



Issue 86

Newsletter

May 2021

### FROM THE CHAIRMAN

At this time, when we are all doing our best to cope with the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, good news is hard to find. I am pleased therefore to provide some to all our members. At our recent committee meeting, it was unanimously agreed that **those who are in current, paid-up membership will have that membership extended to May 2022 without further payment.** As we have been unable to hold our monthly meetings and 'drop-in' mornings since February 2020, although we have maintained our enquiry facility remotely, and kept in touch through our journals and newsletters, inevitably our expenses have been lower than normal.

Please note that anyone newly joining the Society will be required to pay the usual annual subscription.

One question that we are asked frequently is when will we be able to resume our meetings? I hope that this will happen soon. To answer the question, the present situation is this: subject to any change in Government requirements, provisionally we hope to hold our first meeting on Thursday 15th July, at 8.15pm, at our usual venue, St Mary's Centre for the Community in Stream Close. This will be our long-delayed AGM, followed by Mike Webber bringing us up-to-date on our acquisitions since 2019.

Another annual event is our boat trip along the Wey Navigation canal. This is provisionally booked for Thursday 24th June, hopefully getting as far as Newark Priory.

Please note that both these provisional dates are subject to confirmation. As and when they are confirmed, we will send you the appropriate notifications. If the boat trip is confirmed, tickets will not be on sale before 1st June.

So, keeping our fingers crossed, we hope to resume our normal events programme from September, with hopefully fitting celebrations for our 25th year.

To sum up:

- Current members have their membership extended free-of-charge until May 2022.
- Delayed AGM provisionally set for Thursday 15th July
- Boat trip provisionally set for Thursday 24th June
- Normal programme of meetings provisionally set to resume on Saturday 4th September ('drop-in' at the Heritage Room), and Thursday 16th September (monthly meetings).

Please note that the Heritage Room in Byfleet Community Library is closed until further notice, as it is used as a quarantine area for books and furniture.

Keep safe and well

Jim Allen.

**PS** Thanks to Mary McIntyre for pointing out that the caption to the May 2021 calendar photograph should read Piper's Hill and not Mill Lane.

We hope by now that you have received Issue 8 of our Journal, and that you enjoy the contents. We are very grateful to Chris Glasow for sponsoring this anniversary issue and would like to thank him for his generous offer.



## Byfleet Fire Station needs your help..!!

As you have hopefully seen, The Byfleet Fire Station Trust is busy raising funds and planning how we can bring this lovely building back to life for the community. We have applied to the Surrey County Council Your Fund Surrey initiative, but we would also like to raise funds via a crowd funding event.

The Byfleet Fire Station Trust is planning to acquire and restore the Victorian building. Once restored, safe, and fit for use, the purpose of the building will be to provide a community hub for all ages and abilities to use for events and activities.

Please go to [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com) and search for Save Byfleet Fire Station to read more about the Trust's plans and please donate if you can. Thank you.



The Fire Station in 1968



### A Date for your Diaries

Come and meet the team and find out more about the plans for the fire station. We will be having a Fun Day on Saturday 5th June on Plough Green, Byfleet, with lots for everyone to enjoy, including:

Tombola  
BBQ  
Ice cream  
Cakes  
And lots more

Keep an eye out for announcements:

On Facebook [www.facebook.com/ByfleetFireStn](http://www.facebook.com/ByfleetFireStn)

On Twitter [twitter.com/ByfleetFireStn](http://twitter.com/ByfleetFireStn)

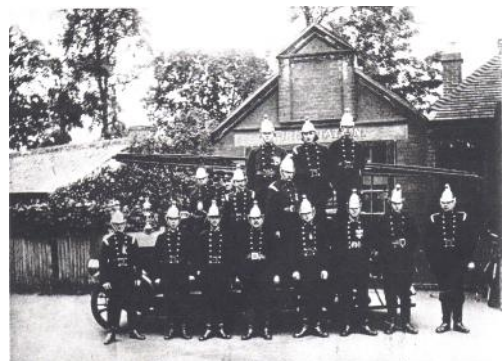
This is not the first time in its history that fundraising for the fire station has been carried out, as you can see from this article from the *West Surrey Times and Guildford Gazette* from April 5th, 1884 (although you do wonder if someone was getting commission from Messrs. Carling, Gill and Carling!)

#### "THE VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE

This useful body is in want of a £5-note to put their affairs "straight". The annual report, just issued by the captain and hon. Sec. (Mrs. A Bissett), states:

The year has again been an expensive one to us, having expended a large sum in the purchase of about 150 feet of an extra hose, suction pipe, and an additional branch pipe. These requirements have been a long-felt want, and they will greatly assist us in reaching water when attending fires. This large outlay has caused the deficit in our balance sheet as shown on other side. We therefore have to call upon our friends for their kind assistance and support. During the past year the brigade has made good and steady progress, and also been of good service in attending a fire in Byfleet. Our engine is in excellent order and repair, and the men well drilled, which enables us to compete with any of the neighbouring brigades.

The balance-sheet shows a subscription list (headed by Mrs. Hinds [*who lived at The Clock House*], Sir J.W. Ellis [*of Petersham House*], and Admiral Hon. F Egerton, M.P. [*who lived on St George's Hill*]) of about twenty guineas; but £26 13s 4d was spent—the great item being a payment to Shand and Mason of £19 15s 6d for new hose. We trust the inhabitants will whip round, and make up the deficiency. When that has been accomplished we should advise the brigade—and every other in fact, as well as every large establishment—to provide themselves with Extincteurs. After what we know has been done in Guildford, within the past six months, in saving property which was a light, we should urge everybody interested to consult Messrs. Carling, Gill and Carling, the local agents. An Extincteur always at hand is the cheapest mode of insurance it is possible to have."



In our current journal there is an article about the residents of the Clock House. There was not room in the Journal to include these detailed sales particulars from when the estate was put on the market in 1860, but they give such a detailed look inside the house that I thought I would include them here for your reading delight (I particularly like the "costly Solid Marble Bath in the basement").

From *The Rugby Advertiser and Lutterworth Weekly News*, Saturday July 21, 1860.

"BYFLEET LODGE"

NEAR TO WEYBRIDGE, SURREY.

THIS CAPITAL FAMILY RESIDENCE which has been finished (regardless of cost) with every comfort; comprises an Entrance Hall, 52 feet long, a convenient Cloak Room, with portmanteau and lumber closet; a Dining Room 25 feet long by 20 feet wide, including a large Bow; with enriched cornices, handsome marble chimney pieces, and plate glass windows; a Gentleman's Morning Room or Breakfast Parlour, opening with French Windows under a Verandah to the Grounds; a Billiard Room, 22 feet 6 inches long, by 16 feet, also opening with French Windows on to the Verandah (well placed for a library). Drawing Room, 25 feet long by 20 feet, including the large Bow; opening by double doors into an elegantly designed Conservatory, with metal domed roof and tessellated pavement; erected at a cost of £800. All these rooms have a cheerful look-out across the beautiful Pleasure Grounds, towards St. George's Hill and surrounding scenery.

The Bedroom Floor is approached by a handsome Staircase, and consists of a Bed Chamber and a Dressing room off a spacious lobby; four large Bed Rooms, fitted with convenient closets; three other cheerful Bedrooms, and a Boudoir, with French Windows opening on to a balcony. On the Upper Floor—Three Servants' Bed Rooms, making altogether Eleven Bed Rooms and a Dressing Room. There are water-closets on both floors, and a costly Solid Marble Bath in the basement.

A separate staircase to the Offices which comprise—Butler's Pantry, with dresser and closets, sink, with water laid on; a capital store room, with extensive range of presses, &c.; a Servant's Hall; a well appointed Kitchen, with range and two ovens, dresser, &c.; Back Kitchen, a cool Dairy and Pantry, a good Summer kitchen, with Range, Copper, &c. In the Kitchen Yard, are knife and coal houses, and other useful offices. A Back Entrance communicating also by a passage, - in which is a covered store for wood—with the front Entrance.

The Stable Department is perfect, and comprises a spacious Paved Yard, in which is a large Carriage House, with three double doors; a Three-Stall Stable and Two Hunters' Boxes; Harness and Saddle Room; two other capital loose Boxes—together Stabling for Seven Horses; Two comfortable Rooms for Stable Servants, and Hay Loft; also Two useful Buildings, at present used as a Carpenter's Shop and Cake and Seed Rooms. The Stable-building is surmounted by an expensive Turret and Clock, by BARRAUD—with Vane, &c.

The Farm Yard and Buildings are unusually complete, adapted for Stock and Sheep fattening, and for rearing Colts, with Store House for roots, Slaughter House, Piggery, Cow Pens, and every requisite, including also a Manure Tank.

The Pleasure Grounds and Gardens are very attractive, - beautifully timbered. A Lake, with perpetual supply of water, (brought, at considerable cost, from the Basingstoke Canal) well stocked with Fish. There are also rustic Arbors, and various sources of enjoyment; an Ice House, &c.

The Kitchen Gardens are large, surrounded by high Walls, covered with choice Fruit Trees; containing also Two Vineries, long Melon and Pine Pits; a complete range of Succession Houses; Fruit House, Tool Houses, and Potting Sheds, all connected with the surrounding very rich Paddock, finely Timbered, giving it a Park-like appearance, of 25 Acres, bounded on one side by the River Wey, with a Tumbling Bay, securing

continuously a good depth of Running Water. A commodious Entrance Lodge is suitable placed at the entrance to the Park—separated only by the road are Eleven Acres and a Half of rich Meadow Land, with Rick Yard and Sheds; the quantity altogether approaching Forty Acres.

N.B.—The above-named property is Freehold, and free from Land Tax. Adjoining Land may be had if required.



The Clock House from the rear, showing the two bows containing the Dining Room and Drawing Room, and the ornamental lake.

## BYFLEET'S PAST—LOOKING BACK 150, 100 AND 50 YEARS AGO

### PART ONE: 150 YEARS AGO, 1871



St Mary's church from the air (in the 1920s)

\* The churchyard at Byfleet was consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester, the Rt Rev Samuel Wilberforce, DD, FRS, FAS, on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1871.

\* At Chertsey Petty Sessions on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1871, Richard Vinevine was charged with damaging a hedge, the property of Mr John Ellis, at Byfleet, on the 26<sup>th</sup> February. Henry Worsfold, nine years of age, was called, but as he did not know the nature of an oath, he was not sworn. In answer to the Bench, he said that he saw defendant pass across Mr Ellis's field on Sunday afternoon. He was carrying a bottle at the time. Saw him get through. PC Blanks said that on Sunday, the 26<sup>th</sup> February, he saw defendant come from a beer-house with a two-gallon jar. He [Vinevine] asked the constable to request some beer from the house, as he was working on the Basingstoke Canal. Defendant said he had come across Mr Ellis's field, and that he

was going back the same way; he was intoxicated. The constable added that great complaints existed of men like the defendant, and a number of loose women, assembling on the river banks on Sunday during divine service. Defendant admitted that he crossed the field. Ordered to pay 6d damage, and 2s 6d, or seven days imprisonment.

\* A correspondent wrote to the Surrey Advertiser, in March, with some particulars in reference to the complaint made in the case of the trespass reported [see above], as to the conduct of the loose characters by the river side on Sundays and other times. From this we gather that some miserable women, who during the winter appear to stop in the workhouse, in the summer time come forth, and lie about the banks of the canal, with nothing to cover them save a piece of tarpaulin. At times they shamelessly bathe, and otherwise misconduct themselves. The correspondent added: "No respectable person can pass that way without feeling shocked at their disgusting conduct and language. I wish to ask, ought this to be tolerated? If a poor tramp lies by the side of the road for one night, or seeks shelter in some outhouse, he is taken before the magistrates and punished, while these worthless creatures stay here from spring to autumn without any interference, to the annoyance of every respectable person. The ground they occupy, I believe, belongs to the Hon. Locke King, and surely if it was generally known, that gentleman would not permit such a thing to exist".

\* During the nineteenth century there was a strong temperance movement in Byfleet. The Surrey Advertiser reported on one meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March: "... a highly interesting experimental lecture was delivered in the National Schoolrooms by Mr T A Smith, of London, J Leyland, Esq, in the chair. The attendance was very large, many persons being unable to obtain seats. The lecturer commenced with a few introductory remarks upon the nature and manufacture of strong drinks, and their effect upon the human system, illustrating these by analysing in the presence of the audience some beer and rum. The greatest attention to the lecturer was paid (with the exception of one or two persons who seemed to have come for no other purpose than to create a disturbance), and at the conclusion, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to him. Several persons signed the pledge before leaving the room".

\* At Chertsey Petty Sessions in June, Edward Matthews, a travelling hawker, was summoned, but did not appear, for allowing a horse to stray on the highway at Byfleet on the 14<sup>th</sup> May. PC Prescott proved the summons and the case, and the defendant was fined 10 shillings, and 16 shillings costs.

\* At the same court the following month Thomas Berryman was summoned for assaulting the police on the 16<sup>th</sup> July at Byfleet. Defendant was found drunk in the road by PC Prescott, and on his rousing him up, he struck and kicked him. He took him in charge. Defendant admitted being drunk, but denied striking the constable; the handcuffs were on him. Fined, including costs, £1 or 14 days imprisonment. (Continued over)

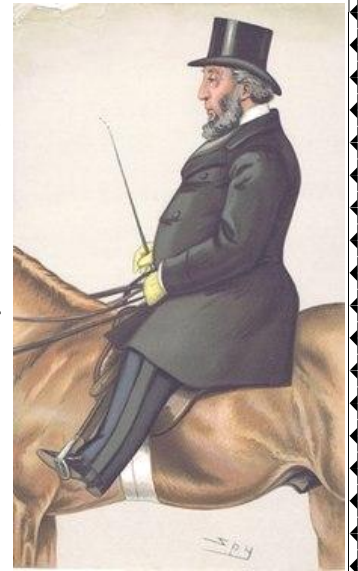


St Mary's school building in 1968

\* One evening in August, Tuesday evening, as Mr J W Ellis was returning home from business in his dog-cart, the horse, which was a very young one, suddenly became restive, throwing Mr Ellis violently to the ground, breaking his leg and otherwise injuring him. He was taken home, where he was attended by Doctors Sealy and Webb.

\* The annual meeting of the Byfleet Agricultural Association and Labourers' Encouragement Society took place in November on a piece of land in the occupation of Mr B Lovelock at Byfleet. It was reported that some remarkably good workmanship was exhibited in the ploughing classes. In the schoolroom, a quantity of cottage garden produce and fruit was exhibited. Later in the afternoon, a dinner took place in the schoolroom, provided by Mr Prichard, landlord of the Plough.. At this time, Mr Ellis was still recovering from his injuries (see previous paragraph), and was conveyed in a vehicle to see the ploughing and the show of cottagers' produce.

Mr John Whittaker Ellis (Sir John from 1881) in a caricature from Spy Magazine. He lived at Petersham House in High Road (until recently Lloyds Bank).



In this, our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we are pleased to announce that we have presented a plaque to St Mary's Church, commemorating the fact that Queen Elizabeth II is our longest reigning monarch. The oak plaque has been placed inside the church on the south wall.



This is a photo of Billie Knowles Band, believed to be on stage at Byfleet Village Hall sometime in the 1920s.

We think Billie Knowles is the gent at the piano. We do know that Alan John Cawsey is the last man sitting on the right hand side, next to Billie Knowles. The tall older man at the back is possibly Percy Matcham who used to teach swimming in the river at New Haw Road. Some suggested names for the

other band members are Reads, Reeves or Stephens, but this is unsure. Does anyone recognise anyone on the stage, or is able to confirm the location as Byfleet Village Hall?

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**SOCIETY NEWS,  
AND QUERIES**  
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We are pleased to pass on that **Byfleet Community Library** is now **open for their normal hours** and everyone is very welcome to go in and choose their books.

Hours are: Sunday 2-4pm, Monday closed, Tuesday 10am-4pm, Wednesday 6-8pm, Thursday 3-5pm, Friday 10am-4pm, Saturday 10am-4pm.

(Please note that there is no access to the Heritage Room at the moment as it is being used for book quarantine.)

**2022 Calendar Competition!**

A reminder that our photo competition to create our 2022 calendar will close at the **end of May 2021**, so this is the time to look over your photos of Byfleet from the last year and send us your best shots. Our theme will be “The Seasons of Byfleet”, which is open to individual interpretation, but must clearly show a location in the ancient parish of Byfleet.

You can either drop your entries at Byfleet Community Library or send digital copies to [photos@byfleetheritage.org.uk](mailto:photos@byfleetheritage.org.uk).

Details on how to enter and competition rules can be found at [byfleetheritage.org.uk/competition%202021.htm](http://byfleetheritage.org.uk/competition%202021.htm)

We look forward to seeing your photos.



You may remember in our last newsletter that we asked if anyone knew of a Mrs Maysham who ran a nursery school in Byfleet.

Several people have come forward to let us know that the lady was called Mrs Nation and is still well remembered. Her three nursery schools were at St Thomas More Church (which used to be at the end of Binfield Road), in the hut by the Methodist Church Hall, and in the Youth Club building which used to be in High Road in between the Day Centre and the Fire Station (now a block of flats). She worked to a strict timetable, with milk and biscuits at 10.30 and a story just before home time to calm the children before collection. Thanks to everyone who shared their memories of Mrs Nation with us.

**Surrey County Show trophies awarded to Burree’s Farm.**

We currently have a number of wooden shields awarded as prizes to Burree’s Farm for the produce from his market garden (now the Manor Farm nature reserve). There are too many for us to house in the Heritage Society archive, although we will be keeping some examples. Is there anyone in the village with a connection to the farm that might welcome one as a memento? If so, or if you would like to know more, do get in touch via one of the methods suggested at the bottom of this page.

**NEWSLETTERS VIA EMAIL**

Just a reminder that if you would like to receive your newsletters and other Society news by email, do let us know. Just drop an email to **Tessa@westlakesystems.co.uk** to be added to our emailing list.

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](mailto:info@byfleetheritage.org.uk) or ring our Secretary, Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559

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