

BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



In and around Berkhamsted by 'Townsman'

BUSES TO ASHLYNS

My thanks to Mr. Graham Winterbourne, of Coram Close, for an interesting letter about public transport in the district. For some years he has campaigned for a bus service from the High Street to the Ashlyns Estate, suggesting an extension of an existing route so that people living in or near King's Road would not have their service reduced. A short time ago, however, he was advised that alternate buses on the Berkhamsted—Windsor route (353) would be re-routed via Ashlyns Estate instead of King's Road, this Monday-to-Saturday service starting on June 22nd.

'Judging from the number of elderly people I see staggering up Three Close Lane with heavy shopping baskets, I feel sure that the

operators will increase their revenue as well as providing a much needed service,' Mr Winterbourne adds.

He goes on to say that in the twelve years he has resided in Berkhamsted, the train service has got better and better while the bus and coach services have got worse and worse. Recalling the complete withdrawal of the Berkhamsted—Dunstable service, Mr. Winterbourne suggests a Review article on the history of local public transport. Another job for 'Beorcham'!

THE TRAIN NOW STANDING . . .

At Watford Junction the usual slamming of doors made it difficult to hear the station announcer.

A woman, looking rather bewildered, turned to her companion

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

JULY

1974

and said, 'Did he say something about Harold Wilson?'

'No, Harrow and Wealdstone,' was the reply.

THE GRAPEVINE

One of the nice features of our High Street is the grapevine which, for as long as anyone can remember, has spread itself above the windows of shops facing Chesham Road.

Unfortunately, it is so familiar that lots of people never notice it! And it is only those who stand and stare who spot an ancient firemark (a metal plaque issued by the County Fire Office). It is fixed to the wall, just to the right of the vine.

THE RAILWAY BRIDGE

Little has been said or written about a considerable engineering feat—the partial rebuilding of the bridge by the railway station. The work has done nothing to improve the bottleneck under the two fast lines, but once past the narrowest point there is now some welcome daylight. Viewed from near or far, the wide entrance from the north side is quite attractive.

Full marks to British Rail for carrying out the work with minimum disruption of train services; motorists who were forced to use the even narrower bridge near the 'Crystal Palace' may not wish to second the vote of thanks!

A somewhat similar scheme was

carried out in 1927, when the bridge was closed to road traffic for three months. The Urban Council discussed with the L.M.S. the possibility of widening the narrow end of the 'tunnel funnel,' as someone described it, but the cost—trifling by modern standards—was 'prohibitive.'

THE LAST STRAW

Seeing a refuse collection vehicle with Berkhamsted's fair name blotted out, a resident said that was the worst blow to local pride he could ever remember.

THE WEATHERCOCK

'Is it true that the whistling weathercock in St. Peter's is unique? And can you tell me its age?'

These questions were fired at me the other day. Many years ago I read an article which said that there was only one other church with a whistling weathercock—at St. Austell, Cornwall. Unfortunately, I did not keep a copy of the article.

Sorry, I do not know the age of the old bird, which was silenced long before it was grounded, or, to be more exact, allowed to roost on a window ledge near the vestry. By whistling while it worked the weathercock annoyed people living nearby, and a man with a gun scored a direct hit, puncturing the tail. Though no longer having a swinging, piping time 100 ft. above street level, the bird has a proud, haughty look and is not much the worse for his injury.

A MISS IS AS GOOD . . .

The introduction of the title 'Ms' by Women's Lib reminds me that in St. Peter's Church there are memorials to two Misses, each of whom was known as Mrs.

Behind the choir stalls you will see a memorial to 'Mrs. Frances Hawes, Spinster.' She died in 1731 at the age of 72. In St. Catherine's Chapel there is a memorial to 'Mrs. Rachael Farquharson, sister to Francis Farquharson.' Unfortunately, the words on this tablet are now indecipherable, but a full description appears in R. A. Norris's history of St. Peter's.

In a footnote, Norris states: 'Mistress or Mrs. So and So was a frequent description of unmarried ladies and is not altogether un-

known now [1922] . . . In the churches of Marsworth, Bucks, and Kimpton, Herts, are other examples of Mrs. or Mistress as the style for spinsters.'

SHOWING THE WAY

Do we need some more signposts? People walking along the High Street are often asked to direct motorists to Hemel Hempstead. At least three recent enquirers were heading for Tring.

Isn't it time, too, that we helped visitors by putting up some signs indicating the way to the public conveniences?

CITIZENS' NEWS

A column contributed by the Berkhamsted Citizens' Association

We write at the time of year when ribbons and other bits of tin are given out as honours, so let's compose our own list.

The Raspberry of the Year to our local powerless pantomime for its co-option of a member who represents no-one and begins his apprenticeship under the auspices of political gerrymandering: rise, Parish Council!

A Shining Red Star to the DDC for sensibly agreeing to make local planning applications available every Tuesday afternoon from 2 p.m. to 5.15 p.m.; ask for Mr. Meadows. The DDC may be over-conscious of its 'image' (whatever that means) but several have commented on a new zing and efficiency in its corridors. Certainly our own conservation area in the High Street and Castle Street is being carefully looked after.

The Brighten Up Berkhamsted medals go to the new office occupants opposite the Parish Church who have restored their front so tastefully; to the discreet and tasteful Flatt and Mead offices; to the newly resplendent white front of the Crown Inn; to the PRP shop blind; to the owners of the High Street houses who brave vandals and traffic fumes in growing plants and to the Parish Church for its flag.

Awards are not available for the High Street horse trough, the Sharlands Channel and for the Town Hall facade. The Gable Street premises receive the D.O.B.

Award: Dull Old Berkhamsted—how can any town tolerate such an eye-sore for so long? It says much for the apathy of this town's citizens that this blemish still moulders.

The next meeting of the DDC at Hemel Hempstead Town Hall is on 2nd July: do go to listen to what goes on in the Powerhouse. It starts at 7.30 p.m.

If you travel by train you will be interested in the Citizens' Association's letter to British Rail about the service and the capacity of the line to cope with expanding numbers in the rush hour. If you have any comments or suggestions which might widen our knowledge please contact the Citizen's Secretary Mrs. Megan Peplow, Berkhamsted 3089.

Finally, when you're next crossing the High Street in the east, look west along it: you may still look at trees and fields on the horizon. Something to tell your grandchildren in the future; they'll never believe you.

HOUSING PROGRESS

The latest News from

CHRISTIAN ACTION (BERKHAMSTED) HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

The object of the association is to provide accommodation for fatherless families, particularly those with young children. Its 1973 report is now available.

During the course of 1973 the construction of four houses in Ellesmere Road and New Street were completed, and an opening ceremony was held on 14th July at which Mr. Harrowell (the Chairman of the Urban District Council) declared the houses officially open and shortly after that date the first four tenants moved in.

As the management committee had completed their first task of selecting the original tenants, it was decided that the administration would be more effective if the executive and management committees were to combine and this took effect on the 8th November 1973.

During the course of the year the council were approached to ascertain whether they had any other plots of land they could lease