



The
Yateley
Society

NEWSLETTER

Issue 101 February 2011

Registered Charity: 282397

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

News of the sudden death of the Society's Hon Secretary, Graham Brown, in December was met with initial disbelief before the shock set in. Disbelief because the Executive Committee had seen him in apparent full health at a meeting held at his home only hours before his heart attack the following day. He died in hospital of a second attack four days later.

Graham is greatly missed by the Society, and as a new Chairman coming to the end of my first year, I can say that with passion because I was relying on his support and guidance in drafting the Annual Report. The AGM is an important event for any organisation, and the weeks before it are very busy for the officers involved. Graham was one of those people who got on with things quietly and ensured that everything that needed to be was in place. I have found things harder than might otherwise have been, had Graham been here.

Graham and Jenny had been members of the Society for almost 20 years. Graham joined the Executive Committee as Minutes Secretary in 2002 and took over the role of Hon. Sec. in 2009. He was a team player, always willing to take on anything that needed doing, which is something to be valued, especially if it does not immediately fit into anyone's particular role. Those Society members who attended any of the summer socials held in the garden of Graham and Jenny's lovely house will have very happy memories.

Our sympathies are with Jenny and the family. We are the poorer for his passing.

Roger Coombes
ysec@yateleysociety.org.uk



Thursday February 18 2011

THE YATELEY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**And for our 30th Anniversary, a
celebration entitled:**

**"Patchwork Pieces of Yateley –
15 years since!"**

**A trip back in time with
contributions from members
received 15 years ago**

8pm at **The Tythings**, Reading Road,
Yateley

You will receive with this newsletter a copy of
the Annual Report, to be discussed at the
AGM.

This is the most important meeting of the year.
We must have a quorum. and hopefully some
new nominations for the Exec Committee!

**Come along, have a glass of wine and join
in the fun!**

Executive Committee nominations to Jo Hill
please - new members always welcome!!

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Officer nominations have been received for
Roger Coombes, Trudy Boothby. Jo Hill and
Roger Durdle.

NEW MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

I would like to introduce myself as the new Membership Secretary. I have lived in Yateley for 30 years and have been a member of the Yateley Society for the past 15 years. Recently retired, I am now in a position to volunteer some time and energy in supporting our good works. I will aspire to live up to the standards of my predecessor who is sadly missed.

By our membership we all agree that the Society does a very worthwhile job in protecting our environment and providing a wealth of local history information. However this cannot be maintained without funds and resources. You will all have received membership renewal forms by now (and if you haven't please shout at me or Jo Hill so that we can put it right) and I would urge those who haven't already done so to please complete and return with payment or standing order mandate as soon as possible.

I would also like to make a further plea for potential new members to come forward. We desperately need new blood to allow us to make sure that we can continue to challenge unacceptable threats to our area and habitat. If you want to ask a new boy what it is really like on the committee please seek me out.

I look forward to meeting you all personally at one of our meetings.

Roger Durdle



Pond dipping Platform

In the last newsletter you may remember that I told you we had applied for a Big Lottery Grant for a Pond Dipping Platform at Strood Pool. Well, the good news is that we have been successful in our application and Jean Davies, one of our Rangers will be overseeing this project over the coming year. If you are interested in becoming involved or finding out more about the project, please let me know on 01252 640909 ysec@yateleysociety.org.uk.

Thanks to Doug Gibbs who called me to find out where Strood Pool is and also whether it is Strood Pool or Stroud Pool.

Stroud Pool is near the top end of the A30 dual carriageway that rises up from Blackwater to the Blackbushe plateau, its Grid Reference is SU 832 592. It is in a hollow to the north of the A30, and can be reached via the car park and picnic area off the A30 at the top of the dual carriageway on the A30 about ¾ mile / 1400metres east of the Cricket Hill / A30 roundabout, or by using the bridleway that runs the length of Yateley Common. Alternatively there is a bridleway down to the pond from the stables at the very top end of Cobbetts Lane.

- thanks to Tony Hocking for that!

And this is the answer to the question about the name, courtesy of Peter Tipton:

In the Manorial Court Books for 1702, 1739, 1759, 1802 and 1809 it is named STROUD POOLE but in 1809 the entry says STROUD POOL/STROUD POOLE. In 1810 the last E has been added to the STROUDE as well as POOLE. After many entries, in 1835 the spelling becomes STROUD POOL. The enfranchisement (ie when the property became FREEHOLD is STROUD POOL.)

Like STROUD in Gloucestershire which is spelled STROUD and pronounced by locals living there as STROOD, the Yateley Pool of the same name is pronounced STROOD but spelled STROUD. If locals start STROWD that's no problem. After all RYVES AVENUE is now pronounced RIVES by everyone who lives there -- despite the fact that Sir Richard Ryves and everyone else pronounced it REEVES until Heron built the new estate road.

So now that's clear!

Our historic buildings

The Conservation Officer has asked for our help to provide the histories of some of Yateley's most notable homes such as Brookfield House, Yew Tree Cottage, The Old Cottage and Darby Green House to name but a few. We have some information on some of the properties, but we desperately need help researching into some of these properties. This could be a really fascinating project for someone interested in local history – we already have a team working on some properties. If you would like to become involved or find out more, please contact me, Jo Hill, on 01252 640909 or email me at ysec@yateleysociety.org.uk

At the meeting following the departure of Graham Brown, Elizabeth Tipton read out the following piece which Graham penned several years ago.

This inspired the topic for the AGM "Patchwork Pieces of Yateley – 15 years since!" to unearth contributions from members from the "Tapestry" project 15 years ago.

CLOSE ENCOUNTER

Graham Brown, Vicarage Lane

Since moving to Yateley we have enjoyed many walks along the River Blackwater and around the gravel pits of Moor Green. These new lakes have become an important resting place for birds in passage as well as a breeding ground for native species.

On a quiet evening in Spring and Summer you can drink in the heavy scent of new leaves and the fertile, earthy smell of the river and lake water as the sun sinks slowly in the west. We have witnessed many engaging sights, such as a female goosander struggling with a fish that seemed nearly as big as itself while avoiding the attentions of other goosanders, of the hang-glider fight of a barn owl gliding almost horizontally for two or three hundred yards with a vole caught in the trapeze.

The bird population seems to change slightly from year to year and unusual weather often brings in strange visitors or forces the shy ones out into the open. This year the strong Nor-Easterlies brought in the odd smew (*a Eurasian duck – Ed*) and the water rails were out in the open by the river bank.

We moved to Yateley from Crowthorne, where we had lived for fifteen years and raised our four children. For most of that time Yateley was just beyond walking range and yet too near to visit by car so we didn't explore the area until we needed to move house. It was then that I started to extend my walks beyond the bottom of the ridges and into the Moor Green lakes, and then that I began to recognize many birds that were new to me.



One Sunday morning in February at that time I was by the car park quite early. It was very cold and calm with a thin mist above the lakes. I was hoping to find some interesting birds but this time I was surprised to see a deer on one of the islands. As I watched, it walked into the water and started a steady swim in my direction. It swam slowly and steadily with just the whole head visible above the surface. This looked not out of place among the coots and ducks which stayed put as it swam steadily through their midst. It came ashore about forty yards from me and turned towards the road. Then it approached to within a few feet before it stopped, moved away a little and stared intently towards the ridges. It must have picked up my scent but as I remained perfectly still looking through binoculars I don't think it ever recognized me. After a few seconds it turned tail, retreated to where it had come ashore, squeezed through a hole in the hedge and made off towards Eversley.



I have often wondered why the deer should swim to the island, which offers neither food nor protection and is nothing more than a few square yards of gravel. Was it being chased? Was it in search of new territory or did it just fancy a dip in ice-cold water? I know the Scottish deer take to the water to get away from the midges but this was February so we can rule out that explanation. Of course we humans sometimes do strange or dangerous things just for the hell of it but somehow we expect individual animals to have more sense.

Thank you Graham !

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS - 2011

Our meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at **The Tythings, Reading Road, Yateley**, 8.00 pm start unless otherwise stated. *All events are open to non-members and there is no admission charge.*

Thursday 18 February 2011	Yateley Society AGM It's our birthday! This year we celebrate 30 years of the Yateley Society so come along and celebrate with friends. The Annual Report will be presented and then we will hear "Patchwork Pieces of Yateley - 15 years since!" A trip back in time with contributions received from members 15 years ago.
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January meeting: Victorian Times

Peter Smith from Fleet gave a very stimulating talk at the first meeting of 2011. After a desperate search for a venue, having discovered that we had been moved from the Rose Rent Room only to find the upstairs room locked, we decamped to the Red Cross Hall. Undeterred, speaker and followers settled down for a humorous journey through some of the triumphs as well as some of the gruesome realities of Victorian Britain.



In a wide ranging survey considering the enormous changes which took place in Victoria's unbeaten (*so far – we anticipate that she will be overtaken in 2015!*) 63 years reign, Peter pointed out advances in transport, public health and food supplies. Through his light touch and the inclusion of some grisly details along the way, Peter managed to extract laughter and groans of horror in equal measure from his audience as he spun a tapestry of the lifestyles of the Victorians. This included a look at dental treatment, railway excursions, music hall and grave-robbing (a la Burke & Hare, suppliers to the anatomical schools) and finally a glimpse at morals and etiquette as revealed by the letters to Victorian agony aunts and their replies.

The Conservation Group normally meets at Wyndhams Pool, Cricket Hill at 10.00 am on the last Sunday of every 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



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