

BERKHAMSTED REVIEW



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In and around Berkhamsted

by 'Townsmen'

Information Service

A newcomer has been praising that long, long notice board at the local branch of the County Library. "I have never seen anything as useful as this anywhere else," he said.

It is indeed a splendid what's-on guide, almost fulfilling the functions of an information bureau. Dozens and dozens of notices of all shapes, sizes and designs give details of local activities and services. Another good feature is a diary which would be even more helpful if *all* secretaries would enter the dates of forthcoming events and so reduce the risk of several meetings taking place at the same time.

Postcards, photographs and other items that have been used as bookmarks by forgetful readers are sometimes displayed on the notice board under the heading, "Please claim." On very rare occasions someone uses a pound note as a bookmark and forgets to take it out. Recent discoveries include hairpins, matchsticks, bubblegum, a squashed spider, pressed flowers, and a lady's suspender.

I hope there will be no red faces if I mention that a short time ago the date 1794 appeared on those little cards which state the final date for returning books without incurring a fine. I wonder what the penalty would be if one kept a book for 180 years?

Anonymous Court House

After looking round St. Peter's Church, an elderly couple walked towards the Court House. "I wonder if it's an almshouse?" asked the man. "I shouldn't think so, but there's nothing to say what it is," replied the woman.

Overhearing this scrap of conversation, I could not help thinking that a suitable notice would not only enlighten visitors but also encourage contributions to the restoration fund. We have a long, long way to go financially, and much more is needed than a distribution of leaflets.

Healthy and Nourishing

My thanks to Mr. P. M. Saunders, of Holliday Street, for sending along two copies of Berkhamsted Parish Magazine, dated 1911 and 1912.

Especially interesting are the advertisements. H. and J. Matthews were proud of a new warehouse, equipped with a lift to the upper floor, for the storage of furniture. J. Timson's bakery was renowned for ginger health cake made solely by the proprietor. Chilton & Co. were insurance agents as well as grocers. A. C. Neville sold fish where the Civic Centre stands today. S. Timson & Sons, tailors and breeches makers, made a speciality of uniforms and liveries. Edward Platt, wine and spirit merchant, sold Raggett's Nourishing Stout, and a few doors away Percy Millen offered

Dr. Jaeger's wool-lined, ventilated boots at fixed London prices. He also had a competent staff of workmen on the premises.

Those were the days!

High Wall

Probably the least known of our road names is High Wall. I had almost forgotten it until I spotted a public notice about the temporary prohibition of through traffic between Station Road and High Wall.

I doubt whether a more appropriate name could be found for the road between the Castle and the high wall of the railway. But, like many another road which lacks houses, it also lacks a nameplate.

Butts Meadow

In the course of drainage work in Butts Meadow, a metal sleeper was turned up. It was a relic of the light railway which was laid when the meadow was levelled in 1933.

A friend took the relic home, wondering whether it was worth saving for a local museum, if we ever have one. He told me that as a small boy he saw men at work levelling the meadow. The scheme was designed to provide work at a time of appalling unemployment, and the men were paid 1s. an hour—that's 5p, if you need a translation. The money was raised by dances, concerts, a flag day, a bridge drive and public subscriptions. Miss Sidney Courtauld, of the textile firm, followed up her original gift of £500 with £100 earmarked for men physically unfit for heavy work. They were given the task of tidying up Brickhill Green.

Timely Visit

Staying at the Swan Hotel at the end of July, Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Lane, of Worthing, had a pleasant surprise. They found that the newly-published *Review* (for August) contained an article devoted to their old family business, H. Lane & Son, the nurserymen. Naturally, they took several copies to send to other members of the family.

Friday Street

"Can you tell me anything about Friday Street?" This question was put to me by a reader who, though a lifelong resident of Berkhamsted, had only recently spotted the name on a map.

It is a very old place-name which survives as Friday Street Farm, better known today as Haresfoot Farm. That's the one on your left as you drive or walk through Haresfoot Park on the way to Whelpley Hill.

A manorial survey of 1607 mentions "one messuage or tenement in Fryday Streete" for which Francis Wethered, of Ashlyns, paid a quit rent of 2d. a year. In the same survey there is a reference to an acre of arable land "lying neare fryday streete" (no capital letter this time!) for which Thomas Rogers paid a quit rent of 3d. per year.

Like Coldharbour, Friday Street is a name which crops up in sundry places. For instance, there is a Friday Street near St. Paul's Cathedral. I imagine that the name has a very interesting origin, perhaps a religious one, and if you have any information perhaps you will write to me.

Next-Day Delivery

A King's Langley reader has shown me an envelope postmarked Watford, Aug. 14, 1865. On the reverse side appears the postmark Berkhemstead, Aug. 15, 1865.

What a pity only the envelope survives. It was addressed to The Magistrate's Court, Berkhamsted, Herts.

ASHLYNS SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

At the recent annual general meeting it was announced that, during the last year, the association has assisted with the raising of £700 for the school private fund. This money has been used or allocated for the purchase of various types of equipment, including typewriters, video tape-recorder and improvements in the stage lighting.

Two successful dances were held during the year, but meetings organised with an educational flavour were not well supported. A survey of parents, to establish their requirements from the Association, yielded a 13% return generally supporting the holding of social and teacher/parent contact meetings. The annual cricket match, between parents and teachers, due to be played on 4th July, was cancelled because of heavy rain.

Inflation, causing considerable additional transport costs of sports teams and other activities, raised the need for regular additional funds and for this purpose a 100 Club has been established to enable a contribution of £500 to be made to the School Funds. Thanks were expressed to the mothers who run the School Tuck Shop, from which a considerable sum is made annually for the school benefit.

The following parents were elected to the committee, for the coming year: — Mesdames Jackson and Rapsey, Messrs. Collins, Russell, Willcocks, Long, MacNamara, Harper and Boyle. The President is Mr. Johnston (Headmaster), and the Secretary will continue to be Mr. C. W. Smith. Representatives of the Staff are A. W. Medcalf, J. M. Strauss and Mrs. M. R. Fry.

Presentations from the Association are to be made to mark the forthcoming retirements of two long serving, and highly respected, members of the staff, Mrs. Hall, the Deputy Head, and Mr. Cuthbert, the Head of the Music Department. All members of the community will wish them both long and happy retirements.

It is hoped that a meeting will be arranged for late September, to enable parents to meet the new Board of Governors, and on 8th November, the Autumn Dance will be held, at which the half-yearly major prize will be drawn for the 100 Club.

BERKHAMSTED FILM SOCIETY

Readers will be interested to learn that Tuesday, 24th September, sees the opening of the 1974/5 season of films. The venue is again the Kings Arms Hotel Hall.

As last season a wide choice of films, some modern productions and older ones too, has been selected and one of these will be shown each month. The