

A Happy New Year to all our members! Now that the business of the Christmas season has passed, we hope you can find a quiet spot to put your feet up and enjoy our newsletter. We have another year of interesting talks ahead which we hope you will enjoy, and we look forward to meeting you either at St Mary's Centre or at our monthly drop-in sessions at Byfleet Library.

There are still some of our 2019 calendars available if you still have to set yourself up for the new year. They are on sale at Byfleet Community Library and cost £5. And if you want a good book to curl up with on a grey January day, Jim Allen's "Byfleet and the Great War", which has been enlarged and updated including new pictures, is also on sale at the library for a very reasonable £7.

FORTHCOMING
EVENTS 2019



All talks are held at St Mary's Centre for the Community, Stream Close, Byfleet and will begin at 8.15pm.

2019

Here are the dates for the coming year for your diaries

Thursday 17th January: *Byfleet in the 19th Century.* Come and hear about the goings-on in our village in the past. By **Jim Allen**

Thursday 21st February: *Painshill Park* by **Andy Mills. A talk about the well known local beauty spot**

Thursday 21st March: *A Look at Church Stained Glass* by **Mike Sleigh. The history of this beautiful medium.**

Thursday 18th April: *West Horsley Place: the House and its History* by **June Davey.** Come and hear about this beautiful Grade 1 listed building, now owned by **Bamber Gascoigne**

Thursday 16th May: *Society AGM* followed by a guest speaker—details to follow

Thursday 20th June: *Our annual boat trip along the Wey Navigation Canal.* Full details to follow.

Thursday 18th July: *Chris Glasow* returns to tell us more about the *History of St Mary's Church.*

Thursday 19th September: *Sue Jones* comes to speak to us about *Working the Wey.*

Thursday 17th October: *An evening of Members' Short Talks* where our members take the floor to tell us about their interests.

Thursday 21st November: A talk on *Dame Ethel Smyth*, composer, suffragette, sportswoman and resident of Surrey. By **Chris Wiley.**

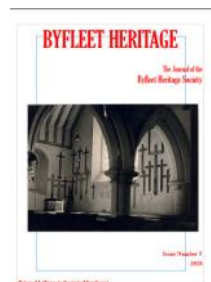
Thursday 19th December: *Christmas meeting.* For our final meeting of the year we once more welcome **Mike Webber** who will show some of the photos and items of interest that the Society has acquired throughout the year.

Members free, Guests £2
Everyone very welcome!

Don't forget—if you have a topic or an idea for a talk, please let us know.

Members should all now have received their copy of issue 5 of the Society's Journal.

If you have not received it, then please let us know. Contact details are on the back page.



For the Record...

We welcomed the **Rev Canon Nick Aiken** as our November speaker. Nick has been the Rector of Wisley and the Vicar of Pyrford for 25 years, and has responsibility for the two parishes and three churches. The two parishes were officially linked in 1762, but at one time Wisley was linked with Byfleet, possibly because it could not financially support its own priest. The oldest of the churches is Wisley, which is unusual as it is not dedicated in the way that most churches



Wisley Church

are. It is simply known as Wisley Church. The two churches in Pyrford are each dedicated—the older of the two to St Nicholas, the newer building to the Good Shepherd. St Nicholas is positioned on a hill in Newark Lane, the road between Pyrford and Ripley. The Church of the Good Shepherd was built in the early 1960s to accommodate the increasing population of the village.

Nick spoke about the history of each church. Wisley is the oldest, the existing building dating back to the mid-12th century, at which time it was the larger of the two parishes. However, there was a building here from about 1086, mentioned in the Domesday Book. There are traces of some original frescoes, as well as three of the 12 consecration crosses.

He recalled receiving a telephone call one day from the occupant of the house next to the church, telling him that the church was on fire following a lightning strike. The fire brigade arrived fairly promptly, and was able to restrict the damage to the tower area. It was fortunate that the occupant was home at the time, as otherwise the fire could have taken hold and caused more severe damage..

St Nicholas Church, also dating back to the middle of the 12th century, remains essentially unaltered since that time. It has a capacity of 100, and is a popular film location. It is surrounded by a churchyard, which is now full. An extension of the burial ground is located across Newark Lane, with a hazardous crossing across the busy road between the two areas. To ease the situation, a new car park area has been created off Warren Lane. Originally the road between Pyrford and Ripley went to the west of the church, but this route involved a steep incline down to the water meadows, so the present road to the east was built.



St Nicholas, Pyrford

Queen Elizabeth I visited Pyrford Place on occasions, and presented the church with a silver chalice, now located in the Treasury of Guildford Cathedral, to St Nicholas Church.

Nick explained that the Church of the Good Shepherd, dedicated in 1964, was designed to be not only larger than St Nicholas, but also more flexible. The doors across the rear of the worship space can be fully opened so as to provide a larger space extending into the church hall for well-attended events. An Emmaus Chapel was added in 2000, to commemorate the millennium.



Church of the Good Shepherd

The policy of the three churches is that the buildings should remain open for visitors when unattended. It appears that this policy has been successful, with very little evidence of theft or vandalism—in fact, it is felt more likely that damage would be caused if secure buildings were broken into.

Nick told us that, prior to coming to Pyrford, he was the Youth Officer for the Guildford Diocese, organising youth events such as the annual Easter pilgrimage to Guildford Cathedral, and running the Diocesan Youth Centre at Graffham on the Surrey/Sussex border.

Nick was happy to answer questions. He explained that his title of “Canon” is mainly honorary. He has a dedicated stall in the cathedral, and is entitled to attend important services and events there.

In answer to another question regarding a possible tunnel linking St Nicholas Church with Newark Priory, he said that there was no evidence for this, and he felt it was unlikely that such a tunnel exists due to the water in the meadows between the two buildings.

By Jim Allen

As is now traditional, in December **Mike Webber** displayed some of the pictures and items that the Society has been lucky enough to receive for our archive over the year. Our archive is getting bigger and better all the time, so very many thanks to everyone who has donated or lent us your items. The next two pages show a small selection of Mike's display.



Left: Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon at the BAC site at Brooklands during the ground resonance test of the VC10 in April 1962. On the left is David James (Chief Structural Engineer) with Harry Hitch (Head of Dynamics and Mathematical Services) between the Princess and Lord Snowdon.



1st Byfleet Scouts. Left—summer camp at Rowlands Castle 1950. Above an undated outdoor gathering.

Some members will remember this tile picture of a fine bull which used to be on a wall in Derisley's butchers in High Road. The shop has gone only relatively recently, and the space is now the entrance to Derisley Close.





BYFLEET PARISH COUNCIL.

FORMAL OPENING

OF THE

RECREATION GROUND

AT WEST BYFLEET.

BY

MRS. F. C. STOOP,

WILL TAKE PLACE

On WEDNESDAY, JULY 7th, at 7 p.m.

Chairman - A. H. P. CATON, Esq.
(Chairman Byfleet Parish Council)

The Opening Ceremony will be preceded at 4 p.m., by a Tea and Sports for all Byfleet School Children.

The Committee will be grateful for any assistance towards the Sports and Tea funds which may be sent to Mr. A. J. Boreham (West Byfleet) or Mr. R. Ward (Byfleet Post Office).

Any further information will be gladly given by the following Members of the Organising Committee.

MRS. SEALY CLARKE (Chairwoman)
 MR. A. J. BOREHAM MR. R. A. CHARMAN
 MR. WALTER HOLROYD MR. W. H. MATHIS
 MR. W. H. WARTER MR. A. W. STOLLERY

Mr. F. B. LOCKE (Headmaster Byfleet School) and Mr. S. H. GREEN (Headmaster West Byfleet School) have kindly undertaken to arrange suitable Sports for 673 children.

6771921

PRICE—2d.

BYFLEET AND PYRFORD

CORONATION FESTIVITIES
« PROGRAMME »

God Save the King.

Wednesday, May 12, 1937 **West Byfleet » » Recreation Ground**

Clockwise from top left: George Carpenter, Head Gardener at West Hall, with his niece Eva Bowey; Mr Stollery's shop in West Byfleet; Byfleet Manor House with its distinctive gateposts (which are being reproduced at the moment); the programme for the Festivities in Byfleet and Pyrford to mark the Coronation of King George VI in 1937; a flyer announcing the official opening of West Byfleet Recreation Ground by Mrs Stoop in July 1921.

????????????????????
NOTES AND QUERIES
 ??????????????????????

Mystery photo
 In our last newsletter we printed a photo of an unknown bar. We had a couple of suggestions including the Seven Stars at Ripley, but the answer seems to be that it is a bar which was in the basement of Mill House, which for a while in the 1960s became a bit of an exclusive evening venue.

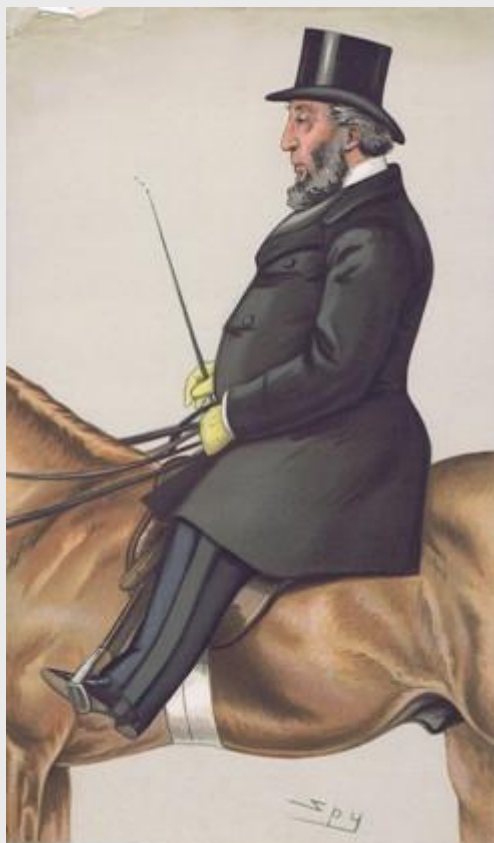


We published this photo, entitled “The Top Hats and Leather Aprons annual cricket match”, in our recent Journal. It is undated, but seems to be from the early 20th century. The young man in the cap, sitting on the chair on the far right was labelled as Harry Medhurst, and we thought this was the man who later played football for Woking, West Ham, Chelsea and Brighton. However, member Mike Gathercole sent the following information from his brother: “I remember Harry Medhurst the Chelsea goalkeeper who went on to be the sponge man. He was born in Byfleet in 1916 and died 1984. He would have been too young for this team. I think the Harry Medhurst in the photo is his father who played cricket for Vickers seconds. I remember seeing him when I was young. He was quite old when I saw him play. He had a wooden leg and kept wicket and always batted with a runner. He was also a groundsman at Vickers.”

Many thanks to Mike and his brother for the information.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?
**SOCIETY NEWS,
 AND QUERIES**
 ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

From the Todmorden and District News dated Friday June 27th 1884:



A caricature of Sir John published in Vanity Fair in 1882

“MID SURREY ELECTION

The result of the voting in Mid-Surrey was declared at Kingston on Saturday as follows:

Sir J Whittaker Ellis (C.)	7,645
Mr Sydney B Stern (L.)	4,949
Conservative Majority			2,686

Sir John Whittaker Ellis, Bart., of Byfleet, near Weybridge, Surrey; Lancaster-place, Strand; Old Broad-street; and Hertford-street, Mayfair, who thus succeeds to the seat vacated by Sir Henry Peek, is a son of the late Mr. Joseph Ellis, of Richmond, Surrey, and was born in 1829. He was educated at Richmond, and when he was 15 years of age was articled to Messrs. Musgrove and Gadsden, land agents and surveyors, of Old Broad-street, in 1854 becoming a partner in the firm, which is now known as Messrs. Farebrother, Ellis, Clark, and Co., Sir John Ellis being now the sole partner. In 1864 he was elected one of the representatives of the Ward in the Court of Common Council, having previously served in various offices connected with his parish, and in 1872 was unanimously elected Alderman for Broad-street Ward. Two years later he served as one of the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, and during his year of office accompanied the Lord Mayor to Paris, where they were entertained with great hospitality. In 1881 he was elected Lord Mayor, and served the office with much distinction in 1881-2, her Majesty being pleased to confer a baronetcy upon him in connection with her visit to Epping Forest. He is one of Her Majesty’s Lieutenants for the City of London, a member of the Court of the Merchant Taylors’ Company, Chairman of the Alliance Bank, and has been for many years engaged in agricultural pursuits in the parish of Byfleet. Sir John Ellis married in 1858, Mary Ann, youngest daughter of Mr. John Staples, of Belmont, near Salisbury. He is the 110th new member returned to the House of Commons since the last general election, but his return on the present occasion makes no difference in the balance of political parties.”

When in Byfleet, Sir John lived at Petersham House in High Road (until very recently Lloyds Bank), and after a fire there he organised Byfleet’s first fire brigade giving his gardeners three lengths of hose and a manual pump on wheels which was kept in the potting shed. He later paid for a proper, brick-built fire station, which still stands on the other side of High Road from his house, which was occupied by a volunteer fire brigade. Sir John later became the Borough of Richmond’s first Mayor and there is a bust of him displayed on the town hall staircase. He died in 1912 and is buried St Peter’s churchyard, Petersham.

If you need to contact the Society, we can be reached in the following ways:
 Leave a note at Byfleet Library, email us at info@byfleetheritage.org.uk or ring our Secretary, Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559

Byfleet Heritage Society, Byfleet Library, High Road, Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7QN
 Published by: Tessa Westlake, 8 Brewery Lane, Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7PQ