



Byfleet Heritage Society.

Issue 18

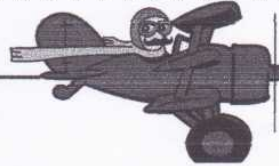
Newsletter

February 2002

Not much room for me to go on this time, as this newsletter is packed full of things to report and read— so get a cup of tea, get comfortable and settle back for a read. We have started a “notes and queries” section, asking queries that have been passed on to us, and sharing some of the answers we have got with members. Have a look, and if you have a query of your own, or can add a memory or information of your own, please let us know.

Lastly, we are calling on your good natures for some help with the Events Organiser post, or with manning stalls at Village and Parish Days—if you could help we would be very grateful.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2002



Thursday 21st MARCH

Anne McCormick from Kingston Museum will speak to us about the work and collections at Kingston Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library, 8.15pm.

Thursday 18th APRIL

Gordon Knowles “Parry Thomas and the World Land Speed Record”

Find out about Byfleet's own record holder! Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library, 8.15pm

Thursday 23rd MAY

Society AGM—speaker to be confirmed Byfleet Village Hall, Room A, 7.30pm

Sunday 23rd JUNE

Following the success of last September, we will be taking another WALK ON WISLEY COMMON in the company of Heath Ranger Dave Boddy. Come along and explore our local landscape. Meeting place and time to be confirmed.

Saturday 27th JULY

Visit to Surrey History Centre 2pm, Surrey History Centre, Goldsworth Road, Woking

PLEASE NOTE: Numbers will be restricted to 12 only. Please note the date in your dairies, and we will take names nearer the time.

SEPTEMBER: To be announced.

OCTOBER: To be announced

Thursday 21st NOVEMBER

Alan Crocker on The Powder Mills of Surrey. Celebrate Guy Fawkes Night (a bit late!) and come and find out about a surprising aspect of Surrey's industrial past. Byfleet Heritage Centre, Byfleet Library, 8.15pm

Members free. Non members £2

As you can see, this spot on the front page is still asking for help with our

Events Organiser job.

The committee has been managing to organise talks by sharing out the job, but the list of contacts we have been using is becoming outdated, and no-one has had the time to seek out new contacts.

We really need someone to volunteer for the job. If you don't want to take on organising all the talks, then we really need someone to volunteer to go to Woking library or contact other societies and draw up an up to date list of speakers for the committee to contact.

Please consider helping us out as we really want to continue to provide interesting speakers. If you want to volunteer, or have an idea for a talk, please contact Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559. Thank you very much.

Help still wanted



Something  
New!!

You may remember in the last edition that we asked if anyone remembered anything about air raid shelters or the Civic Restaurant at the Village Hall. We have had a couple of replies, which we share with you here, and we hope you enjoy them.

This led committee member Jeff Sechiari to suggest a Notes and Queries section, where members can send in queries about Byfleet and (hopefully!!) answer a few!

So if there is something that's always made you wonder, or if you can answer this edition's queries, please either drop a note into the library, or contact Tessa Westlake at 8 Brewery Lane (01932 351559) or on e mail [tessa@westlakesystems.co.uk](mailto:tessa@westlakesystems.co.uk). Thank you!



**1. From Jeff Sechiari: The Sanway Laundry and the name Sanway**

If the Sanway Laundry is shown in postcards as standing opposite the Binfield Bakers, why is called Sanway? Does it have links to the Sanway area?

Also, does anyone know the origin of the name "Sanway"? Is it a corruption of Sandy Way, as Jeff has heard of there being sandpits in the area.

**2. An arboretum by the M25**

Walking along the Wey from the Manor House Bridge, past Park Barn Farm, as the track approaches the M25 the trees straight ahead on either side of the motorway appear to be artificial woodland rather than natural. Why?

Jeff has seen from the OS map that this is by the site of Clearmount Cottage. Does anyone remember the building or who lived there?

We had a couple of replies to our query in the last issue about *Air Raid Shelters*:

*June Whitehouse* spoke to her mother who lived at 15 Binfield Road during the war. They used to go to a big shelter which was under the Sanway Laundry. Many people went there and they used to sometimes stay overnight. They also had shelters nearer the house. It had a brick built entrance to it and was shared by five families. The one outside number 15 was shared by the Rogers, Butlers, Palmers, Spittles and the Morris's. Her mother worked in the Sanway Laundry from aged 14 to about 1965 and she only missed two years out of that time when she had June. June herself worked there when she was about 13 for three weeks during the school holidays. It was the hardest work she has ever had to do. She hated the work, but loved listening to the ladies gossiping at the tea time and lunch breaks.

*Alan Griffiths* used to live at 21 Rectory Close during the war, and remembers that number 22 had an Anderson shelter in the back garden. There was a similar shelter in Rectory Lane on some waste ground opposite the house about five numbers up from Rectory Close, in the direction of the recreation ground.



## *For the Record...*

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

On **December 8th** last year, the Society was very pleased to announce the launch of L R Stevens' book, "Byfleet, A Village of England". The book was last in print just over 30 years ago, and Committee Member Jeff Sechiari thought the Society should do something about getting it back into circulation again. A good few people had expressed an interest, either to replace well-worn or lost copies, or to read about Byfleet's history for the first time. Encouraged by this, Jeff set about seeking the permission of the Stevens family to reprint, and this was very kindly given. A loan was given by Byfleet Parish Council, Sir Cliff Richard's charitable foundation gave a very generous donation and the project was on!



Of course, there was the inevitable last minute hitch—the original printers lined up for the job suddenly announced they were unable to help, and Jeff spent an anxious few days finding an alternative. Luckily one was found (and still within our budget!) and the copies were delivered just in time for our launch.

Members and guests gathered at Byfleet Library to celebrate. Jeff thanked Roger Parsons, L R Stevens' grandson for giving the family's permission and also for coming to the launch all the way from Bournemouth. He also thanked Mrs Patricia Spaight, also a descendant of Mr Stevens, for lending the Society a brand new book cover to be used for the current reprint. Byfleet Parish Council's help was also acknowledged, and the help of Byfleet resident (well, nearly!) Sir Cliff. And Jeff also thanked Howard Cook for working tirelessly in keeping the history of Byfleet alive and kicking while the book was out of print. Mr Parsons said he remembered his grandfather working on the book, and that he would have been pleased to know that interest in local history was still so strong.

Copies of the book are still available, costing £9.95, from Byfleet Library, Yeomans Stationers, Kellys Newsagents and also Corbetts Bookshop in West Byfleet. If you haven't yet picked up a copy, why not do so and explore the long and rich heritage of our village.



We would like to make up a list of references to Byfleet that appear in other books, magazines or any other media that you can think of or find. For instance, we have already listed "Byfleet, A Village of England" (of course!) and some articles on the Society in the Woking magazine.

If anyone comes across or knows of other references, please let us know. Either leave a note at Byfleet Library, or drop Tessa Westlake a note at 8 Brewery Lane (or e-mail [tessa@westlakesystems.co.uk](mailto:tessa@westlakesystems.co.uk)).

Thanks very much



## Queries Continued...

Alan Griffiths also remembers the Civic restaurant. He says: "I remember it as the British Restaurant which was the original name when it first came into being and I believe there were a number of these throughout the country during the War for the purpose of providing meals at reasonable prices in times of shortage. The name changed, in Byfleet at least, to Civic Restaurant after the war. I went to school in Woking in 1946 and the name, I believe, was unchanged at that time.

The Restaurant was in the main hall of the Village Hall. Tickets for meals were purchased at a small window which was on the right in the entrance foyer. You purchased tickets for a main meal and a sweet (as it was called) and there was a separate ticket for a cup of tea, if required. I cannot recall the cost, but it was probably about 1/6d plus tea.

My mother was a postlady and during the school holidays I had to queue to buy a ticket for her, then join the queue which went alongside the wall at the right-hand side of the hall until it reached the hatch from which the main meals were served. When I reached the hatch I had to wait until my mother came in thereby stopping her from waiting. There was another hatch from which the sweet course was dispensed and tea could be obtained near the steps going to the upper part of the hall.

The Restaurant also provided meals for pupils from the school. These were served in a side room to the right of the main hall and I can easily recall well done roast potatoes with nothing inside them and very soggy greens. When I ate there during the school holidays I was in luck because the mother of a friend of mine, who lived in Winern Glebe, used to serve the meals so we got larger portions of the food we liked."

Thanks to everyone who shared their memories and knowledge with us. If you can shed any light on this newsletter's queries, please let us know.

Next time I hope to have room to include a little bit about "The Watney Lot", local men who formed a Motor Transport Company during the First World War—if anyone remembers them, please let us know.

## SOCIETY NEWS

Just room to remind everyone that the book, "Byfleet A Village of England", is on sale at Byfleet Library, Yeomans Stationers, Kellys Newsagents and Corbetts Bookshop in West Byfleet.

Sales are going very well, so if you haven't got your copy yet, I'd go along and get your copy while they are still around!!

## ...and Don't Forget...

- \* our plea for help with our Events Organiser spot,
- \* to check you diary to see if you are available for Village or Parish Days,
- \* and new blood on the committee is always welcome!!