

# Hatfield Local History Society

Formerly Hatfield This Century

No. 37

# NEWSLETTER

June 2000

SECRETARY: Mrs. C. Martindale.  
EDITOR: F.J.Cox.

## OFFICERS CARRY ON

35 members attended the AGM at Oxlease House on the 9th of May.

As chairman Brian Lawrence reported on the success of the meetings at the Bill Salmon Centre and thanked Chris Martindale for her work in arranging these. The venue is not 100% suitable and other suggestions were requested. Isobel Cox presented the accounts for the past year and stated that although membership had increased our expenditure had exceeded income. Thanks were extended to Maurice Richardson for auditing the accounts.

Reg Coleman, Stan Clayton and Frank Cox had completed three years service as committee members and were willing to stand again. Eileen Gallagher had volunteered to serve. All four were unanimously elected.

Subsequent to the AGM a Committee Meeting was held on the 25th May when Eileen Gallagher was welcomed on to the Committee. The serving officers were re-appointed en bloc.

Your committee for the coming year is now:

Brian Lawrence - Chairman  
Stan Clayton - Vice Chairman  
Chris Martindale - Secretary  
Isobel Cox - Treasurer  
Pat'Sherrard - Minute Secretary  
Frank Clayton, Reg Coleman,  
Frank Cox, Eileen Gallagher and  
John Pennington.

## NEW VENUE FOR MEETINGS

Your committee has agreed to use the Meeting Room at the Hatfield Swim Centre for future meetings. As this is available afternoons and evenings, we may be able to alternate as we had initially intended. A far superior room to the one we have been using, it seats up to 45 people. Equipment, such as slide projector, screens, video player and overhead projector can be provided. There is a pleasant cafe overlooking the pool where members can get refreshments and there is a lift for those who have trouble with the stairs.

## NORTH MYMMS MANOR HOUSE

For those members who have booked to go on the tour of the house, please assemble by the North Mymms War Memorial, Dixons Hill Road, over the AIM, by 10.15 am on Saturday 24th of June.

Monday 11 September 7.30

A Brief History of  
de Havilland's  
Aeronautical Technical School  
1928-1962

Talk with Slides & Video  
by

**Mike Rogers**  
At the Swim Centre

## GROWING UP IN HATFIELD BEFORE 1945

In 1990 the Workers' Educational Association held a series of meetings in the Hatfield Library on various aspects of the history of Hatfield. The meetings were led by Mr. V J.Mills and he later persuaded some of our senior citizens to write down these accounts of their youth. The accounts were written independently and without much help from printed sources. We have now published these stories in a series of four booklets and are pleased to be able to offer them at a nominal charge of £1 each.

As a special promotion the set of four booklets may be purchased for £3 including postage. Make your cheque payable to Hatfield Local History Society and send to the editor, or pick up your copies at one of our meetings.

## Letters . . . .

*Potters Bar*

*I am a student on the Open University course Family and Community History, for which I have to write a project.*

*My interest is the Hatfield Workhouse and I would be grateful if the Society can offer me any help.*

*Chris Liston (Mrs)*

## The Fulham Connection by Reg. Coleman

In addition to *me*, Hatfield and Fulham, London, have two other noteworthy connections:

1. Geoffrey de Havilland built his first aeroplane in his workshop at Fulham.
2. In the 1930s the grocers Walton Hassell and Port had a shop on the corner on the next street to where I lived in Fulham. When my family moved to Hatfield in September 1940 I found there was a Walton Hassell and Port shop opposite the main gates of the de Havilland factory. Which leads me to my story of social history and discovery.

It was in September 1939 when I was a lad of almost eleven years old and my school, the Avonmore Road, had been evacuated to "somewhere in the country" that my sister and I were evacuated to Mill Green to stay with my uncle and aunt, Tom and Till Burrell.

The bombs didn't fall and after a few weeks we two returned home. Myself and others who had not departed with their schools had no school to go to; a situation which did not trouble me at the time. Young men were joining the armed forces and a labour shortage had started on the home front. I had a friend, little more than a year older than me, who obtained a job as a delivery boy for the local W.H. & P. shop. He rode a large three wheeled delivery tricycle with large blocks fitted to the dials so that he could just reach them. Between the front wheels was a box intended to carry the groceries, but his deliveries he carried on the rack on top and I travelled around with him, in the box! On one occasion, early in January, we pushed the trike through the snow, spurred on by the fact that there were Christmas boxes still to be collected. Inside

the box it was dark, lit only by shafts of light through small holes near the door lock. One sunny day I noticed that moving images of the trees along the road were being projected on to the white walls of the box. My friend would never believe me as by the time he stopped pedalling the lighting conditions had changed. Had the camera obscura not been known to the artists of the sixteenth century I would have discovered it four hundred years later - and mine was moving! When I smell paraffin burning I am still reminded of the head lamp which we fitted to the trike before starting out for deliveries after dark. I often wonder if that trike and my friend survived the bombings.

Do you have any similar memories or tales to tell?

If so let us have them for future inclusion.

Editor

### ***I Lived There ... 4***

My parents, with three children, lived in Salisbury Square until, in 1937, Lady Salisbury thought we should have a house with a garden. So in the autumn of that year we moved into No. 3 Endymion Road.

This was one of the 37 houses called Primrose Cottages built by Lord Salisbury. They were terraced, concrete block houses with slate roofs built back to back and later renamed as parts of Beaconsfield Road and Endymion Road. They consisted of two rooms in line

downstairs and three upstairs bedrooms. As you entered the front door the stairs were in front of you and a door to the left led into the front drawing room. Through the front room was a door into the living room at the back with a scullery protruding into the corner of the living room. To reach the scullery, which was single storied, we had to go out of the kitchen into the yard where the scullery door was on the left. We had a fitted enamel bath in the scullery but no hot water supply. Water for bathing was heated in a coal fired brick copper.

When we moved in we had electricity and gas laid on together with mains water which supplied the flush toilet situated in the garden. A coal fired range for cooking was in the kitchen but we did have a gas cooker.

The windows were in two sections, one fixed and the other sliding sideways, in the back garden which was about 30 yards long we had a shed as well as the toilet.

David Willson.

Mainly transcribed from Oral Interview No. 96