

*Bitterne Local*

*History Society*



ESTABLISHED 1981

*'Keeping Bitterne's History Alive'*

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# BYGONE BITTERNE

**AUTUMN 2019    VOLUME 146**



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# BITTERNE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

[www.bitterne.net](http://www.bitterne.net)

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**Vice Presidents** Mr R. Sperring Mr J. Brown Miss B. McCaffery

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Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month (October — August) 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 - £20.00

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

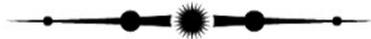
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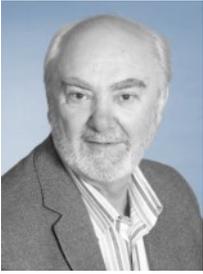
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Thank you all who have been saving their crisp packets for us. We have sent in two batches which raised £20 for the Society. Remember it is any brand of crisp packet (including Doritos, Hula Hoops, Quavers etc.) but not Pringles tubes or wrappers from nuts, meat snacks, etc. Bring them to a Saturday meeting or drop them into the shop.

**Cover shows a street lost during the clearance for the by-pass. See the photographs of our exhibition for Heritage Open Day, page 25.**





## **DEAR FRIENDS — *From the Chairman***

Dear Friends,

Sadly I have to report the loss of one of our Vice Presidents, A.G.K. Leonard, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 96. Alan was a well-known local historian and the author of numerous books, including BLHS's own publication, "*Southampton Memorials of Care for Man and Beast*". His support for BLHS was significant – he will be greatly missed.

I am delighted to announce that the winner of the Lion Cup Competition 2019 is Peter Taylor for his essay entitled 'The Trafalgar Connection' – congratulations Peter!

My thanks go to our Treasurer, Carol Masters, for organising the coach trip to Frogmore House and Savill Garden in August this year, which was very successful. The trip was well supported and financially viable. The weather was good, which always helps, and we have had lots of positive feedback. On the strength of this we may well consider other trips in the future.

Bitterne Festival, a community event in Bitterne Precinct, took place on Thursday 8 August 2019. BLHS organised a treasure hunt which was very popular again this year with many children taking part. Thank you to Trish McPherson for supervising youngsters who participated in the treasure hunt and to all of those volunteers who helped on the day to make it a great success. Without your support we couldn't do it!

Another August event BLHS were involved in was Trifest, at Riverside Park. A reasonable throughput of people attended our stall and several potential new members were engaged in conversation. My thanks go to Steve Adams and Martyn Basford for flying the flag for the Society once again.

The big event of the year was Heritage Open Day on 14 September, when BLHS were represented at Southampton Heritage Fayre in Westquay by a team of volunteers who covered the event from the set-up time before 9.00 am until the close down around 7.00 pm. A great team – thanks to you all.

On the same day our Museum in Peartree Avenue was open to the public from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm serviced by a vintage bus, courtesy of Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust, dropping off visitors hourly from Castle Way, Southampton. On entry our display boards could be seen telling the visual story of the creation of the by-pass, showing the devastation of the old village and the press coverage of the time. In the Museum two shop displays were based on real shops from days gone by, namely Lankester & Crook, and Lumb's. A team of volunteers, some dressed in period costume, were around to provide information and guidance to visitors. A quiz was open to children who like to have fun and enjoy learning about the past. Thanks go to Celia Mayo for preparing the quiz and to all the others who contributed to the day.

The main display had a 1920s theme and was based around objects and magazines held in the Museum's own collection. Local, social and food historian, Emma Muscat, was on hand to talk to visitors about 1920s kitchen equipment, food, diet and popular store-cupboard products and brands that were available at the time. A bean slicer was the favourite item for visitors to try out (no fingers were lost in this interactive demonstration).

Emma also created examples of 1920s food. Once again, many thanks go to all those who helped on the day at each of the two venues. However; a special thank you must be reserved for Emma Muscat, who was literally the star of the day.

BLHS continue to hold monthly Saturday meetings with guest speakers at the United Reformed Church in Bitterne. In July Simon Gomm gave a talk, *I Do Like to be Beside the Seaside*, which went down very well with members and visitors alike. This year, for the first time, we had a meeting in August, the subject of which was: *New Hope Leprosy Trust in India* by Jill Ghanouni, MBE. An introduction by John Avery giving a short history of leprosy in Southampton was followed by Jill's account of her visits to India and the setting up of the charity, which proved to be both fascinating and inspiring.

About the time this magazine is being published, the AGM will be underway accompanied by a talk entitled *50 Years of Pharmacy* by Barbara Wright. The meeting and talk will no doubt be reported on in the next issue.

Meetings to look forward to are: *Escape From Stalag XXA* in November by Steve Foster, which I am reliably informed is brilliant; and *The Hither Side of the Hedge* in December by Jigfoot which tells the story of Alice Gillington, a middle aged clergyman's daughter who lived in Bitterne from around 1900 until 1912, when she and her brother bought Gypsy caravans and went to live with Gypsy families at Thorney Hill in the New Forest. During her time in Bitterne Alice collected songs, dances and stories from the Gypsies who stopped on Sholing Common. She wrote magazine articles, poetry and letters, and the presentation draws on her writings, songs and dances she collected and archive pictures of people and places she wrote about. If you think this topic sounds interesting, be sure to come along and learn more.

I will just emphasise that in order for events and meetings to be successful we rely heavily on volunteers and so I urge members to do what they can to help, even if only in a small way. I can assure you any help is much appreciated.

I am pleased to say our shop in Peartree Avenue is now open five days a week again thanks to a mixture of existing, new and returning staff. However, we have experienced a difficult spell recently due to road works and with trading conditions being tough at the moment, we need all the support we can get – please consider visiting the shop from time to time to make a purchase or donate unwanted items for us to sell.

And lastly I can now report we have a Virgin Money Giving button installed on our website, [www.bitterne.net](http://www.bitterne.net), ready to receive donations – so if you are feeling generous and want to help our cause – please donate. Thank you.

Best wishes for the coming festive season and New Year,

*Peter*



**A.G.K. (ALAN) LEONARD — *Ian Abrahams***

Sadly one of our Vice-Presidents, Alan Leonard, passed away on 26 July 2019, aged 96 years.

He had been a member of our Society since 1984 and was honoured with the position of Vice-President in 1990 in recognition not only of his support to us but his greater contribution to the world of 'local history'. Alan put together more than fifteen books on many different aspects of Southampton history since moving here in 1957. His energy in researching his subject was boundless and, as well as books, he wrote many articles for the Southampton Echo along with his friend and fellow author John Edgar Mann — remember the Echo 'Bargate' column?

Alan was also an avid postcard collector, enjoying nothing more than researching an unusual picture and putting together an article about it.

I first met Alan in the early nineteen eighties when we were selling his books through our Society much like another well known author of the time, the late Eric Wyeth Gadd. He gave me much encouragement and was always enthusiastic to promote the activities of our Society at every opportunity. Although in recent years (as he put it) he was "creaking through his nineties" he continued to support us, not least sending us a generous donation only a few weeks before he passed away "to be used to promote the activities of the Society". He never lost interest and his work will live on for future historians to call upon. We shall miss him but give thanks for his long and full life.



**Photo: A gathering of local authors at Cobbet Road Library in 1992.**

**From left: Eric Wyeth Gadd, Rod Baker, Brian Ticehurst, Alan Leonard, Peter Carne, Irene Pilson and John Edgar Mann.**



## **TRIP TO SAVILL GARDENS & FROGMORE HOUSE — Carol Masters**

The sun shone on our recent outing to Savill Gardens and Frogmore House. The gardens were beautiful and so tranquil. The hydrangeas were particularly impressive and the dahlias a riot of colour. The plant sales were very reasonably priced and there were a few plants brought onto the coach when we left!

After lunch we made our way to Frogmore House. The policeman on the gate told us that there were Royals on site but we didn't get to see them. We did, however, have a very informative guided tour of the house. Different rooms have been restored to different periods from the house's history. The final room on the tour was the Britannia Room, which is furnished with a selection of items from the Royal Yacht Britannia selected by the Duke of Edinburgh. Apparently he often uses the room for meetings, etc. Wandering around the grounds afterwards, the mausoleums could be viewed in the distance, but unfortunately are no longer safe so public access cannot be allowed.

All in all, it was a very enjoyable trip. If you have any suggestions for future outings then please let a member of the Committee know, either in person at a Saturday meeting, by email or by leaving a note in the shop.



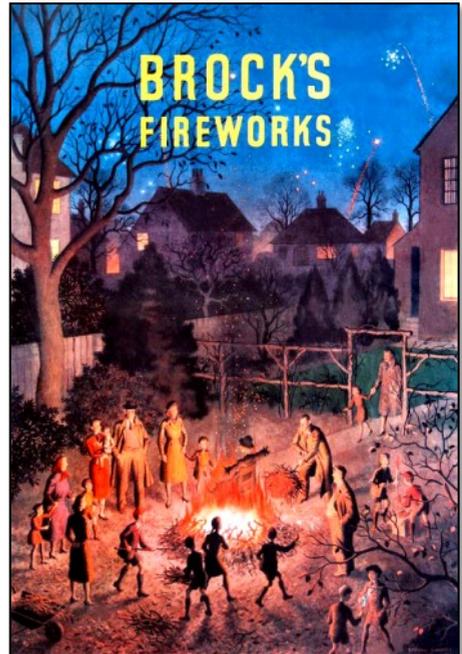
**Savill Gardens**

## REMEMBER, REMEMBER — Alan G. Clark

As a child growing up in the nineteen fifties one of the undoubted highlights of my year was November the fifth. Only Christmas and my birthday surpassed that date in terms of excitement. The trend today tends to be towards large public firework displays, but during my childhood it was much more common for a family to hold a small firework party at home in their own back garden. Another difference is that in the nineteen fifties, unless the weather was dreadful, in which case a delay of twenty-four hours might possibly be acceptable, people would let off their fireworks on Guy Fawkes night only, and not as now, on a random night of choice during the period surrounding that date.

I can't remember, as a boy, being much involved in the construction of a guy. If I were it was only on one or two occasions. There was a good reason for this. The destiny of a guy is to be burned on a bonfire and our back garden was both small and overhung by trees which made a bonfire impossible. Also 'penny for the guy' never appealed to me much as I felt far too self-conscious to ask anyone, with the exception of my parents, for money.

The fact that we couldn't have a bonfire didn't however diminish the thrill of the fireworks. These were available from early September onwards. It seemed that every sweetshop, tobacconist and newsagent in Bitterne sold fireworks. Even Sports, the cycle shop on the corner of West End Road sold them. There were pre-packed boxes of course but most were displayed in glass cases and sold separately, which suited me very well, having only my pocket money to spend. I would forego sweets and start collecting fireworks





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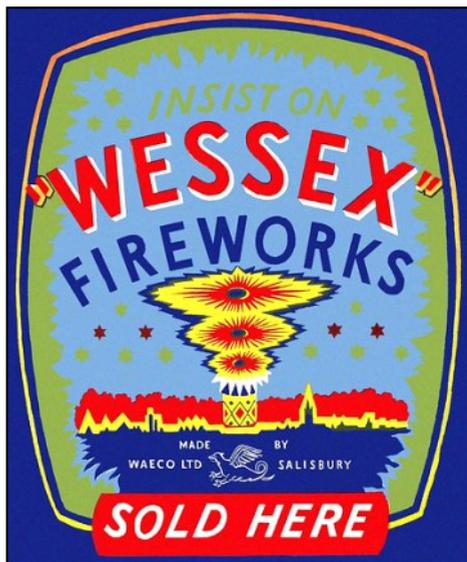
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immediately they appeared in September, so that by November I would have amassed what seemed at the time, a sizeable selection. The three manufacturers I remember are Brocks, Standard and Wessex, although I'm sure other makes were available. I bought many of mine from Stonier's (later Kendrick's) at the top of Lances Hill. This was the newsagent opposite our house. Mrs Morris had a sweetshop further along Peartree Avenue, next to the premises



now occupied by the Bitterne Local History Society Heritage Centre and I bought many fireworks there, but I also made purchases from Fancy's and various other shops in the Pound Street and Dean Road area.

You had to pay 2d for a decent banger. I can see the Brocks banger now, comprising a half-inch thick roll of cardboard with a thinner fuse on top, covered in a pink paper wrapper. One could buy penny bangers of course, but these were not up to much, with not much of a bang. They could however be made more effective. If one removed the flexible connector from a bicycle pump, the penny banger was slim enough to be dropped, once alight, down the now empty metal tube of the pump. The result could be dramatic. Of the fireworks I remember Golden Rain was invariably disappointing, as were some of the squat little models with names like Mount Vesuvius that blazed briefly with a bright green or red light. Catherine Wheels were good value, although sometimes difficult and somewhat dangerous to get spinning properly. Another, named The Aeroplane, was attached to a cardboard 'wing' and was excitingly unpredictable but my favourite was undoubtedly the Jumping Jack which cracked, fizzed and hopped around one's feet in an alarming manner. I haven't seen one for years and I wonder if they can still be bought in this country. There were countless others of course, in addition to Sparklers

and boxes of matches where the flare extended down the wooden shaft and, once lit, burned for several seconds with either a red or a green tinged flame. Roman Candles propelled coloured balls of fire into the air and were very popular and then of course there were variously priced rockets. I didn't buy expensive rockets being unwilling to spend a whole weeks pocket money on a single firework but even the cheapest gave a satisfying whoosh as it shot into the sky, launched from a milk bottle, although it didn't do a lot once airborne.

Eventually the big night would arrive and hopefully the weather stayed dry. My fireworks were all laid out ready in a box, but still I had to wait for Dad to get home from work and then he had to have a wash and then he had to eat his dinner and already the air was heavy with smoke and I hoped the rain wouldn't start and then suddenly it was all over and it was almost as good as I'd hoped and dreamed it would be – almost.

In 1954 November the sixth fell on a Saturday. It was a bright and sunny autumn day with only a hint of smoke lingering from the night before. My friend Ken Rickards called for me in the morning and loitered by the garden gate while I finished my piano practice in our front room. It was always a torment for me, fearing that he would grow tired of waiting and leave before I was allowed out, although it seldom happened. Ken needed some pellets for his Gat and so we crossed over to Sports cycle shop where they sold such ammunition. We were immediately attracted by the sign announcing that all fireworks were now half-price and also by the sight of, what seemed to us, an enormous rocket originally priced at 7/6d. It fired both our imaginations. It was like something out of Dan Dare! The body of this monster was about two inches in diameter and it was over a foot long with a cone shaped top. The square section stick to which it was attached made it as tall as we were. It only needed a glance between us to have us turning out our pockets. It took all our pocket money but somehow we raised the 3/9d needed and the rocket was ours!

Between us we carried our prize down to Freemantle Common, discussing all the way when and where we should let it off. Of course, ideally it

should be after dark but by now it was getting close to the time we were expected back at our respective homes for dinner (now called lunch!) It was a problem because I don't think either of us was willing to relinquish his share of the rocket into the safe keeping of the other and in any case we couldn't wait and so there was no alternative but to light it there and then. There used to be a bench seat on the common situated centrally about twenty yards down from Spring Road. We used this as the launch pad, propping the stick between the slats. We put a match to the blue touch paper and stood back.

And nothing happened – well, not at first anyway, but as we debated whether it had gone out and whether to try re-lighting it, a thin wisp of smoke appeared curling in the sunlight, quickly followed by a fierce rush of sparks that swiftly built in intensity. It seemed to me that the rocket lingered forever and was destined to burn out on the launch-pad but suddenly it was away and we were straining to spot it against the bright blue of the sky. It was a complete waste of course. It certainly flew high and there might have been the odd bang and certainly some balls of flame were ejected but they were insignificant in the brightness. The rocket eventually tumbled back to earth, landing among the trees on the opposite side of Spring Road and we were left with only a sooty cylinder on a charred stick, together with some rather satisfying scorch marks on the seat from whence it took off.

And that was that! We each went home for dinner. One could argue that it was a lesson learned, but was it really? We both knew deep down that it would prove a disappointment and so it was, but we were nine years old and we couldn't wait, and anyway who's to say that had we waited and set it off after dark it wouldn't still have been a disappointment. Can reality ever match our dreams?



## MEMORIES OF GILBERT'S BOOKSHOP — *Peter Richards*

I am sure many of our members will recall the former Gilbert & Son bookshop, 2½ Portland Street in Southampton. I know I lost many hours in there browsing through books – some of which I still of have.

You may be interested to know that a group of academics and creatives, known as MUCollective, and based in the former Bookshop, created an exhibition earlier this year about the building as well as Portland Street's history. It featured information about previous occupants and tenants and, of course, Gilbert & Son's bookshop, which moved into the premises at Portland Street in 1939.

Emma Muscat, local social historian, researcher and blogger, is now resident historian for MUCollective who, as part of the project, made a short film about the history of the bookshop as well as the Portland Street area as a whole.

Emma invited me to come along and be interviewed about my memories of Gilbert's. The photo is me about to be interviewed.

The project is still looking for local people who have memories of the Bookshop when it was at Portland Street so if any of you are willing to provide a couple of paragraphs about your experiences or memories of the bookshop that will be much appreciated. It would be really helpful if you could also provide a photograph of any books that you bought there, preferably with you holding them but if you would prefer not to appear at all then just of the books. This image would accompany your quote. It would be lovely if any of you were able to contribute. If you could email the BLHS editor at [bhs.editor@gmail.com](mailto:bhs.editor@gmail.com) with your contribution we will forward it to Emma for inclusion in the archive. It would be so great to have your memories recorded for posterity. Please give it some thought.



## **LION CUP 2019 — The Results**

Jim Brown, author of many local history books and BLHS Vice-President, who judged the competition, declared, "The winner this year is undoubtedly *The Trafalgar Connection*, a very well researched family history that directly connects Bitterne residents with the Battle of Trafalgar and the news of Admiral Nelson's death being brought back to England."

### **THE TRAFALGAR CONNECTION:**

#### **A Family Journey From Rhode Island to Bitterne — Peter Taylor**

My grandfather lived in Bitterne and when I was very young, he told me that an ancestor of ours was present at the battle of Trafalgar. I had little interest at the time but in recent years as I became interested in genealogy, I decide to check out his claim.

My grandfather's middle name was Almy which I was told, was his mother's maiden name. Armed with such little information and with little expectation of finding anything of interest I put his name into Google and the 'Find My Past' website and see what it would come up with. From that little information I traced my family back to a George Almy of Stoke Damerel, Devon. I also found the following information in the National Archives.

**George Almy aged 30 born in Newport, (Rhode Island) America.**

**Ship: HMS Pickle.**

**Rank/Rating: Acting 2nd Master and Pilot.**

**Ship's pay book number: (SB 98)**

**10 March 1805.**

*(Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace any information on his American roots)*

From that I was then able to extract more information from various other sources and realised that my grandfather's claim was true, and HMS *Pickle* and his great grandfather were actually quite important in regard to the aftermath of the Battle of Trafalgar.

The *Pickle* was the ship that brought the news to England that Nelson had died aboard HMS Victory and that the French had been defeated at Cape Trafalgar.

It is thought that George Almy (born c1775) joined the Royal Navy in Jamaica and in early 1805 joined the *Pickle* before the ship returned to Plymouth and headed for the waters around Southern Spain. The *Pickle* was a schooner, a small sailing ship, and had a crew of around thirty-five officers and men. Because of her size and manoeuvrability, she was mostly used for carrying messages and despatches to the rest of the fleet.

Much of the information regarding the *Pickle's* activities has been taken from George Almy's log, which is held in the National Archives, Kew.

During the Battle of Trafalgar, which began on 21 October 1805, *Pickle* took no active part. It continued its normal duties plus picking up prisoners and transferring them to more suitable ships that could accommodate them.

On the 24 October Admiral Collingwood instructed the *Pickle's* commander Lieutenant Lapenotiere to convey his despatches to the King and the Nation, the sad news of Nelson's death and the success of the fleet at



Trafalgar. It was always regarded as a great honour for the crew of any ship picked be the bearer of such important news back to Britain.

The *Pickle* arrived in Falmouth bay on 4 November and Lapenotiere left for London soon after. He reached the Admiralty on Wednesday 6 November after an arduous journey by stagecoach.

George Almy, after the drama of Trafalgar, continued in the Royal Navy. On 5 January it was reported that he was injured in action with the *Pickle* against the *Favourite*, a French Privateer. His injuries were so severe that he was discharged from the ship in late February.

In September 1807 George married Susanna Easton the sister of Able Seaman William Easton a fellow crew member of the *Pickle*. Their son William, my ancestor, was born in Devon in June 1817, one of six children to George and Susanna Almy.

In November 1807 the Secretary to the Admiralty granted Almy an award of two years pay compensating him for the injuries he had received. He must have recovered somewhat as he is recorded as being posted to three more ships although it is believed that these ships were not involved in active duties.

In April 1815 he was declared unfit for duty, the record stating "The loss of right arm, gunshot wound and rupture" and at that point probably left the navy. He was also awarded a Navy pension recognising his contribution in bringing the Collingwood despatches back to England.

Susanna Almy died around 1825 and George married a second time and had two more sons. He died in 1836.

William Almy, his son, joined the Navy as a fifteen-year-old but only served eight years before becoming a coastguard boatman. He married Sarah Furze in 1841 and spent approximately twenty-five years as a coastguard being posted to Kimmeridge and then to Parkstone, both in Dorset.

In the 1861 census William and Sarah were living in Mill Road, Parkstone (Poole). They had, by then, a total of ten children and on the night of the census it included my great grandmother Abigail who was born in 1854.

By 1871 William and Sarah had moved to the Isle of Wight and were living on the High Street, Yarmouth where the family of William George Kelsey also lived. Their son George probably met Abigail Almy there as they later married in Southampton in 1877.

In 1877 Abigail's mother, Sarah Almy, died aged 59. Her father continued living on the island for some years but by 1891 was living in St Denys, Southampton.

In 1901 William Almy, the son of George Almy the Trafalgar hero, was living in Brintons Road with daughter Abigail Kelsey, son-in-law George and four of his five grandsons including my grandfather Raymond. William Almy died in 1903.

George Kelsey died in 1907 and his widow continued living in Brintons Road until her death in 1944. Incidentally, one of my grandfather's brothers continued living in the house until 1967. Perhaps some will remember the house. Viewed from the top deck of a Bitterne bound bus a poster with the slogan "Why kill for food?" was displayed in one of the upstairs windows for many years.

After serving with the Royal Garrison Artillery during WW1 my Grandfather, with my Grandmother, continued living at various addresses in Southampton until WW2 when, to avoid the night-time bombing, they evacuated to Colden Common. After the war they settled in Bitterne where they lived for the next twenty years. The rest of our small family also settled in Bitterne where I spent my school years.

As far as I know no great deeds of heroism or claims to fame has touched our side of the family since those heady days of Trafalgar. Perhaps some of the many descendants of George Almy have stories to tell of dedicated service to crown and country.

Finally, regarding the Almy family in America, a William Almy sailed with his family to America around 1635 in the ship *Abigail* and settled in Rhode Island some years later. I can find no family connection although I will keep trying as I believe there must be some information out there that connects my George Almy to others in Rhode Island.





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## **HISTORY AND HERITAGE CLUB — Mary Abraham**

### **PAST TRIPS**

Trip to Southwick House and D-Day Museum Southsea. The talk at Southwick House was brilliant and everyone was amazed at what Colin remembered. The famous three words 'OK let's go' by Dwight Eisenhower were uttered here after numerous meetings with Churchill, Ramsey and, on occasions, Montgomery.

### **UPCOMING TRIPS**

**RAF Biggin Hill Memorial Museum** for Remembrance week on Friday, 8 November. A pub lunch, a private guided tour, coach, entrance into the revamped Museum and a souvenir guidebook for everyone. An early start but I expect the take up to be high. Please book your name and deposit with full payment a week before we go. Cost approx. £42.

**Longleat and the Festival of Light.** A family trip on Sunday 8 December. Travel round the safari park to see the animals and then free time to visit Longleat House and walk around the incredible Festival of Light show which lights up at 4 pm. Santa's train to his house is magical (booked separately). Prices for adults/seniors/children from 3 upwards TBC. Please let me know.

Mary Abraham 02380 394930 - maryabraham\_22@yahoo.co.uk



**Visits to Meon Valley  
and Postal Museum**

## REMEMBERING MUM'S CLOTHES-LINE

Reprinted from 'The Bulletin', the magazine of the Rotary Club of Southampton West, by permission.

We are probably the last generation that will remember what a clothes line was.... Great memories for some of us! We had a long wooden pole (clothes-pole) that was used to push the line up, so that longer items (sheets/pants/etc.) didn't brush the ground and get dirty.

### THE BASIC RULES FOR CLOTHES-LINES:

- You had to hang the socks by the toes... NOT the top.
- You hung pants by the BOTTOM/cuffs... NOT the waistbands.
- You had to WASH the clothes-line(s) before hanging any clothes - walk the entire length of each line with a damp cloth around it.
- You had to hang the clothes in a certain order, and always hang "whites" with "whites," and hang them first.
- You NEVER hung a shirt by the shoulders - always by the tail! What would the neighbours think?
- Laundry day was on a Monday! NEVER hang clothes on the weekend, or on Sunday, for Heaven's sake!
- Hang the sheets and towels on the OUTSIDE lines so you could hide your "unmentionables" in the middle (perverts & busybodies, y'know!)
- It didn't matter if it was sub-zero weather...clothes would "freeze-dry." I remember my Grandfather's union suits standing by themselves frozen. How many remember union suits?
- When taking down dry clothes, ALWAYS gather the clothes pegs as you proceed. Leaving them on the line was "tacky"!
- If you were efficient, you would line the clothes up so that each item did not need two clothes pegs, but shared one of them with the next washed item.

- Take clothes off of the line before dinner time, neatly folded in the basket, and ready to be ironed. (IRONED? Well, that's a whole OTHER subject!)

And now a POEM....

A clothes-line was a news forecast, to neighbours passing by,  
There were no secrets you could keep, when clothes were hung to dry.

It also was a friendly link, for neighbours always knew

If company had stopped on by, to spend a night or two.

For then you'd see the "fancy sheets", and towels upon the line;

You'd see the "company table cloths", with intricate designs.

The line announced a baby's birth, from folks who lived inside,

As brand new infant clothes were hung, so carefully with pride!

The ages of the children could, so readily, be known  
By watching how the sizes changed, you'd know how much they'd grown!

It also told when illness struck, as extra sheets were hung;

Then nightclothes and a bathrobe too, haphazardly were strung.

It also said, "On vacation now", when lines hung limp and bare.

It told, "We're back!" when full lines sagged, with not an inch to spare!

New folks in town were scorned upon, if wash was dingy and grey,  
As neighbours carefully raised their brows, and looked the other way.

But clothes-lines now are of the past, for dryers make work much less.

Now what goes on inside a home is anybody's guess!

I really miss that way of life, it was a friendly sign,

When neighbours knew each other best...

by what hung on the line.



## HERITAGE OPEN DAY 2019



Our main display this year was 'Bitterne People Power' telling the story of how the construction of Bitterne Bypass inspired local residents to



create Bitterne Local History Society.



Local, social and food historian, Emma Muscat, was on hand to talk about food, diet and popular brands from the 1920s with a magnificent



display of food she had prepared and a number of our artefacts from the period.





A team of volunteers, some dressed in period costume, provided information and guidance to visitors.





Centre where we were represented by a succession of members manning our stall.

Vintage Buses stopped outside offering free rides to the Southampton Heritage Fayre in Westquay Shopping



Photos by:  
 Barbara McCaffery  
 Mary Abraham  
 Lesley Richards  
 Steve Adams

Two pictures from the exhibition are on page31





**July 1994 — A Bitterne Cinema — *John C. Shephard***

The following information was obtained from the minutes of the meetings of the Southampton Council for the period 1923 - 1925.

On October 25th 1923, members of the Town Council considered an application from Messrs Holloway and Andrews for a cinematography licence to exhibit films at the Parish Room, No. 75 Chapel Street, Bitterne. It was resolved that a subcommittee should be appointed to view the premises concerned.

There were two further meetings of members of the Town Council on 29th November 1923 and on 10th December 1923, at which the application was deferred. However, on Friday, 18th January 1924 following a building inspector's report, the members of the Town Council granted a provisional cinematography licence in respect of 75 Chapel Street, Bitterne for the exhibition of films using a Howarth portable projector. It could be assumed that the Parish Room was then used for this purpose for the year 1924.

On February 9th 1925 members of the Council considered an inspector's report in which a request was made for certain work to be carried out on the building.



**The chapel in later years with the projection box still above the door**

There is no further mention of a Bitterne Cinema in the minutes. In all probability the cost of carrying out the work was considerable, and did not justify the use of the building as such. The provisional licence therefore lapsed, and the Bitterne Cinema was closed.



## **50 YEARS AGO — Continuing a look at Ian Abrahams' diary for 1969**

**15 Jan** The Methodist Church is being demolished, I bought two lampshades for 3/- (now in our collection)

**21 Jan** Demolition men have begun Uncle Edgar's [Brown's] house at 29 Dean Road (where the Leisure Centre is now)

**30 Jan** Mr R.C. Payne retired as Treasurer (to the Congregational Church) after 38 years

**16 Mar** Went to the stonelaying of new Methodist Church in Whites Road

**22 Mar** I bought 2 fish boxes at 2d each from Mr Knott, fishmonger (to use as seed trays!)

**14 April** They have put double yellow lines down outside our house (105 Bursledon Road)

**28 Sept** We picked 19 boxes of apples in the garden (Mum used to polish them and lay them in tomato trays)

**18 Oct** Got a 'new' 10/- coin in my wages (I did a paper round for Michael Lowes at Moore's Newsagency)



**1 Nov** Helped Auntie Debbie and Uncle Charlie (Austin) clear out the shop (cycles). Bobby (Payne) bought remaining stock round in his van (the shop had opened in 1924)

**Austin's shop around 1935**



## **OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES**

### **West End Local History Society**

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

9 Nov PORTSMOUTH: Harlots, Dung & Glory by Andrew Negus

4 Dec SOCIAL EVENING, QUIZ, CHRISTMAS BUFFET, RAFFLE

Contact: 02380 471886

### **Bishop's Waltham Local History Society**

Meetings at St Peter's Church Hall, SO32 1EE at 7.30 pm

17 Oct DEFENCE OF THE MISSION AT RORKE'S DRIFT by Geoff Heal

21 Nov THE DEANE BROTHERS & DIVING HELMET BY Dr John Bevan

19 Dec MEMBERS ONLY PARTY

info@bishopswalthamsociety.org

### **City of Southampton Society**

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

28 Oct THE SCRATCH CHARITY by Annette Davis

25 Nov THE JUBILEE SAILING TRUST by Andrew Milner

Contact: info@coss.org.uk

### **Hampshire Genealogical Society**

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

21 Oct MY GENEALOGICAL JOURNEY by Phil Brown

18 Nov SHIPWRECKS IN WORLD WAR I by Simon Wills

16 Dec MEMBERS' EVENING

Contact: 02392 387000

### **Millbrook Local History Society**

Holy Trinity Church Hall, Millbrook Road at 7.30 pm

7 Nov THE GREAT WAR WW1 1914-1918 by Mike Humme

5 Dec CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING, MINCE PIES, DRAW

Contact: 023 8077 0148

### **Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society**

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

4 Nov ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2 Dec TWYFORD WATERWORKS by **Martin Gregory**

Contact: 01962 855200

### **Nursling and Rownhams History Group**

Meetings at Nursling and Rownhams Village Hall, Nursling Street,

Nursling, SO16 0YL at 7.30 pm

14 Nov THE VICTORIA CROSS AWARDS TO THE HAMPSHIRE REGT  
IN WWI by Nick Saunders

12 Dec ROMSEY SIGNAL BOX by Dick Hewett

Contact: 02380 738552

### **Botley, Curdrige and Durley History Society**

Meetings at Diamond Jubilee Hall, Botley, SO30 2ES at 8.00 pm

25 Oct WINCHESTER: BISHOPS, BUILDINGS & BONES, Part 3

by Andrew Negus

15 Nov 1950 VILLAGES OF THE TEST VALLEY & ROMSEY

by Pheobe Merrick

6 Dec CHRISTMAS PARTY

Contact: 01489 691777

### **NST City**

142-144 Above Bar Street, Southampton, SO14 7DU

20 Oct THE BEATLES: HORNSEY ROAD by Mark Lewisohn.

7.30 pm, £20

Contact: 023 8067 1771

### **Southampton City Art Gallery**

Civic Centre, Commercial Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO14 7LP

18 Jan ART HISTORY STUDY DAY: EXPLORE THE

PRE-RAPHAELITES. 10.30 - 16.00, £28

Contact: 023 8083 4536



## **PRESIDENTIAL PATTERN — *Ian Abrahams***

Dear Friends,

Firstly I would like to refer to the photograph on page 16 of our last magazine [Vol 145, top] contributed by our Vice-President, Jim Brown. It was taken in Bob Payne's shop on the corner of Commercial Street. Bob kindly allowed us to use his shop as our 'base' for several years and it was from here that Irene Pilson launched her books of Memories and we sold our own publications. I think this occasion was the launch of the first book in 1984 and pictured Bert and Vera Instone and George Brennan behind the counter. We wish Jim and Marion well in their new home in North Walsham.

Recently we had a stall at the Bitterne Festival held in the precinct and some seventy children took part in the Treasure Hunt we organised, many thanks to those who helped to make this happen. Also on the day Bitterne Community Corner was launched, this is a piece of land behind the shops on the North side of the precinct which has been given to the people of Bitterne by members of the Holden family who once traded as seed and corn merchants there – you may remember their shop.

On that day the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust supplied a classic bus as the information point and I thought you may like to see a picture of one parked in the same position twenty years ago for the launch of one of our books. As I write this particular vehicle is celebrating its 70th birthday at Bursledon Brickworks where the bus is based.

We took part in 'Heritage Open Day' with a 1920s kitchen display and demonstrations of 1920s cookery by



Emma Muscat. Thank you to her and all the members who worked so hard to prepare for and staff our Centre to welcome visitors.

Continued thanks to those who keep our Charity Shop open – this is vital in order to open our Museum.

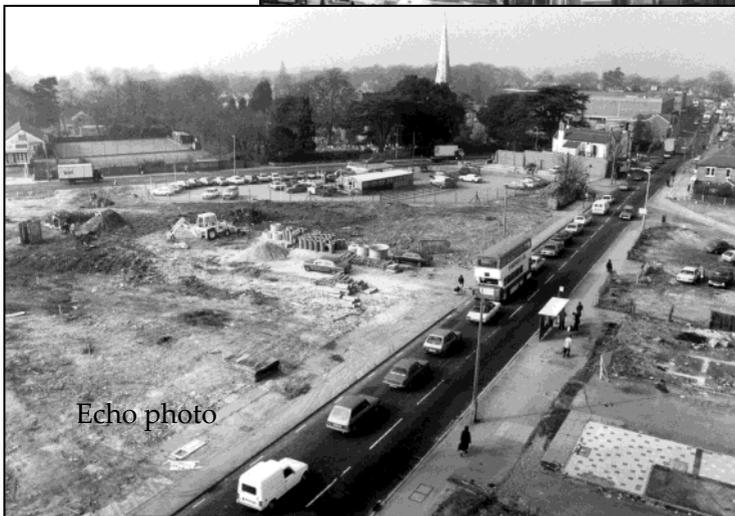
Best wishes,

*Jaw*



## HERITAGE OPEN DAY

Two pictures used in our display that show the original Bitterne shopping centre, Lion Place, before the by-pass (right)



Echo photo

and during clearance for construction of the new road (left)



# 2019/20 BLHS CALENDAR

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

9 Nov	ESCAPE FROM STALAG XXA	Steve Foster
14 Dec	THE HITHER SIDE OF THE HEDGE	Jigfoot
11 Jan	MARY ROSE	Dawn Perrier Baker
8 Feb	WINCHESTER: Bishops, Buildings and Bones – Part 2	Andrew Negus
14 Mar	BYGONE BITTERNE	Ian Abrahams
11 Apr	SHIPS OF SOUTHAMPTON	Dr Cheryl Butler

**Deadline for contributions to the Winter Edition  
is Saturday, 14th December**

Please send contributions to the Editor, Steve Adams  
**[blhs.editor@gmail.com](mailto:blhs.editor@gmail.com)**  
or address them to The Editor at the Heritage Centre  
231, Peartree Avenue, Southampton, SO19 7RD

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## 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

Closed Saturdays

## HERITAGE & RESEARCH CENTRE

Stewards available to help at

times listed on our website

**[www.bitterne.net](http://www.bitterne.net)**

or by arrangement — telephone 023 8063 7967

231 Peartree Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton

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