

Bitterne Local

History Society



ESTABLISHED 1981

'Keeping Bitterne's History Alive'

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1005127

BYGONE BITTERNE

SPRING 2018 VOLUME 141



Pagefield Charabanc in Bitterne, see p. 2

Non-members

£2.00 please

**Serving Bitterne and the community
for over 125 years**

R.C.Payne & Son

Funeral Directors

485 Bitterne Road East
Southampton
SO18 5EQ
Tel: 023 8044 9111

- Our staff are at your service 24 hours a day
 - Memorial advice and products available
 - Funeral Plans available
 - Members of the National Association of Funeral Directors



www.dignityfunerals.co.uk
Part of Dignity plc
A British Company

BITTERNE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.bitterne.net

President Mr Ian Abrahams 023 8043 1067

Vice Presidents Mr A.G.K Leonard Mrs J. Nicol
Mr R. Sperring Mr J. Brown

Officers & Trustees

Chairman	Peter Richards	023 8044 0864	blhs.chairman@outlook.com
Vice-Chairman	Marion Marais	075 4412 2512	
Secretary	Martyn Basford	023 8063 7967	
Treasurer	Carol Masters		

Committee

The Officers and Trustees plus:

Marion Marais	Shop Management	075 4412 2521	
Barbara House	Shop Management	023 8042 1678	
Andrew Robertson	Membership Secretary	077 4358 2259	blhsmembership@gmail.com
Elaine Canterbury	Trish McPherson	Steve Adams	

Other Contacts

Minute Secretary	Peter Richards	blhs.chairman@outlook.com	
Programme Secretary	Peter Richards	blhs.chairman@outlook.com	
Magazine Editor	Steve Adams	blhs.editor@gmail.com	
Webmaster	Celia Mayo	023 8044 8426	celia.blhs@gmail.com
Schools Liaison	Celia Mayo	023 8044 8426	celia.blhs@gmail.com
Catering Coordinator	Jill Abrahams	023 8043 1067	
Heritage Centre Coordinator	Martyn Basford	023 8063 7967	

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; second person at same address £6.00 (no magazine)

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 OR ELECTRONIC FORMATS
PLEASE CONTACT THE EDITOR

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Dear Friends	Chairman	3
General Data Protection Regulation	Peter Richards	5
Obituary Mildred Russell	Ian Abrahams	6
Sholing's Primitive Methodist Chapel	Jim Brown	8
'Pull Round' Streamline Taxis, Pt 1	Hilda Fletcher	10
How the Society Works	Peter Richards	12
Spitfire Production: The Dispersal	Peter Richards	14
Help Given		20
Wood Nymph	Alan G Clark	22
Sewing Machines	Keith Marsh	24
The Lion Cup		25
Other Local Societies		26
From the BLHS Newsletter of 25 Years Ago		29
Presidential Patter	Ian Abrahams	30
BLHS Calendar		32

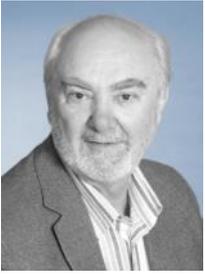
FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you to all those people who responded to my plea for magazine articles for the in last the issue—I now have articles 'in waiting' that will be carried over for a future edition. **But** please do not let that stop you from penning your own reminiscences, etc., to share with everyone.

COVER PHOTO

Summer is nearly here—time to plan a day out!
Travellers pose on a Pagefield Charabanc, probably converted from a WWI 4 ton army lorry, outside Bitterne Motor Works, about where Iceland is now.





DEAR FRIENDS - *From the Chairman*

Dear Friends,

Sadly I have to report the deaths of a number of long standing members. Mildred Mary Russell died on 10 March 2018, aged 93. She was a BLHS founder member and Vice President, who took on the role of the Society's Treasurer for a period of 10 years. Adrian Arthur Edmunds died on 7 April aged 83, Bob Gurney died on 8 April aged 98, and William George "Bill" Monk died on 22 April aged 83. Our condolences go to their families and friends. They will all be sorely missed.

BLHS continues to engage with the wider community by welcoming supervised groups of youngsters to visit our museum. Following visits from a local Cub pack back in January and February of this year, we were pleased to welcome a mixed group from Merry Oak Youth Association in March. The boys and girls, with an average age of 10, were very interested in the exhibits and enjoyed taking part in our quiz. Thanks go to Martyn Basford and Peter Shawyer for hosting the event. At the time of writing we are planning to invite a group from the local Boys Brigade in May. The long term objective is to encourage a new generation to become engaged in local history—we hope these visits will help to plant seeds of interest that will grow in the future.

To commemorate RAF 100, BLHS will have a display in our museum for June and July relating to the history of the oldest independent air force in the world, the Royal Air Force, formed in 1918 when the Royal Flying Corps merged with the Royal Naval Air Service.

BLHS are running the Lion Cup local history writing competition again this year. The entry form and rules can be found on our website www.bitterne.net, or collected from BLHS shop, 231 Peartree Avenue. The closing date is 31 July 2018—so get writing soon—you could be the Lion Cup winner and receive the prize of £30.

I'm pleased to confirm that *Out of the Shadows* will be coming to Bitterne Precinct on Wednesday 13th June. *Out of the Shadows* is a Heritage Lottery funded project which aims to engage more people with the heritage of Spitfire construction in Southampton through a number of different activities. A series of Community Heritage Days are being planned across the city, which will involve taking two of the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust buses out to share this part of the City's heritage and also provide opportunities to gather people's stories. BLHS are taking part and we will be exhibiting our display in the United Reformed Church on 13 June. Please come along if you can—refreshments will be available.

I am delighted to announce that on 8 September this year, we have a guest speaker, Emma Muscat, who will give a talk entitled *Women's Suffrage In Southampton, 1900 - 1914*, dressed in period costume. This will follow immediately after our AGM giving you all an extra reason for turning up!

We will be taking part in the Heritage Open Day (HOD) again this year. The date is set for Saturday, 15 September. We are pleased that we will be included in the vintage bus route from Castle Way, Southampton, linking us with the Heritage Fayre at St Joseph's RC Church, Tudor House, *SS Shieldhall* and the Heritage Workshop in Eastern Docks. This year our chosen theme for the HOD is 'The First World War' in order to remember the men who gave their lives in the 1914-18 War (as recorded on Bitterne Parish Memorial) and other local people involved in the conflict 100 years ago. As in previous years you can view displays and artefacts from bygone Bitterne, which will evoke memories of an era before the bypass was constructed. Our shop front displays are based on real shops from the past and will educate the young and bring back memories to those who are a bit older. In addition we hope to include a display which refers to extraordinary women who had links to our side of the

city, east of the River Itchen. Please mark your calendar to remind you to come along and enjoy the day.

Future Talks – In July we have *Winchester: Bishops, Buildings and Bones*, part 1 of a series of talks about Winchester by Andrew Negus. These talks have been popular with other societies and so we can now look forward to learning more about the ancient capital of Wessex.

Allyson Hayes has kindly agreed to give a talk, on behalf of Bevois Mount History, in October entitled *Notable People of Bevois Mount*. The wall murals in the Bevois Mount area, sponsored by this group, are truly amazing - I can strongly recommend you look out for them next time you are in the district.

Our shop in Peartree Avenue is always looking for donations so please think of giving books, bric-a-brac or vinyl records next time you have a clear out. If you happen to know anyone who can volunteer for a few hours a week, either in the shop or our museum, please call in and enquire as we often have vacancies.

Best wishes, Peter



General Data Protection Regulation - GDPR - Peter Richards

Like all other organisations that hold personal data (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc) we as a Society are undertaking an audit of the data we hold, checking whether we need to hold it and organising its safe storage. As a fairly small organisation we will have to make important but fairly minor changes to our current practice which I am sure you will notice in due course. These changes will ensure that the details we hold about you are kept safely - important in this time when personal data is sold for nefarious reasons - and to ensure that the Society operates within the law.



Obituary: Mildred Russell, 1924 -2018 -- Ian Abrahams

Mildred was born in Dean Road, Bitterne (then Chapel Street) at the family home, Rosella Cottage, and was to live there until the 1970s when it was demolished to make way for Bitterne Leisure Centre. Mildred started at Bitterne School in 1929 at the same time as John Shephard whose passing we marked in our Spring issue, he was born just a few streets away from Mildred four days after she was! As with John, Mildred remembered her early days at school when Miss Gwen Prydderch was Headmistress and when she left at the age of 14 in 1938 former headmistress of the girls school, Miss Kate Sharman, wrote a glowing reference (opposite).

Mildred did indeed 'do well in clerical work' having a number of different posts during her working life including at William Dibben Builders Merchants. In retirement she looked after her sister, Kit, for a number of years (another BLHS member who we remember with much affection).

When our society was formed in 1981 Mildred was a founder member and she wrote on her application form 'I am joining to meet local people, old friends and school pals'. She certainly did that and was soon appointed BLHS Treasurer, a position she held for ten years. Mildred threw herself into Society activities wholeheartedly and was part of what used to be called 'The Road Show Team' who took our book stall to many hundreds of local events over the years raising a considerable amount of money for our museum appeal fund. She loved to dress in costume for the local carnivals and fetes which BLHS were so much part of (pictures p.31).

In 1993, when we opened our first shop and heritage centre, Mildred volunteered to serve in the shop and continued to do so for many years. In recognition of her long service she was also honoured with the title Vice President. Although in recent years she was unable to actively take part in Society activities she was always keen to know how things were going and much enjoyed having our magazine read to her by her niece, Diane.

Those of us who knew Mildred will know that our Society would not be where it is today without all her hard work and enthusiasm, amongst

others. It was a pleasure to have known her and we shall remember her with much love.

Donations to the Society in memory of Mildred amounted to £330 and we hope this will go towards something which will be a fitting memorial to her many years of dedication to preserving Bitterne's history for future generations.

For C.E. Girls' School,
Bitterne,
15th Dec '38 Southampton.

As Headmistress of the above-named School, I have known Mildred Russell for about seven years.

All her work was most satisfactory. She was an excellent help to me in keeping the Milk Record Book, & should do really well in clerical or office-work.

Her character is excellent, & she has a very pleasant disposition, & is willing & hard-working to assist others.

M. E. Sharman
Late Headmistress.

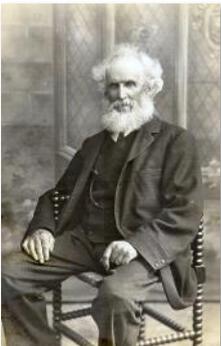


SHOLING'S PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL – Jim Brown



This lovely colourful oil painting (*left - to be passed to BLHS when I shuffle off this planet*) was made by Police Constable Ken Gyue in 1968 and hangs in my bedroom. The Chapel was at the junction of South-East

Road and Chapel Crescent (hence the latter's name) and is where I was married in 1953. The part of the building to the right is 155 South-East Road where my wife's family lived for many years and where my wife and I lived in the 1950/60s. Her grandfather, James Parker, helped to build the Chapel in 1876. He was second cousin to the notorious Richard Parker who was eaten at sea by his shipmates when they were shipwrecked in 1884.



It was known as "*Green's Chapel*" as George Green (another member of my wife's family) was the Chapel's Treasurer and known as the dynamic and forceful leading member of the congregation.

Sadly, by 1968, concern over the cost of maintaining the building resulted in the congregation combining with those of the Hightown Bible Christian Chapel in Bursledon Road, who had a similar problem.

George Green



The Hightown Chapel

The eventual outcome was the two congregations joining to build a new St Andrew's Methodist Church at the junction of South-East and Butts Roads. This was opened on 29 November 1969 by the Rt.Hon. Horace King, Speaker of the House of Commons and

later Lord Maybray-King.

The old Chapel structure, after a period of being used as a store by the Southern Gas Board, was later replaced by housing (below)



Sadly, in 2010 even the new building ceased to function as a Methodist Church as the congregation was unable to provide a Treasurer or other vital officers. Fortunately it was taken over by CityLife, a Christian Church connected with local schools and is now used by the New Community Church.



The original Chapel organ had its own history and had been transferred to the new St Andrew's Methodist Church in Butts Road. It had been displayed in Prince Albert's famous Crystal Palace Great Exhibition of 1851. It

was eventually sold to a distant church so its history continues outside of Hampshire.



The 1851 organ inside St Andrew's

Full details of the history of Methodism in Southampton and the Sholing Chapels can be found in my book *"The Story of St Andrew's Methodist Church, Sholing"*, now out of print but a copy is available for viewing in the BLHS Heritage Centre, Peartree Avenue or on Amazon as a very cheap £1.19p Kindle edition.



'PULL ROUND'! Memories of Streamline Taxis – Hilda Fletcher

My husband, Harold Fletcher (Harry) worked for Streamline Taxis from 1949 to 1956 from offices which were in Hanover Buildings. He had learnt to drive in the early 1930s before the driving test started but got a licence in the army and was offered work straight away. He was given money to buy a dark suit and cap. (Yes! All drivers wore caps!) The cost would be taken weekly from his wages.

The rank was in Ogle Road and there were no radios, so the front driver would answer the phone in a box which had a direct line to the office. He normally worked from 4 pm to finish, and for the first two years worked every day as we had just moved to Southampton with our second child on the way. We were on the council housing list staying in the old Work House in St. Mary's Street, now the college next to the church. Much of the town was still bomb sites and many shops were in huts. We then moved to a new house in Somerton Avenue, what luxury, even two loo's and a large garden.

Thursdays were very busy as one of the 'Queens' docked and stayed overnight. There was plenty of business from the ships—Union Castle from South Africa and cargo ships from all over the world, all unloaded by crane and hand. The crews wanted taking to the station, home, or some other 'local attractions'! As he got to know some of the crew, various items would appear instead of cash. One night Harry came home with a complete stalk of bananas! They hung in the airing cupboard to ripen, much to the amusement of the kids.

There were regular arrivals of American tourists (very good tippers as they could never work out £.s.d.) Sometimes they would ask to go to London, not realising how far it was on the A33 through Chandlers Ford, Basingstoke, Virginia Water and Staines. One evening Harry was at Ocean Terminal when the 'Lizzie' docked and a chauffeur walked over and asked 'Want a run to London, we're short of a car?' Harry had to keep up with three Rolls Royce's taking Bob Hope to the Savoy; that tip was very welcome. Another evening Harry arrived home rather early and to my surprise said he had two Americans in the car who couldn't find a room, could we put them up. That night the boys slept on the sofa, but the Americans didn't get a hotel breakfast as it was rationing still and no shops opened before 9 am. They kept in touch for years always sending a parcel at Christmas for the boys.

As for those 'local attractions', some of the liveliest pubs were the Horse and Groom, Juniper Berry, and a mock Tudor pub in Above Bar opposite the now entrance to Marlands, it stood alone amongst the bomb sites. I can't remember the name, but it was very popular. Harry took me in one night to be greeted by some 'ladies of the night' saying 'Hello! Harry taken a night off at last with the Missus', etc. There was also 'German Eadies' in East Park Terrace, a restaurant run by a large woman who, if she took a dislike to you would throw you and your food out. Sometimes unsuspecting diners would get their tie cut off and pinned to the wall on 'castration night'. It stayed open until the late 1960s.

Part 2 will follow in the next magazine, No.142, Autumn 2018



HOW THE SOCIETY WORKS – Peter Richards

Bitterne Local History Society is a Registered Charity and has a number of volunteers organised into groups to form a working structure. The Committee would encourage other members to join one of the groups below to help in running the Society.

THE COMMITTEE – The Society is governed by a Management Committee in accordance with the Constitution. Members of the Committee include: The Officers and Trustees (i.e. the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer) and several other Members including the Shop Manager and Magazine Editor.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS – These are held once a month and only Committee Members are eligible to attend. All matters pertaining to the running of the Society, including finance, are discussed. Decisions are made with regard to what action should be taken and when. If any BLHS member would like to raise an issue with the Committee all they need to do is ask a Committee member to bring it up on their behalf.

SHOP VOLUNTEERS – the BLHS shop is run under the guidance of the Shop Manager with the help of Shop Volunteers who spend ½ a day or more per week working in the shop serving customers. We often need volunteers so anyone wishing to become a Shop Volunteer may call in to the BLHS shop at 231 Peartree Avenue and ask for an application form.

SHOP MEETINGS – although many informal meetings occur throughout the year the shop has one formal annual meeting when all Shop Volunteers may attend and express their views.

STEWARDS are those who spend ½ a day or more per week working in the museum, welcoming visitors and helping with customer enquiries. No specialist knowledge of local history is required. Stewards can always take details of enquires and get others to answer them. Politeness and courtesy is all that is required. It is surprising how much you learn by

doing the job so please don't hesitate to find out more.

HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS are those who help out with various tasks throughout the year, such as helping to prepare displays or cleaning and restoring artefacts, but are not committed to fixed working hours. Anyone thinking of becoming a Heritage Volunteer or Steward may call in at the BLHS shop in Peartree Avenue and pick up an application form.

HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS' WORKING GROUP MEETING – This meeting is held at the Heritage Centre in Peartree Avenue on the first Wednesday of the Month at 4.00 pm and lasts one hour. Topics relate to forthcoming museum displays, artefact/archive storage, what is to be done over the coming weeks and months and who will do it is discussed and agreed. All volunteers (including Stewards), and those members who are thinking about becoming volunteers, are welcome to attend.

VOLUNTEERS' MEETINGS – This is a quarterly evening meeting, which is open to all Volunteers and Stewards to attend – and indeed any member who is thinking of volunteering. Topics discussed include past and forthcoming events, heritage enquiries and general matters relating to the museum and artefact/archive storage. This is held at the Heritage Centre in Peartree Avenue starting at 7.00 pm. Be warned – these meetings often last 2 hours or more. Meetings are scheduled for 24 July and 23 October. Please come along if you are a member and are interested in getting involved – you will get a good insight into what goes on behind the scenes.

SATURDAY MEETINGS – These are held on the second Saturday of each month and start at 7.00 pm. A guest speaker is normally invited to give a talk for approximately one hour and this is followed by an opportunity to socialise with others, with refreshments and a raffle. Members and non-members alike are eligible to come. Members pay £1 and non-members pay £3 entry fee.



SPITFIRE PRODUCTION: The Dispersal -- Peter Richards



Spitfire in Guildhall Square, Southampton photographed on 16 February 2018

Inspired by a visit to our Heritage Centre in January by two members of the production team of a new play entitled *The Shadow Factory*, which premiered at the new NST City Theatre in Guildhall Square, Southampton, earlier this year, and using some of the information I was able to dig out for them. I have delved a little further into the story of the Spitfire production dispersal in WWII, after the bombing of Supermarine's Woolston and Itchen Works on 26 September 1940.

Actually there were three major air raids. The first was on 15 September 1940 and although the target was the Supermarine Spitfire factory, it was civilians who suffered most. As Jon Honeysett explains:

...the streets of terraced housing near Supermarine's and east around the main Southampton to Portsmouth railway line were devastated; damage to Supermarine's factory was light but six people were reported killed in the immediate residential area, nineteen seriously injured, and twenty-three with minor injuries taken by ambulance to the Royal South Hants Hospital. [1]

The second raid on 24 September yielded even more casualties including factory workers - as one report put it:



Supermarine Woolston Factory pre 1940



Supermarine Woolston Factory after the bombing raids in September 1940

Direct hit on Supermarine's shelter, many killed, many dug out alive. [2]

Jon Honeysett gives more details: Forty-two people were killed, sixty-five seriously injured and one hundred and nine less injured casualties conveyed to the nearby hospital by a fleet of ambulances. The east corner of Vickers-Supermarine main building was reported to have sustained minor damage, a nearby railway bridge destroyed, and unexploded bombs caused chaos, with the

need to evacuate the factory site. Damage to property on both sides of the River Itchen, and the suburbs was severe. [3]

The final and most devastating raid was on 26 September when the Vickers Supermarine Spitfire factory's Woolston and Itchen Works were very badly damaged. Fortunately machine-tools, lathes and wing jigs survived. However human casualties were high:

Forty-five people lost their lives in Southampton that afternoon, forty-nine were critically injured, and a further forty-three people were treated for minor injuries. The damage to property was marginally less compared with the first raid on the 15 September, reflecting the greater accuracy of the Luftwaffe force. [4]

The two aerial photographs of Woolston Supermarine Works on the preceding page, which were found amongst BLHS archives, show the site before and after the bombing raids. [5, 6]

HB Pratt was the General Manager, who during the air raid was blown from one side of the railway embankment to the other. He badly injured his hand, putting him out of action for a while.

Repairing the factory buildings in Woolston was not an option - they would just be bombed by the Luftwaffe again and so the solution was to disperse production, which all happened fairly quickly. Canadian born British newspaper publisher, Lord Beaverbrook, who at the time was the Minister for Aircraft Production, took a lead role in making it happen.

By the end of October dispersal was completed to a total of twenty-two workshops and seven premises used as Stores. [7]

The first three premises requisitioned were Hendy's Garage, Pound Tree Road, Southampton; Seward's Garage, Winchester Road, Southampton; and Lowther's Garage, Shirley, Southampton. Not all premises were in Southampton - the Wilts and Dorset bus garage in Salisbury was acquired despite objections from the Mayor of Salisbury; it was chosen as its height was ideal for Spitfire jigs.



HB

Harris Bathrooms

Bathroom Showroom
Affordable Luxury Bathrooms & Tiles



Bathroom Design Service

Large Selection of Mirrors

Good Choice of Accessories

Easy Living Options

Walk-in Shower Enclosures



Fitted Furniture in a Selection of Finishes

148 West End Road, Southampton SO18 6PL

www.harrisbathrooms.com

02380 473299

Open: Mon - Fri 9am-5pm Sat 9am-4pm

The air-raid damage caused by the Southampton Blitz a few weeks later created further problems:

During the heavy air attacks on Southampton on the nights of 30 November and 1 December, none of our Dispersal Premises in Southampton suffered any damage whatever, but they were affected for two weeks by the partial failure of electricity supply, gas supply and great inconvenience was caused by the complete breakdown of telephone communication.

Many of our employees experienced serious hardship due to bomb damage to their houses and difficulties of transport also affected the number of hours worked.

During the night of the 1 December, a bomb struck the Store Building at the vacated Woolston Works and also caused a fire which resulted in damage to a considerable amount of raw material which was stored there. [8]

The headquarters of Supermarine dispersal was initially the Polygon Hotel but that didn't last long; by December 1940 it was moved to Hursley Park, a large country residence, owned by the widow of Sir George Cooper, Lady Mary Cooper, an American heiress. The house and grounds were requisitioned by the Ministry of Aircraft Production (MAP) to rehouse the Design and Production departments.

Denis Le P Webb describes what happens later with regard to the General Manager, HB Pratt.

Some six months after settling into Hursley Park a rather unpleasant business started. This was an Inquisition by some of Beaverbrook's crowd into the Management of the Firm ... The outcome of the Inquisition was that Pratt was displaced at the end of June and tragically feeling the injustice of it all, shot himself. [9]

However production continued and as Webb points out: *By the end of 1941 we had got back to pre-dispersal output and by the middle of 1942 we had passed it. [10]*

I'm sure some of you went along to see the play *The Shadow Factory* by Howard Brenton in Southampton's brand new theatre, NST City, as I

did. It also tells the story of the dispersal of Spitfire production, with the focus being on a fictional laundry owner, Fred Dimmock, who initially bloody-mindedly resists demands to give up his business premises for the war effort. It illustrates how some traders were opposed to authoritarian government methods of acquiring production sites. In contrast Lady Mary Cooper seems quite willing to make her house available for war work. Among the cast was Anita Dobson, who switched parts from posh toff to grumpy granny with professional ease. The piece includes humour and romance, as it sketches a very challenging time in Southampton's history. I thoroughly enjoyed it - as I did researching the story of the dispersal of Spitfire production.

Notes:

1. Honeysett, Jon, *Death in the Afternoon: The Bombing of Vickers Supermarine Works, Southampton, 1940*; an article for the 145 Squadron Association, 1999, 4.
2. Blackmore, Harold, *Southampton & Surrounding District Air-raids & Alerts*, Bitterne Local History Society, 1995, 9.
3. Honeysett, 5.
4. Honeysett, 9.
5. Photograph from BLHS archives.
6. Photograph from BLHS archives.
7. Webb, Denis Le P, *Never a Dull Moment at Supermarine: A Personal History*, J&KH Publishing, Hailsham, 2001, 156.
8. *Ibid*, 156-157.
9. *Ibid*, 161.
10. *Ibid*, 160.



HELP GIVEN

In the last issue of *Bygone Bitterne* we asked for lots of help and a number of people have given us information.

SOME MOTHER'S SON: Charles Hasler - *Alan Harvey*

From my research I found that Charles was the youngest of eight siblings, born to William Hasler and Sarah Bull, in Bitterne 3rd quarter 1884, unfortunately Sarah died very shortly after the birth, (1st quarter 1885). This left William, a labourer, living in Brewery Road (now Dean Road) having to bring up all the children on his own.

William's sister, Charlotte, had recently married Francis Bone and was childless; by the time of the 1881 census she was already into her late 30s. It appears that Francis and Charlotte never had children so was Charles passed over to William's sister to help with his upbringing? In both the 1891 and 1901 census, a Charles Bone was living with Francis and Charlotte and recorded as their son.

In the 1911 census, (which, by the way, is the first to be filled in by the householder and not the enumerator) Charles is shown not as Charles Bone the son, but Charles Hasler the nephew of Francis and Charlotte. As for Charles's Hasler's war record, none seem to exist, until you make the assumption that he used the name Bone instead of Hasler, then a record does appear.

Charles Bone served in the Hampshire Regiment, and died on the Somme, has no known grave, and appears on the Thiepval Memorial. The sad part of this story is that, whether this is Charles Bone, or Charles Hasler, (whom I believe are one and the same person), he probably had no one to mourn his death; by the time medals were issued in all his "parents" have died (Sarah in 1885, William in 1919, Francis in 1920 and Charlotte in 1923).

Charles Bone's medals were never issued due to 'no known next of kin'. If he was indeed Charles Hasler, are there any relatives around, who

could claim them? He likely has relations still alive as from both the GRO index, and the two census' of 1881 and 1891, William and Sarah's other children are as follows: Stephen born Dec 1864; Rose born Jun 1868; Alice born Mar 1871; Olive born Dec 1873; Elizabeth Ann born Sep 1875; Sarah born Sep 1877 and William James born Jun 1882.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH - *Carole Olding and Ian Abrahams*

Ian pointed out that an address on a photo mount was usually that of the photographer and the address " St Alban's, Pear Tree Green" is still there but the road is now named Tranby Road. Carole went a whole lot further: I believe the picture to be the old Fawley Board School. Mr Frederick George Snell lived in Fawley and was a farmer and overseer so would be an ideal candidate for a parish clerk. In 1911 he was 60; the school is now demolished.

WAR MEMORIAL H. PLIMSOLE - *Carole Olding and Alan Harvey*

[I have combined the research of these two people - Ed.]

H Plimsole was Horace Reginald Plimsole (listed as Reginal Plimsole on the Southampton Cenotaph) of the Red Lion Hotel, Bitterne. He was born in December 1891 in South Stoneham, probably at 28 Northbrook Road, St Mary's. He was a Freemason and is named on the Masonic Great War Project as a member of Sanitarian Lodge 34658. In the 1911 census he was listed as an apprentice engineer living at The Red Lion Hotel with his mother Matilda Andrews, formerly Plimsole, and stepfather Richard Heywood Andrews; they married in 1906. Horace's father was William Francis Plimsole who died 28 October 1900 in Southampton Poor House.

Horace died at sea 9 November 1918 and administration was granted to his stepfather Richard Haywood Andrews who was the licensee at the Red Lion in 1911. He left £497 0s 5d to his stepfather.



Wood Nymph – Alan G Clark

When I was a boy growing up in Bitterne in the early 1950s, there was an expectation by my peers that I would climb trees and what is more, that I would enjoy doing so. I'm not sure if that same expectation exists today, as most children would appear to live more sedentary lives. I didn't enjoy climbing trees, although I would never have admitted it at the time; it would have invited ridicule.

As I remember, there were two fir trees half way down Freemantle Common, on the edge of the green, towards the right hand side. These were much favoured for climbing and, when I think back to those far-off days, I can almost smell the resin that stuck the dirt to my palms as I made my fearful way up through the branches. I say fearful because I knew without doubt that only trouble lay ahead. It is one thing to climb up a tree, where one can see the possible hand and footholds, but quite another to climb back down when these aids are not visible and I knew it would be only by luck that I returned to earth unscathed.

My great friend Ken loved climbing trees, and to me appeared quite fearless. Albeit on a much smaller canvas, if I were Tom Sawyer, then he was Huckleberry Finn. One of our favourite occupations each Spring was bird-nesting and the place where we were most successful was in the woods at Cutbush Lane. There were very few houses there at that time - just the narrow lane, woodland and fields beyond. Bird-nesting inevitably involved a bit of climbing, and of course he who climbed, got the egg. Nowadays it seems a heartless and almost cruel thing to do, but I don't think we regarded it so in those days and in any case what unease I felt was partly assuaged by our own personal code of good practice, in that we never took the last egg from a nest. I picture myself now, clinging precariously to a branch with one arm, whilst stretching the other hand ever closer to a nest until finally my fingers crept over the edge to feel the warmth of an egg, all these actions accompanied by angry shrieks of abuse from the parent bird in a nearby tree. The eggs we found varied but were mainly either the speckled brown and green of the Black-

bird or the beautiful pale blue, black spotted eggs of the Song Thrush. These days the Song Thrush appears to be much less common, but back in the early 1950s they seemed to me, similar in number to the Blackbird.

Once stolen, all that remained was to blow the egg. This was achieved by the somewhat unhygienic method of making a pin-prick hole in each end, putting the larger end to one's lips and blowing the contents through the other hole. If recently produced, no damage resulted to the shell but if close to hatching then one could easily lose one end of the egg.

It's strange how tiny incidents can remain in one's memory for a lifetime. Ken, at that time, lived in a new house near the top of West End Road. Invariably we went home dirty from our adventures in the woods, but I particularly remember one occasion when I accompanied him to his house Ken was spectacularly filthy, being soaked in black mud up to his knees. His mother took one look at him and called him 'a dirty little Arab'. It amused me greatly at the time and still makes me smile when I think of it today.

For me, however, the most memorable incident involving trees occurred one summer afternoon after school when we were about ten years old and took place by the aforementioned fir trees on Freemantle Common. There were three of us involved, and Ken was most definitely the star, but try as I might, I cannot recall the name of the other boy who was with us. As I have mentioned, Ken was keen on climbing trees and indeed was very good at it. I can't recall how it came about that afternoon but for some reason one or both of us dared Ken to climb to the top of the left hand fir tree and take off all his clothes. Ken, never being one to shirk a dare, immediately started his ascent and very soon reached the topmost branches where he proceeded to strip naked, throwing his clothes down to us item by item. After prancing about for a couple of minutes he decided he needed a pee and called down to us to move his clothes out of harms way. It must have been this last action that gave us the idea - it certainly wasn't premeditated. Watching Ken perform, it suddenly seemed the most natural thing in the world to hide his clothes,

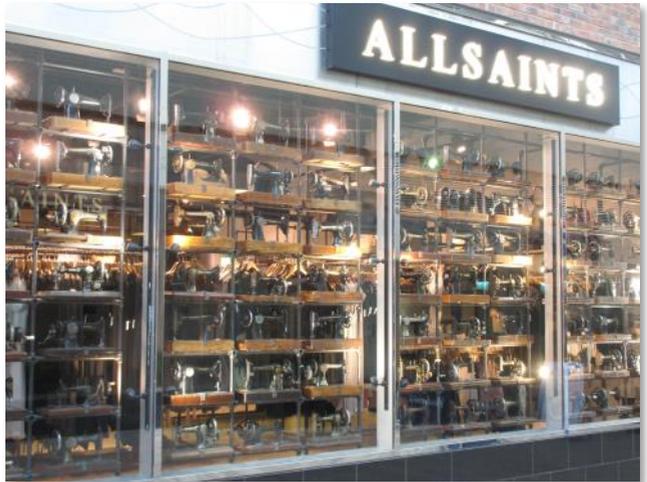
and bundling them up once more, we made off. Ken, quickly realising what was happening, started a mad scramble down the tree, but by the time he reached the ground we had long gone. Taking a somewhat circuitous route, we came to the pavement by Peartree Avenue where we deposited Ken's belongings and then returned to watch him flit like a pallid ghost between the tree trunks as he searched in vain for his clothes. All this time we of course were totally convulsed with laughter and even Ken could see the funny side of it. We didn't keep it up for long before giving him clues but there were some hilarious moments, such as when Ken emerged from cover in an attempt to retrieve his belongings only to dive back into a bush, as an unsuspecting pedestrian appeared around a bend in the avenue.

Reading through this account now, it strikes me that our behaviour was perhaps a little unkind, though it didn't seem so at the time, and Ken certainly took the joke in good part; he was very easy-going and good-natured. Indeed, any one of us might have been the victim - although maybe not me! I never really liked climbing trees.



SEWING MACHINES – Keith Marsh

Anyone who thought BLHS had a lot of sewing machines should reconsider! ALLSAINTS clothing store, in each of their shops worldwide, have displays of hundreds of machines filling their windows, literally floor to ceiling! Many, many models from several manufacturers are displayed, all in amazing condition: dusting must be a nightmare!





The Lion Cup 2018

Bitterne Local History Society organise this competition to encourage people to write about their experiences or to research local history

The Society is running the Lion Cup Competition once again this year and invite previously unpublished essays of no less than 1,000 words on any factual topic of local history; this may be memories of the writer, or others, or a piece of original research about people, places or events east of the River Itchen.

Anyone over 14 years of age is encouraged to enter, as long as they are not a published author of a local history book. Past entrants (and winners) of this competition are also welcome to submit new essays. Correct citing of references is essential as is obtaining permission to reproduce any photographs, maps, diagrams, etc. illustrating the article.

All entries must be typed and accompanied by an entry form, which can be downloaded from the Society's website or picked up from our shop. The full rules of the competition are on our website at www.bitterne.net.

Closing date for the competition is Monday, 31 July 2018 and the Cup and prize of £30 will be presented at the Society's AGM in September. BLHS will have the right to publish any entry or parts of it, either in their own magazine or anywhere else; full credit will be given to the author.



OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES

West End Local History Society

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

4 July THE MAYFLOWER & SPEEDWELL IN SOUTHAMPTON
by Geoffrey Wheeler

1 Aug SOCIAL EVENING AT MUSEUM, All Welcome

5 Sept NELSON & HMS VICTORY by Colin van Geffen

Contact: 02380 471886

Botley, Curdridge and Durley History Society

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

28 Sept WHERE & WHAT IS THAT? by Jill Daniels

Contact: 01489 691777

Bishop's Waltham Local History Society

Meetings at St Peter's Church Hall, 7.30 pm

19 July BONE SHIPS, THEATRES & LEWD OBJECTS
by Paul Chamberlain

20 Sept THE ROAD TO MANDALAY by David Cope

Contact: <http://www.bishopswalthamsociety.org.uk/contact-us>

City of Southampton Society

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

24 Sept SOUTHAMPTON & THE MAYFLOWER
by Godfrey Collyer

Contact: info@coass.org.uk

Hampshire Genealogical Society

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

16 July MEMBERS EVENING - 5 minute talks

20 Aug ANIMALS IN WWI by Tony Babb

17 Sept STROPPY WOMEN! WOMEN WHO SHAPED THE
HISTORY OF SOUTHAMPTON by Cheryl Butler

Contact: 02392 387000

Millbrook Local History Society

Holy Trinity Church Hall, Millbrook Road at 7.30 pm

5 July IMAGES OF DIBDEN & DIBDEN PURLIEU
by Gordon Chambers

6 Sept A STROLL THROUGH SHIRLEY (1950s & 1960s) Pt 2
by Tony Biffin

Contact: 023 8077 0148

Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society

Meetings at the Underhill Centre, St. John's Road, SO30 4AF at 7.45

2 July WOMEN ON THE RAILWAY by Becky Peacock

6 Aug THE QUEEN MARY BEFORE & AFTER THE WAR
by Stephen Hoadley

3 Sept ASPECTS OF MILITARY ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE
RIDGEWAY REGION by Don Summers

Contact: 01962 855200

Friends of Southampton's Museums, Archives and Galleries

Meetings at Dolphin Hotel, 34-35 High Street, SO14 2HN at 10:30 am

12 Sept TBA

Contact: info@fosmag.org.uk

Nursling and Rownhams History Group

Meetings at Nursling and Rownhams Village Hall, Nursling Street,
Nursling, SO16 0YL at 7.30 pm

12 July VISIT & GUIDED TOUR OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH,
MICHELMERSH, Nr ROMSEY guide: John Chambers,
meet at Church, SO51 0NS at 6.30 pm

13 Aug AGM - followed by a Social Evening at Village Hall

Contact: 02380 738552





MOBILE FOOT HEALTH CLINIC

Do you suffer discomfort from ...

- Callus**
- Athletes Foot**
- Corns**
- Ingrowing Toe Nails**
- Verrucas**
- Fungal Infection**

**ALL ASPECTS OF FOOT CARE TREATED
TREATMENT IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME**

CONTACT:

MELLOWJANE ROSALES

S.A.C .Dip FHPT S.A.C Dip FHPP

078 4368 6239

Evening and weekend calls available





From the BLHS Newsletter of 25 Years Ago

June 1993 — MEMORIES OF MARTHA GODWIN by Don Godwin

Here are some extracts from a letter written by Mr Don Godwin in Australia, to a cousin of member Doreen Roseweir in Epsom, Surrey.

My Grandfather WILLIAM JAMES GODWIN had the horse-cabs which were stationed at the Woolston side of the Floating Bridge plus some at Bitterne (similar to the taxis of today). I remember when Ray and I were quite young we would visit my Great Grandmother at Bitterne and if the weather was inclement Dad would hire a cab to take us back to Bullar Road. The steps up into the cab seemed to be that high we thought that we were about 20ft high.

I do not expect that you would remember our Great Grandmother. Well, she was the oldest newsagent in Great Britain (probably Europe) and when she was in her 90s the 'Southern Daily Echo' and the 'News of the World' always had her photograph and a suitable story in their paper.

Unfortunately she had to give the business up as she broke a hip after falling in the shop but lived until she was 103.

I can still recall visiting Great Grandma Godwin at her shop opposite Bitterne Church. She would always give Ray and I a cone of sweets. There were no wrapped sweets in those days, they were all in jars and she would make a cone out of newspaper and fill the cone up. She was a remarkable lady, her hand-writing was copperplate. There were no gas lamps, only oil lamps, and she would be up every morning at 5.00 a.m. winter and summer, to see to the paper-boys and no one could rob her of a penny with the bills etc.

She did her cooking on a wood stove but did have the luxury of tap water, although there was a well in the small front garden.



PRESIDENTIAL PATTERN – Ian Abrahams

Dear Friends,

In my article about Bitterne Policemen I asked about the ‘prefab’ pictured alongside the police station and member Nina Williams remembers it well. When she was only three years old her family lived in a similar one situated at the rear of the station and on checking the 1949 map in our heritage centre we find that there were indeed three such homes numbered 2a and 2b Whites Road, and 32 Bursledon Road (the one pictured). They were presumably erected to help with the housing shortage after WW2 and demolished along with the old police station in the early 1960s.

Sadly we have lost several of our older society members in recent months. There is a tribute to Mildred Russell on page 6. Bob Gurney, at 98 years was possibly our oldest member and those who used to have their hair cut at well-known Bitterne barbers Glanville’s may well remember him working there, although he gave up cutting hair in 1963! Adrian Edmunds had been a member for 27 years; his parents were one-time grocers in Thornhill Park Road. He was a picture framer for many years and although suffering a stroke in 1989 was determined to remain as active as possible and supported our cause whenever he could. In recent years he was very much involved with community events in Hedge End, in particular the annual carnival fete at which he would collect admission at the gate. Bill Monk, 1930 to 2018, had also been a society member along with his wife, June, for 27 years. June worked in our charity shop for many years and Bill was always on hand to assist when asked, indeed he helped when we first opened 25 years ago. Our thoughts are with Marie, Adrian’s wife, and June and all those who will miss these friends and we give thanks for their long and varied years of service to our Society.

Thank you all for your continued support as we seek to preserve and promote the history of our village.

Best Wishes



Top: Mildred Russell, her sister Kit and a 'friend' at BLHS Summer Fayre, 1983

Centre: Mildred at Sholing Valley's Fayre, July 1997

Bottom: Mildred in the BLHS stall at the Royal Victoria Park Bus Rally, 1990, with Bill Hulbert and Violet O'Rourke



2018 BLHS CALENDAR

MONTHLY MEETINGS

- | | | |
|---------|--|-----------------------------|
| July 14 | WINCHESTER BISHOPS, BUILDINGS AND BONES - Pt 1 | Andrew Negus |
| Sept 08 | AGM / WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN SOUTHAMPTON
(1900-1914) | Emma Muscat |
| Oct 13 | NOTABLE PEOPLE OF BEVOIS MOUNT | Allyson Hayes |
| Nov 10 | HOW DO YOU TAKE YOURS? A Secret History of Tea | Jane Glennie |
| Dec 08 | TALES OF OLD SOUTHAMPTON | Mike O'Leary (story teller) |
| Jan 12 | A TONGUE IN CHEEK TOUR OF OLD SOUTHAMPTON
Part 2 | Don Robertson |

**Deadline for contributions to the Autumn Edition
is Saturday, 11th August**

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

WHY BE DOWN AT HEEL?

visit the

SHOE REPAIR CENTRE

at

9A West End Road
Tel: 80446154

also providing

KEY CUTTING

and a good range of

Leather Goods



OPENING TIMES

Monday Closed

Tuesday - Friday 9.00am - 5.00 pm

Saturday 9.30am - 1.00pm

enquiries@shoerepaircentre.co.uk

BITTERNE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

CHARITY SHOP

including viewing of Museum displays

Monday — Friday 10am-4pm

& Saturday & 10am-1pm

HERITAGE & RESEARCH CENTRE

Stewards available to help at the following times

Monday & Tuesday 1pm-4pm,

Wednesday 10am-4pm,

Thursday & Friday 1pm-4pm

Or by arrangement — telephone 023 8063 7967

231 Peartree Ave, Bitterne, Southampton

SO19 7RD

Printed by:

**John
Buttler**
PRINTING

10 Holland Road · Woolston · Southampton · SO19 9FW

Tel: 023 8068 5248 · Fax: 023 8068 5248 · Email: johnabuttler@sky.com