humour's very sharp He's always up for having fun But his social conscience is inbred And he helped out with the soup run.

So please accept my lad as a Thief He lives in t'Borough, off Layer Road And welcome him as you've welcomed me If you don't clap, I'll be round to goad.

And so might his uncle, Andrew Ellis.

Fellow Thieves: David Allen!



Little Man kneels at the end of the hall; "Why can't I be upstanding and tall?" Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares! Wee David Barbour is saying his prayers.

Twas from the far North his Scots forebears came,
To the land of the Angles at fair Chattisham.
His Grandad it was in the late 1920s,
Brought the Scottish invasion to these farmlands of plenties.
With sons Andrew and Jimmy, who wed Margaret and Mary,
They ploughed Suffolk soil with success that was scary.

So much that when Grandad took his hand off the plough,
Uncle Jim and Dad Andrews together said "Now
To Camulodunum we Scots must repair –
In the land of East Saxons is much land that is fair".
To Gosbecks they came with tractors and tools,
And David was born the day after 'All Fools'.

That happened in nineteen hundred and fifty,
A Scot, and a farmer: no wonder he's thrifty.
In small parcels they say come the things that are best.
As David got older this was put to the test:
After schooling at Endsleigh and then Isle of Wight,
Andrew and Margaret found themselves in a plight.

After all of their efforts he still was quite little.
"I know!" said Andrew. "We'll send him to Writtle."
And while he was there studying cows hens and porkers,
He very quickly learnt that the ladies are corkers.
So, as well as learning to be a good farmer,
He learnt all the ways to be such a charmer.

Tennis, squash, football – sports talents alarming, Scarcely a mo to help Dad with the farming. And clay pigeon shooting (a champion, no less) And at rugby and golf he tried to be best. But even tiddlers can get caught on a hook, And when just 22 he was snared by a look.

'Twas Anne the daughter of TV man Chesman,
Saw him from her car and said "Get off your knees man!"
But as at that moment he stood on new heels,
Romance seemed unlikely with Anne at the wheels.
But our David was a man not to be blighted – their very first date was to Colchester United!

Even with that most unusual start,
David the charmer captured her heart
And so down the years events have moved on,
And David's fine sons are Andrew and John.
He farms but a little at Gosbecks the noo –
"Tis his pride archaeological shred for town and for you.

Little man sits at the end of the hall; A man who in spirit and caring is tall. Hush! Hush! Whisper who dared! Wee David Barbour still says his prayers.

Gentlemen: I give you: David Barbour.



Born in Colchester Maternity Hospital, was Brooks
A man of exceptional looks, met Pam schooled in Colchester another local girl
That won David Brooks and he gave her his pearl.

A land agent with Fenn Wrights was a start to his career
Which he enjoyed for a day and many a year
Eventually some time later and many a beer
He opened the Colchester office for Robinson and Hall, here, here.

With his work on foot, in office and field
For Colchester Council and Farmers help yield
Valuing this and summing up that
He's a popular local
A clean bright chap.

A shooting man, a walker too
He's been from St Botolphs to Timbuktu
And in his spare time using his glue
Has two bright daughters
Vicky and Loo (Elizabeth).

Well known to most, I am pleased to host

And honoured to boast, to fellow Thieves as I welcome to you all tonight

A well overdue proposal as Thief, Mr David Brooks.



The man I introduce tonight A friend of mine called Dave A gent of charm, a real good wit It's a pity he needs a shave.

In Suffolk was our hero born
In Essex now his home
West Bergholt is his place of choice
He doesn't live alone.

The lovely Julie is his wife His kids Sophie and Fred A runner, cyclist, cricketer, A busy life he's led.

An estate agent was his first job Abbots and Bairstow Eves What better training could he have To join a bunch of thieves?

Bradford and Bingley was the next Step on our Dave's career But on he moved, to law he turned That's how he came to be here.

To Birkett Long our Dave transferred Business development to pursue His job to open many a door He may have talked to you.

So my friend Dave I give to you A great bloke to be blunt But please be sure to learn his name Because it's David Cant.



From Pendeen's beacon, David did spring, His accent a mix, a curious thing. In Clacton's calm, with sly wit and charm, He built a firm, where accents disarm.

With trucks and tools, his team in tow, They travel the land wherever they go. For BT's call, they answer with glee, Removing phone boxes from land to sea.

Through valleys and hill, they roam with delight, David's laughter echoing, day and night. In Essex's embrace, his humour rings true, As phone boxes vanish, his mischief accrue.

So from the Cornish lighthouse's glow to Essex's cheer,
David Chapman's legacy, crystal clear.
In accents mixed and humour sly,
His firm marches on, reaching the sky.



Our David works at school all day,
He is so very wise,
The girls they love him dearly,
He's a hero in their eyes.

The books he keeps with greatest care,
The figures must be right,
For when things are in order,
He will surely sleep at night.

Then one day to his Office, Came Miss Jones with figure neat, With smiling eyes she said to him, "I think you need a treat".

Please see if you can make it, To the gym at half past four, I'll be there ready waiting, I shall stand beside the door.

Our David is not made of stone, And his knees began to shake, As to the gym door later on, His way he sought to make.

Her words of wisdom shook him, As she fixed him with a beam, "Congratulations David. You're in the netball team".

Now Cotterell has recovered, But he's had a nasty fright, So fellow Thieves, please welcome him, At our dinner here tonight.



A gentleman of great integrity
A sportsman through and through
A kind and generous man for sure
A hand he'll lend to you.

A builder of pits and reservoirs As he oversees SRC But also, a successful farmer And great friend especially to me.

On his estate at Elmstead Market There will soon be more profitable crops As he swops his beats and onions For a thousand building plots.

But it's not all good you know For there's one area where he's a menace And that with us at Prested Hall Where he cheats at Padel Tennis.



He nearly lives in Clacton, Upon the sunny coast. But really hails from St Osyth, An altogether better boast.

He grows spuds and wheat and barley and turf,
And loves the worms that live in his earth.
He limits his tillage to help life in the soil,
And plants hedges and trees, the land not to spoil.

Another passion is the Tendring Show.
Farming and Countryside and how things grow.
The Chairman he's has been and still wants to see,
Educating the public and he does it for free.

He tills his farm and so much more, So let him in I do implore. A proper Thief he needs to be, That's David Lord for all to see.



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves.

David, half Irish, was born in Stepney Green. At an early age he left the big smoke, the family desire for a quieter scene.

> In his early career he flirted within banking, Before turning his hand to a career more highly ranking.

A Colcestrian he became in his early twenties, where Insurance work and Essex girls were always aplenty.

Here he met his wife Nicki, a real gemstone And it wasn't too long after that they were both in the zone.

With David in high demand, parenthood was always the plan. Two aspiring young adults he has raised in James and Dan.

They set up camp in Fordham and the talk is he left through boredom. Home base is now in the village of Bergholt, which the family moved to in a jolt.

A keen sportsman he has been, Stanway football he has coached With great success he has seen!

Gentlemen, from Colchester City, I give you David Morrissey, An interesting addition, I hope, to our group of Thieves.



Fellow Thieves

The member I offer this year is honestly meant As a copper he's never or not often been bent. He worked in Colchester for part of his career Remarried, retired and he still lives here.

He is a South Essex kid from a barrow boy background But he wanted to chase criminals until they were found. On catching the bad guys, he would be heard to say When you are caught in Colchester you will be made to pay.

Married three times he's a bit of a tinker A golfer, Col U supporter and strategic thinker. The Colchester Community Stadium Company needed a chair So this bloke offered his services and experience to share.

Now the man I am proposing was the Borough's top cop What could be more fitting for the Thieves' new crop? I hope you welcome him with warm and friendly looks Especially in a hall that is possibly full of crooks.

I give you my good mate Colchester's retired Chief Superintendent, David Murthwaite.



An honest youth, not tempted by crime, His passion was computers, primitive at that time. First money he earned was at the keyboard, I recall, Of the Wurlitzer organ, during bingo at Bilston Town Hall.

In mid-life he was based in Geneva, marvellous for photography,
To chair the international committee on data cryptography.
I will not attempt to explain, this complex codebreaking lark,
You need a Degree in Mathematics, and training at Bletchley Park.

Then to Kroll Associates, New York's top corporate investigator, Where cases of less than 10 million dollars, are shown the door. Civil recovery of fraud through the banking system is why, He spent many of his days in Monaco, Cayman and the B-V-I.

Forsaking this excitement, now he earns an honest fee, Running a computer forensics consultancy. Elected as a borough Councillor while rather long in tooth, Still plays the Town Hall organ, just like he did in youth.



Djalil was born in Iran, a country that's quite far, An officer he was in the navy of the Shah. Things all changed for Djalil due to the Revolution, Leaving his home country he felt was the solution.

Home he made in Italy and then onward to Sweden, Took training as a dentist, a field he would succeed in. He met his wife Nadi there, so good things went his way, In 1996 he moved to the UK.

Set up his own practice in old Colchester Town,
Became the go to man to see for a filling or a crown.
He's heading to retirement now and winding down a bit,
Travel and relaxation, he cannot wait for it.

Japan is on his bucket list along with ancient Persia, And many more I'm sure there'll be once he picks up inertia. The time has come to end my rhyme, I've tried to keep it brief, So, Amir, as he's known to friends, I commend him as a Thief.



Originally from Croydon, to
Essex he then came,
To sea and sand and
Open space, there to seek his fame.

He first became a bobby and Walked the Tendring Streets, But found the Clacton Drivers Very hard to beat!

And then a "Police Detective"

He was one of my boys!

Then to the Regional Crime Squad!

Oh joy of all joys!

But undercover duty, Strained hid family life, Because by then, he had, Acquired a pretty wife.

So with his expertise, Especially his charm, He's made Panther Security, The name for a house alarm.

Into local politics, for Lexden Ward he ran. He now desires to be a Thief, Accept him if you can.

A dreamer, schemer, raconteur, But never on the con! My Chairman, Members of the Thieves, I give you Henshall, Don.



A Nottingham Lad was thinking one day
Of what to do with his life
He knew how to mend things in just such a way
Be it engine or toaster or knife.

And so to Cambridge he promptly set sail
Engineering to study – or try –
All went well until fate did prevail
And he found his penchant was the sky.

Now Edward's a polyglot, all of Europe's his beat Enjoys food and wine, in all of their forms Raconteur, bon viveur and punster complete A pilot, a train buff and tooter of horns.

Ed, Ed, Engineer Ed,
Globe trotter, wood chopper, hash harrier Ed
Full of good cheer, he enjoys a cold beer
Raise a glass now to welcome
Our newest Thief, Ed.



My Chairman, Fellow Thieves, it's a pleasure for me, To propose tonight – my friend Ernest Free. Born Colchester Maternity Home – 1949, He schooled at Wilson Marriage until his working time.

A sporting lad, football and cross-country,
Played at Col U and ran for the County.

More football for Coggeshall – Wivenhoe – and Lexden,
Met his match in '71 – when he met Marilyn.

They've produced two children – one girl – one boy, There's three grandchildren – who bring much joy, For leisure now golf at Braiswick he plays, A useful performer – on his better days.

He's one of four brothers, Denis, Rolly and Glynn, Is a Rotarian and Mason – where a Master he's been.

With a shop in the High Street and several employed, He's a chap we normally would wish to avoid. No goods in his window – or Sale signs about, Turnover is good – stock seldom runs out.

If your wife pays a visit – then be on your guard,
Though rest assured that the bill – would be on her card.
He's soon got your measure with a look – not a word,
This Director and chief of – WH Shephard.

A new hip corrected – his limp – as he got older,
They said it was caused by heavy weight – on one shoulder.
His touch I'm told is gentle and caring,
Which I recently found most re-assuring.

When I asked whether it mattered – if large or small?

He replied that it didn't matter at all.

Whatever the size I was left in no doubt,

By the time he had finished – there'd be nowt sticking out.

So it matters little, when it comes to your turn, 'Cos whatever your choice, be it bury or burn, Just relax and rest easy, you're in safe hands with our Ern.

I think that's enough, so at this point I'll end, And ask you to welcome – Ernie – my funeral friend.



He has attended this dinner, For many a year, Enjoying the company, Wine and beer.

A Colchester man and proud of it, who now lives in Hitchin and West Mersea too.

After attending the Royal Grammar School, he joined Barclays Bank. I think that was where he got the nickname, Frank.

A family man whose interests vary. I married his sister a lady called Mary.

Friends he has many, Some near and some far. As a boy he sang in the Garrison Church Choir.

> His voice is quite strong, can be heard loud and clear. That's without him taking, a drop of beer.

Mr President, I make myself brief. I commend Francis John Harding, Join us as a Thief.



With a name like Francis O'Mahoney
You'd expect a load of b'larney
But he's honest and kind, with incredible mind
And makes a mean bacon sarni.

(well, you find something to rhyme with O'Mahoney!)

His father is Irish, his mother is French So not for him some run of the mill wench But a wonderful wife who answers as Gill Who insists that her husband's not over the hill.

He lives in Highwoods, thinks France is sublime But between you and me I think he'd opine That this passion is down to a good glass of wine.

He works for BT, difficult tasks he explores Share options and issues are his daily chores He works long days, well into the night But doesn't dare stop until it's all right.

So, I hope you agree, that he's of the right stuff A good candidate, who's done more than enough So please welcome Francis without any more grief To this venerable company, as a Colchester Thief.



Francis is a North London Lad,
Living in Highgate for 15 odd years, the price of property made him sad.
But not one to let that hold him back,
He moved to Colchester to stay on track.

Called to the Bar some 20 years ago,
He has built up a legal reputation as someone you should know.
Appears in Manchester, very often does he,
Representing doctors before the GMC.

Many a career has been saved, And a hard one reputation gained. Always keen to impress, His office is in the Shard, 19th floor no less!

In lockdown he stuck strictly to the rules,
No parties or alcohol or playing around with fools.
And whilst the absence of laughs and fine wine made him sad,
He will now make up for lost time so we can all go mad!

So welcome Francis, give him a Cheer!

A fascinating sort of career!

And whilst he has also striven to be the Chief.

He is now simply delighted that he can now be called a Thief!



Before you is a man called Winton,
Who sadly was not born in Frinton.
Instead he came from Southeast London (said in a SE London accent),
Which to him was a bit of a dungeon.

He became a doctor and not a horologist, And eschewed the chance to be a proctologist. Instead, he decided to become a shrink, Which was better than being in the clink.

He says he is not analysing you all, As that would be beyond the pall. If he did analyse you all, he'd become a daisy, As he would have been driven totally crazy.



Frank hails from the Emerald Isle
A cheery chap with a ready smile
A legal man by trade is he
As qualified as he can be.

Solicitor, Barrister, he's got them all In Australia he had a ball Qualified over there as well He loves his work as you can tell.

His family followed their old Dad Into the law and he was glad He lives today in our fair town And shows no sign of slowing down.

So welcome Frank, give him a cheer He's tried all sorts in his career His legal friends will give him grief Prosecutor, defender, now a Thief!



He enjoyed Cubs and Scouts, then the District Service Team, Where he met Queens Guide Gillian to complete his dream.

With Transport for London, our Frederick George Brown, Spent much of his life working underground.

> As a draughtsman/engineer he plied his trade, And for 41 years this was his crusade.

From East London to Colchester, he eventually moved, And a lead to retirement this new course proved.

So, with time on his side for a Thief to become, With your collective wishes he is pleased to succumb.



Of feather beds and farmers we are told, That they are really men with hearts of gold, With men of highest stature they do rank, As they stagger ever onwards to the Bank.

Said Gordon times are hard you know full well, My last Rolls Royce I fear I've had to sell, Bermuda's out, it's Jaywick where I'll go, I've hired a jolly super little bungalow.

But let's take heart we know that at the finish, Gordon's spirits will revive with pints of Guinness, So let us think of golf and game well won, Please welcome Gordon Penrose, a Thief he would become.



My nomination for Thiefdom I hope you'll agree,
And give your approval a formalit-ee.
A very keen sportsman known to most here,
He's partial to wine and ... the occasional beer.

Though swarthy in looks he's not from the fens, In fact he was born in Kingston-upon-Thames. His father was English and his mother Maltese, He's inherited their humour and just loves to tease.

After school he joined the accountancy profession, And served several firms in quick succession. Eventually he came to this splendid town, Liked it so much ended up hanging 'round.

Now Senior Partner with Griffin Chapman, He professes to be an ardent sports fan. But you may wish to question the sheer sanit-ee, Of a lifelong supporter of BRENTFORD F-Cee.

Long since retired from his soccer career, His opponents no longer cowering in fear. He re-lives his memories of matches he blighted, By watching home games at Colchester United.

Happily married to Judith ... His Wife, He insists he has led ... a quiet life. But a big family man with a heart of gold, He's served our community in ways untold.

And so fellow Thieves I'll end if I can,
By proposing for membership this very good man,
Of character sound, a true shining star,
I commend to you now, Mister Geoff Tarr.



George Campling, who I've been told is my son.
Is rather a crack shot with a gun.
An award winning filmmaker by trade.
At six foot six tall, what a whopper I've made!
But a good loyal man,l know him to be.
And as a newly made Thief, I hope you'll agree!



Gordon, an adopted son of our Roman Town, Came south to study at our University, His aim, to earn the Essex grown, Which he achieved with alacrity.

He is a northern lad, a Liverpool fan, His lot, to suffer many a defeat, And so torture the soul of this Anfield man, When mostly to the Manchester United elite.

A Director of Fiducia since he was twenty-four,
His knowledge and skills mean a demand with no end,
Whether investments or pensions, clients can ask for no more,
And not just a colleague, a very good friend.

A true family man, Lisa is his wife's name,
Round Tabler too, as others here will be aware,
To be found in the gym or pool, though retired from the beautiful game,
And in his spare time, a cook quite extraordinaire.

Fellow Thieves: I invite you to admit Gordon Kearney to our ancient order.



Mr Chairman, so the story goes, He started life at Shardeloes, A mansion fronted by a lake, That once was owned by Francis Drake.

Like pirate Drake of old then he, Soon packed his bags and went to sea. But here the similar story ceased, While Drake went west, our man went east.

> According to a pal of mine, He joined the British India line. He sailed the ocean and 'ere long, He landed up in old Hong Kong.

He left his ship to fight their crime, And joined their police force maritime. To stop the pirates Chinese thugs, From running migrants guns and drugs.

I could tell more – all that entails, Of junks with masts and batten sails, Of chasing pirates and typhoon, Among the islands of Kowloon.

Suffice to say that in the end, He finished up to superintend. Before near here he dropped his hook, To settle down and write a book.

In village life this new recruit, Now chairs the Nottage Institute. Where you can get an education In seamanship and navigation.

And now I think you will concur,

He was a first class mariner.

So fellow Thieves, with one accord, let's make a Thief of Iain Ward.



I would like to propose a man who is truly a Thief,
Of 800 staff he is the chief.
Newsquest Essex I hereby proclaim,
Is his Colchester company's name.

Many have said that he has no standards, Not true, he has the COUNTY standards, And he's got Gazettes and Expresses, And it's rumoured large printing presses.

Newcastle is still his true home town, But from there he chose to roam, From Newcastle to Doncaster he drove, And then a town called Brighton & Hove.

He's been a publisher far and near, Newspapers are his chosen career, Once he was the man from the Pru', Knocking on doors if you were overdue.

He once thought of being a teacher, He wasn't pious enough to be a preacher, He's skilled at newsworthy headlines, And publishing papers to deadlines.

Although he is the Managing Director,
He is also a frequent aviator,
"It's all getting too much" he now and then cries,
And off to his Spanish villa he flies.

While we're wrapped up in warm woolly vests,
He's gazing in rapture at all those bare chests,
Whilst sitting here in his shorts,
He claims we are all in his thoughts.
I'm only drinking my Champagne,
Why is it you all complain?

From Sussex to Colchester he has arisen, From there he'd heard of Colchester prison, He said he thought we were all convicts, But now he knows we're all Thieves.

I would like to propose IAN FERGUSON.



I ask you fellow Thieves to bear with me tonight, Recommending two names may not be quite right. They're both local accountants from the PKF stable Little and large but both very able.

The first is named David, the taller of the two, Six foot four inches and that's without shoes. Successful in rugger because of his size And also at golf he has won the odd prize.

His drives off the tee are impressively long, His shoulders and arms must be terribly strong! But now and again, with his aim not so true, His ball hits the trees and the air turns quite blue.

During the day he helps companies in trouble, Wherever they are he goes in at the double. Some he is able to save from disaster, Others he tries to patch up with a plaster.

The second of my guests is an expert in tax, (And) spends much of his time on computer and fax.

On weekends and holidays he likes to set sail,

And often gets caught in a force thirteen gale.

Born in Barbados he's PKF's boss, Though portly in stature he gathers no moss. A few years ago he owned a nice pub, Serving the punters, very good grub.

Like many of us here, he's partial to wine, As long as it's red, he really does not mind. "It's good for your health", I've oft heard him say, But I'm sure that's not true, for a bottle a day!

I've gone on too long, so I'll get to the nub, Both of my guests want to join our great club, And so fellow Thieves if I may be so bold, I commend (to you) Ian Greenidge and David Merrygold.



Born in Hove, but raised in Reading Soon to Cambridge he was heading, And after a couple of top-notch degrees He studied at Harvard overseas.

Called to the Bar his career was stellar, As Junior, Silk, High Court Judge, Arbitrator. His practice is global, he's a member of Bars In France and Australia, Singapore – and next Mars?

Ian lives in Dedham with his wife Jill When of London they've had their fill. As a top barrister he'd never chunter, So acclaim as a Thief, please, my guest Ian Hunter.



It is my pleasure to introduce Ian Mosley to you,

To enlighten my fellow Thieves to this fine chap and propose that he join our crew!

As a single young Yorkshireman student, he drove the girls dotty,

And was extremely popular with the local young ladies!

Later meeting his beloved wife, he came in search of his bounty, Coming 30 years ago to Colchester in this fine county, An upstanding professional and in true Yorkshire fashion, direct Of good character this senior architect.

A partner of Stanley Bragg's for many years,
His designs are a cause for celebration, not tears,
A family man through and through with 2 fine sons,
A passion for Switzerland where he probably keeps his funds.

Keen on football and cricket,

Making Ian a Thief would surely be just the ticket.

I commend Ian Mosley to you,

A more deserving Thief I never knew!



For 30 years James has been a Colcestrian Serving its people as best he can. He has been a Scout and Leader for many a year, The people of Colchester should give him a cheer.

He married his true love and very happy they were, For she was the daughter of his manager. He worked very hard both night and day, And saw a steady rise in his hours and his pay.

They were blessed with a daughter, whom they truly adored, And when time would allow, they went hiking often abroad, Or climbing up rocks very steep and fearful, But his family of three made him content and cheerful.

Not satisfied that he was serving well,
His sights on Rotary rapidly fell.
He gives all he can to this organisation,
Helping all over the world, people in desperation.

He'll continue to help no matter where, Being honourable, for all people does he care. Thus saying, will you please receive, James Chandler as a Colchester Thief.



James was born in far off land, in a county north of here. He now lives here in Essex and drinks the local beer.

Reading was his college home where he gained a good degree, But known to his mates as "Suffolk", a few is "acupla three".

He farms in Great Bentley with George Wright,
Works hard from dawn to dusk and night.
Grows spuds and grass and other crops,
But in the shooting season stops.
Out comes his gun with cartridges in, and his gun dogs Tonic and Gin.

Please let him in I do implore, I really can't say any more – James Groom is my son-in-law! For me it would be such relief for him to be a proper Thief.



A young man of Halstead by fame Colchester born his father the same Property Management his game He'll strive and he'll strain To provide for his clients a gain.

Covering Essex is all in his day
From Rowhedge to Chelmsford he'll play
A school Governor of sorts
he enjoys lots of sports
At cycling he excels every way.

Moved to Pebmarsh, he drinks down the pub He likes sausage and mash and all grub His wife Julie and kids, all love him to bits When he works in the garden life fits.

He'll be honoured to join as a Thief Cos his dad says this rhyme must be brief The applause says it all He'll bow to your call Big hearted he's not all that tall.



May I introduce young James O'Toole, When it comes to the Law, he's nobody's fool, Dublin born, now a Colchester lad, From a family of lawyers, brother, sister and dad.

Criminal Law his chosen subject,
A hard life that is, I would expect,
At Police stations and courts, he spends all night and day,
Stopping villains from being put away.

Defending criminals, yes, that is his game, He also plays tennis but that's not quite the same, In court he excels and advocacy, If I were a crim he could represent me!

When not stopping the bad guys from going to clink, He runs miles to relax, quite quickly I think, And spends time on holiday, with hot sun and sand, Not quite like it is in his native Ireland.

May I give you this gent from the fine land of Eire, As a friend and colleague you couldn't choose fairer, And so as a Thief I propose him today, Please welcome young James, who says crime doesn't pay?



May I introduce James Sheldrick Colcestrian since ninety-six In Cambridge he was born and bred Studied at St Thomas' College of Meds.

Ophthalmology is his game His darling wife, she does the same I can't let this one pass me by I hope they're seeing eye-to-eye.

Spent some time attached to the military
And on exercise in Germany
Got himself in a bit of a fix
Underpants and nettles just don't mix.

Likes a drop of proper beer Enjoys his travel far and near Warm water and sun his main requests After Naval cold water survival tests.

He loves his stand-up comedy A finer chap there could not be I'm sure it's much to his relief Applause for James, he's now a Thief.



I propose a true Colcestrian He's lived here all his life And also married locally To Robyn, his charming wife.

Maternity Hospital Lexden gone He'd like a word with the peasant Who demolished this, his place of birth For homes in Sovereign Crescent.

If toning up is a New Year's resolution Nutrition and Fitness are his skills He's good at offering a professional solution Without the need for expensive pills.

> Honesty, integrity and justice Are values in which he believes So I hope that you will all agree To welcome him to the Thieves.



Tonight, I am here to propose my son Joe, A man with ambition, get up and go. As a guest he's attended many a time, Now it's my turn to tell you about him in rhyme.

> He works in high-tech, With Police far and near, To handle phone calls, From people in fear.

Sport in truth is his real desire, Skiing, football and golf. Got his colours at Uni for sliding down slopes, And in football last year satisfied both league and cup hopes.

He's achieved quite a lot, built on strong self-belief, And tonight I ask you to make Joe a Thief.



Let me introduce to you, John Arrowsmith, a whizz it's true. The financial planning skills he's got, Will help you retire with a healthy pot.

At Optimum, he's grown his career, Married to Sally for near twenty-five year. He loves rugby, snow sports and motorbikes. It's only football he dislikes.

Three kids he has, all born in December.
His birthday is in March, remember?
If you do the maths, it will soon be clear,
What his wife gives John as a present each year!

His father and brother the Police force were in, John's a firm believer in strong discipline. An unlikely Thief, that would seem to be true, Yet I commend him to join our venerable crew.



The Thief I propose to this mess
Is Brooke-Smith, AKA JBS.
Essex boy since the nest,
You have probably guessed,
He's a lawyer (like all of the best).
Often here as a guest,
He has come through the test.
So I ask you to stand and with zest,
To rise to your feet, raise your glass and say Yes!



John McGuckin was the driver of a train, Now he is retired he won't do that again. Over bridges under bridges to Great Bentley Station, As he lives in Aingers Green, his final destination.

Our friend John McGuckin comes from Glasgow fine, Would rather drink a single malt than awful Buckfast wine! He would say that Celtic are his favourite football team, And Warriors winning the Championship would be his Rugby dream.

He likes to spend his spare time with his wife named Hollie, And days out playing golf or bowls do really make John jolly. He loves to use his caravan but what really makes him curse, Is pushing it onto its pitch because he can't reverse!

I've tried to keep this poem short which I'm sure is a relief, So now I'd say the time is right to make our John a Thief.



Now here's a little story, to tell it is a must – About an unsung hero – in whom we place our trust.

Tonight I propose a jolly good chap – his job's a financial adviser,
So when he buys you a drink,
It's not what you think,
'Cos it's a packet of crisps and a Tizer.

So when he did this to me – I thought he's taking the "P" –
So I told him it wasn't a joke,
He said indeed it was not – returned to the bar in a shot,
But came back with a bottle of Coke.

I thought this good guy should join us at Thieves, I explained – and he found this quite fine, Now there is something else, that really relieves, He knows that our tipple is wine.

When he said he liked football, the "U"s came to mind,
And I knew he was my kind of man.
So you can imagine the shock when I came to find,
That he's really an Ipswich Town fan.

But joking apart – you couldn't do better, And in fact, he's one of the best. What I said before – wasn't true to the letter, And, in fact, it was all said in jest.

> Now there's nowt in the rules, To cause you to ban, This loyal, But misguided, Ipswich Town Fan.

So now you can clap – this really good chap – whose name is JOHN MILLICAN.



Ode to John Warren

Come hither my friends and lend me your ears Cast your mind back some thirty odd years For then Stanley Grant stood where I now stand To make a proposal he tried his hand He knew Ford Warren as a jovial old cuss But still he proposed him to be one of us And now before us is John, son of Ford Who for many years has been working abroad Air movement his game and French was his tongue A man of great talent whose praise must be sung He's modest and kindly, unassuming, yet grand Now he's returned here to live off the land Not tilling the sod nor planting anew But growing fine houses, and a hotel or two? A likeable rogue his pedigree may be A chip off the old block now I bring to thee. So let's welcome John warmly for it's my belief That the son of Ford Warren will make a fine Thief

Gentlemen: I propose John Warren as a member of our Association.



A young man's here to join our gang tonight, It's young John Wheeler sitting on my right. With Lay & Wheeler he will soon begin, To count his bottles and distil the gin.

Said dad, "It's at the bottom you must start, For tasting beer and wine is quite an art". To the cellar young John made his way, To sip and taste the super Beaujolais.

The tile went by,
He slumped down in a corner,
Empty bottles round him; great disorder.
Said Dad to John, "Today your score is naught.
You've drunk our special stock of vintage port.
The cellar door is locked and I've the key,
For you a special course in drinking tea".

My Godson John – A welcome to our crew, May happy days and fun be long with you.



A Colchester man both born and bred John started business in his garden shed. Developing films and running off prints Undertaking all sorts of photographic stints.

The business expanded, but the shed did not Forcing John to consider an alternative spot. A series of places, he moved as he ought Before ending up at Brunel Court.

A major involvement has been with the Scouts District Commissioner by all best accounts. With many years' service in so many roles Enabling him to achieve so many goals.

Married to Ann, two daughters they've got And living at Langenhoe – a pleasant spot. A member of Rotary amongst other things A worthy candidate to join with the Thieves.

Gentlemen: I give you John Williams of Redwood Photographic.



Fellow Thieves, may I introduce, Jolyon Berry, also known as Joe,
A commercial lawyer from Wivenhoe.
I first met Joe when he joined TSP,
Brought in to make a difference, I'm sure most would agree!

Born in Kent, schooled in the City, Played left wing in the Army, fast and gritty. Then Magic Circle training, for his new vocation, Often found on the square for the social occasion.

From London to Ipswich to progress his career, Now in Colchester for more than a year. He now leads a team, that employers hire, When they need to recruit, or most likely fire!

Not in his nature to cheat mug or steal, But becoming a Thief, for Joe, is ideal. Thank you Thieves for careful attention, To Jolyon Berry's appeal for retention.



I propose to you Jonathan Evans-Jones as a Thief.

He knows all the ladies from beneath!

If you shake him by the hand,
two fingers in your palm will land.
A gynaecologist he was of late,
His hall through his letterbox, he can decorate.
So with his skills, I hope you'll agree,
Evan-Jones a Thief should surely be.



Our Major Pyman found Bosnia especially hot,
And was in airborne as often as not.
He made many jumps,
Landing with spectacular bumps,
And that's why his knees are now completely shot.

In insurance, he's made his particular fame,
And covered most things in that complicated game.
Divers on ships,
Singers and broken hips,
He negotiates to pay for the claim.

At Colchester rugby he'd often be found, And his voice echoed all over the ground. But whether as coach or referee both, He was never shy in buying a round.



There once was a Warren called Ford,
Who farmed his land like a lord,
It's not what you think,
His affinity for a drink,
Did not lay him out on a board!
HE FELL OUT OF THE GREENGAGE TREE!

The next Thief in line was me, I dug up the greengage tree, But no need to tell, You know me so well, What happened in life to ME.

Till eighteen Josh lived far offshore,
A trail he then learnt to explore,
From ski-ing to sailing,
And by way of IT trading,
He's a young man who aspires to more.

A life he has made here in town, Essex Uni gave him his gown, Then on to hard work, Which he never did shirk, His business is one of renown.

So Warrens go right back to Ford, Three Thieves have never been scored, And now we've got Josh, Who's not quite as posh, But then he WAS born abroad.

Gentlemen: May I propose my son Joshua as a third generation Thief.



Fellow Thieves, this is a poem, using rhyme and wit, Composed by myself, and that is no shock. May I introduce you all to my older brother Keith, Who I know will make a very fine Thief.

He runs the family business with our mum, brother, wife and son,
They all continue to make Marks Tey Radio number one.
Providing quality sound, for events big and small,
Always first on the field, with son Ben and my other brother Paul.

He worked alongside our dad from a very early age, Setting up microphones, TVs, speakers and even the stage. Learning from the best I hear people say, Your friend Nigel Fitch, the legend, Mr Marks Tey.

The annual Thieves banquet is no place to feel alone or sad,
That's not easy to do without the company of our dear dad.
As ladies are not allowed here, I can't invite my mother,
So please accept the next best thing, Keith Flitch, my big brother!



Half the Thieves gathered here tonight I see,
Enjoy the status of the privileged postcode – CO3.
My guest was one of those landed gentry – of course,
Living in Fitzwalter Road before moving to Sovereign Court.
He is now ensconced in East Bergholt – for some it is heaven,
But to the rest of us now he's just an ordinary – CO7.

After a start in hotels and the hospitality industry,
He took to the skies for the world to see,
Not for him however the Hun coming out of the sun,
But rather "Would Madam care for some tea and a bun?"
Bristol Britannias, VC10s, 707 and Jumbos for a start,
When he arrived on Concordes, he let go an almighty – smile.

Now a golfer with a handicap of 16, Playing three times a week he's pretty keen, He says he's competitive – I call him mean, He gives you no favours when you're on the green. We're teeing off tomorrow at half past eight, To hand over more dosh will be my fate.

Someone on his table please give him more wine,
Then, with luck, the pot could be mine.
Destined to be a flying golfer from birth,
He is smallish of stature and roundish in girth.
A good egg, I am happy to call him a mate.
Gentlemen: I give you Keith Hearfield on Table 8.



I cannot think of a better man to be a Thief than Keith Larkman.

A lawyer – solicitor, actually;

So being a Thief comes naturally.

But rude to Keith I must not be, 'Cos who're his partners? Yours truly and Tony Frost, our President, and Chris Holmes, Deputy Lieutenant.

Southend-On-Sea was Keith's home town, But before you groan and frown, As soon as Keith got qualified, Up north his future he espied.

So to Colchester his steps he trod, And in North Hill he got a job. He was not then a partner with me, Instead he worked for APB.

Then to Crouch Street he came along, And now he's with us at Birkett Long. A wizard with the Private Client, With wills and probate, quite reliant.

Inheritance tax his specialty,
And trusts – they fill him up with glee.
Enduring Powers of Attorney are
To Keith so much bread and butter.

A dull man? No – a funny bloke, Upon his lips there's ay a joke. A clever brain and very witty, He's always got a little ditty.

What pastimes take up all Keith's time? He's partial to a glass of wine, But principally gardening, And choral music – he can sing.

Backgammon, bridge – all indoor sport, Birdwatching – the feathered sort. I hope by now you're getting the picture, Good old Keith's a bit of a twitcher.

My verses surely I must end, to you I'm pleased to recommend to be Colchester's newest Thief, my friend and partner Larkman, Keith.



Kevin was born in Colchester town, He's been around here all his life, He has two children, 5 and 8, With Sara his beautiful wife.

He is often found playing with balls, All of varying size, Football, cricket and also golf, For which he won many a prize.

His recent challenge was a little extreme, Many miles he decided to run, Successfully 2nd , 4 marathons in 4 days, I'm not sure I'd call it fun!

London to Brighton, the London Marathon 3 times, Round Mersea Island every year, Losing toenails, blisters, aches and breaks, Raising money for charities he holds dear.

> There is one fault I feel I need to share, Where the shepherd lead's the lamb, Gentlemen: I give you Kevin Smith, A supporter of West Ham!



I think Kim Kennedy a good Thief will make, He's honest and lawful and never a fake, He's bouncy and brimming with public school charm, People trust Kim (nice but dim), you'll come to no harm,

He's stuck with a first name that's really for girls, It's hardly his fault though (don't mention his curls), In moving from law to being a Thief, He'd be a gamekeeper turned poacher! What a relief!

His well spoken voice is like Wooster and Jeeves, He's bound to mix well with this gang of Thieves, As a lawyer his manner is abrupt, more than rude, But don't complain or you're bound to be sued.

You may call him lanky or lofty or tall, But however you describe him it'll never be small, He's careful with money to the point of quite tight, He'll try and save pennies with all of his might,

He can also be generous, giving and kind, He likes to give gifts, the best he can find. Like many Thieves here, he's a husband and dad, With all that this brings, the good and the bad,

Since he came to Colchester (it's been twenty years), He's earned the respect of both friends and his peers. And so finally it is my firm belief, That all of this is why Kim will make a good Thief.



Born in Colchester with a Dutch sounding name, For Len insurance was his primary game. But rugby his real passion, apart from his lovely wife Julie, And then there are his boats, cars, golf, travel and Rotary.

The Association was founded for the protection of property,
Len would claim you need insurance to do this properly.
But some claim insurers are actually Thieves,
Matters not whether this you believe.
But the fact that he wishes to join us proves it must be true,
And I therefore commend Len Nieuwenhuis to you.



An Essex boy through and through,
That's if you include Ilford which many do.
In quaint Tolleshunt Knights he made his mark,
and then to that well-known estate, Welshwood Park.
Sadly, he supports Tottenham Hotspur in his spare time,
A former construction contracts manager, bringing projects in on budget and on time.
Fellow Thieves, I commend to you my friend Mr Martin King.



Mervyn does hail from London town Did National Service at Boscombe Down Some secret stuff goes on round there But he knows, he will not share.

Moved to our fine town in ninety-three
To be fair it was actually Tollesbury.
A yacht importer he was to be
And his old home of Harrow was lacking seal

A toastmaster now for 40 years, Last year the President of his peers, His toasts rang out in all our ears, So raise your glasses, give three cheers.

Mervyn, he needs no introduction Please may I ask, no interruption, And unlike in the years gone past He's had his pud in peace at last.

These words today I'm proud to utter I will say them clear, try not to mutter. He led our toasts without a stutter I commend as a Thief – Mervyn Rutter.



Michael, from the age of 4 Made his mind up what laid in store He didn't like to read or write And dreamed only of what HE had in sight. His teacher said "There's more to life Than puppets and magic" - he caused her strife. He performed in assemblies at his school And was always ready to play the fool. He dressed up, juggled and unicycled too Then got himself a job at Colchester Zoo. He performed Punch & Judy, tricks and impressions Much more interesting than doing lessons. This was his idea of heaven And all of this by the age of eleven. We thought he'd join the family business And work with his brothers, that made sense. But the thought of work caused Michael stress. He had other ideas for his finesse. When we offered him a work position He said "Not me Dad, I'm a Magician". He proved that too, winning large cups, trophies and National Awards. Joined Magic Societies and The Circle as well Now the secrets of magic he can never tell. In 2003 he went to the Palace He entertained the Queen and made her smile He said "She was amused for quite a while". Now he wishes to join our band And I am sure he'll show you his sleight of hand, He will entertain beyond belief

If you accept him as a Thief.



May I propose as a Thief, Michael Kennedy, You may note our surnames have a similarity, He is of course, my son and it pleases me To welcome him into our esteemed fraternity.

There's so much to say about him, but here in summary:
Grew up in Colchester and was schooled locally
His greatest loves are cars and Colchester U's FC,
Plays football when he can in the position of goalie.

His easy-going manner could charm a bird from a tree,
And he'd sell ice to an Eskimo quite easily.
He works in web design and IT, to me a mystery
Though I know enough to be suspect of his browsing history!

And now my verse is done which should allay his fears, That I would say something that would offend his ears, To make my son a Thief almost moves me to tears, Although my wallet says he's been a Thief for years!



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves.

Let me present to you a man that will always achieve An interesting addition, I hope to our group of Thieves.

A true Colcestrian by birth and a real family man,
With a great sense of humour.

Married to the lovely Rachael, two daughters and a son,
And Gertie the dog, his real true love, that's the rumour.

Educated in Stanway and then the sixth form,
He knew early on that it was to be a career in a uniform.

As a Colchester Firefighter he is highly regarded,
And never been shy to rollout his hose.

He is proud of his uniform and his bright yellow helmet and is always the first to strike for a pose.

Michael has for years been Green Watch chief driver.

He thought this might help him become a womanizer.

Insurance claims and property repairs are his sidekick game,
A successful business he has built for the family name.

Holidays in Yorkshire and Florida are the norm,
These are meticulously planned whilst on standby in his dorm.
He has got all the disco gear and 'DJ Mike' he aspires to be.
You can always be sure how Michael starts his New Year.
Gin collecting and tasting is a real true passion.
Many a Thieves dinner starts out with a few gin bath rubs by ration.

So hold on to your helmets and hose yourself down. Gentlemen: I give you Michael Rogers as one of our own.



Mike Tyler I'll introduce to thee, Born in Rowhedge in '63, Schooled at Charlie Lucas, for his sins, That is where Mike's adventure begins.

Perhaps adventure is stretching too far, For at profit and loss Mike became a star, Trained as an accountant, his vocation found, Of taxes and suchlike his knowledge is sound.

A Colchester man he's been all his life, Still lives in the town with his daughter and wife, Loves walking and fitness, keeps in shape this man, And trundles around in an old camper van.

He'll balance your books, much to your relief, And so stop the tax man from giving you grief, So the time has arrived to make Mike a Thief.

I commend to you Mike Tyler.



On proposing MIKE ALDIR

I said to Rodney Partington ...
That's him sat over there,
"I'd like to bring Mike Aldir,
He's a decent man I swear,
But I've got a bit of a problem,
And I don't know what to do,
I can't find a rhyme for Aldir.
How about you?"

"No, YOU doesn't rhyme with it", Said Rodney, "What a blow, I'll tell you what though Gordon, Our Glenda's bound to know". And, sure enough the answer came, (She's got a lovely touch), "The word you want is POLDER, The trouble is it's Dutch".

Now Mike came here from Guildford,
To improve himself and such.
I don't think that's in Holland,
Well, not by very much.
A Royal London man, a golfer too,
A chap I'm sure you'll like.
Mr Chairman ... Fellow Thieves,
I give you ALDIR ... MIKE.



I present you a man so cool and calm; he would never do anybody any harm.

A Colcestrian man from head to toe; he was born and bred to help friend and foe.

When young, he lived in the Zanzibar; but playing around he found himself bound, on a plane for Colchestar. To Grammar school he went and worked off his pants; and it was Colchester Council that then called him to finance.

An accountant he was destined to be; and through training his work became key; but life moves on to earn a fee; and now he's saying it's IT that is paying me.

A newspaper man he may possibly pledge; but it's definitely Bill Gates that has given him the edge: He's always the first to get the new toys; and as we all know, he really just wants to be one of the boys.

Within moments of meeting he dips in his pocket; and wow you say – is that your rocket? No he says it's the best 3G; but don't talk now I'm on time free be.

His time at the Mercury was right up his street; and to this day he remains interested, in all things arty and replete. Fine dining and wine he loves to enjoy; but is that 3G a deliberate ploy? For under the table he is playing around; to get the big news for all to astound.

With his dear wife Amanda they have four lovely offspring; active they are, happy and demanding. His home is alive with those family sounds; with kids and dogs he keeps them in bounds.

His passion is music with his beloved strings; give him a guitar and he will strum you many things. To church he will go and pray to the Lord; and he brightens our day with a song and a chord.

Great Horkesley was the place and a Scout Leader he became; to help many youngsters improve on their game.

Mersea Sea Scouts afloat he now energises with, and as Chairman he leads a strong board; but if it's a boat ride you want and not fall overboard; then son Sam is the bloke to pilot your boat.

A founder in Rotaract with Bonnie and Peter; he was soon in office, as Presidential greeter. But Brazil was his thing; and elected he to go, he was the young, ambassadorial GSE King.

A strong Rotarian he has always since been; and President he once was in the Trinity team. He owns real estate in Road Fitzwalter; a place so befitting for a man that don't falter.

A man like this just doesn't come kinder; his friends say he really is a great and true minder. He is up to the minute on all the news; and never at a loss to offer his views.

If four words will suffice – believe me this man can find more in a thrice. He loves his cars and skiing's a treat; with both demanding good use of his feet.

Sailing he loves but alas he admits; my sons are better, the little sh**s (shadows of myself). A man with high principle whatever he does; he's surely a Thief and to be one of us.

It is my delight to give this proposition; and I have no doubt there will be no opposition. So the end is here and I make my proclamation; with I hope from you all much, and great acclamation.

Fellow Thieves: I give you this person in full, and with no blur; His name is now simply – Thief Michael Kerr.



Please welcome Thieves our Neil Watts
The T's he crosses, I's he dots,
Compliance is his speciality,
And other things regulatory

He runs the firm with rods of iron ... Well at least he does keep tryin' To see that we do what we ought to Ensures our audits we do sail through

Now a poacher, once gamekeeper, Trying to rhyme this made me weep-a In his spare time he rides his bikes ... The Alps, the Dales, where'er he likes

Born int the West of our country He's now East as East can be, His wife and children he loves dearly The picture now you must see clearly

Fine wine, good food among his passions
For Harwich Runners he does dashin ...
Came to our town 10 years ago,
He feels it home that much I know
A Thief in waiting, so you lot
I commend to you Neil Watts



Born in the Wirral by the sea, From there he travelled down To Oxford University, To gain his graduate gown

He subsequently flew away And met his wife to be While studying in the USA Where he earned a Ph. D.

As a proper doctor he came back, And trained as a GP. He took up golf and his skill at that Is plain for all to see.

The Balkerne Gardens Trust he chairs, Performed to much acclaim. My long-time friend I present to you Nick Dixon is his name.



This is a tale of the king of Blue Cross sales excesses, And how his wife Janet helped with his successes, A story of young sweethearts, Who'd been engaged for 15 years, And finally named the day. Poor Jan and Nick, how they were teased, By friends who passed their way. They'd saved themselves for all those years, And never more than kissed! Jan's mates would slyly whisper: "You're going to get WHAT'S WHAT When the nuptials are over, He'll give you all he's got!" Poor Nick, he fared no better, His mates were even worse. They'd poke him in the ribs and shout: "You're going to need a nurse! For shy Jan will soon turn right about And she will give you WHAT'S WHAT! You're wedding night you'll not forget, You're going to cop the lot!" The wedding day dawned bright and clear, And everything went fine. They honeymooned in Blackpool by the pier, And were in bed by ten past nine. Ian looked at Nick and said: "Come on -I want WHAT'S WHAT - right now! I've waited more than 15 years, And don't want to have a row". Nick looked confused and tried to smile "No, it's you gives me WHAT'S WHAT", Jan scowled at him and shook her head: "You've let me down a lot". An argument soon started Over who should have WHAT'S WHAT. Nick cried: "If we don't find it, The wedding's gone to pot". They searched their room, their cases too But couldn't find WHAT'S WHAT. Nick said: "We may as well go home, We've gone and lost the plot". As he turned round to get his case, Looking like a ghost, His braces got caught up On the wedding bed post. His trousers round his ankles, showed, A man still in his prime. Jan gasped: "What's that?" Nick said WHAT'S WHAT?" She said: "Oh you, you had it all the time!" Fully recovered and here tonight, hoping to become a Thief. I give you Nick Clarke of Debenhams - he is their chief.



My friend Nigel is a bit of a star.

With this fine company, I know he'll go far.

A filmmaker by profession, and known by many.

To be an upstanding gentleman with more talent than any.

I think now I've been kind enough about this chief,

Please help welcome Nigel as our newest Thief.



Anxious and concerned as nowadays when one digs around,
You never know what might be found.
He was born in 1944, his father Douglas MD
at Groome Daniels & Co, our local brewery store.

A Colchestrian in the fine brewing trade,
Took a liking for the taste so in the business he stayed.
After more beering with Truman Buxton & Co,
Onto pastures new as an Investment Manager with Samuel Montague.

Which markets to follow, which way to go, Decisions, decisions, which seeds to sow? He looked around short term or fixed rate, Then an inspired investment he married in '78.

Next to M&G as Director till 2009, Retirement from full-time just suited them fine. Two sons they have, both commercial high-flyers, Freeing Nigel to retain his passion for classical tyres.

Two little beauties he has been able to bag, A '59 Bentley Flying Spur and a '73 E-Type Jag. An active member of the Rugby, Hockey and Officers clubs, Still leaves time with family to enjoy many restaurants and pubs.

At Braiswick he chases the little white ball,
Takes the rough with the smooth calmly accepting it all.
He's a great chap to know, Nigel Douglas Morrison's his name ...
I trust fellow Thieves he'll be met with acclaim.



When heroic tales are told
As in historic times of old
Of our friend Norman Hornigold,
What will be said,
In tones of dread
Of his dealings with the whitest gold?

He climbed to the heights of Everest,
He was the very best
He sold more units than the rest.
With plastic double glazing
And doors that were amazing
His targets were exceeded and he rode the very crest.

At SEH he was the finance chief Handling all the monetary grief But now retirement has brought relief So with gardening and contentment He is turning over the latest leaf And finally wants to be called a Thief.



What a peculiar situation,
On this august and solemn occasion,
I rise to propose my sons as members, but alas,
They are not here. Why? I hear you ask.

On Friday in the town of Ypres,
The town the Tommies used to call Wipers,
My eldest son is being wed,
And thus not here, they're there instead.

I'll tell you something about my lads, And please forgive a loving Dad, If what I say seems to suggest, That as sons go, they are the best.

Born in Colchester, like their Dad, Proud of it too, and mighty glad, To join our merry bunch of Thieves, Despite their absence overseas.

Roberto's Bar is their life's work, In Crouch Street, where they never shirk, Pulling pints and pouring wine, A place to relax, the custom's fine.

Although in Ipswich town they went to school,
Colchester is their home as a rule,
They worked abroad for years without a flicker,
In France and Greece and Corsica.

They are known for their humour and zest, Their wine bar is the very best, If there is within you disbelief, Call in and tell them you're a Thief!

They will be with us next year I pray, And join our merry revelry. My friends, I've said enough till then, Please welcome my sons, Pat and Ben.



An Executive car dealer he is
At getting a luxury vehicle for you he is a whizz
Whether it be a Mercedes, Bentley or Jag
He is sure to make your wallet sag
Paul Dundas is his name.
On being a Thief he will bring us no shame.
So vehicle comfort for all is now guaranteed,
As soon as we elect him as a member with speed!



It's an honour to stand before you and introduce another This little rhyme is about Paul Fitch my other Big brother.

As a little brother I think I helped him become the man he is today, By breaking things so often "Paul will fix it" I'd always say.

He is a hard-working dad, with three boys and always on the go. His phone is always ringing, that will be his wife, Jo.

We attend this annual Dinner in honour of our late Father, Who loved this Steak & Kidney Dish. And all his three sons, to all be Thieves, would have been his special wish.

So with that in mind let's raise our glass

To all those who are dearly missed,
and drink plenty, celebrate life and most importantly get P***** - Merry!

Introducing my brother Paul Fitch.



I bring before you Mr Flatman.

He has a jukebox in his home
On which he likes to play Tom Jones
His flower power goes before
Flowery shirts he wears galore
It's often said his heart is big
And never known to wear a wig.

A true East Anglian born and bred And I believe he likes a red The family business helped us eat With specialism halal meat You hear his arrival hours before The Lamborghini gives out a roar.

He owns the tallest tower in town Or pardon, City as it's now known We hope to tell a future story When elephants will rise in glory I hope you will accept my brief That Paul Flatman joins us as a Thief!



From Colchester Grammar, Peter arose, To Warwick's halls where knowledge flows. In reading history, he sought his fate, To unravel the past and so debate.

With parchment and pen, he journeyed through time, With studies of conquest, and stories sublime. But destiny's whisper, it called him away, To the realm of the Law, where he'd find his say.

> As a solicitor now, his path is clear, In shipping's domain he's learned to steer. With legal acumen and wisdom bright, He navigates waters, both day and night.

Yet when the waves call, he heeds their song, As a sailing instructor to teach the young. And with Colchester Ravens there's rugby to play, So let's make Peter Bartholomew a Thief today.



My fellow Thieves, from near and afar Let me present our friend Peter Carr.

Born in Yorkshire, moved to Essex, Uni at UEA A degree in Computing on graduation day.

Technically minded, he now works in IT And at Fisher Jones Greenwood, a Partner is he.

Speaking of partners, what of a wife? Amy Jones is the love of his life.

With a boy called William, a girl Emily They four make up the Carr family.

For hobbies, his head turns to the sky Designing and building things to fly.

Many model airplanes built and flown And rumour has it he made his own drone.

My poem is near over, I see your relief Just one question remains – shall we make him a Thief?



It's a difficult belief An Accountant as a Thief. But next door to us here, Is a man you should fear!

The numbers he crunches,
Affects the size of your lunches.
The forecasts he makes,
Cuts down on your cakes.

He looks the sort you could like,
'Til you see him on his motor bike.
All leather and boots,
Gives a clue to his roots.

He was skilfully trained in the art,
Of really making you!
When he predicts where your Company is bound,
With amount of bad news he has found.

With that I am in no doubt, Your Company he could easily trout, And give you considerable grief, With that in mind he makes an ideal Thief.

I give you, free of charge or fee, Peter Gardiner.



A Wivenhoe man since '72, born in Westcliff, schooled in Thorpe Bay, Married to Bonnie for 44 years they have two sons and a character house where they stay.

> His life story is long I will precis not dwell, 27 years ago I first met him looking then still so swell.

Banking and finance he has truly had sway, Developing processes and systems for many home and away.

The great and the good he consulted with zeal
And became a top man with great style and appeal
For 25 years with a passion to help, a local councillor he persisted
And mayor 3 times he existed.

Scouts and Guides he led too for years, And St John's Ambulance he presided over also without fears.

An active Rotaract member he has also been, And in Rotary too always remembered and still seen.

A King Coel's Kitten he has been since the eighties And still he is chair of many Wivenhoe activities.

Whether it's a housing trust, a website, a neighbourhood plan, A syndicate trust or a local history fan.

> He chairs them all with vigour and fun, How does he find time to still find the sun?

Having travelled the world and worked very hard, He retired 5 years ago to work just as hard.

But holidays he does and with boys skiing he insisted, Well that was until his leg became too twisted.

Now, with a love of good wine and his work in the garden, He still remains very active as the Wivenhoe Guardian.

If that's not enough there is a whole lot more, But as time is against me I will leave this for sure.

And so now for our Thief he has a new chapter to fulfil, For this very energetic man I present to you Peter Hill.



May I introduce to you Philip Ross Bartholomew

He was born in Colchester some years agew 1985 to be precise we lawyers like to be concise. First son of Rob and Jen, they had three more Then the lock went on the bedroom door.

To Philip Morant and Hull Uni Phil went Computer Science was how his time was spent; He now works in IT for Essex Police and Kent. With small daughter Brooke and wife Carrie Anne They all live in Stanway, a perfect life plan.

Sailing, skiing, snowboarding and more He is oft seen at Mersea in boats galore With brother Simon, of whom you will hear more In a moment or two when he's also proposed I am sure.

Phil's a good friend and useful to many
For solving tech issues for not many a penny.
Fellow Thieves it's a pleasure without more ado
To propose as a Thief my friend Phil Bartholomew.



Now the excellent meal is done, I'm proud to introduce my son, born in '91. Philip has always been an active outdoor lad — To be honest, at times, it's driven me a little mad.

A list of hobbies too many to mention but skiing, golf and climbing Britain's most challenging heights,

Definitely amongst his favourite delights.

He's happy to share a beer or two,

Especially at a footy match wearing a scarf that's blue!

Rural Practice surveying took him up to Humberside,
But a calling in 2014 brought him back to work by his father's side.
His passion and flair combined with honesty and integrity,
Assures me of the business' longevity.

Carrying on the Boyden's family brand, Philip is keen to join our unique band. Fellow Thieves, he's a true gent And an excellent 'next generation' estate agent.

Gentlemen: I propose Philip Boyden as a member of our Association.



I'll tell you tonight of my partner, Pip Who's strong in the arm and stiff in the lip But as he's my partner in the law You'll understand he is quite poor.

He hailed from Wanstead - or about those parts, Where little was heard but groans and carts Wound their way round country lanes and yet Young Pip, he won a scholarship.

And so he passed to higher school Where mannered mild and brain ice-cool He soon became the teacher's ticket, Top of the class and best at cricket.

At soccer, too, he did excel It makes one sick – as sick as hell, That in the frame of one young man Should dwell so many virtues.

At school they taught him all they knew
And wondered how to treat him
But Cambridge beckoned and off he went
And even that could not defeat him.

So Classics he read twixt breakfast & bed – The Examiners he knew how to fool 'em, Indeed one wonders how such a bright chap Could end up in Camulodunum.

A family man now, with Lorraine and two – Young Thomas and Samuel are whoppers. But my verses must end, as they started, I fear, Or you'll think they are absolute shockers.

If I give you the Pip, please don't be offended – Please hear me right out 'til I have quite ended. Good Thieves, I would ask you all to forge A strong link with my friend, Philip George.



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves.

The friend I'd like to make a Thief To you and me he's Phil. A man whose charm defies belief, He'll often foot the bill.

In Sussex did he spend his youth And then he went to college To study Law and Politics In Cardiff, I acknowledge.

Less than a week had been his stay When Sarah came along They fell in love; what can you say? Together they belong.

A dustman was his holiday job
He really was a hit.
A lawyer now and some would say
He's always in the ... right place at the right time!

A family lawyer at Birkett Long
Divorce and separation.

He's great at his job; he's one of the best,
A master of preparation.

A rugby player of renown And now a qualified coach. A walker too, up hills and mounts, A life without reproach.

A family man is now Phil's role His kids are James and Rachel To be with them is what Phil loves, His occupation preferential.

I must now end because, if not, Our Robert me will blame. It's time to propose my man as a Thief And ask for your acclaim.

I hope you see my pal's a gent A really nice guy, a model. But please make sure you get his name right – Because it's Philip Hoddell.



Mr Chairman, Distinguished Guests and Fellow Thieves.

I have come here on a very comfortable ramble
With a purpose to say some good news about my good friend Ray Gamble
A Croydon boy who went to grammar school in South London
He obtained lost of good O Levels to set his career on the run.

After an early spell in banking and then working in the PLA, He married his lovely wife Jenny and moved to Ipswich not far away. Then a period of 35 years spent in the National Probation Service Where he helped all needy people with lots of support and advice.

He has been a Colchester Borough Councillor for many a year With the particular honour in 2007 of being our special Mayor here. A great football fan with both Crystal Palace and Colchester United. He also spent 20 years as a football referee – how delighted.

And so fellow Thieves, I come to a quick end By proposing for membership my very good friend. It will be great to have a new Thief, Ray Gamble – I am sure he will make our Association even more able.



Distinguished Guests, Fellow Thieves, vagabonds and crooks – Pray silence, lend me your ears, have a good look.

Let me recommend to you An interesting addition to our crew.

Born in nineteen fifty-five I say, a good year to come alive.

A Yorkshireman, from Harrogate, by the way Schooled at Bedford, the Modern one, did not go astray.

Off to London, to university Where he studied, took his degree.

Then to Colchester, to Crouch Street, to Owen Aves Where he dispenses specs to the borough's myopic knaves. (No – let's not go there)

> For Richard is an optician, an optometrist What rhymes with that, Trotski-ist, economist (No – let's not go there)

Fellow Thieves, as we go about our business We need our sight, our eyes, no less.

As a Thief, Richard will be an asset, Useful to us in every facet.

Married to Wendy, his social secretary
Davis & Ben, his sons, Fitzwilliam Road his territory.

Richard has another side, he is a man of God Training to be a priest, a part-time one, no ordinary bod.

A vicar on our side would really be wicked A vicar, a Thief, one of us, really quite terrific.

So ... we get two in one Your contact lenses done.

And a guy to offer spiritual succour So, please give a warm welcome to this old f-f-friend.



Gentlemen I give you Dickie Bird No sparrow is he, His initial plumage was blue And now red, white and pink.

His first career was the Police, through ranks to Inspector bold. Now retired, he lectures on wine And travels to vineyards to dine.

A guard of honour was he,
Protecting her late Majesty.
Later he served her with wine,
Though the Duke was moved to decline.
(He preferred beer)

From sparrow to wise owl he's grown, Taking people under his wing. Supporting the retired from the force, a much needed service of course.

I now ask that you accept my brief, And welcome Dickie Bird as a Thief.



This fellow who's joining our hallowed ranks, With dimpled white balls he frequently plays, Not terribly well he sadly confesses, To grip his shaft tight causes extraordinary stresses.

Swinging smoothly back to get some momentum, And swiftly down straight through at the bottom, Going for the tight cup on the short green grass, And not getting bunkered by finding some sand.

His life has not been quite the same, Since he chose to play this game. He fantasises for hours on end, A fortune in lessons he has had to spend.

It has made him curse and cry, He hates himself and wants to die. It promises a thing called par, If he can hit it straight and far.

To master such a tiny ball, Should not be very hard at all, But his desires the ball refuses And does exactly as it chooses.

It hooks and slices, dribbles and dies, Or disappears before his eyes. Often it will have a whim, To hit a tree or take a swim.

Playing this winter through mud and muck, He's oft been heard to mutter "Oh dear, I'll give it up and drink to ease my sorrow". But the dimpled white balls know, That he will be back tomorrow.

Former administrator at the UniversitEE, He's still not eligible for the O.A.PEE, Which puts him in the minority here, But I still commend him as a peer.

Fellow Thieves, I give you Richard Jarvis on Table 8. He's the one with glasses, a grin and a balding pate.



Nieuwenhuis is this man's name, Insurance is how he found his fame. He works and lives in Colchester too, Accident claims, he's seen a few.

A round table member and a rugby fan, He has also extended the Nieuwenhuis clan. With a wife, two boys and a dog in tow, There isn't much more you need to know.

Except Rollerworld is where he met his wife, As a Quasar marshall in his earlier life. Then insurance broking came along calling, With clients hoping to see premiums falling.

An honest, polite and friendly man, Many can't offer what Richard can. With all this in mind it is my belief, That Richard would make an ideal Thief.



I've known this chap since the day he was born He is my sister's boy, he arrived just before dawn His upbringing showed that he was no fool So off he went to the Boys High School.

Many long years he did there toil
Learning at what temperature water would boil
This information was not seen as a bummer
Because when he left school he became a plumber.

To call him a plumber would be met with a sneer Because in fact really he is an air-conditioning engineer He works in the town for C H Lindsey & Son The firm started by his grandfather in times long gone.

Away from the office he is involved with sport Rugby being the main one he was taught Deep sea diving is also high on his list Where you look like a frogman if you get my drift.

Rotary too features big in his life
And gets him away from his trouble and strife
Not that Wendy gives him too much grief
Please welcome Richard Pearce as a worthy new Thief.



At Christmas I said, "Richard, will You be a guest of mine, Our Thieves' Dinner is approaching, We shall get some lovely wine."

"Yes Dad" he said, "I'd love to, But, I've work that must be done, Please let me get it over, And then we'll have our fun."

The case it proved quite tricky, With the client, there in the dock, Shaking like a jelly, And in greatest state of shock.

But Richard worked with greatest care,
He really was committed,
A secret witness would be there,
To get his man acquitted.

The day dawned bright, the judge looked stern,
But Richard seemed unshaken,
As quickly he set out to prove,
Identity mistaken.

A hush, then over at the door, There stood a lovely mother, And on her arm, the ace trump card, Was Richard's client's twin brother.

The judge went pale, the jury stared,
They quickly scented trouble,
"There's something wrong", the foreman cried,
"For we are seeing double".

Then up jumped Richard with stout voice,
"There's only one solution,
It's, free my man and send him home,
With costs against the prosecution".

So thus concluded Richard's brief, Please bid him welcome as a Thief.



Robert was born on Friday 13th
On a day perceived to be scary
A bright and sunny boy he is
With no hint of being too lairy.

As he grew and grew A sport fanatic he became, Football and golf Became his game.

As time went by his personality developed
And books became his thing
A career in Law, not as an appellant
That now is in full swing.

A solicitor with a bias for justice
The law is ever strong
A Thief he's not, a charmer he is
But don't ask him to sing a songl



At Sparlings Solicitors down the road there, we have a jolly crew Including one solicitor who goes by the name of Robert Bartholomew.

Robert conveys houses, garages and land
Hopefully the same property on which the houses stand!

Be it freehold or leasehold both he can manage very well,
It is quite an art you know to ensure the title is fit to sell.
He's been doing it for years,
His clients often tell him that their house move was without tears.

Robert's father was a solicitor at Sparlings of repute
And Robert joined the firm when very young and looking cute.
But the years have rolled on by and many things have changed,
A wife called Jenny and four sons enough to make one quite deranged

Not that Robert is now craggy like some I can see here But maturity is costly of facial lines and hair. As mentioned Robert is a family man and lives on Lexden Road Where many Thieves past and present have often had their abode.

Robert and all his family enjoy their sailing on the sea Not a pastime though that has ever found favour with me. They have travelled far and wide with their boat to find good sailing But in France disaster nearly struck with their tow bar failing.

Safely back at home again I feel the time is great
To propose a new Thief to you before it is too late!
Now fellow Thieves I pray that you will accept this man
By popular acclaim as I know you can.

A solicitor and a gentleman and yes that accolade is due My colleague friend and fellow lawyer Robert Bartholomew.



My good friend Robert Last is here, As pleased as Punch and full of cheer, He's eating well and so he should, He cooked it all and baked a pud.

It's on the cricket ground he shines, With bright new tents and sparkling wines, Please Mr Johnston give him a look, He longs to feature in a cricket book.

So Robert, thank you for this ...
For all of us it is a treat.
We welcome you into our grotto.
"First try Last" shall be our motto.



My fellow Thieves, I give you this night A former copper, treat him not light He serves our town steadfast and true And fought elections in rosette of blue.

But let's not dwell on things of the past Let's concentrate on that which lasts His work for us as our Town Cryer Is world renowned, and he'll not tire.

With lungs of steel for all insundry
This man will bellow from Monday to Sunday
For you to hear his call out loud
He gives his all, no one more proud.

So at this dinner of meat and veg Your reservations please do not hedge Or it will be for me much grief So please make my friend dear Bob a Thief!



Born in Berlin to a military man Moving to Thirsk he became a Leeds fan, With the demise of Dan Revie and the arrival of Cloughie Robert decided he needed a plan.

> His father who wasn't a fool Sent Robert to Stanway School So, it isn't so strange that at Lexden Grange He became Head of Development Control.

In '98 he married Corine (who'd never been to Berlin) With little palaver they produced baby Tara Followed later by little Erin.

So gentlemen I will be brief
His credentials will give us no grief.
He may support Leeds but there are no other misdeeds
Robert Pomery should be elected a Thief.



Oh dear, I'm sorry I'd quite forgotten, I had to speak, I feel quite rotten. Nothing to say, a man of letters, Really should do something better. Weeee! ... here we go then, to make amends, Please forgive me, Thieves and friends, I introduce my friend Tebby, Bob. A man who is happy in his job, A sportsman too with gun and rod, He owns a garage (or two not far from here). Likes good food, good wine, good beer. A friendly chap with ready smile, And honesty too, not much guile, A family man with daughters two. I commend his election now to you, And lest you say, my fellow Thieves, Another car-man we do not need. Remember, we all have our cross to bear, And car-men too crave love and care. So, before you think perhaps or maybe, My friends, please welcome Robert Tebby.



Rodney Ellis originates from Oxford Town, Many years in the army, lots of moving around. Sandhurst, Egypt, some time in the Rhine, But eventually settled in Colchester fine.

Played rugby for school, county and the armed forces, An excellent chorister I hear from my sources. A guard at the coronation of your late Queen, What a hugely proud moment that must have been.

Lieutenant Colonel was his rank on retirement, Fathered three children, a family gent. His grandson's already a Thief but don't fret, His son is as well, so we have the full set!

In his spare time he fishes, mainly for trout,
And if you break your fine porcelain, give him a shout.
I have been instructed to keep this quite brief,
So I commend Rodney Ellis to you as a Thief.



Mr Chairman, distinguished guests, fellow Thieves.

May I plead your indulgence and leave
To introduce to you
A Colchestrian true
With glasses, short legs and a wheeze.

Born in Ilford of RAF stock
Dad moved to Colchester with a new job
Electrical Engineering his skill
An Institute Lecturer post to fill
And Roger to wean all agog.

His education was in this good Town
The Grammar school all red and brown
Short trousers he wore
'Til just thirty four
When he started to serve the Grown.

University days were good fun Spent among the folk of London A Law degree With honours for free Was followed by working Maldon.

With Jackson & Partners he began
To practice Law in our town – This young man
Was to get his own play mates
With Asher Prior Bates
As part of the Buston life plan.

Public service takes his free time In the Territorial Army he's fine Lieutenant Colonel's the rank 16 Air Assault Brigade's bank of helicopters to him are divine.

A Borough Councillor he also became Another credit to this man's name So if the traffic don't flow When we all have to go You now all know who to blame!

Vertically challenged he may be Just above Richard Jarvis's knee He is feisty yet fair But really does care 'Bout this town, his work and his fee! I commend to you with belief This man who will make a good Thief As Solicitors do – What solicitors' do With the Law, Big Bills and a Brief.

I've known Roger for close on thirty year
As a professional and personal peer
He is true and stout fellow
Now starting to mellow
So buy the old Bugger a beer.

Gentleman: Roger Buston - Yes he is standing!



As a past Chairman I hesitate, to introduce a friend or mate, Knowing the hight standards required of each candidate. However, I will try to convince myself and of course you, That his credentials are sound so with no more ado.

Born in 1941 a Croydon youth, a bright young lad to tell the truth, Went to read physics and maths at Bristol Uni Then trained with GEC in Coventry.

Colchester next to join Woods Fans, then into PA Consultancy,
Worked in UK and oversees 'til retiring in the late nineties.

Married to Deena with grown family away,
He gardens many acres and golf attempts to play.

All in all I believe he's OK, just hope my faith is not displaced
And that the cost of supporting him will not be a waste.

Gentlemen please welcome with acclaim,
My double 0 6-and-a-half guest – Roger Moore.



Roger Morris, the Bishop of Colchester Is a man who makes a great chorister I am so proud to propose him into thieves He speaks so well and always achieves.

He first came as speaker in two thousand and sixteen I was chair that year and his speaking was supreme He has since been to every meeting we have had And always engages and makes us so glad.

Chemistry he first studied in Imperial London
But it was Theology at Cambridge he was not to abandon
He entered ordained ministry in nineteen ninety three
And eight years ago came as our Bishop, and top of the tree.

Sally his wife is a headteacher and minister

They have two daughters, surely a home with much to administer.

Roger is chair of Innovation Trust, and a trustee and patron of many good causes

His diary is full, a wonderful man, and a person for sure who gets great applauses.

A keen supporter of football and Bristol City especially I give you Bishop Roger to be welcomed enthusiastically.



The man I put before you Is known to you by name. A local legend in his time And piggeries were his game.

This enterprising gentleman Moved on from pigs and muck And in property development Was wont to try his luck.

Fragrant flowers and roses Soon caught his canny eye And shrubs and plants and bushes Were added to the pie.

Koi carp and lots of goldfish And plants of every hue And then he ups and turns around And trucks form up to queue.

A man of talents, that he is, And kind and good and true. He's earnt his place among the Thieves So let's give him his due.

Gentlemen: I propose Ron West as a member of our Association.



Hailing from Scotland A Weegie man Has travelled the land Well far from his clan.

Now in West Bergholt Wife June, children three, Provides cabling solutions From his own company.

A connoisseur of braw Scottish fare, Scotch whisky or haggis Ron will be there.

My verse blethers on 'Tis now my belief We should make our friend Ron A right sleekit Thief.



Mr Chairman – I have pleasure in proposing: Mr Ford Warren of Abbotts Hall Farm, Eight Ash Green.

In case you may wish to know where that is, and how Mr Warren gets home on the occasions when he is sober ... I can tell you he lives just off the new dual carriageway recently completed at Stanway, with an unspoilt view of the labyrinth of intersections, loop roads, flyovers etc. crossing his farm, which is approached by a nicely made-up well-lit road right up to the farmyard, all provided of course at the taxpayer's expense ...

This approach road was previously an ordinary farm road which some little while ago encouraged an unwelcome visitor to gain access to the house, have a good meal, and put himself to bed until disturbed late at night by Mr Warren on return home. An episode which proves the truth of the old saying that it "takes a Thief to catch a Thief" ...

Mr Warren's occupation is a farmer – or so it says on this piece of paper ... – It could have added earth removal adviser, feather plucker, snooker player, a stirrer-up of trouble, and so on ...

A man of stature who hasn't seen below his belt for years, but is still known as the Stag of Stanway ...

A man who can be trusted explicitly - as far as one can throw him ...

All in all, Mr Chairman, a man I suggest who has all the attributes of a first-class member of the Association of "Thieves", and who I will endeavour to sum up in a little verse as follows:

When talking of a Warren one thinks of "bunny"
Which is easier to rhyme, if not very funny;
The bypass built, the turmoil is over,
Gone is the muck, the rhubarb and clover.
But what has Ford left apart from the money?
Why the crumbs, the cake, the jam and the honey!



Saul Hunnaball is an undertaker of quite some note.

About death he has many a good quote.

But if you get him talking over a couple of courses.

He'll tell you his proudest moment was starring in Only Fools and Horses.

So let's give him a mighty good cheer. After all, some of us might need him this year!



I would like to introduce Selvan Govender whose hobbies are drinking red wine, fishing and golf – he excels at red wine.

Selvan grew up outside Durban and went to Witwatersrand Uni then onto Stellenbosch studying Dentistry ... needless to say, he gained Hon's in the art of drinking red wine.

A combination of James Bond and desire to roam, saw him move to the UK where he gained membership of the Royal College of Surgeons.

After a couple of jobs, he moved to The Avenue at Colchester.

Married to Sandhya in 2005, he now has a 4-year-old daughter called Arya who rules his every move. He now runs his own practice at Dentoworld where he and his colleagues are keen to make your smile a pleasure to see.

It will cost a fair price but it's money well spent, you can't take it with you so pay up and relent. Fellow Thieves, I present, Selvan Govender.



A true Old Colcestrian is he,
Attending Colchester Royal Grammar School with glee!
After exams he knew he had plans
And started a career in the City.

Now that journey started to become quite (... pause ...) a bore
From his home on the island of Mersea checking the tides, what a chore.
Further exams were required which made him far too tired
And so transferred to Colchester forever more.

Through the ranks he progressed
Although his earlier managers would never have guessed!
33 years in banking, most of it spent (... long pause ...) as a Corporate Manager
Which he considers to have been blessed.

Now outside of work, he's known by another name, Mersea Millsy is building up some fame. An award-winning amateur photographer, But nothing to interest a pornographer.

So gentlemen, I have no hesitation in recommending Shaun Mills be accepted as a Thief.



I propose Simon without grief, To spare you all, I'll keep this brief. It really is my strong belief, He'd make a truly splendid Thief.

Young Simon is a Manningtree lad, A rugby man, just like his dad. Cycles too, which can't be bad, He likes his Guinness, just a tad!

Apprenticed he was, in carpentry, A Design Manager now is he. He has a wife, her name, Julie, A son called Ben they have, aged three.

With sister Claire, he is a twin, Happy when the England XV win. So raise a glass and make a din, Before this rhyme becomes too thin.

I'll finish now, to his relief, Simon Bradford, now a Thief.



I give you, gentlemen, my chum Simon Evans ... "was he sent from Heaven" ... I think perhaps not, comes the cry As to say so might be an exaggeration Dedham town is nearer the mark But take him nonetheless as a trustworthy spy A Thief, scallywag and vagabond for sure But as a mate one could ask for no more. As a professional man he'll build you a ship, a rig or a tug And for his business, this is a plug APB Marine of Colchester for sure And he'll build all these things in local yard or foreign and more If yachts are your pleasure he'll survey one for you And sort it out wherever you are Being of repute from Harwich to the South China Sea That's over in the East to you and me He sails the high seas

Always willing to please
At times indeed providing his own breeze
He pinches the wind, always then nicking a place
But it's fair and square that he wins the race
If you can't do it, he'll teach you with the patience of Job

When time after time your turns are riding and your sails are slatting
Tho fail to pay attention when racing and trimming and you're in for a blasting.

What's that?

Good Heavens - who can it be; it's Simon Evans.



Now he's a strange one, it's not often this occurs

Two brothers out of four to be proposed during the liqueurs,

Brother of Phil of whom you've heard, you know the one the computer nerd.

Simon is second son, don't worry the other two are still too young

Father Robert a fellow Thief you know, asked me to read this rhyme

So both his elder boys could be proposed at one and the same time.

Like brother, Philip Morant was the school of choice But Simon off to Plymouth went and did rejoice A good degree in engineering was attained And now a property developer in Colchester is gained.

His partner Vicky and young son Harry, 2
Live on Mersea in Rosebank Avenue
He's been a sailing instructor for the Sea Scouts with brother Phil
But he's also into wakeboarding which is brill.

I have the pleasure of introducing to you to be accepted with acclaim Another member of the family, Simon James Bartholomew by name.



I'm here tonight to propose my guest As a Thief he's called Firmin S I'd normally have said Stephen Firmin But the rhyme'd be a terrible mess.

The problem with a name like Firmin Is that very few words with it rhyme There's the inevitable "vermin", But for a lawyer that just isn't fine.

I thought he's a posh enough bloke To've been born to the purple or ermine But he's just a good Colchester boy, Even though at St Joe's he was learnin'.

To Uni in Nottingham he went To study both law and good beer, He's married to Lene, a Dame, So from Vikings he's little to fear.

An elegant dresser, his jib is well cut And his shirts have the style of Jermyn Street, so I ask you without any fear To acclaim as a Thief Stephen Firmin.



My candidate is Williams, Steve, The sort of man to be a thieve. A lawyer, so he's halfway there, He's sitting in this very chair.

A Londoner by birth is he, And, sitting on his mother's knee A love of football made its mark Because he lived near Upton Park.

To East Ham Grammar went our lad, As student he was not all bad, In many subjects good was he, And off he went to L.S.E.

The law at uni did he read,
"I'll be a barrister" he decreed,
And so it proved. To the criminal bar
Steve went, and he became a star.

But then ambition in him fired, To Reader's Digest he aspired. Their Head of Legal he became, And quickly won widespread acclaim.

And there he stayed for many a year,
But then he fancied a change of gear.
To Suffolk he decided to go,
More time with kids, the pace more slow.

For local work our Steve did long And now he is with Birkett Long. A commercial lawyer of great class – He doesn't charge a lot of brass.

At Shotley, Steve with Linda dwells, Four children too – two boys, two gels. A vineyard does the garden grace, A football pitch, too – it's quite a place.

I hope my tale convinces you That Stephen is a gentleman true. I really think he's one in ten millions, I'm pleased to offer Stephen Williams.



It's my pleasure tonight to introduce you to Steve
A friend of mine for a few years or more
Loving husband to Caroline & proud father of Sophie
Steve meets the criteria - I believe - to qualify for our fellowship.

Although not a 'native', let's not hold that against him
He hailed from 'the Vallies' ... but now well (& truly) 'Anglophiled'
Taking pleasure in life's finer things - good company, fine pudding (or pie) & wine
Reassures him to return to our company to dine!

Retired from a Royal Air Force career but still partially employed
Means Steve's got time for his clubs and the occasional round
To improve his handicap ... takes a whole lot of attention
And when times permit, a penchant to ski ... not too fast while staying on piste!

A liveryman with the Coopers puts Steve at ease with 'Thieves' company ...
So I hope it's your view that he measures up to our tests
And that you accord with my appeal ... my case rests!
I propose for membership my good friend Steve Hogan.



Don't panic, don't panic, don't panic,
I introduce Steve Mannix.

Ah, his background so uncertain, a Liverpool scouse was his first curtain.

But to the Mercury he has brought great glory,
Our Pantomime has been his story (oh yes it has!).
While he may muse on plays and parts, his past includes Stonewall,
Hackney's Empire and Battersea Arts.

His claim to fame burns like a fire; he put Boris on that zip wire.

Olympic dreams did not waiver and Steve bounced back and is now in favour.

I promise he has turned the leaf.

Steve will be the perfect Thief.



'Twas Colchester Mags where he learnt his tricks,
Back in the time of 1986.
At North Hill he chose a life of crime,
Until 2000 and the lure of Red Lion.

Decades later can there be any debate, Literally now a legal "heavy weight". Defender of the oppressed and those in plight, If all else fails, he's good for a fight.

> A barrister of substantial clout You pay a reasonable fee, He will get you a reasonable doubt.

A man of stature who loves his rugger,
No doubt it's what made him a mighty slugger.
Sudbury boy in white and blue,
Defeat by Colchester he never knew.
At JFO it's our sincere belief,
Dyble will make an excellent Thief!



My nominee was born in Barnet.

His family moved to Colchester when he was four, Barnet's loss or a score draw?

Education along the way took place at North Street Primary and in a tiny hamlet called Stanway.

A regular mistake is that you may say I know this man, he's the one who shouts over the PA during a game at the Community Stadium, but that's not him but his less handsome brother named Peter the DJ.

With former local gems such as Spottiswoode & Ballantyne and Barrack Street Printing Works he became a print artist.

In search of sun, love and alcohol, but not necessarily in that order, he left this fair isle for a short spell down under, but came back to Colchester, why we wonder?

All was revealed in 2001, with pockets full, he bought businesses in Colchester & Ipswich called Mailboxes etc.

Why? The proximity to Wetherspoons of course.

If granted membership my nominee will fill an obvious gap in the members talents, because he lays on beds of nails and walks on broken glass, without even falling on his ... face.

Fellow Thieves: I present to you the young Mr Steve Sleigh.



As I will explain I must be brief In recommending my fellow accountant as a Thief.

The length of these poems is quite exact
The time it takes the speaker to commit the carnal act.

There now I've gone and done it I give to you Stuart Bennett.



Now Terry is a local man Whom many of you will know He's now retired but when at work Was always on the go.

Designing shopping centres was
His speciality
In the North and West his artistry
Is there for all to see.

He's now in to sketching, painting too And pretty good all round. He also likes to DIY At home his jobs abound!

And exercise he often takes
It's what he seems to like –
If you're out and about in Lexden
You may see him on his bike.

He's really quite a family man And Lyn's his lovely wife Though he often follows orders To stay clear of domestic strife.

So there is Terry's portrait Some lines on an A4 leaf I hope you'll agree he's just the man To welcome as a Thief!



24 Years as a soldier and ordering grown men about
Gave Terry the perfect experience for training his voice how to shout
At his fellow elected councillors across the wide chamber floor
Where his judgement, good sense, fairness, vision and thorough
Good planning soon raised him to be Mayor of this Borough.

In the Army, his talent for rugger very soon caught Royalty's eye
And soon he was a team member for the Sultan of Brunei.

Stepping down from the Sultan's fine jet, after winning away at a fixture,
He met our dear Queen in the heat, and she really looked a picture.

Years later he met her again, when deputy mayor of the town,
But this time it was much colder, so she wore a long warm red gown.

24 years in the army with planning and sorting things out
Gave Terry the grounding for order, so Property Management came about.
Solving problems with flats, car parks and estates, are the daily routine of his team.
As well as cutting the grass down, they've got to keep them all clean.

With 25 years of service, devoted to this great town,
He has the credentials to be a great Thief and I hope you won't let me down.
When I propose Col U supporter and President of the Royal British Legion
My friend and honoured guest, Mr Terry Richard Sutton.



Thomas Novorol, a quantity surveyor is he,
At Rose Builders he performs his art for a fee.
When not at work he likes to smoke cigars and shoot,
And after a couple of drinks, he becomes quite a hoot.
So to nominate him gives me no grief
Because I know he'll make a jolly good Thief.



I must introduce Tim with a smirk
He is known as the "Colonel" at work
In the army he's not
Nickname says quite a lot
Shows this fine chap never does shirk.

The property game is his life
In Great Horkesley he lives, with his wife
Has two lovely sprogs
Also two crazy dogs
And I hear that these cause him much strife.

Enjoys fine wines when they are released
Is also a keen alpiniste
For all those that know him
I am sure they'll agree Tim
Spends a lot of his time on the piste.

So, I commend to you Mister Tim Racher Spends his spare time at one with nature And although the pheasants don't agree He does shoot rather splendidly.



(With apologies to the writers of odes and classical rhymes)

I'll tell of this young lad from 'up North' Here at Thieves for his third time tonight I think it'd be good for him t'join us An' I hope that you'll agree it's alright.

Tim Rowbottom pack'd his bags an' came South Back in eighty-six as we recall To find work, wealth and romance An' by gum – with success, he found all.

> He excelled at his work as an engineer And Woods Fans paid a bob or two To Colchester life he got accustomed And cap it all found a lass to woo.

The days passed by and love blossomed So in his mind there was nowt else for it On bended knee he proposed And a the gorgeous Lucy said "of course, why wait?"

The years passed by and t'family grew
And with two stout sons they are blessed
There's Jack and young Edward – chips off the block
Nicer young men thoust couldn't hope to meet.

Of his interests, like us all, he has a few Music, travel and good company (occasions like this!) Are right up his street But of course, the family comes top of this list

Then there's 'Team Rowbottom Racing'
With a Caterham 7 centre stage
And the whole family's involved on race day
I can hear Lucy shouting "Lad, act your age!"

Lucy's the boss of butties and tea And Jack's the Team Engineer Young Ed looks after sponsors and guests While Tim does his best to finish 'top three'.

Now after all these years 'down South'
Our Tim's the boss of the family store
And he's even been known to speak 'Essex'
For a lad from Up North, thoust couldn't ask for more.

So to my friend and brother-in-law Tim To Colchester now he is wed. Thieves, I commend you his friendship And would ask you t'nod thy head.



Fellow members: I introduce a friend and colleague Timothy Biscoe looking rather spruce.

Born in Ilford some sixty years ago,
And forty years a civil servant I will have you know.
The Department for Work and Pensions front man was he,
A decision taker on their behalf he would plea.
So if you ever lost a case from here to San Francisco,
Be assured the man that beat you was my mate Tim Biscoe.
So if the Work and Pensions ever gave you grief,
You will know he's highly qualified to be a Thief.



I'll keep it short, having given it little thought,
An exemplary soldier, his note to me states.

"Read it out loud", given we're mates.

He's courageous, flamboyant and insightful peer, it says it here.

Northern Ireland, the Rhine, the Gulf and Rhodesia,
The North Countryman's Club, they all feature.

33 years of army career, he would turn down the post of Brigadier,
The reason for that is eminently clear,
So he could remain in the town he really holds dear.

So I'm hoping his nomination will be heartily supported, And his attendance as a guest from now on sorted. As a paid-up member and by agreeing this bid, It will actually save me £55 quid.

Thieves: I nominate our previous Garrison Commander Colonel Tony Barton.



A Colchester boy born and bred, Whose ambition in life was to care for the dead. St Helena School was his alma mater, And at sport he excelled to be a footballer later.

The lure of the hearse and shiny black cars proved too much to resist,
So to the High Street went Trevor an undertaker to assist.
Football he still loved and at Essex Senior League he played while supporting Colchester U's,
He still cheers from the terraces 'Up with the Blues'.

Starting his own funeral business with Melanie in 1984 they worked side by side
Until the kids came along and joined in the ride,
Was elected President of the National Association of Funeral Directors in 1995.
He became head of them all

Great times were had at the Undertakers' Ball.

Celebrating 30 years in 2014 of Hunnaball Family Funeral Group,
Recognised for care and dignity alongside his loyal troop.
A passion for boats and his family,
60 years in the funeral business means landmark anniversaries almost annually!

I am delighted to commend this worthy Thief to you all, Colchester's own Trevor Hunnaball.



Fellow Thieves, I offer you, A man of life, a different hue. One who stands upon a stage, To perform for those of any age.

With Thespian bent on show for all, This man of fun once heard the call. To play his part in *Dad's Army*, And 'Allo, 'Allo! on our tv.

No stranger to those who go astray, From the bench he rules the day. Commit the crime and it's your loss, The chair will tell you I'm the boss.

So, let's this night grant Vince his wish, As we sit here partaking our favourite dish. Vincent Rayner he is by name, So let's make him a Thief as well as a dame!



A third of a century ago
There arrived in UK, down at heel,
A clever young 'Stralian vet,
My guest here tonight, William Steele.

To begin with he settled in Sudbury,
Where he met both his wives, one and two,
But he then joined a more local practice,
A decision he's no cause to rue.

To Colchester's New Town he came, Where he lives with wife, Naz, and their brood He keeps there his wonderful cellar And serves up magnificent food.

That Bill is a host nonpareil
The girths of his guests can endorse.
They just hope it's Wright's beef they've been eating
Rather than home-slaughtered horse.

As a vet Bill is highly regarded
For his judgement is always most sound,
This is why he's a national expert
On that beautiful dog, the greyhound.

Though Bill seems a fair dinkum ocker Things just are not quite as they seem For now he's a UK Dual National He'll always back the winning Ashes team.

So come on, fellow Thieves, let us do it, For it surely would beggar belief If, coming from a country of convicts, We failed to make William a "Thief".

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MINUTES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROSECUTION OF HOUSE-BREAKERS, ETC WITHIN THE LIBERTIES OF THE BOROUGH OF COLCHESTER YEARS 1783 - 1899

First meeting held in the Moot Hall December 2nd 1783. Initially, having appointed at this meeting a Treasurer and Clerk, a subsequent meeting took place, again at the Moot Hall, on December 30th of the same year and a Committee of 20 people were appointed all of whom subscribed a certain amount of money.

The amount of the subscription is documented in 1783 as being 2s..6d and there were 71 first subscribers. By 1784 it had been raised to 5s..6d for a single subscription (relating to dead property or stock) and 11s..0d for a double, which also covered livestock. By the early 1800s there were two further categories, triple and quadruple, but by 1863 this was simplified to the original two categories and the single was extended to include poultry and domestic birds!

The December 28th 1784 Annual Meeting, (there were also Quarterly ones), notes that after paying out for Criers, printing and distributing handbills, prosecuting offenders, paying for birchings and whippings and not forgetting the quarterly emolument of 1 guinea paid to the Treasurer, there remained in the kitty £30..18s..9d. By 5th January 1789, the amount remaining after the quarterly dues and expenses was £13..13s, so the subscriptions were adjusted to 2s..6d and 5s..0d.

The first "offence" to be detailed was by a Mr John Biscoe on January 12th 1784, who reported that he had been robbed of a pair of sheets and that a person was in Custody. It was agreed that the Association would bear the expense of the Prosecution. A certain Solomon Carter was convicted and publicly whipped as punishment.

In 1784 it was necessary on April 27th to add an Article to the Statutes saying that if subscriptions were not paid to the Clerk within 15 days of the Quarterly Meetings then the Benefits of the Association to the individual would be denied.

And so it continued ...

At this time Britain did not have a Police Force as such and had to wait for Sir Robert Peel and his Bobbies in London in 1829 and the ensuing County Police Act of 1839 for the other counties. Subscribers would ask to have details of felonies either posted on notices throughout the town or proclaimed by the Crier or both. Indeed, on April 24th 1786, it was agreed that notices of members of the Association who had not paid their dues in timely fashion were to be displayed around the town.

On 14th June 1787, a Mr John Snell was robbed of 16 pairs of stockings, was "Cried" and 5 guineas reward was offered. On January 5th of the following year Mr Thomas Hacker was robbed of 2 pairs of stockings, 1 apron, 1 handkerchief. The reward was 2 guineas. Fast forward to October 8th 1800 when Mr Robert Taylor was robbed of several "fowls".

Things hotted up in 1807 when Mr Robert Tabor proclaimed that offering more substantial rewards was the only effective means of apprehending offenders and it was proposed that a reward of 50 pounds should be given to any informant enabling the Association to bring someone to Justice.

1837 was a good year for stealing vegetables! January 15th Mr William Cant amongst others lost onions. 1838 saw a Prosecution for stealing greengages, another 2 months later for peas. 1839 there was a fashion for stealing cucumbers, cabbages, turnips, beans and potatoes and one for white broccoli heads (?). Perhaps there was a famine that year! Stealing pigs, fowl and sheep was also popular.

1844 saw a letter from the Honorary Secretaries of the New Town Hall writing to the Association to thank them for their "Donation and Liberality towards Expenses attending the erection" of this edifice. The amount involved was 5 guineas! Financial considerations were also extended to Officers of the Police Force and their expenses were frequently met though rarely excessive. Superintendent Kent and another policeman unnamed both received 10 shillings for the "recovery of fowls".

Hard labour, solitary confinement and even transportation (see attached mention - August 24 1801) was meted out as punishment in the Courts for relatively little. Jos. Skinner and Francis Armitage were tried at Chelmsford in 1801 for a certain robbery, details unspecified, and received a sentence of Death. John Griffin on August 14th 1862 received sentence for 3 months hard labour for stealing apples from Mr Daniel Maynard. August 22nd 1865 saw Henry Scott, aged 10, sentenced to 14 days in the Borough Jail for stealing plums and on October 10th, 11 year old George Day received one month's hard labour for stealing walnuts.

Throughout the 19th century the subscriptions appear to have been standardised. A single subscription was 5 shillings, a double 10 shillings most of the time. And ... wait for it, the annual dinner charge was throughout the records examined to 1898 ... 2 shillings and sixpence! Unfortunately, no records of the menus exist!

ates at Afsociation 11 - 1748 1 31802

Proceedings of the Association for the Provecution of House-Breakers, & within the Liberties of the Borough of Colchester. Colchester Dec. 2. 1783. As the first meeting of this afrociation held this Day at the Most Hall, it was agreed . That M. Wir Swinborne be the Treasurer to the Association till the next meeting to be held the 30th of Lecember instant: That Wir Cole be Clerk to the apociation for the vame time. and that the Committee be nominated at the vaid next meeting.

Colchester July 11. 1785 At a Meeting of a Committee of this afrociation held this Day at the angel Inn. Reco Harris - M. Tho . Hedge M. Win Swinborne W. Tho. Hood . It appeared to the Committee that the Rea. W. Harris had been Rolbed of & Ducks . That M. Hedge had been robbed of sundry articles .- also that M. Mood had been rolled of a Vail floth from a Hay Stack. - and also that M. Joseph Rudkin had been robbed of vundry things by a Boy who was then in fustady. It was agreed that the Prosecution of the S. Boy be carried on at the laponce of the afsociation. It was also agreed that notice of the other Robberies be proclaimed by the Creyor, and also that hand Bills be printed and pasted up about the Town of the vame offering a reward of two quineas for each Offence!

Colchester Jan. 5. 1788. At a meeting of a formmittee of this apociation held this Day at the angel Inn.
Present - M. W. Swinborne.

M. Ales! Carter. M. Joseph Shephend M. Harry Davis Mr. The Wood . Mr. Tho . Hocher represented to the Committee his having been robbed of Two pair of Hockings an apron, a Handherchiof, and sundry other articles. It was agreed That a Reward of Two quineas be offered to be paid upon Conviction of the Offender, on Offenders; and that the same be proclaimed by the Common Gryen.

Colchester May 26. 1800. At the adjourned Meeting of the Members of the Association, hed this Day, at the angel Inne. Mr. Rob. Tabor in the Chair. N. Amon triveto represented to the Meeting, that he had been defranded in trade, of a Vack of Oats, and 2 Buthels of Beans , by a Person who ordered them at his shop , and desired a Bill to be sent with them. That the same Person called after. waiss, and told him that he never would pay him for them. M. It, wither to know whether such actions came within the cognisance of the Mociation, a not; when it was unanimously agreed that they did not. At this Meeting). the sweral Demands of M. Capstack, W. Mason, M. Garrad, M. H. Neymen, and M. Bunnell, were satisfied. Sweral of Subscriptions were bought in, and new Subvoribors admetted.

The Meeting was then adjourned to Monday June 9. 1800. at A o'clock, to be then held at the same place.

1861 to be Impriored with Hara Labor for the period of 2 Calendar Willow Jeeaswer March 11. Daniel Ratford was Counted of being found in a Farm al Monkinek Farm situate in the parth of h Giles, in the occupation of Nor John Tettrell and being Concreter thereof way soulered to be mejerinea with Hara Labor in Springfula Gad Heavy Wolfor Trairie-What Querel Secretary

Colchester Feb. 23. 1801. At a Committee Meeting held this Day at the Angle Inn, Tresent M. Rol. Tabor Tresum M. Lovette M. Nunn M. Wood W. Bett M. Bloomfill M. W. Keymer M. Gomal M. Kayner M. Carkes M. Turkes informed the Committee, that having Useched a voldier, with part of his property upon him, and he being in Casto Dy , wither to know whether he should give him up to military law, or prosecute him at the Experse The Moriation . The former was agreed toAt the Annual Meeting of the onembers of
the Colchester Association for the protection of
Roperly and the prosecution of House breakers
and Thieves held at the Jour Wall on the
4th May 1858
ResentHenry Wollow, Esq., Treasurer
in the chair -

M. Thomas Bran, IV. C. F. Frentons.
A E. Church . H. S. Goody & Cha! Farling The Secretary.

The enimites of the Committee Meetings held on 11th Arvember 1857 and 28th April 1858 + the proceedings for the past year were read to confirmed.

The Treasurer's accounts for the past year were then examined audited and allowed and a balance was found to be due to the Association in the hands of the Treasure

Last geor's balance receipts - 164. 2. 2
Expenditure. 48. 6. 8
Balance 55. 15. 6

It was moved by M. Sarling seconded by M. Goody + unanimously resolved that-Il. Wollon, Esq. be chosen and Elected Treasurer for the ensuing year.

It was moved by M. Goody seconded by M. Sarling & unanimously resolved that the Subscriptions for the Ensuing year should be as under vist

Single Subscriptions - 5% ouble 10%

in addition to 2/6 to each gentleman as usual towards the birmer -

It was moved by M. Goody seconded by M. Fonton, and unanimously resolved

that M. J. H. Church be chosen + elected Secretary for the year Ensuing at the accustomed Talary The following Gentlemen were chosen and appointed as the Committee for the year ensuing The Treasurer - The Lecretary. George Y. Allwood Charles 7. Frenton Thomas Bean Noney S. Goody Joseph Cooke, Esq. John Mann, Esq. Samuel G. Cooke, Esq. John Pattison Charles Darling Jamuel Willey The following Bills of Costs of M. Henry Jones were allowed i ordered to be paid to d Reg r. Gladwell 2.2.0 Shepherd 10-6 2.12.6 After binner the following new membry were elected - vigt

Henry Laver Grorge Allen William Mills George Timpson John Bromhall William Clarks Rowland Taylor Poler Clarke hur Robert Turpen John Corder William Ward George Crowe Frances Wells Richard Evans A. M. While Lossefolo Grand John Wronch Wanted Hunstbrilla hinght. George Lay Treasures What Church Secretary

John Warren knew just where to look
When searching for help with his Thieves' Book.
For creative design he knows that the man is
Photographers Van Cols' MD, Janus
But he must have had a hunch
That there's is no such thing as a free lunch
As thus we are allowed just a few lines
the only requirement is that they rhyme
Van Cols Creative... now called VC2
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