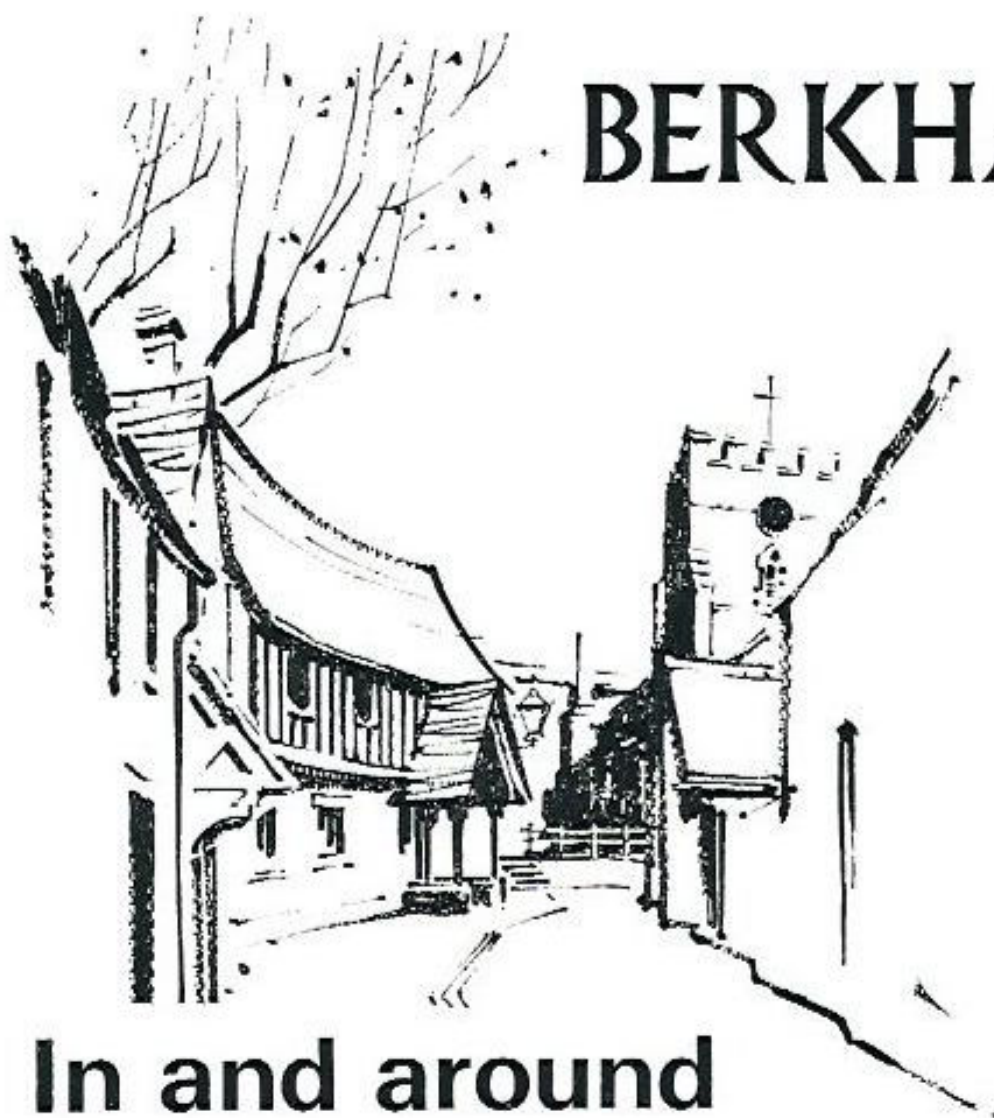


BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



In and around Berkhamsted by 'Townsmen'

Not wanted

The new Parish Council has voted against calling itself a Town Council and turned down the chance of having a mayor instead of a chairman.

Good! It would be farcial for a local authority of such limited powers to have a mayor, and I cannot understand why such an opportunity is open to all and sundry after many years of limiting charters to very large towns.

If Berkhamsted had maintained its ancient status as a borough I am sure we would still wish to have a mayor, but the last one was elected 312 years ago. He was Christopher Woodhouse, a doctor with a flair for removing evil spirits from bewitched persons. But he could not save the life of the Corporation!

On the right lines

It is not too soon to mention that in 1975 Berkhamsted railway station will be 100 years old.

This is a centenary we must not fail to celebrate. It may not be worth a pageant, but for one day only I am sure British Rail will provide trains drawn by steam locomotives will tall chimneys.

Season ticket-holders will be expected to appear in top hats, tails and spats. Ladies will wear crinolines, additional coaches being provided to increase the seating capacity. For old time's sake all trains will stop at Willesden for tickets to be collected.

I am not sure of the actual date of the 100th birthday, but 1 April would be appropriate. I shall certainly buy a platform ticket.

EDITORIAL

Hon. Editor
Mr. H. D. Woodward, 53 Bridgewater Road
Tel. 2723

ADVERTISEMENTS

Hon. Manager
Mr. C. J. Gosling, 8 Bridgewater Road
Tel. 3194

CIRCULATION

Hon. Managers
Mr. & Mrs. G. W. A. Dell, 4 Clarence Road
Tel. 4706

MAGAZINE COMMITTEE

Chairman
Mr. A. C. Conway, 20 Murray Road
Tel. 5798

MARCH

1974

Level crossing

Seriously, a great deal of work on the railway was in progress 100 years ago. The number of tracks was increased from three to four, and the building of a new station was only part of a scheme which included the provision of much larger sidings than the old ones facing Station Road.

Much thought was also given to the building of a bridge to eliminate a level crossing near Rose Cottage. An old road (Rose Lane) ran from Bank Mill Lane, over the canal bridge, and then continued straight ahead, via the level crossing, to Gutteridge Farm.

In 1872, the railway company proposed building a bridge a short distance west of Rose Cottage, but the cutting was not really deep enough at that point and in 1875 a more ambitious and costly scheme was adopted. A site farther west was chosen for the bridge, and the railway company had to construct three approach roads, one from Bank Mill canal bridge, another to link up with George Street, and a third, called Ivy House Lane, which rises steeply past Sunnyside Church and joins the old road to Gutteridge Farm higher up the hill.

A row of trees on the east side of the allotment gardens indicates the line of the old road (Rose Lane), which was abandoned when the level crossing was closed.

More about 'Alice'

Three more letters about 'Alice', the town's last horse-drawn fire engine.

A Glasgow correspondent, who was at school here in the 1920s, recalls horses being detached from a dust-cart when the hooter was sounded. Dustmen mounted the horses and galloped to the fire station; the fiery steeds then took 'Alice' to what the local papers usually called a conflagration in those more spacious days.

A St. Albans reader recalls the Kepston fire in 1929 and says that the blaze was first seen by a young woman who had broken a leg at hockey and was unable to sleep. She called her father, who ran down the High Street to sound the alarm.

A Berkhamsted reader recalls a period when the waterworks hooter was out of service and maroons were used to call the brigade. One landed in King's Road and damaged a front door.

Benevolent landlord

My thanks to a reader for sending a 'Conditions of Letting Cottages' form issued to tenants of Earl Brownlow's Ashridge estate in June, 1906.

A certain cottage at Little Gaddesden, 'with the garden and appurtenances thereto belonging', was let to a man employed at the Bridgewater Arms.

Bedroom windows, except in case of illness, were to be opened every morning from 8 o'clock until noon. Every room was to be limewashed once a year at the expense of the tenant, the landlord delivering lime for the purpose. All vegetable matter and refuse was to be used or dug into the ground of the garden and not left to accumulate in heaps or pits. The agent or estate inspector was to look over the premises as often as he considered necessary.

If these rules were strictly obeyed, an allowance of one shilling in the £ would be returned on payment of rent. And how much do you think the tenant paid *per year*? Just £3 3s.—or £3 if he complied with the regulations!

IF YOU ARE NOT ON
THE ELECTORAL ROLL
SIGN ON NOW!

PROFILE

*This month's interview is with
Miss Bateman, Headmistress of
Berkhamsted School for Girls.*

Will you please give me a resumé of your life to date?

I belong to a naval family and was born not surprisingly therefore in Plymouth. I spent my childhood years in Devon and Edinburgh. At the age of eight I went to boarding school, first in Northumberland, and then to the Abbey, Malvern Wells, where I spent the rest of my school life. At the end of the war my family moved to a remote part of Herefordshire, so boarding was essential. Fairly soon after I arrived at the Abbey I was awarded their major Scholarship. Later on I was awarded a State Scholarship to read English at St. Anne's College, Oxford. The following year I spent training to teach at Homerton College, Cambridge. My first post was as Assistant English Mistress at Westonbirt School in Gloucestershire. Thence I moved to a similar post at the Lady Eleanor Holles School near Hampton Court. I then returned to Westonbirt as Head of the Department. I held a similar post at Brighton & Hove High School G.P.D.S.T. before I was appointed to Berkhamsted, the Headship of which I took up in 1971.

What is your earliest childhood recollection?

My earliest recollections unprompted by other people's reminders and photographs are of the voyage to South Africa in 1939 to visit my grandmother and other relations. I remember stopping at Lobito Bay, which was hot, sandy and bare, with bicycles propped up in a shed near the shore. I also remember the fancy dress party on board the ship, and one or two of the passengers.

Will you please tell me who has had the most influence on your character and why?

One's character is affected by one's upbringing; I was certainly affected by my parents who, without pressing, expected me to do well

at school. I was also enormously affected by Oxford University as an institution which permanently alters and fixes attitudes, as many others have also found.

What do you consider is your greatest achievement to date?

I do not rate any of my "achievements" as at all deserving the title of "great". The one which gave me most pleasure was my school Scholarship.

What single thing would you most like to see happen in future?

As for the future, I wish that everyone else would wish of the future—a solution to national and international political problems. But I should like to see particularly an accepted fair distribution of wealth which has, so far, eluded us, but must be possible since a number of other nations seem to have arrived at a solution.

* * *

This is the last profile in the present series. We hope that more profiles will appear towards the end of the year. Our thanks are due to our interviewer, Mr. Christopher Smith, for persuading so many eminent citizens of Berkhamsted to speak about themselves in such an interesting way.

MAKE A DATE

Make a date—and help to raise money to buy a television set for the children of Thomas Bourne School. The Friends of Thomas Bourne School Association are holding a spring market on Saturday 23 March from 10 a.m. in the school hall. There will be stalls to suit all tastes and ages, selling cakes, sweets, toys, books, toiletries, handicrafts, plants, mother's day presents. There will also be an antique stall where goods will be going for a song. Refreshments will be available; so why not make this your coffee morning rendezvous?