

The clocks have gone back, the fireworks have all been lit and now thoughts turn to Christmas. Well, fear not! We have tried to solve at least some of your present buying problems. Our 2012 calendar will soon be available and will make both an attractive and useful gift. See the back page for further details.

As detailed on the back page, you may find a subscription renewal reminder in this issue. We hope that you will decide to continue to join us, but if we have sent a reminder in error, please let us know so we can amend our records.

We hope you enjoy this latest copy of our newsletter and that we will see you very soon at one of our meetings.

FORTHCOMING
EVENTS 2011



2011

Thursday 17th November: Come and hear **Peter Duplock** from the **London Bus Preservation Trust** speak about the history of the former Cobham Bus Museum and their recent move to Brooklands Museum. **St Mary's Day Centre, Stream Close, 8.15pm.**

Thursday 8th December : Christmas Social. Nibbles and drinks, together with Mike Webber's annual collection of new photographs that the Society has come by. **St Mary's Day Centre, Stream Close, 8.15pm.**

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

2012

The new year is fast approaching and Jeff is busy setting up our calendar with lots of interesting topics. The dates to note in your diaries are : 19th January, 16th February, 15th March, 19th April, 17th May, 14th June, 12th July, 6th September, 11th October, 8th November, and 6th December. Topics planned are:

- * a continuation of our exploration of Byfleet shops and a possible extension up the road into West Byfleet.
- * Byfleet Boat Club
- * Chatley Heath Semaphore Tower
- * St John's church in West Byfleet will be celebrating its centenary
- * and we also hope to have positive news about the Fire Station and further discoveries about its history.

Watch this space for further announcements and if you have any ideas for speakers Jeff would be delighted to hear from you.

Following a survey of the older (closed) part of the **churchyard at St Mary's church** which was carried out last year, members had a conducted tour of the area with our Chairman on **16th June**, looking at some of the more interesting graves. Among those visited were:

- * Elizabeth Ayres died 29 March 1769, aged 89. She was a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, leaving 125 children.
- * Walter Charles Choat, aged 34 years, who lost his life when attempting to apprehend armed burglars at the Houndsditch on the night of December 16 1910. P C Choat was a police officer with the City of London Police, when he was involved in what became known as the Houndsditch Burglary, an event which led to the Siege of Sidney Street. He and two other officers were shot, and were accorded a 'State' funeral at St Paul's Cathedral.
- * George Chuter, who was murdered at his house in Chertsey Road, Byfleet, on the 12th of (cont on page 2)

For the Record...

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

January 1888, aged 67 years.

- * Granville Erskine Money, Rector of Byfleet 1884 to 1917, Born June 6, 1845, Died March 29, 1918 (Good Friday), having retired in 1917 and moved to Sunset Cottage, Highfield Road, West Byfleet.
 - * The Hon. Francis Egerton, Admiral R.N., son of Francis, 1st Earl of Ellesmere 1824-1895, and Lady Louisa Egerton, his wife, daughter of William, 7th Duke of Devonshire 1835-1907. Lady Louisa performed the opening of Byfleet Village Hall.
 - * George Smith. Born in London March 19th 1824, died at Byfleet April 6th 1901. A tablet placed in St. Paul's Cathedral by his friends as a token of their love and esteem records that English literature owes to him the dictionary of National Biography. Also in the memory of his beloved wife born August 2nd, 1831, Elizabeth died September 5th 1914. George Smith was a publisher who took control of his firm at the age of 22 and accepted the manuscript of 'Jane Eyre' from an unknown country author, Charlotte Bronte. He also published for Ruskin, Thackeray, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot, and the Brownings. His greatest work was the 'Dictionary of National Biography'.
 - * Richard Harold Barnwell Born 3 April 1879. Killed 25 August 1917 while flying at Joyce Green Aerodrome, while experimenting with a newly designed aircraft. Well-known Vickers test pilot. In late 1914, when he was the chief test pilot with Vickers Limited, designed a single seat "scout" or fast reconnaissance aircraft, and had it built without the knowledge or approval of his employers. He attempted a first flight of his design, named the "Barnwell Bullet" in early 1915, but the aircraft crashed and was wrecked, possibly due to a miscalculated centre of gravity.
 - * Ann Fitzwater Born January 14, 1814, died January 11, 1885 and her husband John Fitzwater Born December 4, 1810, died October 24, 1893. John Fitzwater was a well-known Byfleet shopkeeper for over 40 years, and a Parish Councillor.
 - * Edward Millington Synge, died 1913. Was elected an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter Etchers, and exhibited two etchings of Weybridge. In 1899, one of his etchings, "The Blacksmith's Shop", was hung at the Royal Academy. He studied in Paris and Rome. He executed about 370 plates, many of which were for The Art Journal, and The Graphic. He visited Venice in 1906. Related to John Millington Synge, the author of 'Playboy of the Western World' and other plays. His sister, Else Mary Synge, died 1952, is also buried in the churchyard.
 - * Charlotte Bulford Holroyd, born 11 June 1841, died 17 Dec 1922, and her husband George Barron Holroyd born 22nd Jan 1841, 1st June 1928. He was one-time owner of Byfleet Mill and of Byfleet Brewery. Parish Councillor for over 40 years.
 - * John Godfrey Parry Thomas, Born 6 April 1885, accidentally killed on Pendine Sands when attempting World's Motor Speed Record 3rd March 1927. The car, called 'Babs', was buried in Pendine Sands for many years, but in recent years has been dug up and restored to running order. On occasions it is on view at Brooklands Museum, otherwise it is based at the Museum of Speed at Pendine.
 - * Carie Edward A. Jones, killed while flying at Hendon, November 8th 1931, aged 34 years.
 - * Horace Curzon Plunkett P.C., K.C.V.O., F.R.S., third son of Edward, 16th Baron Dunsony of Dunsony Castle Co Meath. 24th Oct 1854 - 26th March 1932.
 - * Clarissa Mary, beloved wife of Francis John Cheverton Rector of this Parish. Also in memory of Francis John Cheverton Died 15th September 1948 aged 80 years. Rector of Byfleet 1931 - 1938
 - * Dr. K. B. Alexander 1874- 1956 and his wife, Jane Wise, 1869-1936. Well-known doctor in Byfleet.
 - * Ebenezer Mears Died October 15th 1929, aged 73 years. Founder of the Byfleet -based local transport and demolition business. Also his wife, Mary Ann, who died February 4th 1940, aged 83 years, and Ethel Truelove Glass, their daughter, who died on 19th November 1945, aged 59 years.
 - * Herbert Le Vack, who died in Switzerland 16th September 1931. He was known as the 'Wizard of Brooklands'. He was killed in the Swiss Alps in 1931 whilst testing the Motosacoche A50 motorbike. He worked for the company as its works rider, chief designer and tuner.
 - * Bessie Winifred Jane Griffin who passed away on 21st December 1937 aged 47 years and her husband Ernest Philip Griffin who passed away 9th December 1967. Major E P Griffin built many houses in Byfleet, including those in Winern Glebe (Winern being a combination of both their forenames) and Rectory Close.
 - * Flight Lieutenant Hugh Robert Junor DFC, RAF, who was killed on duty August 19th 1926. He served throughout the Great War.
 - * Three victims of the German bombing of the Vickers aircraft factory: Edward Eastwood, devoted husband and father who gave his life on Sept. 5th 1940, aged 36. Erected by his fellow workers. Irene Coleman who gave her life Sept. 4th 1940 aged 17 years and Arthur Woodward 1877-1940.
 - * Sir Thomas Collins Chief Inspector of Taxes who died December 4th 1944 aged 84, and his wife, Lady Ada Collins who died Feb. 28th 1962, aged 97.
 - * Rear Admiral Charles Scrivener Wonham, C.B.E. 7 April 1870-15 February 1946.
- Following the tour of the churchyard, members adjourned to the church (just as it started raining) to look at the memorials and other interesting features, including the First World War crosses on the west wall, each of which has now been identified.

2011 marks the 100th anniversary of Scouting in Byfleet and Tim Hookins (or Rama as he is known to many Byfleet children) came to tell us all about it.

In 1907 Lord Baden Powell founded the Scouting movement, which was to provide activities for boys based on many of the things he had done in the army in Africa. The foundation of the Girl Guide followed in 1910, and the Wolf Cubs in 1916.

People in Byfleet were obviously keen to join the movement and the first Scout troop, Byfleet and Pyrford, was formed in 1910. Mr Vivian Howell, Captain of Byfleet fire brigade, gained his warrant as a Scout leader on 2nd May 1911. An old Scout revealed that Mr Howell was known as

“Spotty” - but never to his face! Women were also involved. Miss Lucy Barnes of Foxholme ran a patrol for boys from the Sanway area, and Mrs Rutson of Byfleet Manor headed the Tiger patrol in 1916. There is still a Tiger pack in existence today. Other notable leaders included Mr Payne, a frontiersman during the Boer War, Major Summers in the 1920s, a VC and possible cousin of Lady Baden Powell, and “Skipper” Evans who had a cobbler's shop in Chertsey Road and was involved with the Scouts from 1932-1953 and also helped set up the Scout band. This ran from 1932 or 3 until the 1950s and the troop still possess a couple of drums, some cymbals and a bugle. The bugles were provided by Sir Christopher Gilbert Scott, a great patron of the troop who lived in St George's Hill. He was an architect who designed the telephone box and Waterloo Bridge. In 1935 2nd Byfleet was set up by Mr and Mrs Pyke. This troop lasted until 1946.

Tim showed some photos from this era, with the boys camping in bell tents. There were trips to Pagham and Hayling Island. The equipment would be loaded onto a trek cart and walked to the station. At the station the cart would be dismantled to load it onto the train. According to one old Scout's memories, the record for dismantling the cart was 4 seconds—Tim suspected it might have taken longer to reassemble. Later an Ebenezer Mears truck would provide transport to camps.

Many of the troop's camps were based on Wisley Common. This tradition still continues today on the Scout campsite at Birchmere near Pond Farm, but originally the Scouts camped nearer to Foxwarren. Les Webb, a Scout since 1914 who went on to become Works Manager at Vickers, remembers Mr Howell organising visits to the rifle range at Bisley. Les continued his involvement in Scouting until the 1930s.

The Scouts met at the meeting hut in Walnut Tree Lane. This hut was nicknamed the Tin Tabernacle but was also called the Holroyde Hut, due to the patronage of Mr Rice Holroyd from Byfleet Mill. This was replaced in 1966 with a pre-fab building which is still in use today.

During the First World War the Scouts guarded the railways and acted as messengers for the Royal Flying Corps at Brooklands. People were understandably a little jumpy at this time, and an old Scout tells stories of how the Scouts and the local constable on the beat would alarm each other from time to time. After the war the Scouts kept going for a little while, but numbers gradually dwindled and leaders became thin on the ground. However, in 1923 Henry Castlemaine, one of the original Scouts from 1910, was approached to become Scout leader. He agreed, funds were raised and the troop was revitalised.



Scouting in Byfleet continued to grow. The earliest recorded Scouts football team ran from 1935, with Byfleet winning the 6-a-side trophy in 1947. During the Second World War the Scouts were again involved in Civil Defence work, and after the war saw the advent of the Bob A Job era. This started in 1949, became Job Week in 1970 but gradually petered out due to fears over child safety.

Tim showed some lovely photos of the troop over the years taking part in activities that would be familiar to Scouts today. During the 1960s the troop would attend church parade where the troop would march with flags from the Methodist Church to St Marys, or from the Scout Hut to the Methodist Church. This continued until the 1980s.

Scouting is now a worldwide phenomenon with 216 countries in the movement. Many of Byfleet's children have enjoyed Scouting and today the troop is stronger than ever. The old Scout hut is nearing the end of its life, and it is planned to sell off the old site and build a new HQ off Murrays Lane. This will give the space needed to enjoy the outdoor activities that are such a part of Scouting. Planning permission has been granted and the Scouts are working on fundraising with a will. It is hoped that this new HQ will see scouting in Byfleet safely into a second hundred years.

We thanked Tim for taking us on a trip through a century of Scouting in our village, and wished the troop continued success.



In September we welcomed **Norman Clarkson** who took us on a tour of some of the coins, tokens and medals used in Surrey over the years.

The first coin to be used in Britain was the Celtic stator. Celtic coinage in Europe was influenced by trade with Greece, and the coins copied Greek designs featuring Philip of Macedon on one side, and a realistic chariot and horses on the other. However, by the time the designs reached Britain they had become much more stylised and the head and chariot are harder to make out. Although we have the coins we do not know exactly how they would have been used—what one would have bought or whether anything was given as change.



In 43AD the Romans arrived, and hoards of Roman coins are still occasionally found. During the building of Brooklands Track in 1907 an earthenware pot was discovered. This was found to contain over 137 coins dating from 297-305 AD and had possibly been hidden away in the 4th century. Sixty were taken by the British Museum and the rest dispersed. A selection were held at Weybridge museum, but many were spirited away by the workers and the public in the first excitement of the discovery. Then fifty years later a pot with 82 silver denarii was unearthed in Pyrford during some ditch digging. These date from the late 1st/early 2nd century AD and you can see them on the Exploring Surrey's Past website (www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk). Again, although you can hold the coins in your hand, we do not actually know what one would have got you at the local market place.



After the Romans retreated from Britain the monetary system broke down. A turbulent time followed with invasions by the Saxons and then the Danes who introduced a new coin system. The Danes used silver pennies based on the idea of 240 pennies equalling one pound in weight. This worked well until there was a need for small change. But the problem was solved by simply cutting the coin—in half for a halfpenny and into quarters for farthings. King Cnut's penny featured his head in profile, a design copied from Roman coins. The coins were all struck by hand.

The system did not change very much for many years. But due to the practice of clipping becoming a problem (the silver would be cut away around the edge of the coin, meaning that its value would be debased) some security measures were introduced. A silver penny of Edward III was found at Newark Priory and it can be seen that the design now includes a cross that extends right to the edge of the coin, making any clipping more obvious.

Many examples of Tudor currency have been found in the county. A Tudor coin found at Oatlands Palace shows one of the earliest side on portraits of a ruler, in this case Henry VIII. A shilling of Elizabeth I has also been found. Norman said that the Matrix project has been set up by Surrey Museums which intends to create a database of all coins found in or associated with Surrey, from the tiniest farthing to the grandest gold coins.

During the 17th century the phenomenon of tokens began to be introduced. At that time base metal for smaller values became very scarce. The practice of cutting up larger coins had become obsolete as the smaller values were now such a small fraction of the more valuable coin.

So from 1647 until around 1672 people created their own small change in the form of tokens. There are very many examples to be found today, although we are still unclear on exactly how they might have been spent. John Evelyn says in his diary that they were still in use in some places as late as 1697. They were sometimes issued by the local town council, such as the Guildford "Poor Token", or they were sometimes issued by local merchants to allow trading to carry on despite the shortage of government issued coins. Later they became used as a form of advertising. Professor



Holloway, builder of the Holloway Sanatorium and expert at promoting his pills and ointments, issued one in the 1850s. In the early 20th century agricultural tokens began to be issued. These would correspond, for example, to a certain number of bushels harvested, the farm worker would be paid the corresponding number of tokens in return for his work and these could then be spent at a certain merchant or sometimes even at the farm itself. It is a fascinating branch of numismatics and there is a wide array of tokens to be studied, with more being discovered all the time.



We all enjoyed Norman's study of something that we use every day, but don't often stop to wonder about its history and development.

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QUESTIONS AND QUERIES
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OUTING TO HARDWICK COURT FARM



On 11th August 2011 about 20 members, including some guests, visited Hardwick Court Farm, Chertsey. The visit was inspired by the talk given by Carl Boyde, MRCVS, the owner of the farm, at our meeting in October 2010

When we were all assembled in the farmyard, Mr Boyde welcomed us and showed us a piece of equipment which was used to power farm implements, such as threshers, in days gone by. The apparatus comprised a rotating wheel connected by a long shaft to pulley wheels to which could be attached drive belts for the various pieces of equipment. A horse would be attached to the main shaft, and as the horse walked in a circle, the connected shafts would operate. In lieu of a horse, Margaret Simmons's grandson, Joshua, was persuaded to show us how it worked.

We then went into the tithe barn, an impressive timber structure, built in the mid-15th century for Chertsey Abbey which then owned the farm. Using dendrochronology, some of the timbers have been dated to 1445.

The court that was held there was primarily used for the collection of taxes and tithes, and to deal with minor offences, or to settle arguments.

During the reign of King Henry VIII the farm was taken over by the Crown, and became part of the Royal Estates. It was held by the Royalists during the English Civil War, subsequently captured by the Parliamentarians, then returned to the Crown whereupon King Charles II gave it as a present to his wife.

The farm remained in Royal ownership until the Georgian period, when it was sold. During World War II the farm was hit by three Luftwaffe bombs, and Mr Boyde later showed us where the farmhouse had been hit by one of these.

After spending some time in the tithe barn, we were shown round the farm, some of us venturing up Cockrow Hill to see the area to which the court adjourned in later years. Impressive views are to be had from this vantage point, unfortunately spoiled by the M25 motorway.

We saw the various animals kept at the farm including horses, sheep, cattle, and geese. Mr Boyde also has three dogs.

Mr Boyde has lived here since 1963 and ran his veterinary practice. He regaled us with tales of some of the animals he has dealt with, including looking after an elephant on the farm for about a year, and also a llama and a camel.

We returned to the tithe barn for further questions, and a supply of tea, coffee and biscuits, generously organised by Mrs Boyde. Just before we left we saw the geese march in procession under their own direction from the fields, to have their supper. Mr Boyde pointed out the oldest goose, which is 40 years old!

Many thanks to Mr Boyde for being so generous with his time.



Jim Allen

ROYSTON CHASE HOTEL

An update on our query about the high embankment that used to run along High Road outside the Royston Chase Hotel. Last issue we showed two postcards which we thought might show it. However, Alan Fairlie says he remembers it as a long mound running from where the notice board is on Plough Green now, right along to the hotel entrance which was opposite what is now Beech Close. At a guess he thinks it was about 7ft high and on top were lots of pine trees. He remembers waiting for the bus there and having to be particularly vigilant as the mound stopped you spotting the bus until it was almost upon you. Does anyone else remember the banking, or when it disappeared. The hotel itself was demolished in 1957. If you do, let us know by calling Tessa on 01932 351559 or drop a note at Byfleet Library.

PETERSHAM COTTAGE

Jeff has been looking at Who's Who entries for Byfleet and found Admiral Wonham whose address is listed as Petersham Cottage.

Does anyone know where Petersham Cottage used to stand? Or does it still exist and has merely changed its name?

If you have any information please let us know by the usual methods. Thanks very much

SOCIETY SNIPPETS

Byfleet Heritage Society Calendar 2012

Judging has been completed and the final images chosen for our 2012 calendar. The new calendars will be available at our meeting on 17th November and at Byfleet Christmas Fair at Byfleet Village Hall on Saturday 19th November, at a cost of £5.



If you are unable to get to either of these events, you can always contact Jeff Sechiari (01932 341084) or any of our committee and let us know how many you require.

We hope you enjoy our selection of some of the beautiful scenes around the village, and many thanks to all our entrants.

BYFLEET HERITAGE SOCIETY TEN MINUTE TALKS

As an experiment we have been trying some ten minute talks at the Heritage Centre at Byfleet Library once a month on Saturday mornings to coincide with the Farmers' Market. These are just short talks on various topics, or an opportunity to see some of the pictures and objects in our archive and you can just drop in at either 10am or 11am.

Of course if there is a particular topic you would like to hear about, or if you would like to share some of your knowledge with us, please let us know. Keep a look out for more information around the village for the subject of the next talk.

Family History Enquiry

We had a call from Malcolm Harding who is looking into the history of his family. On one side he has the Steadman family, one of whom, Arthur, was his grandfather. He was in the fire brigade as a casual and worked as a driver for Ebenezer Mears.

Another relation was the Morish family who ran a baker's in Chertsey Road.

Does anyone have any memories or information about the Steadmans or Morish's bakers? If you do, or would like to speak to Malcolm about his research, please let us know (ring Tessa on 01932 351559 or leave a



Subscriptions for 2011/12 were due at this year's AGM. Thank you to everyone who has so far renewed. If it has slipped your mind or you were unable to get to the AGM this year, a reminder slip should be enclosed with this newsletter. Your subs can be either sent direct to Avreil, our Treasurer, or left at Byfleet Library where they will be collected.

If, however, you find a slip and you have already renewed, many apologies and please let us know so we can amend our records.

Thank you very much to all our members for your continued support

And Finally.....an odd little item from St Mary's Parish magazine, "Byfleet Home Words", of May 1909.

"A BLACK BEAUTY. A piece of coal came up from Mr Barron Holroyd's coal cellar lately, on which we should like to hear a geologist's opinion. It has been likened to a honeycomb. To us it rather suggests a model, in coal, of a mountainous district of lofty, precipitous, tooth-topped, thin hills, running in serpentine parallels, with deep ravines between. But we hope that eyesight will be allowed on Parish Day to expose the clumsiness of this description of a carboniferous curiosity. It seems an odd comparison, but, except in colour, it is really very like an Aurora Borealis effect in an illustration of Pouchet's "The Universe"."