

Daniel Day and Fairlop Fair

In the 1720's Daniel Day, a block and pump maker of St. John's Parish, Wapping, inherited property at Fairlop and on the first Friday of July, came with friends to collect the annual rents. Afterwards he arranged for a feast of bacon and beans from The Maypole, then sited near to where the New Fairlop Oak Public House is today. He and his friends then enjoyed a bean feast in the shade of the enormous branches of the ancient Fairlop Oak

Over the next five years, others joined Daniel Day and the gathering slowly took on the beginnings of a fair, with the attendance of stalls selling toys, gingerbread men, ribbons, together with puppets, acrobats, wild beasts and other circus entertainments. It would seem that at first it was respectable and regulated, but by 1738, the first prosecutions of stallholders took place for gaming and illegal sales of alcohol.



Fairlop Fair

(Courtesy Vision: Redbridge
Culture & Leisure
Information and Heritage)

Daniel Day felt at home on the River Thames, but had been involved in a number of accidents when travelling by coach and horse, so he put wheels on a boat, pulled by a team of horses, and travelled in style to the fair accompanied by musicians.

Fairlop Frigate First published 1843 London Illustrated News

(George Gaunt)



By the 1750's it is said that between 30,000 and 100,000 attended the Fair. In 1765 the constabulary claimed that a great number of those attending the fair indulged in riotous and tumultuous behavior and the sale of ale and spirit liquor and gaming tables encouraged vice and immorality.



The Fairlop Fair in Epping Forest First published 1843 London Illustrated News

(George Gaunt)

In the 1760's, a huge branch fell off the Fairlop Oak, and Daniel Day, aged 84 took it as an omen of his forthcoming death, which occurred in 1767. In his will he declared that he was to be buried in the Churchyard of St. Margaret's, Parish Church, Barking. The Fairlop Oak stood in the parish of Barking Church. His will states that his body is to be placed in a boat and conveyed to Barking aforesaid by water.

The fair was banned in 1763, but continued the following year.



**The Grave of Daniel Day in
St Margaret's Parish Church,
Barking.
The only wording that can be
seen in good light, is Fairlop
Fair.**

(David Martin)

The Fair continued for another 100 years despite the loss of the Oak in 1820 and deforestation, when 3,012 acres of Kings Wood forest was turned into farmland in 1851.



The Fairlop Boat at Barkingside 1900
(Tower Hamlets Library)

It cannot be certain where the fair was held after deforestation in 1851. By 1900, not only had the Fairlop Oak been long gone, but so had the forest itself.

In 1829 Constables Dorwood and Fox from Woodford Police, asked a lad to mind their police horses and gave him sixpence, but by the time they returned the lad and horses had disappeared. In the same year 17 people were fined at Lambeth Court a total of £5 with 8s 6d (43.3p) costs for operating without numbers on their vehicles whilst taking passengers to Fairlop. For two years the Fair was a washout due to heavy rain and subsequent flood. In 1839 the Religious Tract Society counted over a hundred drinking booths and over seventy gaming tables. It is claimed that over 200,000 attended and pea and thimble riggers operated in conjunction with pickpockets and horse stealers.

In 1844, a violent argument took place between a husband and wife. Her horses were startled and she fell in between the shaft and Harriet Milward was killed. An angry crowd were intent on lynching the husband, but he was rescued by the local constabulary.

J. Shaw, Esq. Mayor. 4

Mr. Miles, he lives at Snarebrook in the parish of Wanstead. On the 4th of July, about twelve o'clock at noon, I had been to Fairlop fair with the carriage, I came home between ten and eleven o'clock at night, the bell was gone.

SAMUEL EVERTON *sworn*. Q. You are a patrol, you observed the man coming down the back lane at Hackney.—A. Yes, at half after four o'clock in the morning, there were eight bells found upon him, and this was one of them.

JOSEPH LANGLEY *sworn*. I am a smith at Woodford, I know that this spring belonged to the bell that I hung for Mr. Miles; I took it down the 9th of July, the bell was gone.

Fairlop Fair and Hainault Forest feature in trials held at the central London Criminal Court

(Old Bailey Online)

See link for Old Bailey Online in top menu

In 1846, PC George Hall was fatally injured when thrown from his horse after 15 hours of duty at Fairlop Fair. His name appears in the Book of Remembrance of the Metropolitan Police. The Fair continued until 1900, despite the loss of the Oak in 1820 and deforestation in 1851.

In the Name of God Amen.
 I Daniel Day of the parish of Saint John Wapping in the
 County of Middlesex late Blotk and Pump Maker do hereby
 revoke all former wills by me at any time heretofore made
 And do make and declare this to be my last Will and
 Testament. I desire to be decently buried in Barking Churchyard
 in the County of Essex at the direction of my Executors herein
 after named and I desire to have six Wren of the same Trade
 that I followed to attend my funeral and to put my Body into
 a Boat and to Convey the same to Barking aforesaid by water
 and then to set the same Inter'd And I give and bequeath to the
 said six Wren one Guinea each and also a new Apron and a
 pair of Gloves to each of them for their trouble therein. I give
 and bequeath unto Thomas Dillow of the parish of Broughling
 at Southford five pounds Save and bequeath to

**An excerpt of the original will of Daniel Day declaring that he be buried in
 Barking Churchyard, to be conveyed there by boat**

(National Archives PROB 11/932/409)



**Mural representing Fairlop Fair painted by Madmunita Bose and David Martin
 in October 2009 on the screen shielding Big Al's house before demolition.**

This is now Owls Play House at Fairlop Waters.

(David Martin)

THE RETURN OF THE HISTORIC

FAIRLOP FAIR

6TH JULY 2013, 11AM-6PM, FREE

Fairlop Waters, Barkingside IG6 3HN, www.redbridge.gov.uk/fairlopfair

THE GREAT BRITISH GINGERBREAD MAN FESTIVAL
Best designed gingerbread man competition, judged on the day

STORYTELLING BY SPINNING GLOBE COLLECTIVE, PUNCH & JUDY SHOW

PRESENTED BY CATWALK PETS

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THE FAIRLOP FREAK SHOW
ENTER YOUR FREAKY TALENTS TO WIN AN AWARD; STUPIDEST HAIRCUTS, BIGGEST EARS, FUNNIEST FACE, OR BRING ALONG YOUR FREAKY LOOKING VEGETABLE

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BETTER BARKINGSIDE

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Vision
London Borough of Redbridge

London Borough of Redbridge

Vision, part of LB Redbridge have revived the Fairlop Fair and hope to continue to hold the event each July.

Fairlop Heritage Group exhibited and visitors sampled the finest ales of Ha'penny Brewing Company from Aldborough Hatch.

(Vision, London Borough of Redbridge)