

Our Autumn edition unfortunately sees St Peter's Hospital under threat of closure. If we are to stand any chance of preventing this, it is vital that as many people as possible write to protest against this proposal. Details and addresses of who to write to are on the back page. Please take a few minutes to send letters of your own and to persuade others to do so too.

Otherwise, put your feet up and catch up on Society meetings over the summer, and note down the dates for 2007 in your diaries. Chris is working hard to confirm another year of interesting and varied speakers, and we'll let you know full details very soon.

Enjoy the newsletter and we hope to see you at one of our meetings soon.



2006

Thursday 12th OCTOBER: *Stuart Surrey*
by Prof Peter Edwards

A look into the world of Surrey during Stuart times

*Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library,
8.15pm*

Thursday 9th NOVEMBER: *The Ancient
City of Rome* by Ian Franklin

Rome, its people and places

*Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library,
8.15pm*

Thursday 7th DECEMBER: *Christmas get
-together. Speaker to be confirmed.*

*Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library,
8.15pm*

**Members free. Guests £2
Everyone very welcome.**

**Dates for 2007
(full list of speakers to be
confirmed—watch this space!)**

Thursday 18th JANUARY

Thursday 15th FEBRUARY

Thursday 15th MARCH

Thursday 12th APRIL

**Thursday 24th MAY—Society AGM to be
held at Byfleet Village Hall**

Thursday 21st JUNE

Thursday 19th JULY

AUGUST—no meeting

Thursday 13th SEPTEMBER

Thursday 11th OCTOBER

Thursday 8th NOVEMBER

Thursday 6th DECEMBER

Subs reminder! Subs for 2006/7 were due in May. Many of you have already renewed at the AGM or through Byfleet Library—many thanks for your continued support. For those of you who haven't got around to it yet, reminder forms are included with this newsletter—if you have already renewed, please ignore them. If you are unsure about the state of your membership, please contact our Membership Secretary, Jeff Sechiari on 01932 341084. Thank you.

For the Record...

Did you miss a meeting? Find out how it went.

In June, Byfleet Heritage Society had the opportunity to view a selection of old postcards of the village and surrounding area, presented by Chris Glasow.

Chris showed Byfleet scenes that, while containing familiar elements, were greatly changed to how they appear now. We saw Byfleet Corner before the building of St John's church, and the canal at Parvis Bridge with boathouses on both sides of the water. The house on the West Byfleet side was the Gentleman's Club House, but has since been demolished for housing. The entrance to the village was past the grounds of Lake House on the left (where Lake Close now stands), passing the village pond, where stray animals would be kept. Derisley's butchers shop still stands, but there was also a Wesleyan Chapel, with a coffee tavern next to it run by Mr Dedman. The triangle of land created by the junction with High Road, Parvis Road and Chertsey Road (now much altered since Parvis Road was extended) held the roundhouse (where felons were held before appearing at Chertsey Magistrate's Court) and the village pump, and later the war memorial.



Byfleet Village Hall appeared much the same, but there used to be a stream running through a ditch by the roadside, which has now been covered over. Further along, Oyster Lane was shown to have had a rural appearance very different from today's busy highway. And the Blue Anchor Pub used to be a small cottage before today's larger building was erected. Its reputation as a fine hostelry was established even at the turn of the century – a message on the card read "This is the place for drinks, Floss!"

Some of the cards showed buildings that had now completely disappeared. Lake House was shown as a large, comfortable house in fine gardens overlooking a lake which is now covered by Parvis Road. The old Rectory was shown, and Digby's Grocers and Albany Cottage were shown standing next to the Blue Anchor pub, where Digby Way has been built. And while the Clock House still stands, it could be seen from the postcards that some stables and a row of cottages stood to the left hand side, where Grasmere Way is now. We also saw some fascinating pictures of the Royston Chase Hotel, which stood on Plough Green, in its large grounds, with orchards at the back. We also saw indoor pictures of the dining room, the library and one labelled "Dormitory for four juniors", but whether this was from when the building was a school, or a temporary hospital, or lodgings for the hotel staff, was not known.

Some eagle eyed members noticed a couple of cards that had been labelled wrongly. One of Petersham Avenue was discovered to be York Road. A bridge connected two large buildings on either side of the road, which were the warehouses of the furniture works. Tarrant's Builders once had part of the site. Another card was labelled High Road, but members thought it was more likely to be Parvis Road at the entrance to West Hall.

There were also some mysteries thrown up by these old pictures. The picture of Lake House had a large chimney in the background. Members wondered if it belonged to Tarrant's Yard in York Road. Another card showed a row of terraced houses with their residents celebrating the end of the First World War. Suggestions included Chertsey Road, Binfield Road or Sanway, but Chris suggested it would need someone to go out armed with the card to compare houses in Byfleet to find the correct location.

Chris finished with some scans of old advertisements from the local shops, showing what services were available in Byfleet in days gone by. Goldings at 118 High Road offered a 17" TV and radio for 66 guineas, while Invicta Cycles at 102 High Road would reserve you any bicycle for a deposit of £1. H E Philbank at number 94 encouraged people to invest in some new underwear for Easter, offering a large range of nylons from 4/11d – 15/11 a pair, and finally the Royston Chase Hotel offered lunches and dinners from 3/6, under the personal supervision of Lieutenant Commander G A Whittaker RN (Rtd). We thanked Chris for this tour of Byfleet in the old days and enjoyed the memories the pictures brought back.

Byfleet Heritage Society recently heard from Dr David Bird about Roman transport in Surrey. The transport system did not begin with the Romans. Pre roman routes must have existed between hill forts and to the settlements around them, and the discovery in England of items such as stone axes from France proves that trade routes existed, although their location is not certain.

After the Roman invasion a network of roads spread out from London. Routes coming through Surrey included London-Winchester, Stane Street from Chichester, and London to Canterbury. Contrary to popular belief, these roads were not purely military, but built to connect towns whether military bases or not. Parts of these routes have been lost over the years. For example, parts of the A29 follow the route of Stane Street, but after Farnham it disappears. It seems logical that it went on to London, but this has not yet been proved. Plans are afoot to look for it soon.

Roman roads were known to have milestones, but none have ever been found in Surrey. This is a mystery, as there must have been some. Were they perhaps made of wood? There would also have been bridges, probably also made of wood, like the one found in Alfoldean in Sussex. Staines was actually called Ad Pontes, showing that bridges were considered important enough to give a town its name. Staines was also an official posting station where animals could be watered. Silchester went one step further and contained an inn for watering travellers. However, other than this, evidence of Surrey posting stations and inn is scanty. Possibly there was one at the Mole crossing and the Wandle crossing, but this is guesswork rather than fact.

Proof that the transport system was well developed is found among the many artefacts found spread around the country. Samian ware pottery, glass bottles and amphorae containing wine, olive oil and olives were imported from abroad and spread throughout England. Home grown produce was also transported around the country. A pottery factory near Farnham is known to have provided London. Tile kilns near Reigate at Doods Farm supplied a major baths project in London, and wood from Surrey provided building materials and fuel. It was previously thought that much was transported by water, but Surrey rivers are not really ideal for this and some sites were not near rivers to begin with, making it impractical.

Lastly, Dr Bird considered the types of vehicle that would have been on the roads in Roman Surrey. Horses, asses, mules and donkeys would have been used, but the question of harnessing has puzzled scholars as there is no real evidence. Harnesses tended to be made of perishable stuff such as leather, so there have been no real finds and pictures such as those on gravestones are not detailed enough. Large carts were drawn by oxen. In some cases oxen even provided the transport container. One picture showed a "culleus", which was the skin of a whole ox full of wine. Smaller vehicles would have been the 2 and 4 wheel chariots, official post coaches, goods carts, sleeping and travelling coaches (like stage coaches) and even carts with big barrels making a form of tanker. There is evidence of all these in Roman carvings and writings, and so no reason to suppose they weren't on Surrey's roads.

Dr Bird finished with an example of how some things don't change. A memorial has been found to a child killed when run over by a cart, and in Rome the traffic got so bad that Augustus Caesar banned heavy traffic from the city during the daylight hours. We thanked Dr Bird for an insight into how things might have been travelling about Roman Surrey.



After our summer break, we had hoped to hear a talk on Signalling in Surrey, but due to the speaker being taken ill, we had to have a rethink. Instead, members exercised their grey matter with a quiz about Byfleet's history. Refreshments provided by Chris Glasow aided the concentration, and some members displayed great initiative by spotting the answers to some of the questions among the display boards around the room! A picture round of old Byfleet scenes was included, which brought back a lot of memories from members. A picture of Digby's Grocers was included with the name of the shop blanked out. However, sharp-eyed competitors spotted the name of the shop had still been left on the delivery cart, giving a valuable clue! The competition was fierce, but in the end the victor and winner of a bottle of wine was Avreil Fabb.

If you were unable to come, and are wondering how you might have got on, a few of the questions are included below. To save any distress, the answers are also included! If you want to check, all the answers can be found at the Heritage Centre at Byfleet Library.

1. What do Parry Thomas, Charlotte Bronte's publisher George Smith, and mother, grandmother and greatgrandmother to 125 children Elizabeth Ayres have in common?
2. Where were 17 Roman coins found in Byfleet?
3. How much would Byfleet Mill have set you back in 1086?
4. Which friend of Henry VIII (who was also Master of the King's Horse, Chief Standard Bearer of England, Privy Councillor and Knight of the Garter) lived at Byfleet Manor?
5. When was Byfleet's Scout Troop first registered?
6. Who saved the life of King George III in 1800?
7. What two businesses did members of the Holroyd family own in Byfleet?
8. When did Vickers move to Byfleet?
9. Whose buildings did they move into?
10. What did W G Tarrant build besides houses?
11. What was it designed for, and what happened to it?
12. What two things did the answer to question 6 and the "Peress" atmospheric articulated diving suit have in common?



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| 1. | They are all buried in St Mary's churchyard |
| 2. | Wimern Glebe |
| 3. | It was valued at 5 shillings in the Domesday Book |
| 4. | Sir Anthony Browne |
| 5. | 2 nd May 1911 |
| 6. | John Holroyd |
| 7. | Byfleet Mill and Byfleet Brewery |
| 8. | 1911 |
| 9. | The old Itala car works |
| 10. | The Tarrant Tabor Triplane |
| 11. | It was supposed to bomb Berlin, but it crashed on its maiden take off |
| 12. | The builder of the triplane, W G Tarrant, worked with Joseph Peress, inventor of the diving suit. Peress used stainless steel bolts salvaged from the crashed triplane in his suit. |

BYFLEET FACES AND PLACES

GOLDING COTTAGE

You may remember a query as to the whereabouts of Golding Cottage, the home of a Mrs Choate. We received a phone call from a member who heard from a friend that the Cottage stood in Chertsey Road in the Dawson Road area. If you stood at the end of Dawson Road facing Chertsey Road there was a pair of semi-detached houses opposite you. To the right was a detached cottage, and it was here that a Mr Choate lived with his two sisters.

Thanks very much for this information.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL

Here are a couple of photos from St Mary's School. The one on the right dates from 1910. However, we don't know the names of any of the dancers, nor the reason for their fetching hats!

The picture below is a class photo from 1951, but again, we know nothing else about it.



If anyone knows anything about either of these pictures, or if you have other pictures from St Mary's or anywhere in Byfleet, please let us know. Either drop a note in at Byfleet Library, or ring Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559.

Thanks very much.

ST PETER'S HOSPITAL UNDER THREAT

You have probably heard of the proposal to close the A&E Department of St Peter's Hospital. However, we have heard from the Byfleet, West Byfleet and Pyrford Residents' Association that it appears that the whole hospital is under threat. Barbara Provis of the Residents' Association says **"This makes it doubly important to make sure we fill the mailboxes of those concerned with letters of protest, personal experiences etc...It is only by overwhelming the mail boxes of the powers that be that we stand any chance of saving our hospital.**

Humphrey Malins, MP for Woking, says "To force the closure of a major hospital is going to dramatically reduce the level of service in the county...St Peter's provides a vital service for many people in Woking...Ashford and St Peter's is a three star hospital which provides high levels of care. It is very close to the M25, and the M3, M4 and A3, which are accident hotspots. It provides care for the greatest number of Surrey residents who live within the shortest distance. Heathrow Airport relies on many services provided by St Peter's. If it were to close, 60% of St Peter's patients would probably have to travel outside Surrey for care, most likely to Kingston, which does not have the capabilities to cope."

Previous similar proposals have been stopped because of public protests. Therefore it is important that as many people as possible support the campaign to save St Peter's by writing to any or all of the addresses below. Thank you very much.

1) Mr Humphrey Malins CBE, MP
The House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

2) Candy Morris
Chief Executive
NHS South East Coast
York House
18-20 Massetts Road
Horley
Surrey RH6 7DE

3) Rt.Hon. Patricia Hewitt MP
Secretary of State for Health
Department of Health
Richmond House,
Whitehall,
London SW1

4) Glen Douglas
Chief Executive
Ashford & St.Peter's Hospital
Guildford Road
Chertsey
Surrey
KT16 0QA

5) Chief Executive
North Surrey PCT
Bournewood House
Guildford Road
Chertsey
Surrey
KT16 0QA

If you could help with making tea after meetings, or would like to help out on the committee, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559. Thank you.



The Heritage Society is hoping to publish a book of old postcards of Byfleet. This will feature fascinating old scenes of the village which have been scanned from members' collections. Thanks to them for lending their items, and watch out for news on progress soon!

