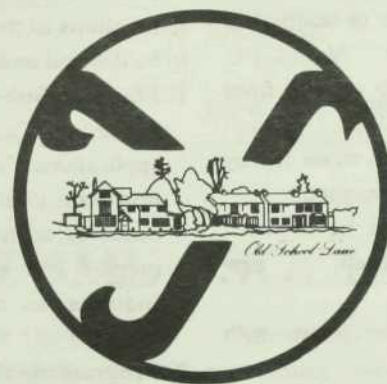


the Yateley society



Newsletter

The Summer Social • The May Fayre

Natural History Walk

Simmonds Graves Appeal Launch

1981 Dawn Chorus • Postcard Dates and Identities

No 59

June 1995

THE YATELEY SOCIETY

Newsletter No 59 June 1995

Editor: Tony Hocking, 30 Connaught Close, Yateley (01252) 875158

THE EDITORIAL

Dear Member,

I have had some comments on the *Newsletter*, which is very helpful, and they are listed here to see if they encourage more people to provide ideas. A bit of feedback is always encouraging!

1. A contents list, preferably on the front page, would be welcome.
2. Local walks (in addition to those led by Irene Draper) should be advertised.
3. A list of members should be attached occasionally, for the benefit of new members.
4. Sub-committees should be listed, with their activities.
5. News of the activities of neighbouring societies should be included.
6. Members could be asked to report on our talks, or on other local events.
7. Updates on long-standing items, *eg* the Simmonds Graves, are required.
8. The Editor might enlist the aid of 'persuasive and extrovert' assistants to

gather material for publishing.

9. Newsletters could be sold in the public library. A regular supply of membership leaflets should be provided there,

Any more comments???

Some of the above will be incorporated as space allows in the *Newsletter*, some will have to be debated and attended to later.

1. Planning Sub-Committee

Function: To review local planning applications. To prepare comments on important local planning applications and issues as advice to local authorities. To prepare and give evidence at Planning Inquiries on matters of importance to Yateley.

2. Programme Sub-Committee

Function: To arrange a programme of talks, walks and social events for the Society.

3. Publications Sub-Committee

Function: To establish a policy for the nature of Society publications of all types. To organise the production of the publications.

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NEW MEMBERS

from Geoff Hoare

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined the Society in recent months.

Mrs Statler
2 Laurel Cottage, Cricket Hill Lane

Mr & Mrs Seagrave
Woodpeckers, Cricket Hill

Mr & Mrs Payne
1 Tudor Drive

Mrs Mains
Coach House, Old School Lane

Mr & Mrs Larkin
18 Pond Croft

Mr & Mrs Craighill
Leafy Oak Farm, Cobbetts Lane

Mr. Beere
3 Hillfield

Ms. Edgar
3 Hillfield

Mr & Mrs Colbert
11a Round Close

SUMMER SOCIAL

ONCE AGAIN VALERIE and David Kerslake have very kindly offered the use of their garden for a social event. The now traditional Summer Social is always popular and we have taken up this offer of a venue.

This year, to be different, it will NOT be a Barbecue. We have decided on an **AL-FRESCO BUFFET** instead.

Admission covers a main course of something savoury with salad and a glass of wine, or soft drink. (More drink will be available, for which a voluntary donation would be welcome.)

For sweets we rely on your offerings as in other years (the selection of delightful confections that you all usually bring could not be bettered!)

A raffle prize would also be most welcome.

Finally, some able-bodied helpers are needed to set things up, from about 6.30pm.

Note: It would be wise to bring a garden chair as they tend to be in short supply!

PLEASE TELL MARY OR TONY HOCKING (YATELEY 875158) IF YOU ARE COMING - BY FRIDAY 23 JUNE.

The date:
Saturday 1 July

The venue:
**Lime Tree Cottage,
Chandlers Lane**

The time:
7.00pm

The price:
Adults £2.50 Children £2.00
(Pay on the night)

MAY FAYRE

by Tony Hocking

ONCE AGAIN THE Society did well financially at the May Fayre, at least that is the simplified message given by the following summary.

| <i>Receipts</i> | | <i>Expenses</i> | |
|--|---------|-------------------|---------------|
| Publications | £ 83.45 | Pitches (3 @ £25) | £75.00 |
| General sales | £154.27 | Hire of Marquee | £ 50.00 |
| | | Exhibition | £53.00 |
| Total | £237.72 | Total | £178.00 |
| Apparent profit (omitting cost of publications) | | | £59.72 |

This shows that the general sales covered the majority of the expenses, and any profit was due to the sale of publications. It is difficult to calculate the real profit because each publication has its own costs which in any case have already been born by the general Society funds and not the May Fayre expenses.

What is obvious from the figures is the very high cost (£125) of attending the May Fayre, before considering the exhibition expenses. Why three pitches? The marquee itself occupies two, and the spread of guy ropes forces us to occupy the third.

Behind this result was a lot of hard work. Most of you are familiar with my annual plea for help with the May Fayre, and some of you responded, as always, with great enthusiasm. I, and the rest of the Executive Committee, are extremely grateful to all those who helped with the marquee, the Exhibition (particularly Stephanie Butcher who covered the Cobbetts Lane story) and the sales. The generosity of a few of the members contributing to the items for sale, especially cakes, was quite overwhelming.

This looks like a healthy picture, the Society was being advertised and our costs were covered. The snag is that much of the work was done by the usual group of 'old hands'. It seems a bit silly when this small group of members make or grow the items for sale, do the sorting and pricing, man the sales stall and even buy some of each other's contributions! Ah well, at least the Society as a whole gets some benefit.

I've booked the marquee for 1996 already, so we will be begging again next year! What would be nice would be for more members to contribute to the sales items. We know that not everybody is up to setting up marquees or

spending all day on their feet behind the tables, but if they contributed only one worthwhile item each it would spread the load and make a big difference.

Cakes and jams or preserves of all types are good saleable lines, and the more the merrier. However cakes and jam cost money to make, and the other good line is always plants. A few rooted cuttings of bedding plants or indoor plants, or even a single healthy young shrub from a seed or cutting from your garden would do very nicely. There's a whole year to go – so why not start things growing now and make a useful contribution with close to zero cost and effort!

Again in the low cost/low effort category of help we need containers. Those who make their own jams and preserves and sell them need jam jars (preferably 1lb size with screw tops), and there is a need for old plant pots for the seedlings and cuttings which we sell. So, please hoard away some jam jars and plant pots for next year – every little helps!

STILWELLIANA

by Valerie Kerslake

A WINDFALL OF STILWELL memorabilia turned up earlier this year and is being mulled over by members who try to pursue Yateley's history.

John Pakenham Stilwell came to live in Yateley in the early 1870s when his wife, formerly Georgina Stevens, inherited Hillfield (later Yateley Place) which stood on the land enclosed by Cricket Hill Lane, Stevens Hill and Potley Hill Lane – now a residential estate – and Fiske Court. For many years the Stilwells were the most prominent family in Yateley. John Stilwell was very conscious of the responsibilities of his wealth and class, and in spite of commuting daily by open carriage to Farnborough and then by train to work at his bank in London, he was deeply involved in church and village affairs, as his children were after him.

There are no Stilwells in Yateley now, but Jean McIlwaine, an enthusiastic family historian as well as church archivist, has kept in touch with some of the family, with the result that Lindsay Stilwell, a great grandson of John, most kindly lent Jean and the Society a whole suitcase full of papers, photographs, journals and letters passed on to him by his elders. They shed light on all sorts of uncertainties about Yateley in the past century, even though they sometimes contradict evidence from other sources. Amongst legal documents are ones relating to probate, which list John Stilwell's tenants and the houses which they rented, thus pinning down names to

precise addresses for at least the year he died, 1921. This is hard to do even from censuses, for few houses are named and the census-taker often seems to have roamed wilfully from side to side and up and down the road.

The Journals were written jointly by John and Georgina while travelling on the Continent. Their energy is impressive. Why do we so often suppose Victorian women to have been fragile and delicate? On a five-week trip to Italy in 1877, which began with John weak from a long illness and during which Georgina endured agonies of toothache, there is scarcely a day, except when travelling, which was not filled with sight-seeing. They visited half the cities in northern Italy as well as stopping in France and in Switzerland, where they were in fact hampered and depressed by a cold wet May. Georgina sometimes admits being dreadfully tired, and no wonder, especially when she was probably confined in a dress with a tight bodice, long sleeves, high neck and gloves in the Italian sun. But mostly she writes merrily and not just of the works of art; she must have been an amusing travelling companion. At the end of each day I imagine it was she who pasted in the photographs of cathedrals, street scenes and galleries, though they took turns with the writing. Today, opening the thick leather-bound exercise book with its fading pages of sloping script, one feels close to the writers as they sat down each evening, dipping a sometimes cross-nibbed pen into the hotel inkwell.

THE SIMMONDS GRAVES (or 'Angel' Graves)



This sketch was made from a photograph of the grave marker after its last complete renovation and relettering. It was painted white with black lettering. The sign-writer used the wrong spelling of 'Francis' on the nearest board, but the spelling was correct on the board for Francis' wife!

THE SIMMONDS GRAVES

by Tony Hocking

OVER THE LAST year there has been talk of renovating the unique Simmonds (or 'Angel') grave marker in St Peter's churchyard. There was a display board devoted to this at the 1994 May Fayre.

After inviting various people for their opinions on how to proceed, and obtaining several frightening estimates there has been a great step forward.

Gail Pattenden, the daughter of Society members Stephanie and Ron, works for a firm specialising in restoration. It was agreed that for £705 the missing and rotten woodwork would be replaced and the algae and surface damage on the rest of the structure skimmed off. Very appropriately Gail would do the work herself.

So far so good, and the work is virtually finished.

The next stage is to paint and letter the boards with the original inscriptions.

THIS WILL COST A LOT MORE MONEY!

(Between £500 and £700)

This expenditure is essential as without proper painting and lettering the grave marker would soon revert to the sad state it was only a few weeks ago.

The Executive Committee is extremely anxious to finish the job properly, but is mindful of the large drain on our financial resources caused by Planning Inquiries, of which yet another is in the offing.

The Yateley Society is therefore launching **An Appeal for Donations** towards this work.

As an encouragement to you the Chairman announced at the last Executive Committee meeting that three donations, totalling £130, have been received to assist with the woodwork task.

Even a small sum per head would soon better this figure and ensure the completion of the lettering.

PLEASE HELP by sending a donation to Dr David Lister, Monteagle Surgery, Tesimond Drive, Yateley GU17 7FE.

Every little helps!

A NATURAL HISTORY WALK

By David Lister

SEVERAL MEMBERS OF the Society enjoyed a walk led by Irene Draper on Saturday 29 April, starting from near the bridge where Mill Lane crosses the *Blackwater*, and walking away from the river up to the beautiful woods of Finchampstead Ridges, where a large stretch belongs to the National Trust.

I am an ignorant amateur in matters botanical, but very much enjoyed Irene's informative remarks, and if I include the Latin names as well as the English ones of the plants and birds she showed us, it is to enjoy the sound and association of both.

These hills were formed from the gravel left by the retreat of the last ice age, which reached its southernmost point in these parts about here, some 15 000 years ago. We admired the stretches of Bluebells (*Endymion non-scriptus*), a member of the lily family. On the way we saw Greater Stitchwort or Adders Meat (*Stellaria holostea*), and it accompanied us at various places for most of the way. Irene showed us a magnificent oak, about 300 years old, which had been smashed by the 1987 storms, but which was springing to life again. We passed larches in their beautiful spring green, England's only deciduous conifer (*Larix decidua*), which is an introduced species.

Irene showed us what at first looked like black bits of brain on a dead ash; they were a fungus known as 'King Alfred's cakes' for obvious reasons. In the woods we admired the red furry hair of the female flowers of the beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), with their male flowers below.

We heard the call of the Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) and the Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus collybita*), and the echoing laugh of the Green Woodpecker or 'Yaffle' (*Picus viridis*). Down by the lakes formed by the gravel pits near Moor Green we saw nesting Snow Geese (*Anser caerulescens*), Barnacle Geese (*Branta leucopsis*), Ring Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) and Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) (hardly worth the mention!) We saw a Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) dive-bombing a crow, Great-Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*) with young on its back, and the first Swallow (*Hirunda rustica*) of the summer.

Beside one hedge grew White Climbing Fumitory (*Corydalis claviculata*), a member of the Papaveraceae family, and in another a patch of Town Hall Clock (*Adoxa moschatellina*). We found Elm (*Ulmus procera*) in flower, very rare now that Dutch elm disease has killed so many, and lastly Irene showed us how a broom flower is pollinated by tickling an insect under its chin with its stamens, a place like the human back where the insect cannot clean itself

until it does so against the stigma of another flower.

There was much else to experience, the pleasant company, and the surprise, for at least one member of the group, at the beauty and interest of the country on Yateley's doorstep.

THE DAWN CHORUS

by Tony Hocking

SEARCHING THROUGH SOME old papers at work recently I came upon the following which was not published at the time it was written, and then forgotten.

The site was at the junction of the path from Heathlands Cemetery to the Common and the track leading east to Hill Farm and Cottage Farm. Twenty-seven Society members were up very early that day!

The Book of Dawn

- 0330 In the beginning the surface of the Earth was dark and void.
AND ALL WAS SILENT.
- 0340 And the Lord said 'Let there be the YATELEY SOCIETY',
and darker shapes appeared in the void.
AND ALL WAS SILENT.
- 0345-0415 In the first half hour the Lord said 'Let there be birds of the water'.
AND IN THE DISTANCE A SOLITARY MALLARD
QUACKED.
- 0415-0445 In the second half hour the Lord said 'Let there be birds of the land'.
AND FARTHER IN THE DISTANCE A SOLITARY
TAWNY OWL HOOTED.
- 0445-0515 In the third half hour the Lord took mercy upon the YATELEY
SOCIETY and said 'Let there be blackbirds, robins and all birds of
heathland, wood and pond'.
AND A GENTLE TWITTERING BEGAN, AND IT
GREW INTO A MIGHTY CRESCENDO OF SONG.
- 0515-0545 In the fourth half hour there was much stamping of feet and rubbing
of hands in the frosty air.
AS THE SONG CONTINUED.
- 0545-0615 In the fifth half hour there was a great marching of feet.
AS THE SONG DIMINISHED.
- 0615 And Peter (Tipton) said 'Let there be breakfast!'

Undiscovered fragment, mislaid in Yateley, 3 May 1981.

DATES AND IDENTITIES

by Valerie Kerslake

THE OLD DOG & Partridge and the White Lion Inn are running neck and neck in the postcard popularity stakes at Yateley Industries and the local newsagents. I refer, of course, to the sepia copies of old postcards The Yateley Society reprinted last August, each incorrectly saying 'circa 1900' on the back. My fault – I am now better informed.

The Post Office first agreed to allow picture postcards to be used in 1894 but one whole side had to be reserved for the address so message and pictures were squeezed onto the other. This rule was relaxed in 1902 so our cards could not be earlier than that, though the photographs might just be. In the case of the White Lion card it was not much later either, as my original copy is postmarked 'Camberley NO 18 03'. It was bearing Christmas greetings to Mr E Bye, addressed to *SS Perthshire*, Sydney, Australia. It missed him there so was redirected to the shipping agents at Capetown, but, again too late, was sent to London where the postmark is 'FEB 27 04'.

Wondering out loud about Mr Bye, I discovered from Geoff Bunch that he was the father of old Frank Bye who used to live at the Cooperage at Eversley Cross (next to Le Toad & Stumps). What is more, Geoff knew that the lady

with the small child in the picture was the wife of Mr Higgs the innkeeper, whose daughter still lives in the neighbourhood. I whizzed off to see the daughter who confirmed that it was indeed her mother, with her father standing beside her. The toddler was her elder sister and the figure on the right a young woman who helped at the inn. She could not place the others but the old man must surely have been some local worthy, and might the young man have been a groom for the horses and carriages one could hire here? George Higgs, she told me, had been valet to Cecil Rhodes before his marriage, but his wife did not want to live in South Africa. Back in England he took over the White Lion in 1903 and remained there for 29 years. The postcard therefore dates from his first year in Yateley.

I have not seen an original copy of the other card to help date it but as the Dog & Partridge was rebuilt in 1912 it must have been before that, and I would guess it to be much nearer 1903. Thousands of local views all over the country were then being photographed to celebrate the newly liberated picture postcard, and Mr Gadd, whose General Stores also features in the scene, no doubt jumped on the band wagon.

Yateley Society Programme 1994/1995

From June 15 1995

JUNE

Thursday 15, Yateley Centre C.1.4, 8pm

Talk – The Blackwater Valley

by Leigh Thornton

An update on the progress of the Blackwater Valley Scheme by the current leader of the Team

Sunday 25, Wyndhams Pool 10am

Conservation on the Common

Our monthly working party supporting the Country Park Rangers

JULY

Saturday 1, Lime Tree Cottage, Chandlers Lane, 7pm

Society Summer Social (See Special Article on p3)

Sunday 2, Shepherds Meadows car park, 7pm

Walk – Shepherds Meadows

Led by Irene Draper

An evening in an area rich in wild flowers, butterflies and birds

The car park is off the roundabout on the Owlsmoor to Blackwater by-pass,
by the River Blackwater

Thursday 6, Barclay House, 8pm

Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday 30, Wyndhams Pool 10am

Conservation on the Common

Our monthly working party supporting the Country Park Rangers

AUGUST

Summer break

SEPTEMBER

Thursday 21, Yateley Centre C.1.4, 8pm

Talk – The Forest of Eversley Trust

Phillip Todd will describe the objectives of the Trust, and something of its organisation. This should give a very useful insight into a scheme which affects all our local countryside

Sunday 24, Wyndhams Pool 10am

Conservation on the Common

Our monthly working party supporting the Country Park Rangers

Copy dates:

Newsletter
21 August 1995

Stop Press
When necessary

**The Yateley Society**

Registered with the Civic Trust
Registered Charity No 282397

The Hon Secretary

Carolyn Seymour
7 Wren Close
Yateley
Hampshire
GU17 7NZ

Telephone

01252 871294

The Ramblers' Association
60 years working for walkers



1/5 Wandsworth Road
London SW8 2XX
Tel: 0171-582 6878
Fax: 0171-587 3799

Dear Walker,

As a member of an organisation affiliated to the Ramblers' Association, you may know a bit about us. In this our Jubilee year, we'd like to invite you to join us at a specially reduced rate. (This only applies to new members and not to existing ones renewing their subscription.)

You may be wondering why you should think of joining the Ramblers as you are already a member of a walking club.

We are the campaigning and lobbying group in Britain. It was the Ramblers, for example, who persuaded the Ordnance Survey to put public rights of way on their maps and who campaigned so vigorously to save the Pathfinder series. And more recently, we defended the freedom to roam in Forestry Commission woods - and won. We have dedicated staff, and invaluable volunteers at local level who do all they can to make sure the countryside remains a good place to walk. But apart from supporting a vital cause, there are a large number of benefits you'll receive if you become a member.

We'll send you a lively quarterly colour magazine; you'll get a free copy of the Rambler's Yearbook and Accommodation Guide (which sells in shops for £4.99) containing over 2,300 Bed and Breakfast addresses and information on maps, long distance paths, equipment shops and much more; you can use our map library; and last but not least, you will be a member of one of our 400 local groups and will be able to walk with them if you choose.

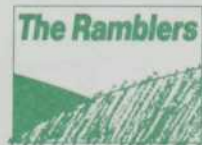
So if you want to take advantage of this special offer and get a 20% reduction on your subscription rate, just fill in the form overleaf, paying by direct debit, and send it back to us.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Catharine Gunningham'.

Catharine Gunningham
Assistant Director
Publicity & Development



Special Membership Offer

As a member of an affiliated society, you can use this coupon to get 20% off your subscription if you are not already a member of the Ramblers' Association. See overleaf for more details.

Please return to: Ramblers' Association, 1-5 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 2XX

It is a condition of this offer that you pay by direct debit.

I/We wish to join the Ramblers and have completed the direct debit instruction below:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms (Initials) _____ Surname _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Date(s) of Birth _____ RA Group _____

(if you wish to be in a group other than your local one)

Tick the box that suits you best:

| | Special Rate | Full Rate |
|--|--------------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary | £12.80 | £16.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joint/family + | £16.00 | £20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced ordinary* | £6.40 | £8.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced joint/family | £8.00 | £10.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donation to Step Alive Fund | £ _____ | |

Total: £ _____

*Members under 18; students; disabled; unwaged and retired persons.

+ For two adults at same address and their children under 16.

The offer stays open until 31 December 1995 and is not open to existing members.

Direct Debiting Instructions

Originator's identification number 922670. Membership number (office use only)

1. Name and address of your bank: _____

2. Name of the Account holder: _____

3. Account No: _____ Sort code no (RH corner of cheque) _____

4. I instruct you to pay Direct Debits from my account at the request of the Ramblers' Association. The amounts are variable and may be debited on various dates. I understand that the Ramblers' Association may change the amounts and dates only after giving me prior notice. I will inform the bank in writing if I wish to cancel this instruction. I understand that if any Direct Debit is paid which breaks the terms of the instruction, the bank will make a refund.

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

A bank may decline instructions to pay direct debits from some types of accounts.

We will not make your name and address generally available to commercial organisations. However, we may from time to time allow other non-profit organisations to write to you. If you prefer not to receive these communications, please tick this box. ☐