

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

Editorial.....

Following upon the closure of the meeting room at the Swim Centre, Reg and Terry have, after much searching and negotiating, completed arrangements for our meetings to be held at Friendship House in Welfield Road. Unfortunately it has been necessary to change the Monday afternoon meetings to Thursday. The Monday evenings will continue. Dates and times for the coming programme will be found on the back page of this Newsletter.

In response to our letter regarding the University Auditorium the Head of Public Affairs states that the Weston name is not intended to detract from their association with de Havilland. Many of their buildings are named after different individuals and organisations and they are planning a 'naming' event next season with a plaque outside the Auditorium with some explanatory words for visitors to see. The Weston Foundation is a charitable trust that makes donations to support community based arts programmes across the country. "We welcomed the donation towards our Auditorium. It is fitting that we should name ... (it)... in recognition of this support."

Thank you to all those members who provided articles for this edition. Please keep them coming to make the Newsletter an interesting publication for all our readers.

THE GREAT AIR RACE

Considerable interest was shown for the display in the town library of the Great Australian Air Race of 1934. None moreso than by the representatives of the Grosvenor House Hotel in London – sponsors of the winning DH88 aircraft in that event.

By the good auspices of Frank Clayton, two senior members of the Hotel staff visited Hatfield on the 12 October to be escorted around the locality of the de Havilland company.

After visiting the Galleria to see the model Comet on display there and lunching at the Comet Hotel – now the Hatfield Ramada Jarvis – the visitors were suitably impressed by the display at the library then adjourned to the Mill Green Museum where members of the Local History Society and museum staff had prepared another display of photographs and artefacts relating to the Comet racer and the air race.

In attendance were members of the maintenance team who had rebuilt the original aircraft to airworthiness standard and still continue maintaining it at the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden Aerodrome at Biggleswade.

The gratitude of the visitors is expressed in the communications received after the visit and our thanks are extended to Jim Parker and Reg Coleman who instigated and prepared the display and to Frank Clayton for involving Grosvenor House Hotel.

THE DE HAVILLAND COMET

I want to send sincere thanks for all your help and guidance regarding the de Havilland Comet and the Hatfield area.

The day was well planned and orchestrated with a perfect balance of information and sight-seeing. We feel privileged to have been invited.

The library staff and the local history group made our visit very memorable.

We want to make a visit to the airfield (Old Warden) to see the real thing at some stage and will contact you nearer the date.

In December we hope to arrange a luncheon with the Australian High Commissioner and members of the National Press to commemorate the race when we can have a display of the great Comet.

Howard J. Hartley

GROSVENOR HOUSE COMET

Thank you all for organising our most enjoyable visit to Hatfield on October 12.

The whole day went extremely well and was full of interest. We are grateful to you and all those people we met at the Galleria, the Ramada Jarvis, the Library and the Local History Society at Mill Green Museum.

Nicholas Redman

ST. AUDREY'S SCHOOL GARDENERS



With reference to the Newsletter of September 2003 referring to St Audrey's school pupils carrying out gardening activities in the 1920's. I enclose a photograph of some pupils gardening, one being my father, Victor Frederick Moore, (next to the teacher). I have no idea who the other boys are. The writing on the back reads:

Victor Moore. Won first prize for gardening July 21 1910.

The garden area is between the school building and the railing running alongside Endymion Road, with Primrose Cottages on the other side of the road. My father was also given a pocket watch when he left St Audrey's, the inscription reads:

Herts County Council for 5 years perfect attendance Victor Moore
In addition, he also received a book 3 years running for good attendance from 1906 to 1909.

I wonder how many of these were given out and how many are around today?

Gerald Moore

HOPKIN SMITH - continued

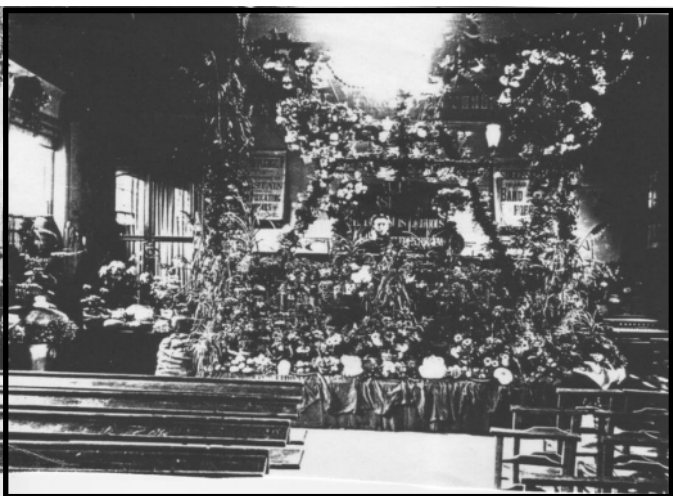
from September

Thank you for your letter and enclosures.

Regarding my Mother's memories of a "grand procession of carriages and coachmen" when the school children had seats on a stand in the station forecourt, I wonder if it was the King's visit in 1909, despite the reports in the local paper that the Royal party arrived and left by car? Perhaps Mum was mixing two different memories? Probably we shall never really know! The accounts in The Herts Advertiser and St Albans Times are very detailed, and I thought you would enjoy reading them. (Abridged version on page 3)

When we were speaking on the phone I mentioned that my Grandfather, Hopkin Smith, had a photograph of a chapel decorated for Harvest Festival. He was a regular attender at the Railway Mission Hall near Tingey's shop in St Albans Road (presumably all during his time in Hatfield from 1891 - 1910), and certainly he 'took the pledge'. I wondered if anyone could identify the enclosed picture as being in Hatfield please?

Marion Donaldson



THE MISSION HALL, ST. ALBANS ROAD?

Probably connected to the White Lion when Bradshaws Brewery and later to become the Salvation Army Citadel



FORE STREET

Decorated for the King's visit
1909

KING AND QUEEN AT HATFIELD

Their Majesties the King and Queen and Her Royal Highness Princess Victoria spent last weekend at Hatfield House as the guests of the Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury. The visit was private but opportunity was taken by the people of Hatfield to give the Royal visitors a whole hearted welcome. Decorations were carried out on a scale which did credit to the town and large crowds assembled to witness both the arrival and departure of their Majesties. The decorations extended from the school in London Road to the railway station and up Fore Street and consisted of blue Venetian poles located at intervals on both sides of the road and wreathed with evergreens, with festoons of evergreens extending from pole to pole, the roads being crossed and re-crossed from pole to pole, with streamers of pendant flags. Three triumphal arches were erected, one near the school, another near the main entrance to the Park, and the third in Fore Street. Appropriate mottos spanned each of the arches. The one near the school read "Hatfield welcomes our beloved King and Queen": that in Fore Street, "God bless Their Majesties": and that near the Park gates "God save the King".

Their Majesties traveled from Buckingham Palace by motor car, and were expected to arrive at Hatfield about 4.30. Fully an hour and a half before that time people began to line the route through Hatfield, the favourite place of assembly being near the late Marquis' statue. Of course, the news of the King's visit to Hatfield had spread throughout the countryside and the crowds included a large proportion of people from the surrounding district. Residents of Hatfield were privileged to enter the Park, and the facility was taken advantage of to a considerable extent, the main drive being lined with onlookers. Spectators were not allowed however, to enter the quadrangle in front of the House.

In readiness to greet their Majesties was a bodyguard, stationed opposite the south front of the mansion, consisting of members of the Herts Battalion of Infantry. Col C E Longmore was present in his position as Commander of the Regiment, as also was Col Daniel, wearing his elaborate uniform as Chief Constable of the County.

It was not until half past five that the Royal vehicles were sighted, and when the school was reached the cars slowed down a little. The King and Queen were sitting on the rear seat of the first car, Princess Victoria being just in front of their Majesties. Lusty cheers broke out from the crowds as the Royal visitors passed along, and nearly every man doffed his hat.

The cars drew up at the south front of the mansion, and when their Majesties alighted the bodyguard gave a Royal salute, the Regimental Band playing the National Anthem. The Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury and the members of their family received the Royal guests; and the Marquis took the opportunity of introducing to the King Col Longmore and Col Daniell. His Majesty then inspected the bodyguard, and to Col Longmore expressed his admiration of their smart appearance. He intimated that he wished to see the bodyguard march off, and accordingly remained on the steps while the Territorials took their departure.

Sunday's brilliant weather drew large crowds to Hatfield in expectancy of catching a glimpse of the Royal visitors.

There appeared reason to believe that their Majesties and their house party would attend Hatfield Parish Church in the morning, but eventually it was decided to hold Matins in the private chapel of Hatfield House. At this the Rev Lord William Cecil officiated and also preached. Afterwards the King, Lord Salisbury and the Rector, and the Queen, Princess Victoria and Lady Salisbury, all the ladies being without hats, strolled down to the Parish Church and as Matins was over there were very

few people about. The King was particularly struck with the Salisbury Chapel, and was interested in the brass tablet notifying the burial place of Lord Palmerston, the Victorian Prime Minister. The Queen had brought a little hand camera with her, and with it Princess Victoria took several views of the church. She also took several snapshots of Fore Street. A visit was made to the tomb of the late Marquis of Salisbury which the party viewed for some minutes in silent contemplation. Crossing the monastery yard, the Old Palace was entered. This ancient and well known building, now used as stables, was formerly part of the residence of the Bishops of Ely being used by the Abbot and monks as a banqueting hall. The King seemed highly interested and, puffing a cigar, walked up and down inside, the fine old roof coming in for special admiration.

The Royal visitors concluded their stay at 11.30 on Monday morning, when they left by motor for Windsor.

Previous to the departure, the King and Queen each planted a cedar in the gardens at the south west of the Mansion.

The Royal party passed through the Old Palace Gateway and down Fore Street at scarcely a walking rate, by special request of the King who in an open car, was evidently highly delighted with the sincerity of the welcome extended by the towns folk, who surrounded his car and observed him lustily. There were practically no visitors in the town and Hatfield people had His Majesty all to themselves and showed by their enthusiasm their appreciation of the privilege accorded to them. The King traveled in an open car. His Majesty, who was wearing a light grey suit, a brown bowler hat, and motor goggles, repeatedly recognised the hearty cheers which were given by the loyal townsfolk. Lord and Lady Salisbury's other guests also took advantage of the improved weather and left by car. The route to Windsor led the Royal car through New Town, where another welcome was given as they sped through.

Seasonal



Greetings

QUIZ

Where could I have found the Welwyn Department Store shop in Hatfield?

Which was the first self service shop in Hatfield?

Where in Hatfield did Sir Leonard Hutton live?

Could you direct me to Albion Terrace?

Letters

On Thursday 3rd February 2005 at 7pm, Mr. Alan Bryett, who was part of the Great Escape from Stalag Luft 111 during WW2 will be coming to the Central Resources Library, Hatfield to talk about his part in the escape operations.

He is an experienced public speaker and will bring maps and diagrams of the camp. He will also be able to tell us how it felt to be waiting in line to go down the 29ft shaft and what happened when one of the escapers got an attack of claustrophobia.

The cost is £2.50 each and there will be a free glass of wine or fruit juice. Tickets are on sale after Christmas.

If anyone is interested I may be able to reserve some tickets before this date but they have to be paid for.

Chris Martindale

Your Spring Programme

Thursday Feb 10 2.30 pm

Stevie Doherty

Stevenage from Stone Age to New Town
With slides and artefacts

Monday March 14 7.30 pm

Nicholas Maddex

Tales and Legends of Mid-Herts
Highwaymen Witches Ghosts & Poachers

Thursday April 14 2.30 pm

Terry Cox

From Dock Green to Doc Martin
Light hearted review of Herts Constabulary
From recruitment to Retirement

Monday May 9 7.30 pm

Annual General Meeting

In September Frank Clayton and I had a meeting with a representative from County Hall, who informed us on the latest situation regarding the grade 2 listed ex-de Havilland Administration building and canteen/restaurant. We were shown photographs of considerable damage caused by penetrating rain requiring an estimated three million pounds to repair. There appear to be no plans at present for the restoration of these buildings and my fear is that they will be allowed to deteriorate until they are beyond repair and another part of Hatfield's aviation heritage will be lost. Why should not these buildings become Hatfield's new community Centre?

Reg. B. Coleman