

Bitterne Local

History Society



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'Keeping Bitterne's History Alive'

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1005127

BYGONE BITTERNE

AUTUMN 2017 VOLUME 138

Itchen Firemen — page 2



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Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month (September — July) at 7.00 pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, Bitterne Village. Visitors are welcome (£3.00 per meeting).

Annual membership subscription - £14.00;

Concessionary (under 18 & over 80) - £8.00; Overseas membership - £17.00

Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of the Society but those of individual contributors

THIS MAGAZINE CAN BE PRODUCED IN LARGE PRINT FORMAT IF REQUIRED
PLEASE CONTACT IAN ABRAHAMS 023 8043 1067 OR THE EDITOR

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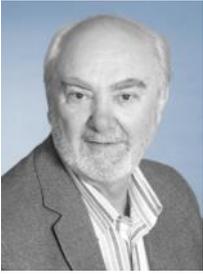
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DEAR FRIENDS - *From the Chairman*

Dear Friends,

I will start by offering best wishes to members Deidre and Denis Abraham, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 1st June this year. Congratulations to both of you!

Museum news: major changes to the layout of the Heritage Centre have taken place in preparation for the Heritage Open Day and so if you haven't visited our museum in Peartree Avenue recently it will be worth your while popping in to see the improvements. Thank you to all those who helped make this happen.

News on the Red Lion: a planning proposal for the extended outside seating area has been put to the Council. I have commented on the public forum to say the two concerns to BLHS are that the Lion should not be painted red and that the Lion should have a plaque outlining its history mounted on the plinth. The Council have responded to say they will specify that the Lion is to be cleaned but not painted, and they will put forward a request to Wetherspoon's for a plaque. We await the outcome.

I am pleased to announce the results of the **Lion Cup** Local History Writing Competition for 2017. The winner is 'Wheels' by Alan G. Clark and the runner up is 'A photographic Adventure' by Joy Bowyer. Congratulations to you both and thank you to BLHS Vice President Jim Brown for judging the competition.

And now to recent events: Back in May BLHS were involved in River-Fest 2017, a community event at Riverside Park. Thank you to Martyn Basford and Marion Marais who, despite windy weather conditions, were able to set up the display and to Mike Paget and Peter Shawyer, who were meeting and greeting visitors to our stand for many hours on a fine, if slightly cold, spring day.

On 10th June, BLHS took part in the Church & Community Open Day at Bitterne Parish Church. This was well attended and much enjoyed by all those involved. Thanks go to Steve Adams for the difficult task of

preparing important elements of the display within tight time constraints and also to Ian Abrahams and Steve Adams for setting up the display in the church and to Gerry Franks and Joy Bowyer for manning the display during the day. Much interest was shown in our display and in particular the map of Bitterne (c.1911) which we had encapsulated for this exhibition. Many thanks go to Bitterne Parish Church for offering lottery funding to help cover our display costs.

In the evening of that same day, we had a fascinating talk entitled *Southampton Passengers and Ships* by one of our regular speakers, Jake Simpkin, which was very well received.

In August BLHS participated in a Bitterne Community Event in Bitterne Precinct under the headline “Make Bitterne Better”. We ran a Treasure Hunt again this year, which proved very popular with children — there were sixty winning entries! — committee member Trish McPherson was very busy that day dishing out the prizes. My thanks go to Ian Mitchell, the co-ordinator, and the Junior Neighbourhood Wardens for organising the event. Also to Ian Abrahams for arranging the Treasure Hunt, to Southampton Children’s Play Association for providing an excellent range of prizes, and to all the BLHS volunteers who helped make this day a great success. Thank you all.

Our July meeting was *Mary Seacole — The Lady Without the Lamp* and was given by John Avery. I’m sure many of you will know that Mary Seacole has a ward named after her at the Royal South Hants Hospital — so it was interesting to learn more about her.

So what’s coming up in the future? In October we have a talk entitled, *Jane Austen’s Southampton* by Dr Cheryl Butler, which is timely as 2017 is the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen’s death. Then *The Forgotten Wrecks of the First World War* by Grant Bettinson is our November talk. For our December ‘end of year party’ we have the Fogey’s, a four piece folk band, with live music to entertain us, which should be great fun. Hope to see you there. Best wishes,

Peter



THE LION CUP 2017

The Lion Cup by Jim Brown (our Vice-President and Judge)

This year it was difficult to decide between the two leading contenders for the Lion Cup, but the winner had to be *“Wheels”*, a recollection of how young boys made their own amusements and toys many decades ago. It was a reminder of how youngsters had to use their imagination much more when playing.

The joy of a second-hand tricycle to a four year old was also well described, with the author taking a long unauthorised trip from Peartree Avenue to well down Spring Road, beyond Easson’s Garage. It was also ridden by a four year old through Bitterne to Hamble Lane, a distance of over four miles. How dangerous would that be today?

The account of how orange boxes, especially the longer and narrower Fyffes’ banana boxes, were used to create home-made *“go karts”*, reminded me of my own childhood. I also remember using wheels obtained from sources such as old prams and the fun of travelling downhill too fast. The author’s description of a nasty accident with a *“go kart”* is graphically described, establishing the article as being well written.

Here is the Winning essay.



WHEELS by Alan G. Clark

There are so many ways in which life has changed since I was a Bitterne boy in the 1940’s and 50’s. At this moment I have in mind children’s toys. These days it seems that the back garden of every house where children live is filled with gaudy plastic junk. Children’s playgrounds have to be a garish mix of clashing colour, or else it won’t be attractive to the little ones. Is this really the case? I don’t believe so. When I was young we had far less in the way of toys but what we had was made of metal and of wood—materials that could be adapted and in many instances repaired—toys, perhaps most significantly, which left something to a child’s imagination.

When I was about three years old, a highlight of any visit to my aunt and uncle’s house in Radstock Road, Woolston, was being allowed to look at my cousin Peter’s pedal car. To me it was just like a real car, made of metal and shaped rather like an old Austin. Peter was four years older than me

and at the time I was very envious of his car and wished that I owned one. Of course, you can't travel far in a pedal car. Even gaining a few yards requires a great deal of effort, and wisely my father, an engineer, decided I should have a tricycle instead. This was my birthday present when I was four and whilst I might have been just a little disappointed that it wasn't a car, I took to it straight away.

The tricycle was second-hand, although I didn't know that at the time and indeed it had been renovated to near-new condition. It was painted a pale blue, had a chain, brakes and solid tyres, and I remember riding it up and down our long front path for hours on end. The first time I escaped, I rode down Peartree Avenue and turned left into Spring Road, travelling nearly a mile before reaching my uncle Jim's grocery store, 'H.J. Garrad'. His shop lay fifty yards beyond Eassons Garages on the right. At that time, my parents didn't have a telephone that my uncle could use in order to report my arrival, and so he had to drive me home in his car. I have no memory of my mother's reaction to my disappearance but presumably she was glad to have me back.



**Alan at the top of Lance's Hill
c.1950 view looking west.**

My second escape, which must have occurred soon after the first, was much more ambitious, although I didn't think it too arduous at the time. My father worked for Fairey Aviation at the airfield off Hamble Lane, just before the village of Hamble. One morning I rode my trike up through Bitterne and along Bursledon Road, passing both the Elephant and Castle and the Target before turning right down Hamble Lane and arriving at the company's gatehouse at around lunch time. The total distance was over four miles. I must have told the gatekeeper who I was and that I'd come to see my dad, for my father was summoned to the gate and was totally amazed to find me there, having no idea that I would know where he worked, let alone how to navigate the journey. It was a great treat for me later that day to travel home with him, his workmates and my trike on the covered lorry used to transport employees.

Although my tricycle was a very satisfactory and swift means of transport, I still hankered after four wheels, and my friend Ken and I would spend hours constructing trolleys (what my children's generation would call go-carts) using planks and blocks of wood from my father's shed and a lot of nails. To make the bodywork we would scrounge orange boxes from a local greengrocer. One of these—I believe his name was Mr Mansbridge, was very good in this respect. He opened his shop in the early nineteen-fifties on part of the land now occupied by Sainsbury's and traded there for a number of years, originally selling just a couple of lines whilst building his business. Orange boxes were much sturdier than they are today and could be used in all sorts of ways but what we really craved were the Fyffes banana boxes. These were longer and narrower—rather coffin-like in fact, and made from much heavier wood, but Mr Mansbridge wouldn't let us take them because a returnable deposit applied. This reminds me that deposits were also paid on many bottles in those days and I remember scouring the village for 'returnables' and taking them to Peter's, the off-licence, in order to retrieve the deposit paid.

We built any number of trolleys at that time, although many must have left a lot to the imagination. One was a double-decker bus, using two boxes spaced apart, one above the other.

Another was a covered wagon, employing a bit of canvas stretched across four sticks. The perennial problem however was wheels. We could never satisfactorily solve this problem; I had one pair of old pram wheels, about twelve inches in diameter and on an



My maternal grandparents shop in Spring Road

axle. They had been hanging up in my father's shed for years.

Unfortunately they had no tyres, and so not only was it uncomfortable



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to propel oneself along, but they were noisy and inclined to leave marks on the pavement. These being the largest, I used them at the rear of any current vehicle. My front wheels must have come from an old pushchair and were good in almost every respect, being eight inches in diameter and with good quality solid tyres. The problem was that they had no axle, and therefore each one had to be fixed to the front block using a combination of washers and a six-inch nail. This solution worked reasonably well, and indeed on one occasion the construction defect may possibly have saved me from serious injury.

The incident to which I refer occurred one school day during the dinner break. I think our lunchtime must have lasted

at least an hour and a half because there always seemed plenty of time to get into mischief as well as have dinner (as we called it) during the time allowed. On this particular occasion, after calling at home to pick up my trolley, I walked with two classmates, John and David (not their real names) down Peartree Avenue before turning right by Bayliss' grocery store into Gainsford Road and then right again into Braeside Road. John lived on the left, near the top of this road. Braeside Road is fairly short but extremely steep. Not only is it steep but at the bottom of the hill the road immediately turns ninety degrees right, giving no opportunity to see what vehicle or pedestrian might be approaching from around the corner. As far as any of us was aware, no boy had ever dared or indeed would dare to attempt the descent by trolley. I just wanted to experience what it would feel like to be on the lip of the hill, as if just about to set off on that impossible ride, and so I asked both David and John to hold a back wheel, whilst I positioned myself flat on my stomach, head first, gripping the front steering block with my hands, my chin protruding and a mere six inches above the pavement.



**My father working on a Fairy Firefly,
Hamble 1940s**

I expected it to be thrilling and it certainly was. No sooner was I in position and admiring the view than I found myself part of it. The temptation had obviously proved too great and my 'friends' had let go. With more presence of mind I might have swung the wheels into the fence immediately and taken the tumble before gaining too great a speed, but in the time it took for me to realise what was happening, I was practically flying, and fighting to maintain a straight line. In no time the corner was upon me. Should I carry straight on, and leave the pavement to risk meeting a car as I crossed the road at speed before crashing through someone's fence into their front garden? Should I try to make the turn, knowing I would surely roll over? Instinctively I chose the latter. I wrenched the front block violently to the right as I reached the bend and immediately it felt to me as if a powerful brake had been applied. What had in fact happened was that the nails holding the front wheels in position had bent over due to the pressure caused by the turn and both wheels were now lying flat on the ground. I slithered on for a further twenty feet before coming to a gentle halt. For a few moments I just lay there marvelling at my good fortune. I didn't have a scratch on me—not even a grazed knuckle; I wanted that moment to last forever. I felt as if I could lie in that position all day, musing in wonder at my deliverance. In a moment John and David would come racing, breathless round the corner, fully expecting to discover my mangled remains and would find me lying here perfectly still. But not dead, as they might fear. A thought that left me feeling as if perhaps I were a bit of a disappointment to them.

And that was it really. I basked and revelled in my hero status for a minute or two before bending the front wheels back roughly to where they should have been and so making my way home. The incident passed into insignificance and was swiftly forgotten. Except that some things are never truly forgotten—like this and other associated memories that return to me in such vivid detail as I write, more than sixty years after these events occurred, and which it is my great pleasure to recall and recount in these short essays.



ASCUPART STREET PRISON – *Jim Brown*

Whilst scrolling through the Southampton census records, looking for somebody for a friend, I stumbled across something completely unexpected, a record of officers and prisoners for Ascupart Prison, at No.7 Ascupart Street, near St Mary's Street. The 1863 street directory is the first directory to show Ascupart Street with the Borough Gaol, with only seven premises shown, but the 1871 street directory shows the Borough Gaol at No.10 Ascupart Street, with ten premises shown.

I had known of there being a police station in Ascupart Street, when I joined Southampton Police in 1952, although I had never visited it I know of it as where the police stored abandoned bicycles, but never heard of it as a prison. To my further surprise I found there were a total of, believe it or not, 62 prisoners, of whom 14 were female. The list of prisoners also included children as young as 11 months.

What is also surprising is that an individual's Human Rights were respected long before the European Union, as all the prisoners were only recorded by their initials! Out of general interest, to show the various occupations and birthplace of the prison residents, I list them as under:

John BREWER, Widower, 60, Governor of Prison, Truro, Cornwall

Emelia S. BROWN, Un, 35, Matron, Winchester

Elizabeth HILL, Un, 31, General Servant, Newport, Monmouth

Emil C. LEIGH, Un, 24, Warder, Newport, IoW

John RUSSELL, Married, 35, Warder, Eling, Hants

Henry WHEBLE, Married, 25, Warder, Winchester

Following are shown as prisoners.

FR, Married, 29, Builder Carpenter, Southampton

HP, Married, 50, Hatter, Middlesex

AHV, Un, 24, Capt. Army, Bath

DM, Widower, 40, Pipe Maker, Fareham

MF (F), 34, Widow, Laundress, Bath

CB, Un, 28, Stone Mason, Hereford

JP, Un, 24, Bricklayer's Labourer, Romsey

JP, Un, 25, Sailor, Boldre, Hants

and a further 54 people with ages between 1 and 63, averaging 29 years of age, most with no description of occupation or birthplace.



BILL COX by Ian Abrahams

Alan Clark's article in our last magazine [Vol 137, Summer 2017] about Mr Glanville brought back memories for me—although not of Mr Glanville! My memories are of one of the other gentlemen mentioned, Bill Cox. I don't remember whether it was Bill who always cut my hair but do know that when he moved to Athelstan Road in about 1963 I followed him 'down the hill'. IT was a tiny little premises with seats down one side of the room for waiting and opposite these, on the wall, was displayed Post Office First Day Covers for sale. I suspect it was the attraction of buying these with my pocket money that persuaded me to make the journey from Bitterne!



I remember Bill as a very tall gentleman who lived, I believe, in Middle Road and also used to work in Southampton Guildhall in the evenings waiting on tables.

The other gentleman barber that Alan mentioned would, I suggest, be Mr Bob Gurney, one of our own Society members who celebrated his 98th birthday in August.



CORONATION STREET PARTY 1953

Here are two pictures that have been recently re-discovered, they were taken in Cross Road. Were you or a member of your family there?



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ROYAL SOUTHAMPTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY by Ann and Roger Elliott

The Society was formed in 1862 on 13th December and was called the Southampton Horticultural Society.

This is an extract from the Southampton Times dated 20th December 1862.

Southampton Horticultural Society

A meeting in connection with this new and most desirable society was held on Monday evening last, at the Bedford Hotel. The secretary Mr A. Kelly of the Ordnance Survey Office, submitted a statement showing by the numbers of members enrolled which included some of the most influential gentlemen of the town – that the society has every prospect of success before it.

We understand that fetes and shows are to be held during the ensuing summer, and as the captivating charms of floral beauty, on such occasions, be the most prominent attractions, we feel that no doubt of this young institution meeting with large and generous support.

This is an extract of the Southampton Times dated Saturday, April 4th, 1863.

Southampton Horticultural Society

Under the distinguished Patronage of the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of London M.P. William Rose, Conservative M.P. for Southampton

Sir J.C. Jervoise M.P.

Thomas Chamberlain Esq.

H.R.K. Holloway Esq.

Steuart Macnaghton Esq.

General Archibald B. Dyce

John Tuner Turner Esq.

President Sir Edward Hulse, Bart.

The first exhibition of the society will be held (by kind permission of Mr Haslar) in the grounds of Bannister's Park on Coronation Day Monday June 29th, 1863. Persons desirous of further information, or wishing to become members, will please apply to Mr Alexander Kelly, Hon. Secretary, Ordnance Survey Office, of whom a copy of the rules, etc. may be obtained.

By order of the committee. Alexander Kelly Hon. Secretary.

This is an extract of the Southampton Times dated 4th July 1863.

Part of a column headed “**The Coronation holiday**” included “the newly-formed Horticultural Society held its first show in the delightful grounds of Bannister’s Park, and afforded gratification to a large number of visitors who will delight in the floral beauties of nature and to many more who are always ready to join in the amusements incidental to “al fresco” entertainments.”

In 1876 the Society had been in existence for fourteen years and had a membership of 518. The following year it was down to 497.

In February 1879 his Royal Highness Prince Leopold had consented to be President and we have a copy of a letter sent to Windsor Castle asking for Queen Victoria to grant the Society permission to use the word “Royal” in the title. Fortunately, we also have a copy of a letter from Windsor Castle with the Queens agreement.

In 1883 the society signed a lease for Westwood Park and this became it’s own Botanic Garden.

The last great show was held there in August 1896 after a duration of 13 years.

At a joint Park and Exhibition Committee meeting on Wednesday, July 11th 1883 there was a proposal to light the entrance to the Park with two Luggs newest pattern lamps of 60 candle power at a cost of £4-10-0 (£4.50) each including columns, which should be placed in the roads opposite each gate. That two lamps should be placed over the turnstiles and one in each room.

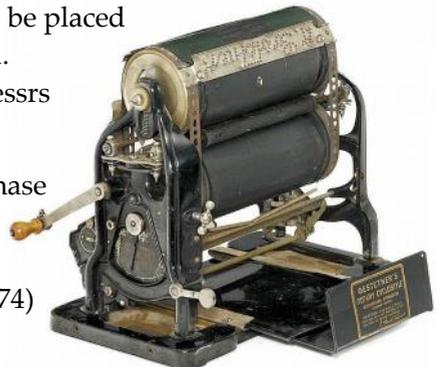
Estimates for firework displays from Messrs Brock and James Pain each for £20.

The Secretary asked permission to purchase a Cyclostile for producing circulars at a cost of 21/- (£1.05). This was agreed.

(Typewriters were not invented until 1874)

A letter was read from Dr Seaton

complaining that he had left his exhibitors pass



at home and was charged 2/6 (13p) admission to the Rose Show. It was resolved to refund his money.

Park Committee meeting held in the Park on Thursday August 2nd 1883.

The Portswood Workmen's Hall wanted to hire the Park for a Fete and were charged £2-2-0 (£2.10).

A Mr Joy wanted to use the Park to give the inmates of the Poor House a treat and he was charged 10/6 (52p).

The secretary reported that the very large space required for the City of Plants had compelled him to telegraph London for extra canvas and make arrangements to increase the large tent by 40 feet.

Promenade concerts were held in the Park for the benefit of the Society.

H.R.H. Prince Edward was president during 1884 but could not accept the office for a second year.

The A.G.M. scheduled for Tuesday January 29th 1884 was delayed a fortnight because the accounts were not ready.

In February 1885 at a council meeting, Mr Blanford wanted to resign but there was no provision in the rules for resigning between AGMs.

He was asked to withhold his resignation until the first Council meeting after the General Meeting when a new bylaw proposing that the Council had the power to fill any vacancies that might occur on the Council would be introduced.

On the front cover of the Annual Report for 1898 the patrons included Her Royal Highness Princess Henry of Battenberg, The Bishop of Winchester and the Principal Nobility of the County. In the same Report there are notices of the Summer Show to be held on June 27th and 28th and also the Chrysanthemum and Fruit Show on October 31st and November 1st. The Report contains advertisements for both Toogood's Royal Garden



Seeds and Sutton's Seeds.

In 1901 on July 2nd and 3rd an exhibition of roses was held on the Royal Pier. It was noted that the L.&S.W. railway have a station on the Pier.

There are no records of the activities of the Society from 1901 until 1977 when Neville Yeates became Chairman. He held the position for 26 years until 2001 when Andy Duell was elected.

Belinda, Lady Montagu, was President of the Society for many years and could not remember when she took on the roles but in 2010 due to failing health she decided to relinquish the position.

Neville organised the horticultural section of the Southampton Balloon and Flower Festivals from 1989 until 2001 inclusive. A large number of members of the Society did all manner of tasks to make these shows the success they were.

On Friday 27th February 1984 the Society hosted a recording of the radio programme "Topsoil" in the St John Ambulance Hall, Kings Park Road Southampton. The presenter was Mary Lewisohn and the team members were Bill Boyd, Brian Kidd and John Studley.

The venue for the normal monthly meetings changed to the St John Ambulance Hall in 1978 and then again in 2000/2001 to the Edmund Kell Unitarian Church in Bellevue Road; St Barnabas Church Hall in Lodge Road was the next venue in 2005 until 2009 when the move to The Wesley Centre, Whites Road, Bitterne took place. Due to the re-development possibility, the Society currently meets in the Catholic Hall, Commercial Street, Bitterne on the first Friday of each month starting at 19:30.

During 2013 the committee decided to use "Southampton Gardening Club" as it's working title as it was felt to be less formal and more friendly.

It would seem to have had members who were well to do but on several occasions in it's history the bank account got into a negative balance and was bailed out by lady members.



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CHILDHOOD MEMORIES by Mrs G. Dugdale

I remember the days when there were horses and cabs for hire by the old Floating Bridge at Woolston.

So often have I gone with my mother on a Saturday evening on the Floating Bridge to Southampton to the market on Kingsland Square, with the naphtha flares lighting the stalls, the hustle and bustle of shopping and the climax a penny (or was it ½d?) prize packet to take home, oh what a thrill it all was.

In the spring an outing to Red Lodge in Bassett by the old open-topped tramcars to see the glorious rhododendrons. My sister and I used to string the fallen petals on some long grasses that grew around.

At home we had gaslight downstairs but candles to light us to bed. There was no central heating so in winter the bedrooms were cold, but we had nice stone hot water bottles for warmth.

There was no bathroom, but the big tin bath was brought in from the back porch and filled with water in front of the kitchen fire.

There was the corner shop where one could buy tasty home made fag-gots and peas and spend our Saturday penny on Sherbet Dabs, everlasting strip, aniseed balls, gob-stoppers and such like.

Then the 1914/18 war, when my parents took my sister and me to Southampton Common to chat to the soldiers camping there before embarkation.

Later just before he enlisted, my brother met and brought home a R.A.M.C. soldier based at Netley Hospital, now the Country Park.

Ours was an open house and 'Arthur' was made welcome when off-duty and in turn brought another soldier who was a beautiful pianist and needed somewhere to keep up his skill and so we had some wonderful evenings of music. My sister and I were too young to join in but were able to listen whilst in bed.

Then the new school—how proud I felt in my new 'Boater', or 'Basher' as we called them, as I walked along the Netley Shore and sat on the wall bounding Netley Castle, the residence then of Sir Harry Chirton and



now a rest home for patients having treatment for cancer. How sadly I walked home having fallen off the wall and crushed my lovely new hat. With the cost of school uniform and books, no way could I have another new hat, so until our head gear was changed to more comfortable Panamas I had to wear a bashed "Basher"!

If I remember rightly I started with one of the first of the Secondary Schools for further education, which is now Itchen Grammar or is it Sixth Form College?

The Senior students, I think, were from the old Pupil Teachers Centre held at the Victoria Rooms, Woolston, and they went on to the Hartley College which ultimately became Southampton University.

Our school in those days consisted of Army Huts, a brick school was not built until many years after I left, but we had a dedicated staff and I have very happy memories of my time at the dear old huts.



FUTURE LOCAL EVENTS INVOLVING BLHS

09 Sept **Southampton Heritage Open Day** at our Heritage Centre and across Southampton and the country. We will be open to visitors in the Heritage Centre all day and members are encouraged to come along and help. The Southampton and District Transport Heritage Trust will again be running a bus service from the Heritage Fayre in Bugle Street to us and back all day. Our theme this year is the 'Large Houses East of the River Itchen'.

30 Sept **The Hampshire Field Club** Local History Section, AGM and Autumn Outing that we are hosting at the URC with talks by our members, visits to our Heritage Centre, Woolston and Bitterne Precinct and Parish Church.



HELP WANTED

BITTERNE C of E SCHOOL 1961



Lynda Kinchenton (nee Dyer) is looking for fellow pupils who left Bitterne School in 1961, many of whom will be in this School photo. Lynda says "I have organised an old Bitterne School Reunion for those who LEFT In 1961 but would love to have contact with more of you." If you, or anyone you know may have been in this group please contact Lynda at : kinchenton@btinternet.com"



A WARTIME MEMORY

We have heard from an Australian correspondent who asks if anyone remembers an attack on a ship he was collecting from the Thornycroft's yard in late May or early June 1942. He writes:

I served in Southampton long after the blitz on that city. I was drafted to England to crew a new destroyer built at Thornycroft's, the HMAS Nepal, which had been badly damaged during construction.



One day in harbour in late May or early June 1942 there must have been an air raid because we were closed up at action stations. I was on "X" gun, a 4.7" gun aft. There was a loud bang on the port side of our stern. I jumped into the gun trainer's seat (our regular trainer had just left to go to the toilet reckoning on nothing happening). When I looked through the sights I could see a ship seemed to be badly damaged. There were a few planes flying above at the time. One came diving in towards our stern. We realized it was German and thought we were going to be attacked and the rating who controlled the trigger to fire the gun was yelling "Will I fire?" but no order came from the bridge. The plane flew over us. The story among the crew after this incident was that there was a new cruiser ahead of this and the pilot decided to go for the bigger prize than the destroyer and was shot down before he made the cruiser. Our skipper did not give the order to fire as there were planes on his tail and he thought we might damage them rather than the German (or as well). "

After some research: HMAS Nepal was an N-Class destroyer ordered from John I Thornycroft of Woolston on 15th April 1939 Allocated Yard No 1203 the ship was laid down on 9th September 1939. During construction on 18th December 1940 the hull structure sustained major damage by a direct hit and two other near misses during an air raid. The subsequent repair work delayed launch until 4th December 1941. Although intended to be sold to the Dutch Navy another ship of this Class was selected and this destroyer was renamed HMS NEPAL in January 1942 and was the 1st RN ship to bear the name. Transferred on loan to the Royal Australian Navy this ship was commissioned on 11th May 1942 before completion of build on the 29th which included fit of degaussing gear as well as 20 mm Oerlikon guns to improve defence against close range air attacks.

Looking through the BLHS Paper No.9, Southampton and District Air Raids the most likely fit to the description above is:

27.5.1942 Raid 3:10 to 3:25. Me109F-4 damaged while raiding Solent shipping by fighters, crashed at Yaverland Farm, near Brading, Isle of Wight at 3:20 pm.

If anyone has any memories of this we will pass them on.





September 1992 — THE BROWNLOW ESTATE

These pages are reproduced from a booklet issued by Hintons when the Brownlow Estate was being developed almost 60 years ago.

Surroundings

Although it lies within the boundaries of the Borough of Southampton, the Brownlow Estate is sufficiently far out of the town to escape the disadvantages of urban life, while retaining the ability to participate in the advantages which a great town such as Southampton has to offer.

The amenities of life, therefore, are present in full force, including easy accessibility, excellent shops and schools, lots of facilities for entertainment, and so forth, while the Estate also shares the many delights of a really glorious countryside, with the immense and untouched area of the New Forest within the easiest of reach, and the Coast, with its many forms of enjoyment, also close at hand.

The situation of the Estate is very healthy indeed, being well above sea level (170ft) and London, Portsmouth, Winchester and Salisbury are all readily reached by 'bus, coach and train.

In short, it is a perfect spot in which to live, and the homes built upon it are worthy of their environment.

Local Services and Amenities

Ease of Access — the Estate lies only 2 minutes' walk from a 'bus stop whence there are frequent services to the heart of Southampton; Bitterne Station is only 1 mile away and linked with the Estate by 'bus. Hants and Dorset 'bus services can also be utilised, and run to all parts of the district.

Shopping Facilities — There are excellent shopping centres within 5 minutes walk, in each of two directions, while Bitterne Park and Southampton are both easily reached.

Electricity — 3d per unit for Light; 1s 1/8d per unit for Power, or an "All-in" rate with a quarterly fixed charge can be arranged at 1/2d per unit.

Rates — 10s 6d in the £ per annum.

Water Rate — 1s 1d in the £ on nett. annual value.

Gas — The price of Gas at present varies from 4.8d to 9.6d per therm, according to consumption.

For convenience of their consumers, the Southampton Gaslight Coke Company have eight Showrooms, each of which is equipped with modern labour saving appliances, and the attendants in charge are fully qualified to give advice on all uses of gas.

A further benefit to the consumer is the Special Service Section, comprising a number of technically trained servants who periodically visit consumers' premises to make certain that they are obtaining complete satisfaction and maximum efficiency from every gas appliance installed in the home. This service after sale is another example of the progressiveness of the Company, and is greatly appreciated.

Appliances are obtainable on Limited Hire over periods up to years — surely a guarantee of quality.

It will also interest you to know that all the houses on this Estate have connections for the following apparatus: Geyser in bathroom, Cooker and copper in scullery, Gas Fire in front bedroom.

Therefore before deciding upon any cooking, heating or hot water appliance, you are strongly recommended to call and inspect the very latest at any of the following branches:- 66, Above Bar, Southampton, 313, Shirley Road, Southampton, 223, Portswood Road, Southampton, 24, High Street, Eastleigh, Rumbridge Street, Totton, High Street, Lyndhurst, Station Road, Chandler's Ford, Bridge Road, Woolston.

Schools — Educational facilities are all that could be desired, for there is an excellent choice of schools within easy reach, including Secondary and Elementary Schools near the Estate besides many good Preparatory Schools for both sexes.

Churches — There are places of worship for all denominations either in the immediate vicinity or in Southampton and its environs.

Recreation — Sports grounds close to the Estate give facilities for most outdoor games, while there are all the attractions of the countryside by 'bus. Up-to-date Cinemas abound both in and near Southampton. 



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ITCHEN URBAN DISTRICT FIRE BRIGADE - COVER PHOTOGRAPH **by Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Retired, Alan House (Archivist and** **Custodian of Hampshire Fire and Rescue)**

The cover photo of the Itchen Urban District Council Fire Brigade was taken in 1909. The station adjoined the Council offices in Woolston, having moved from Leigh Grange, where it had been located from 1902. The brigade was originally the St Mary Extra Fire brigade, changing its name in 1898.

It shows a Hose Cart, hand pulled, carrying hose and hose fittings, hydrants, standpipes, etc. Behind is a hand-pushed wheeled escape ladder, a Merryweather 45ft 'curricule escape'. The main 'manual fire engine' was the most common means of fighting fires for small Brigades of the period. The handles fold out along their length and anywhere from 8 to 16 men would pump up and down to pressurised the water in its trough, either lifted from a pond, etc., or kept filled buckets. The horse to pull the engine came from the Council stables and used for other tasks when not 'loaned' by the Brigade.

The boy on the bike is a 'Call Boy' who would be sent around to knock the doors of the firemen to call them out. The two standing at the front are [left] The Chief Fire Officer and [right] The Second Officer. The chap stood behind the seated driver is the Sub Officer. The Chief Officer often had a 'silver' (nickel-plated) helmet but there is no way of telling from the image.

The medals, obviously worn for the photo were a mix. Some had seen service—probably in the South African Wars, long service (either 10 or 20 years) Brigades medals and probably some drill competition medals. The Brigade fell under the responsibility of the 'Road, Scavenging and Watch Committee'.

In November 1920, the Council and its Fire Brigade was absorbed into the Southampton Borough. By this time, the Itchen Council did actually have on order a Dennis motorised fire engine but it was delivered to the new Brigade and placed in service in January 1921.



OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES

West End Local History Society

Meetings in West End Parish Centre, Chapel Road, SO30 3FE at 7.30 pm

4th Oct FORGOTTEN WRECKS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR
by Stephen Fisher

1st Nov THE KINGS LAWYER: SIR RICHARD LYSTER
by Dr Cheryl Butler

Contact: 02380 471886

Botley, Curdridge and Durley History Society

Meetings held at the Reading Room, Curdridge, SO32 2HE at 8.00 pm

22nd Sept HMS ALLIANCE & THE SUBMARINE MUSEUM
by Chris Hayward

27th Oct HISTORY OF THE BOTLEY TO BISHOPS WALTHAM
RAILWAY by John Tillman

17th Nov THE FIRE SERVICE DURING WW2 by Alan House

Contact: 01489 691777

City of Southampton Society

Meetings at Edmund Kell Church Hall, Bellevue Road, SO15 2AY at 7.00

23rd Oct SEARCHING FOR WAR MEMORIALS by Geoff Watts

27th Nov THE WAR UNDER THE GROUND [Somme] by Peter
Jones

Contact: info@coass.org.uk

Hampshire Genealogical Society

Meetings held at Roman Catholic Hall, Commercial St, Bitterne at 7.30 pm

16th Oct THE TRAGIC LIFE OF ELLEN WREN by Andy Skinner

20th Nov SOUTHAMPTON & RISBOROUGH: TRAIN FERRY
HISTORY by John Fish

Contact: 02392 387000

Millbrook Local History Society

Holy Trinity Church Hall, Millbrook Road at 7.30

5th Oct A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A NEW FOREST PONY
by Anne Servier

2nd Nov THE TITCHBORNE CLAIMANT by John Avery



HISTORY AND HERITAGE CLUB

Wednesday 27th Sept, Day Trip to Strawberry Hill – Leave 8.30am

This is a great day out to see Horace Walpole's Gothic Castle, including a 90 minute guided tour of this restored 18th Century masterpiece, renowned as Britain's finest example of Georgian Gothic revival architecture.



The day will include luxury travel from local points, tea and coffee on arrival, a 90 minute guided tour and free time to look around this fabulous building and gardens.



Cost approximately £30 depending on numbers – to book please pay £10 deposit as both coach and Strawberry Hill need deposits at this time.

Friday 3rd November Day Trip to Imperial War Museum – Leave 9.00am

This is a fabulous day out to see the VAST range of equipment, artefacts and so much to see on all floors. I will find out if there are any extra exhibitions as these may well be chargeable. This will be a free day to explore once there.



Cost should be approximately £20-£25 depending on numbers attending. Please pay £10 each person deposit to Mrs Mary Abraham tel 02380 394930, email if needed to maryabraham_22@yahoo.co.uk. Thank you



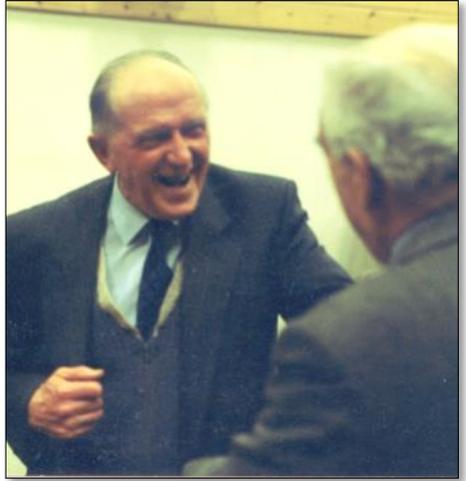
**2018 Diary A day trip to Highclere Castle
on Friday 6th April (Easter Week)**



PRESIDENTIAL PATTTER – Ian Abrahams

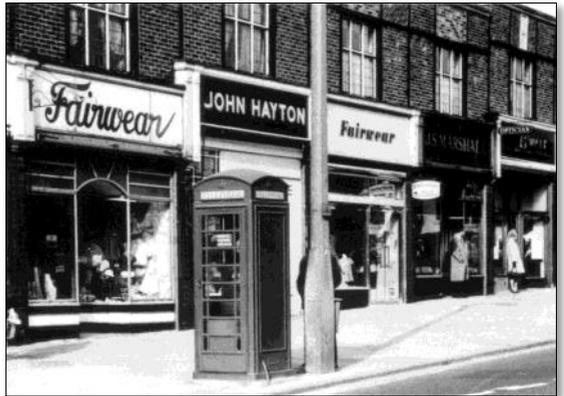
Dear Friends

We were sad to hear the news earlier in the summer of Mr Bert Moody's passing at the grand age of 95. Bert had spoken at our Society meetings many times over the years – his specialist subjects being local shipping and railways. He was known for his immense knowledge of both these subjects and his collection of slides used to illustrate his talks. He wrote several books which occasionally appear in our second-hand book shelves in the shop – well worth looking out for.



Bert is pictured above sharing a joke with one of our Founder members, 92-year-old John Shephard, at one of our meetings.

As I write news has just broken of the closure of "The Flower Shop", formerly Haytons, on August 12th.



A very sad day for our village – Mr Hayton began trading at the end of the second World War, so it has been a flower shop for over 70 years. He still lived

above the shop with his wife until they were both in their nineties – in fact I had a job interview there about twenty-five years ago! The longest serving member of the present staff, Lisa, has been there since 1992. We wish all the employees well in the future and thank them for all

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FLORISTS—415, Bitterne Road

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(Tel. 4405)

and 33, Manor Farm Road

(Tel. 55197)

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The photo [opposite] is the only one we have showing the shop. Perhaps someone out there has a photograph of the shop which we could add to our archives?

By the time you read this our AGM will have taken place so can I take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support.

Best Wishes,

Ian



2017 BLHS CALENDAR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Oct 14th	JANE AUSTEN'S SOUTHAMPTON	Dr Cheryl Butler
Nov 11th	THE FORGOTTEN WRECKS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR	Grant Bettinson
Dec 9th	THE FOGEYS - Live Music	

2018

Jan 13	LAND OF PURE DELIGHT	Gordon Lewis
Feb 10	A 'TONGUE IN CHEEK' TOUR OF MEDIEVAL/OLD SOUTHAMPTON	Don Robertson
Mar 10	BYGONE BITTERNE	Ian Abrahams

**Deadline for contributions to the Winter Edition
is Saturday, 11th November**

Please send contributions to the Editor, Steve Adams
blhs.editor@gmail.com
or leave them at the Heritage Centre

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BITTERNE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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& Saturday & 10am-1pm

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