



The
Yateley
Society

NEWSLETTER

Issue 93 January 2009

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Thursday February 19th 2009

THE YATELEY SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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

Circulated with this newsletter is the Annual Report which will be presented by the Executive Committee to members at the AGM and will be put forward for adoption.

This is the most important meeting of the year.

Come along, have a glass of wine and exercise your Member's right to vote.

Friday February 27th 2009

THE CHAIRMAN'S DINNER at The Ely, Yateley on the A30 at 7:30 pm for 8:00 pm

Our Chairman, Trudy Boothby, would like to invite you all to attend her annual Chairman's Dinner.

Full menu available.

Booking beforehand is ESSENTIAL
Numbers will be limited to 30 to keep things informal and manageable

Please book by Friday February 20th at the latest

Ring Trudy on (01252) 409262 to book.



YATELEY SOCIETY ASSISTS YATELEY TOWN COUNCIL WITH LAND REGISTRY

The land in question was inherited by Yateley from the Church Commissioners, who were the successors in title to the Prior and Monks of Winchester, who were given the Manor of Crondall by King Alfred about 1,100 years ago. This land is or was what we now call common land. Some of it is not common land in the sense we now know it, but was roadside verges and driftways.

Richard Johnston undertook a huge project to make digital photographs of the conveyance documents and relate them to modern maps. He turned his living room into a high-tech digital photography studio to make images of these large maps. Yateley Town Council contacted the Land Registry and we had a meeting at which they readily agreed to register all this land since they too want to have it registered.

It will benefit Yateley in two ways:

1. The Town Council will better be able to prevent encroachment by householders extending their gardens onto registered common land, and
2. they will be able to create ransom strips of this land over which developers may have to seek access to create new housing development. That means that YTC will either be able to refuse permission for the access or may charge a commercial 'going-rate' to use the access.

Do you care what happens?

We are still looking for members who would be interested in contributing to a Local Development Focus Group. We need people who can provide simple, plain English feedback about local planning applications as they arise, by email if preferred, working with a Development Co-ordinator.

The process involved with planning applications has changed a great deal over recent years, with the emphasis now being placed on establishing planning principles with locally created Design Documents, Conservation Area Statements and Parish Plans which lay out how the development of an area should progress (and how it shouldn't). In recent years the Yateley Society has been involved in creating a lot of these documents too.

In doing this we have borne in mind the Society's objectives with regard to local planning, which are:

- (i) To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the parish of Yateley.
- (ii) To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the parish of Yateley.
- (iii) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the parish of Yateley.
- (iv) To secure the enhancement of the biological diversity of the ecosystems, the conservation of the natural and semi-natural habitats, and the protection of the characteristic flora and fauna within the parish of Yateley.

If you are interested in joining in or just finding out more about what we do, please call Tony Hocking on 01252 875158 or email ajfhocking@googlemail.com

The feathered gardener – Tony Hocking

During the late autumn a jay, one of our regular visitors, spent a lot of time industriously burying acorns all over our lawn and under the fruit bushes. While busy with the acorns the jay noticed that other birds were going to a small bird feeder hanging under the roof of a pretend 'well' in the garden, to peck at peanuts.

The jay decided to have a go at the peanuts and flew up to the feeder. Unfortunately the feeder was too small for it to land on, and it fell to the ground. Following this the bird walked round the top of the 'well', carefully studying the situation; it then hopped into the neighbouring lilac for a lengthy look from a different angle. A second attempt at landing on the feeder again resulted in much wing flapping and an ignominious fall.

The sequence of prolonged study, attempted landing and failure, was repeated throughout a whole afternoon. Eventually, the jay found that if it flew up to the feeder, grasped one small, tit-sized perch with one foot and part of a wooden roof support with the other foot, it could just cling on long enough to get its beak into the feeder and fill its crop with peanuts. Needless to say, the peanuts followed the acorns into the lawn and garden!

The rapidity with which the jay removed peanuts was amazing, and the other birds could not get a look in. Reluctantly we decided that the jay was taking too much. Only the small birds can manage. The jay still visits us most days; concentrating on garden pests, which is far more helpful. When will it realise that the feeder which it mastered is elsewhere in the garden? It did not take them long, and they are now adept at clinging on to its aluminium angle pole and getting crop-fuls of peanuts. The two resident magpies sit on the nearby shed roof and stare in amazement. They try to copy the jays, but they just do not have the same agility and rarely get any nuts.



Dr Biddle

Dr James Biddle, mentioned in W B Tice's "Reminiscences of Old Yateley" in the last newsletter, is a shadowy figure who perhaps deserved more recognition. Although he served as Assistant Surgeon in the Army in India, his modest income (country doctors were ill-paid) and possibly humble background evidently prevented him mixing with the retired Indian Army people who occupied many of the large houses in Yateley. One of these, Dr John Mills, formerly Surgeon-General in the Bombay (later Indian) Army, seldom refers to Dr Biddle in the diary that records his daily life in Yateley and never in a social context, though he would have walked past his cottage almost daily. Mills wrote that he was shocked to hear that Dr Biddle had died in the night – he had not heard that he was ill – and was surprised to learn that he was only 45. He attended Dr Biddle's funeral and noted that the vicar's wife and the churchwarden were the only other gentry present, but there were many of the poor. It was they who were Dr Biddle's patients and they now mourned him deeply.

Writing later in the Parish Magazine, the vicar spoke of his charitable, kindly and forgiving spirit, and said that amongst the poor the universal expression was, "Send night or day, Dr Biddle would always come at once, and was always kind."

Dr Biddle's two young daughters used to play or sing at Penny Readings in the village; his son may have been in India when his father died, and would not have heard the news for several months.

- Valerie Kerslake

Reminiscences of Old Yateley by a Septuagenarian.

(William Burrows Tice b 16.8.1860, d 3.6.1941) (UNDATED, ca1933)

Part Three of a serialisation of the Yateley Society booklet

Please note that these are reminiscences, recorded about 1933. Some information is now out of date or may be factually incorrect. They do however, provide a glimpse into the world of Yateley as it was in the nineteenth century. Footnotes by R H Johnston, 2008.

The road round the Vicarage corner to that part of the Green which was known as Goose Corner¹ there were only two houses, White Mead² and Chandler's Farm³ (in my young days Chandler's Farm was very important and was owned by Farmer James Ellis who was born there in 1797, and lived there until 1876 when he retired and went to live at the Hollies⁴, which he had built on the Green, he died there in 1884 at the age of 87 years. He frequently came to Church in the Summer in his smock frock⁵ which was White instead of green to distinguish him from his men, he always wore breeches and top-boots) then going on down the road there were no houses at all until you turn the corner going towards Sandhurst, you then came to an old cottage called Mill Cottage, which bears that name to-day⁶. The old moor at the corner⁷ with the cattle shed inside the gate is William's Moor and was known by that name in the reign of Queen Elizabeth⁸, as was Chandler's Farm.

¹ This area is now (2008) known as Vicarage Lane and Chandlers Lane

² This house still exists, it is on the east side of Vicarage Lane, close to its junction with Chandlers Lane.

³ Chandlers Farm was, unfortunately, demolished in the 1960s. It was close to the present (2008) entrance to the Sean Devereux playing fields.

⁴ In Vicarage Road, west of the junction with Chandlers Lane.

⁵ This smock has survived, and is currently in the possession of Mrs Jean Mcllwaine.

⁶ And continues to do so. This house was greatly increased in size in the 1980s.

⁷ That is, the corner which is the junction of Chandlers Lane and Mill Lane. Williams Moor was a large field (No 158 on the Yateley Tithe Apportionment) on the NW side of this part of Chandlers lane and Mill Lane. This field was the subject of gravel extraction in the 1970s and the barn referred to has gone.

⁸ This is a reference to the Crondal Customary of 1567, which detailed the lands and their ownerships for every property in Crondal manor, which included the whole of Yateley.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS – 2009

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.

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| Thursday 19 February 2009 | AGM - This is the most important meeting of the year and we must have a quorum. Come along, have a glass of wine and exercise your Member's right to vote. |
| | Trudy Boothby is currently working on the new programme of events. If there is anything which you would like to see in the programme, please let me know on 01252 640909 or jo.hill.45@ntlworld.com . |

The Conservation Working Party

At the end of the year, while we were cutting down scrub in the rain, the duty Ranger found a piece of twig with an interesting fungus on it. I imagine that many of you have come across bits of dead softwood dyed dark blue all the way through. This is caused by the mycelium of the *chlorociboria aeruginascens* fungus. We were familiar with the blue dye effect, but like the Ranger, we had never seen the fruiting bodies, the actual toadstools. This twig had lots! The name 'chlorociboria' is, apparently, Greek for 'green drinking vessel', and this was just right; the toadstools were cup shaped, 3 to 5 millimetres in diameter, perched on 3mm long thin stems and bright greeny-blue in colour.

- Tony Hocking



We normally meet 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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