

The Yateley Society

Newsletter

Issue 108 September 2012

www.yateleysociety.org.uk

Musings from our Chair Roger Coombes



JUBILEE OAK

Many thanks to members and others who attended the Jubilee Oak Tree planting ceremony on Civic Day, 23rd June to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee. We were certainly lucky with the weather that morning because by lunchtime it was tipping it down again! We should be delighted to see all the photographs which were taken by at least 10 different people with a view to archiving a good selection. Please contact us if you were one of those snapping away. Mr Christopher Bunch and Mrs Julia Dobbin, Yateley Society members and relatives of one of the original planters were there which added another sense of history and continuity to the occasion. Mrs Vera Taylor and Mrs Alice Gregory both over 90yrs of age and Mrs Muriel Brent 85yrs were also present. Having three senior people from Yateley helped recreate the planting of the Coronation Oak in 1911. They were not the three eldest, as planted the Coronation Oak in 1911 but in a Town so large it would have taken too much time to locate the actual three eldest. Lawrence Smith from Yateley Town Council, James Arbuthnot, the local MP and the Mayor Andy Whittaker were amongst the crowd. Roger Coombes gave a speech about



the reasons behind the installation of two plaques, one to replace the lost one from the Coronation Oak and one for the new Oak. The Jubilee Oak Tree was planted by Mr Gavin Jones; whose company was founded in 1919 and is by

At a recent visit to the cinema in Winnersh my attention to the film

was distracted by the constant flashing of rectangular lights around me. Despite an announcement requesting that mobile phones be switched off, these people were apparently "tweeting", "twittering" or "chirruping"(!).

The fact that they were in a cinema at all is I suppose a good thing for the future of the film industry, but is this obsession with "social networking" a sign that traditional forms of communication are eroding? I am often told that the 20 – 30 generation (and younger) ONLY communicates in this way – they don't write letters, don't go to meetings, don't join clubs and societies. They don't vote at polling stations—will they not use the postal service either? Will we see the introduction of other electronic forms of voting to ease future generations into taking their democratic responsibilities seriously?

Indications that we are perhaps not rushing headlong into this Orwellian future scenario can be taken from the Jubilee celebrations where thousands of people around the country and across the generations took to the streets and parks to participate in communal events, (despite the appalling weather) and also the wonderful Olympic games gatherings, attracting people together from all over the world to view the events "in real life". Could this mean that the human race is not yet ready to completely discard its gregarious nature? For the future of the Yateley Society and others like it I sincerely hope so.

FARNBOROUGH WORKHOUSES

A larger than average audience gathered at our meeting for an illustrated talk by Yateley Society member, Rosemary Rawcliffe of The North East Hampshire Historical and Archaeological Society (NEHHAS) on the Yateley and Farnborough workhouses. We were joined by a number of visitors from Farnborough.



Rosemary used images of a wide range of documents and old photos to present a detailed study of local workhouses, starting with the common features of the architectural designs and focussing on the internal building layouts and then taking us through matters of diet,

accounts, medical officers' responsibilities, doctors' visits, death registers and lists of lunatics!

Some appalling conditions were highlighted (and even by the standards of the day a report in 1847 described them as "disgraceful") such as cesspits and earth closets, and in one example the isolation room (for infectious diseases) being adjacent to the pig sty.

Nevertheless, other moral obligations were taken seriously, with children being provided with an education and apprenticeships in occupations such as husbandry, shoe-making and tailoring. Church attendance was required. However, paupers, including children, were used for casual labour, generally on a daily basis.

The Farnborough workhouse building was finally demolished in 1980. Although it was a listed

building it did not have a preservation order, so that part of Farnborough's history was lost.

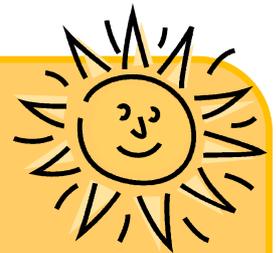


Yateley Society talk to the University of the Third Age



A while ago the Society had been invited to talk to the U3A in Sandhurst about the History of Yateley, so Philip Todd gave them the illustrated overview which had been "tried out" on our own members in March. It was well received by an audience of 60 – 70, who also snapped up Society postcards and booklets at our sales table, manned by Mary Roaf. A number of fellow members went along to give support. At the end, Philip was asked to give the talk to the Hartley Wintney U3A too!

SUMMER SOCIAL



Our annual summer social was held on 7th July at our new regular meeting place, The Red Cross Centre. The bad weather ensured that it was definitely not a garden party this year, but torrential rain on the M4 did not deter Ann Knott from leaving Wales in the morning in order to return to Yateley to prepare and deliver the main course of cold meats, salads, pasta, cheese, etc by 7pm. As is now traditional, the desserts were provided by those who attended. "We're spoilt for choice!" I heard one new member remarking. Numbers were unfortunately lower than usual and we missed, but remembered, several old friends, including Tony and Mary Hocking (the first one they have missed in 31 years!) and Steph and Ron Pattenden. Good news is that Ron is on the mend following major heart surgery. We look forward to you rejoining us at monthly meetings soon, Ron. We were delighted to welcome several recent new Society members, some to their first event, and look forward to seeing them at future monthly meetings. The stars of the evening were Gemma and Abi who sneaked into the kitchen to do the washing-up while the adults continued to exercise their little grey cells on the latest of Tony's quizzes. Congratulations to winners Ann and Roy Sutcliffe, who are new Society members.

Yateley Common—Public Consultation Phase 2

The common has played a central part in the long history of this area. For centuries it provided local people with a livelihood and source of income. The heath yielded wood and heather turves for their fuel and grazing for their animals. Today people value the common as a place to visit the countryside, to walk their dog, ride their horse or to enjoy the views and wildlife. In recent decades it has been used for military accommodation and training, and in the war saw the airfield developed. Together with other heath fragments in north Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire, Yateley Common forms part of an important network of heathlands – wild open spaces across the Thames Basin.

As the heathlands became less important to local people, their owners found other uses for them.

Many heaths were lost under commercial forestry or dug up for minerals. The heaths in this area were ideal for building houses on.

Over the last 250 years, nearly 90% of UK heathland has been lost, so areas like Yateley Common are especially precious today as unique cultural landscapes formed and maintained by generations of local people. The common needs to be managed for the majority of users and for wildlife, landscape and amenity, and in part for military training.

The Wildlife Trust, County Council and Footprint Ecology have produced a background paper that explains the different management techniques in more detail with recommendations as summarised below This can be obtained from The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust at

www.hwt.org.uk/pages/yateley-consultation.html

Or if you don't have access to the internet, please call Jo Hill on 01252 640909 about obtaining a copy (members only).

Summary of Recommendations

- ◆ Management of the Common should make full use of a combination of the main heathland management techniques including grazing, mowing, controlled burning and localised turf stripping.
- ◆ Assess the current extent of encroaching trees and scrub to draw up a programme for clearance and management of retained scrub and trees.
- ◆ Use the opportunity of heathland walks and interpretation to illustrate the value of patches of bare ground for wildlife and especially invertebrates. Involve archaeologists and invertebrate specialists in helping to identify suitable areas for localised turf removal, including disposal of the stripped material.
- ◆ Decide if burns are necessary to restart heather cycles and if so prepare a programme of controlled burning, probably of no more than 1 hectare annually in selected areas. Before any burning takes place, inform occupiers of nearby properties of its timing and duration, explaining the reasons and ensure the operation is sufficiently staffed by trained personnel.
- ◆ Use mowing as appropriate and in combination with other management techniques.
- ◆ Introduce grazing to the Common, as part of the combination of techniques available for effective heathland and grassland management.
- ◆ Grazing on the Common should be primarily by cattle during the spring and summer, with ponies grazing all the year round to be implemented if possible as an additional benefit. Cows (without young calves) of a traditional docile breed should be used, along with Exmoor or New Forest ponies.
- ◆ Permanent perimeter fencing is the preferred option, securing the boundaries of the several distinct blocks of Common, with the possibility of one large enclosure, with cattle grids on Cricket Hill Lane, north of A30 (subject to highway authority audit). Small enclosures are seen as more labour intensive, more intrusive and a less effective way of promoting extensive grazing over the whole of the Common.
- ◆ Encourage the local community to assist with aspects of survey and monitoring eg through workshops/ guided walks.
- ◆ A discussion is facilitated in the community as to how the problem of dog mess can be dealt with and if dog bins are required, how they could be fairly resourced.
- ◆ Managers of the Common should keep in touch with the local community for instance by maintaining or instigating events such as walks and talks, and by circulating a newsletter covering the latest news and proposals for future management of the Common.
- ◆ Undertake a further consultation, including with all previous consultees, on a preferred option for fencing and grazing based on maps of proposals.

HAPPENING?

Thursday 20 September 2012	The life and times of the Citizens Advice Bureau in Yateley” – we are very lucky to have Ouida Grant who is CEO, Hart CAB
Friday 21 September 2012	Steve Bailey’s Bat Walk 7pm—9pm —Blackwater Valley Conservation Trust event. The ground maybe muddy, so please dress suitably and bring a torch. Meet in the car park at Shepherd Meadow, on the west side of the A321 (Marshall Road) between A30 and Sandhurst (grid ref SU 848 607) just north of superstores.
Friday 28 September 2012 -	Steve Bailey’s Bat Walk 7pm—9pm —Blackwater Valley Conservation Trust event. The ground maybe muddy, so please dress suitably and bring a torch. Meet in the car park at Aldershot Park at the end of Guildford Road, off the Lower Farnham Road (grid ref 876 492).
Tuesday 9 October 2012	Fungal Foray—Blackwater Valley Conservation Trust event Mike Waterman will lead a Fungal Foray for two hours starting at 10 am. Meet at Moor Green Lakes carpark, Lower Sandhurst Road, Eversley GU47 8JW, (grid ref: SU 805 627).
Thursday 18 October 2012	TBA
Thursday 15 November 2012	Ken Walters will be telling us all about the history of the Yateley Baptist Church. Please note that this meeting will be held at the Yateley Baptist Church, Cricket Hill 8pm.

Membership Subscriptions

We would like to remind all members that subscriptions for 2012/13 are due on 1st October.

Subscription fees are unchanged at:

Individual membership £10
Household (2+ adults) £15

Membership renewal forms will be distributed with the next newsletter but you can always download these forms from our website

www.yateleysociety.org.uk/membership/

Standing Orders

Would all those members who pay by standing order please ensure that their bank have instructions to pay the correct amount as noted above.

Please support us by paying subscriptions promptly – thank you.

VENUE

Our monthly meetings are held at the Red Cross Centre, Monteagle Lane, Yateley (Unless otherwise stated)

Members and non-members welcome, admission free.



EXERCISE THE BODY AND CONSCIENCE!

The Conservation Group normally meets at Wyndhams Pool, Cricket Hill 10 am— last Sunday of each month.

Everyone is welcome to join in the fun. The aim is to help the Yateley Rangers in all sorts of tasks in the upkeep of Yateley Common. To find out more, please call Mike Mann on 01252 877741