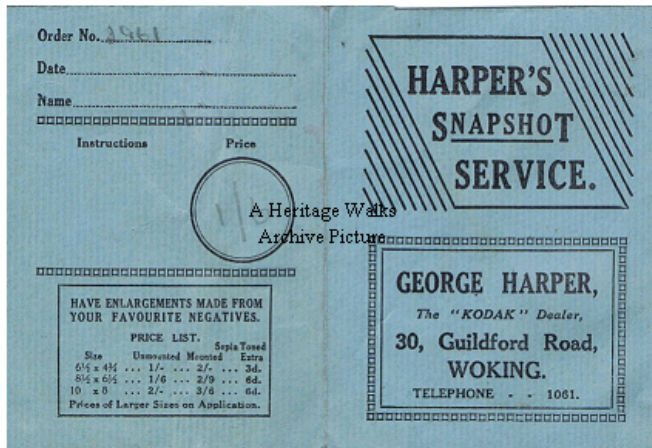


Photographers

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 7th April, 2012)

Last week I reminisced about the my early experiences of taking pictures, but I am happy to say that the art of photography was around for quite a few years before I discovered it, and this week I want to look back to some of Woking's professional photographers, without whose skill most of these articles would be very boring.

I don't know what the date is of the earliest photograph/postcard I have a copy of in my archive, but one of the candidates has got to be the view of the original Albion Hotel shown here. The Hotel was built in 1856 – soon after the London Necropolis Company started their land-sales in what quickly became the new Woking Town Centre. It was a tall, square, three-storey building and was demolished in the mid to late 1890's – making the photograph at least about 120 years old.



If only the prices were the same today!

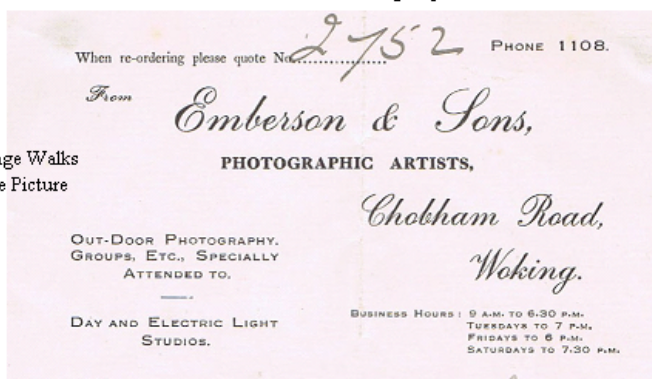


This picture must have been taken in the late 1880's or early 1890's – before the hotel was demolished.

I don't know who took the Albion picture, but there were a number of professional photographers around Woking at that time, such as Keenes (Garland Studio) in Maybury Road, Emberson's in Chobham Road and, later, Sidney Francis - many of whose photographs have been reproduced in Lyndon Davies' wonderful book (published in 2004) called 'A round Woking' (as part of the Tempus Publishing 'Images of England' series).

When it came to developing 'amateurs' pictures, there were a number of chemists in the town equipped to either supply the chemicals or do the developing themselves, and then, of course, there was perhaps Woking's best-known photographer – George Harper – with his photographic workshop, first in Guildford Road (near the Railway Hotel – now The Sovereigns) and then Commercial Road.

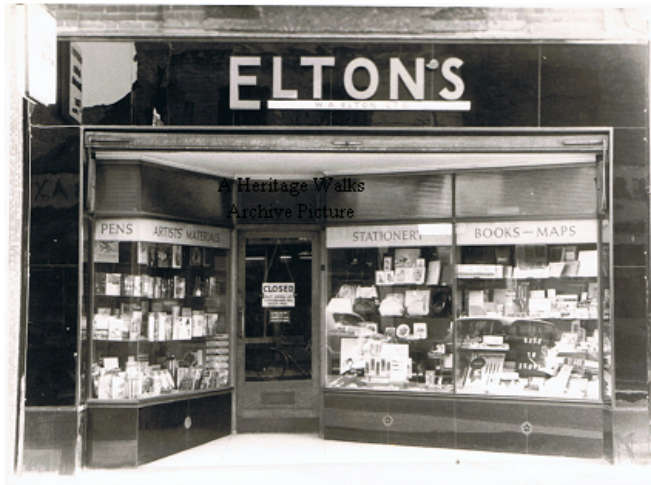
Although no longer owned by the Harper family, Harpers is still a family firm and as such is probably one of the few left operating in Woking Town Centre. Long may it continue to do so.



Keenes & Co and Emberson & Sons - Letter headings were much more elaborate in those days than they are now.

Postcard Publishers - W.A. Elton

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 13th April, 2012)



W.A. Elton set up shop in Woking in 1901.

I mentioned last week that this column would be much more boring without the efforts of photographers such as Messrs Keene, Emberson and Bailey, to name just a few of the professional photographers that took many of the old pictures of Woking in the past. But I should also have mentioned the publishers of those postcards too – people like W.E. Elton, whose stationers in Chertsey Road published numerous scenes of Woking in the early part of the 20th century.

Mr Elton opened his shop in Woking in 1901, with branches later located in Chobham Road and Rosemount Parade, West Byfleet (where a shop of that name still survives, although no longer operated by a member of the Elton family).

The Chertsey Road shop was a treasure trove of not just stationary and artist's materials, but in its early days also had a subscription library as well.

I don't know exactly when the Woking shops closed, but I can remember, even at the end, the inside of the Chertsey Road shop didn't look too dissimilar to the early 1960's advert shown here.

Of course Elton's were not the only local stationers to issue their own postcards in Victorian and Edwardian times. Just up the road, George Addison published his own views including ones of his shop (which remains a newsagents) on the corner of what is still called 'Addison Road' and Chertsey Road

Further up the road Blomfield's 'fancy stationer and toy dealer' was also responsible for a number of wonderful street scenes of the town and some photographers, such as Keene & Co, issued their own postcards at that time.

The interior of the shop in 1963 was almost unchanged even into the 1980's

I cannot help but wonder what they would think of the prices their 'penny postcards' fetch now – let alone what they would make of the town that they photographed all those years ago.



The more modern Chobham Road shop sold office equipment

Flton's

W.A. ELTON LTD.

THE SPECIALISTS IN STATIONERY AND BOOKS

Above is a view of part of the well-equipped completely modernised shop at 45, Chertsey Road, Woking.

ALMOST EVERY CONCEIVABLE ITEM OF STATIONERY, BOOKS, FOUNTAIN PENS, GREETING CARDS, ARTISTS' MATERIALS, ETC., MAY BE PURCHASED HERE.

What do you know of the Pageant of St George?
(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 20th April, 2012)



A Heritage Walks
Archive Picture

Not quite a cast of thousands, but pretty close. Surely someone can remember the event or know somebody that performed in it.

Does anyone know anything about the 'Pageant of St George'? All I have is the photograph and 'picture page' from the Daily Sketch of 27th May 1926 where I read that 'under delightful conditions and in charming surroundings an historical pageant and modern fair was held at Pyrford Court, Woking, yesterday in aid of the St George's Home for officers children'. The home was at St George's Hill, Byfleet and apart from the performance at Pyrford it appears that another was held the following Saturday at Pirbright (where exactly?).

The photograph shows that there were obviously quite a number of people involved (including many youngsters), so it is possible that some of the performers are still around who can shed some more light onto what must have been a colourful event. I have seen other pictures that show that the play was attended by several local dignitaries, including Lord Onslow and Lady Elizabeth (Betty) Balfour.

Pyrford Court was the home of Rupert Guinness, whose wife, Gwendolen, was the sister of Lord Onslow. When Rupert Guinness succeeded his father as the 2nd Earl of Iveagh in 1927, he retired as Member of Parliament for Southend, but his wife soon won the by-election and when she retired in 1935, their son-in-law kept up the family 'tradition'.

Lady Betty Balfour (wife of Gerald Balfour) lived at Fishers Hill, Hook Heath, and as well as being Woking's first female councillor, was very active in several local organisations.

Incidentally Balfour Road at Westfield is named after Lady Betty - rather than her husband, Gerald, or more famous, brother-in-law, Arthur James Balfour, Conservative Prime Minister from 1902 to 1905. His only connection with Woking appears to have been that he died here (in March 1931, aged 81) although it has been suggested that some of the first drafts of the letter that led to the 'Balfour Declaration' was penned by him whilst staying with his brother at Hook Heath.

The photo page of the Daily Sketch of the 26th May, 1926, shows a few of the six 'historic' scenes.



ENGLAND'S MOST POPULAR CAR
By RHODA LEE
See Page 11

DAILY SKETCH
THURSDAY, MAY 27, 1926. Head Office: 28, Old's Street, W.C.1. Phone: HAYES 3001.

FELIX IN TROUSER
The famous...
ILLUSTRATED SUNDAY HERALD

HISTORICAL PAGEANT AT WOKING: DAILY SKETCH PHOTOGRAPHS



(1925) A natural stream in the ground formed a grand stream.



Father Time (Mr. S. Lushington) presents the sword to the Spirit of Youth (Miss G. P. Bennett).



Mrs. Clifford in William the Conqueror and Mrs. Clifford in Queen Edith.



Watching the departure of her deliverer, St. George, after he had slayed the dragon.

A Heritage Walks
Archive Picture



A trio of bonnie children who took part.



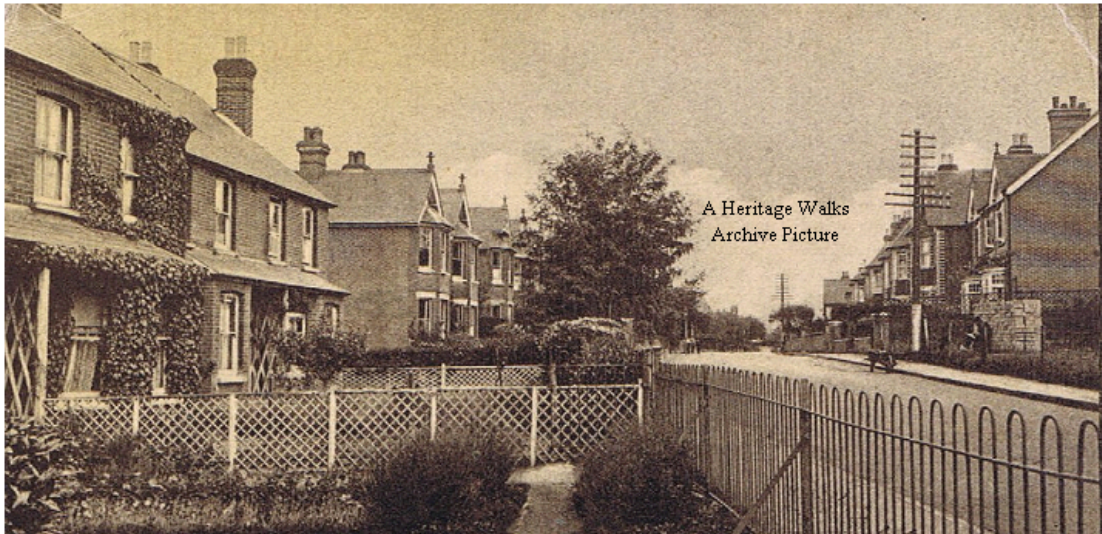
A charming Tudor scene - in the skirts of the forest.

Under delightful conditions and in charming surroundings an historical pageant and modern fair was held at Pyrford Court, Woking, yesterday in aid of St. George's Home for officers' children.

Printed and Published by the DAILY SKETCH LTD. (PUBLISHERS), 28, Old's Street, LONDON, W.C.1. and 17, King Street, BIRMINGHAM. Telephone: HAYES 3001.

Brookwood Postcard Publishers

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 27th April, 2012)



This postcard, sent from Brookwood in 1903 with a ha'penny stamp on, was published by 'Wm Munden, Leicester House, Connaught Road'.

The other week I featured W.A. Elton, the stationers in Chertsey Road, Woking, who published postcards in the early part of the 20th century of all parts of the district.

This week I want to concentrate on Brookwood, where a couple of local businesses (at least) produced postcards of just the village in the late Victorian and Edwardian period.

The first is William Munden whose store, where the fish and chip shop is today, was a 'Boot & Shoemaker, Draper, Milliner and Hosier', so how he found the time to sell postcards as well is anybody's guess.

Charles Blackaby, who produced a number of local views, had more reason perhaps as he ran the village's Post Office. According to the Kelly's Directory of 1899 Brookwood Post Office was a 'Money Order, Telegraph, Annuity & Insurance Office' as well, with letters dispatched to the sorting office in Woking four times a day, at 9.15am, 12 noon, 4pm and 7.15pm each day, and at least three deliveries of mail from Woking being made to the village. And a stamp didn't cost twelve shillings either!

This postcard (left), sent from Brookwood in 1903 with a ha'penny stamp on, was published by 'Wm Munden, Leicester House, Connaught Road'.

Another Blackaby postcard (right), with what must have been one of the villages earliest motorised vehicles. Nowadays it would be hard to take a picture of Connaught Road without at least one car in the view.

Charles Walter Blackaby was obviously quite a character in the village as he also formed the local volunteer fire brigade. Elsewhere in the area the Woking Torchlight Society had persuaded the Woking Local Board (the forerunner to Woking Council) to set up volunteer fire stations in 1894 at Knaphill, St Johns and Woking Village, as well as a 'main' station in the town, but it wasn't until 1912 that the council took over control of Charles Blackaby's brigade.

In those days Brookwood had quite a number of shops – especially if you wanted to buy tobacco or confectionery - but there was also a fruiterer and fishmonger, a greengrocers, a florists, a couple more boot makers, a saddlers, two cycle dealers (or makers) and a furniture store, as well as the usual butcher, baker and candle-stick maker (in the form of Mrs A.W. Gunner, listed in 1921 as the village blacksmith, near to the station). The nearest the village had then to a 'Sainsbury's Superstore' was 'F Hoskins' grocers and provision merchant at 125-127 Connaught Road!



St. John's v St Johns

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 4th May, 2012)



Full punctuation in this postcard showing the houses of Copse Road & Robin Hood Road from 'Prince Hill' (so named after the Prince of Wales pub).

There is great debate, apparently, in the *Woking Informer* offices about the spelling of St. Johns (or should that be St. John's). I was asked if I could provide the 'historical' answer, but I am afraid I might have made matters worse, not better. My immediate reaction was that it is St. John's for the church and parish and St. Johns for the village, but now I am not so sure.

Before the 1840's St. John's did not exist. At that time the Vicar of St. Peter's Church, (Old) Woking, decided that as the population of the western part of his parish had increased somewhat in recent years, it was probably time to build a new Chapel of Ease in the area. A site was found on the edge of Woking Common, near to the crossing of the Basingstoke Canal by the road from Woking to Knaphill (or should that be Nap Hill), and in 1842 the chapel was opened,

dedicated to Saint John the Baptist. Before then the area didn't really have a name, although individual places obviously did – such as 'Kiln Bridge' (named after the brick kilns that were once in the area) and the 'Hermitage' (where a hermit once lived in at least the 14th century).

Gradually, as a village grew up in the area of the church, that community became known as St. Johns – but as you can see from the old postcards and advertisements here, it was also known as St. John's and occasionally as St Johns (with no punctuation whatsoever), or even St John's! How the last two should technically be pronounced I wouldn't like to guess, all I do know is that no matter which spelling I think is correct, there are likely to be some residents of the area who vehemently suggest (as they often do) that I have got it wrong.



No apostrophe in this Victorian postcard of Hermitage Road.

Having looked more closely at the historical evidence I am not certain it really matters how you spell the name – we all know where you mean – it's only the pedants, editor, who really care, just get over it!

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES IN THE SAVU BAG and say

IN THE SAVU SERVICE WE WASH ANYTHING (EXCEPT BLANKETS) BY THE BEST LAUNDRY METHODS AND RETURN IN 48 HOURS FOR YOU TO IRON

Note:—SHEETS ARE IRONED AND FINISHED



How thankful I am for the Laundry

PRICES
 UNDER 9 LBS., 2½d. per lb.
 OVER 9 lbs., 2d. per lb.

TIME TAKEN, 48 HOURS

NO MARKING REQUIRED

SAVU SERVICE DEPT.
 St. John's Laundry Co., Ltd.
 TEL. WOKING 716

Full punctuation too in this 1933 advertisement for the St. John's Laundry in St. John's Road.

Night Answer Phone
 - WOKING 3771 -
 14 ST JOHN'S ROAD

A Heritage Walks
 Archive Picture

Specialists Deep Freeze
 Supply and Stockist

D. S. BAWDEN

PURVEYOR OF BEST QUALITY
 HOME KILLED MEAT, POULTRY, etc.
 AND FRUIT & VEGETABLES
 FROM LOCAL NURSERIES

No punctuation at all for the road name in this 1973 advertisement for Bawden's shop (on the corner with Warwick Lane). Take your pick

Old Woking v Woking Village

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 11th May, 2012)



Pubd. by G. S. Addison, Woking. A 221/297

Woking Village

George Addison obviously preferred the term 'village' for this view of Church Street

Last week we looked at the spelling of the village of St. Johns and the confusion it has caused over the years, but it is not the only area locally where there has been debate over how a name should be written, or even in some cases what the place should be called altogether.

Knaphill (as I hinted last week) is one area that has often been written in different ways. The original name, in the 13th century, was "La Cnappe", and the word actually meant in Old English something along the lines of 'the top of the hill'. Later, when its original meaning had probably been forgotten, people added the second 'hill' to the 'Knap', even though, on occasions, it



Woking, Old Woking Church.

was the 'bottom' of the hill that they were referring to not the 'top'.

On old postcards it is often written as two words or with the 'K' missing, and it has only really been in relatively recent times that the name has been standardised.

With Old Woking the story is quite different. Here the discussion in the early part of the 20th century was not on the spelling, but on whether the 'Woking' should be prefixed with 'Old' or suffixed with 'Village'.

Some people pointed out (quite rightly) that as it was the original 'town' of Woking it should not be classed as a 'village' – whilst others didn't like the term 'old' as they thought it made the area sound old-fashioned or neglected. Personally I

Whilst the producer of this postcard went with 'Old Woking' for this view of the church.

would have preferred it if the council had 'neglected' the area and allowed it to remain 'old fashioned', but sadly they decided to carry out 'road improvements' in the heart of the village and to add new housing and industrial estates where once there were open fields.

An old friend of mine, Tom Harding, once told me he asked one of Woking's Councillors (in the days when the council was staunchly Conservative), why it was that the council 'dumped' all the unwanted developments on the village rather than Hook Heath (where the councillor lived). 'The answer' came the reply 'is quite simple. You will keep voting Labour in Old Woking'. He was joking, of course – but only just! Old Woking is not so 'socialist' now (nor some would say is Labour), but it doesn't seem to have made any difference.

Apart from the new lych gate, the wall and the old lamppost, not too much has altered.



M25 (part One)

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 18th May, 2012)



The local residents association looked at the various proposed routes and decided that 'west was not best', but their concerns were ignored.

My walk this Sunday is around Byfleet, starting at 2pm by the Queens Head (parking by the War Memorial) and then heading down the High Road & Rectory Lane to Murray's Lane and back around by the Wey Navigation.

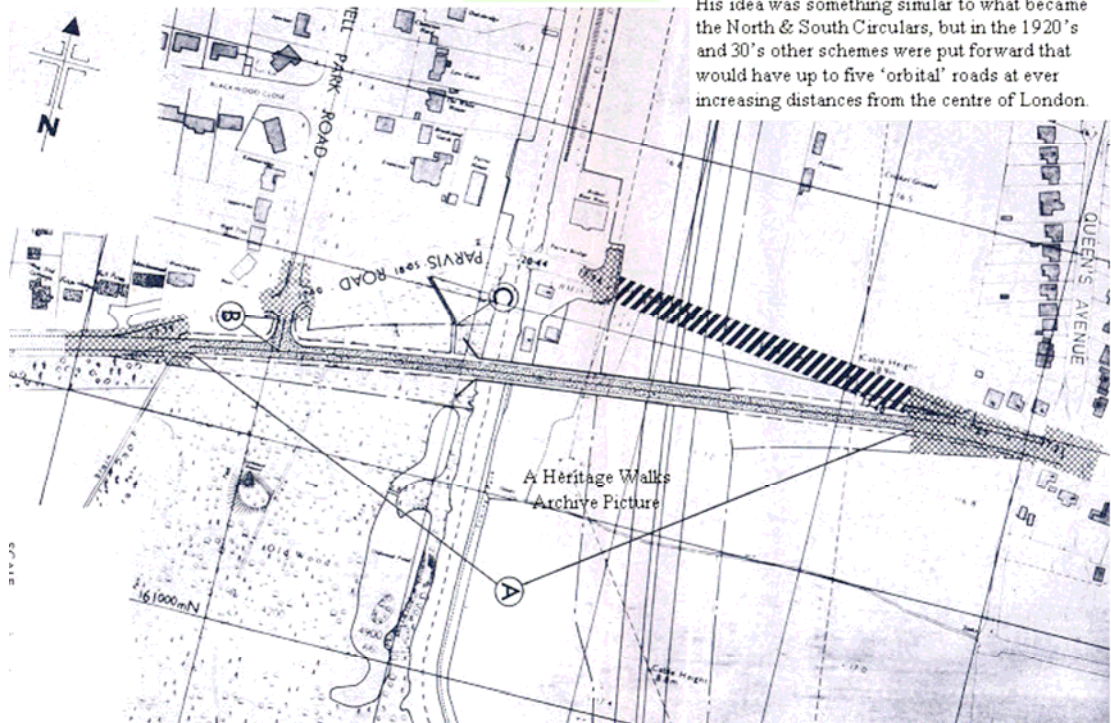
The walk will cross the M25 twice so I thought I should do a little research into the 'history' of the

Plans for the new Parvis Bridge in 1977 (below) and the view looking south before construction began on the M25 (above)

road. I was surprised that the story went right back to the early days of motoring.

Apparently in 1905 a Royal Commission was set up to look at the problems of London's transport and Mr Rees Jeffrey's, who was later to be the Secretary of the Road Board, expressed the view that 'it was a disgrace that no road existed which encircled the English Capital City'. Incidentally he also wanted to see the various road and rail networks properly integrated – but I suppose you cannot win them all.

His idea was something similar to what became the North & South Circulares, but in the 1920's and 30's other schemes were put forward that would have up to five 'orbital' roads at ever increasing distances from the centre of London.



M25 (part Two)

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 18th May, 2012)



The Sir Charles Bressey and Sir Edwyn Lutyens' 'Highway Development Survey' of 1937 included a proposal for a 'south orbital road' that in our area was to follow more or less the same line that the M25 does today. It was to join with the 'north orbital road' at a new bridge over the Thames at Runnymede.

Of course the Second World War put paid to those plans but in the 1940's Sir Patrick Abercrombie's 'Greater London Plan' revived the idea and in the mid 1960's, the route of what became the M25 was 'fixed' with a junction on the A245 at Parvis Road.

Some parts of the road were built by the early 1970's, but with public enquiry after public enquiry, other parts took longer to agree. There was much heated debate locally as to whether the road should go to the east or west of Byfleet village – with most agreeing that the 'eastern' route was probably the best. And so it was that in the late 1970's work started on the 'western route', and the rest, as they say, is history. Except that history (like the traffic on the M25) never ends, and no soon as the road was opened than plans were drawn up to expand it!



Soon after opening the six-lane motorway plans were drawn up to expand it.

Work on some of the bridges started in 1978, although it wasn't until 1981 before the Wisley to Chertsey section was finally opened.



Byfleet's Diamond Jubilee

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 25th May, 2012)



Village Hall.

My walk last week was around Byfleet where, quite appropriately, we passed by the Village Hall erected in 1897 to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the last Queen to reach such a landmark.

The story of its construction is an example of Victorian philanthropy, but its survival one of village pride and dogged determination.

In Victorian times you didn't just issue commemorative mugs or medals, you did something that would really make a mark and in Byfleet you had a couple of local landowners determined that the area would not only have something to remember their long-serving Queen by, but something they would be remembered for too.

Mr Frederick Cornelius Stoop, a wealthy Dutch oil tycoon who lived at West Hall, suggested that if the villagers could find a suitable site, he would be prepared to pay for the construction of a Village Hall. Not to be undone, perhaps, another large local landowner, Mr Hugh Fortesque Lock-King offered such a site (free of charge) in the main road, not far from the village school. All the residents had to do was find the furnishings.

The Village Hall, of course, is not the only thing that these two wealthy gentlemen are remembered for, as my walk also passed the Byfleet Boat Club – built once more by Mr Stoop on land provided by Mr Lock-King, although on this occasion the construction was purely practical rather than commemorative. Mr Stoop had built the first boathouse on the opposite bank of the Navigation as a marketing ploy for the Dartnell Park

This postcard was produced not long after the Village Hall opened in 1897.

Apart from the flower bed (and the introduction of motor cars), not too much has changed in the past 115 years.



development with which he was involved. The 'Byfleet' one was built later to house the punts that were hired out to the public and after the First World War, as a mark of respect to those in the village who lost their lives fighting for both his adopted country and his homeland, Stoop placed in trust the new boathouse for local people to run forever and enjoy.

Today Byfleet has both a Village Hall and a Boat Club to be proud of, and although the maintenance of these buildings has not been easy at times, at least they are still serving their village well – which unfortunately is more than could be said for Woking and Horsell's contribution to Queen Victoria's Jubilee, as we shall see next week!

The boat house where punts could be hired in the early part of the last century is still going strong thanks to members of the Byfleet Boat Club.



Woking & Horsell's Victoria Cottage Hospital
 (copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 1st June, 2012)



Last week we looked at how the village of Byfleet celebrated the last Diamond Jubilee with the building of their Village Hall by Mr F. C. Stoop, on the land given by Mr H.F. Locke-King, but in Horsell there were not as many wealthy benefactors willing (or able) to fund such a venture. Instead, with their 'new' neighbours – the townspeople of Woking – they all clubbed together to raise voluntary funds to build a 'Cottage Hospital' for the district.

When I say 'district' it should be remembered that at that time Horsell was actually part of the 'Chertsey Rural District' rather than part of 'Woking Urban District', so the joint venture was not just forward thinking from a medical point of view.

The new Victoria Cottage Hospital was built on the Horsell side of what was then Boundary Lane, at its junction with Chobham Road, and beside the Basingstoke Canal. It replaced a small converted house that was Woking's first 'hospital' - opened just a few years before in Bath Road (more or less where Middle Walk of the Wolsey Place shopping centre is today).

In all about £4,200 was raised by public subscription to build the new hospital and when

The Victoria Cottage Hospital was pleasantly positioned beside the 'calming' waters of the Basingstoke Canal.

The local health authority did not care for its history when the site was sold for development.

Queen Victoria died just a couple of years after opening, more money was raised to pay for new additions.

More money continued to be raised over the years with 'Hospital Carnivals' regularly taking place in the town, and it should not be forgotten that the excess money raised for the Woking & Horsell War Memorial (which now stands proudly in what will be this generations tribute to the present Diamond Jubilee) also went towards new wards



at the much loved 'Vic'. It should not have been forgotten, but sadly it was, as the old building was destroyed despite much local opposition.

Lets just hope that 'Jubilee Square' doesn't suffer the same fate.



Woking (and Horsell) had great fun raising money for the hospital between the wars.



Woking Football Club Carnival 1949
(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 8th June, 2012)



Monday another carnival procession walked through the street (starting in the Kingsway), whilst the highlight of the Tuesday appears to have been the 'Adult Amateur Talent Spotting Competition'. The Wednesday was for Children's sports and a 'Baby Show' whilst Thursday featured the 'Royal Military Motorcycle Display Team' and Friday was for Punch & Judy and the area's pets to show off.

It was not the first such event the supporters of the club had organised. Another carnival in 1946 had raised fund to allow the club to purchase the freehold of the ground and this one was to help provide more facilities. The Chairman of the Carnival Committee (and President of the Supporters Club), Mr Steer noted that 'in the immediate future new stands, covered terracing, gymnasium, training quarters and other accommodation are urgently required'.

I don't know how much the carnival raised, or whether any other Carnivals were organised in the coming years, but I suspect the clubs 'shopping list' of facilities today is not too dissimilar.



One day – given enough carnivals – all of the Kingfield Stadium could look like this!

In more recent times the Football Club, of course, was the venue for some of the 'Woking Pops' events organised by Woking Borough Council, who I should say have been very proactive in promoting (if not arranging) various 'celebrations' over the years – all of which, I am sure, have helped to foster a greater sense of 'community' in the borough.

Long may such events continue.



Last week I included some pictures of the 'Hospital Carnivals' held between the wars to raise money for the Woking Victoria Cottage Hospital by Wheatsheaf Bridge, but looking through my archive it is clear that the hospital was not the only 'excuse' the people of Woking used to have a good time.

The Woking Football Club, celebrating their 'Diamond Jubilee' in 1949, organised a weeklong carnival, culminating in a firework display on Saturday 6th August.

The week started on the previous Saturday with a procession through the streets of the town, gathering with the Carnival Queen at the Wheatsheaf Recreation Ground at 2.30pm. Later that day there was a 'comic football match' (they have had a number of those since then) and then 'Dancing on the Green' in the evening. On the

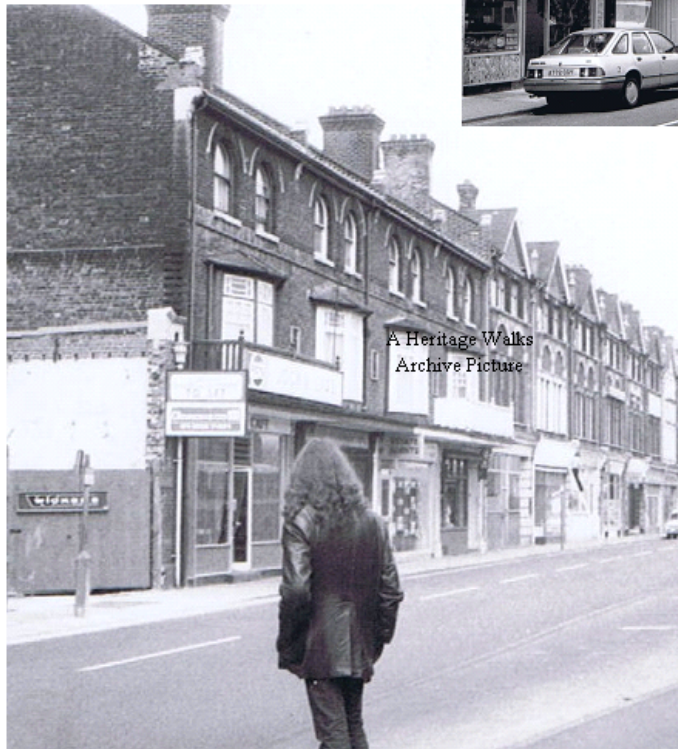
Is it too late to claim No 9257 as the lucky programme?

More carnivals may not have taken place at the football club, but the ground has staged many other events, including the Woking Pops with Musical Director Carl Davis, pictured here in 1997 with the Mayor, Cllr Irene Matthews, and the Borough's Arts Development Officer, David Vince.

The Broadway over the decades

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 15th June, 2012)

I was recently given some pictures of various scenes of around the town in the 1970's. Coincidentally some of the views were similar to ones I had taken myself in the late 80's or 90's, so I thought it would be an idea to try to take more or less the same pictures today. As I was walking around town clicking away I wasn't really taking much notice of what was going on around me, until suddenly, down Chertsey Road, a man came running out of a nearby fast-food outlet, jumped into his van and quickly drove off. To be honest I didn't think too much of it, until just down the road a similar thing happened. Then it dawned on me, the vehicles were parked on yellow lines.



So to the customers of Chertsey Road (and other roads in Woking), I would like to apologise for any alarm caused. I was not taking photographs as evidence for the traffic wardens, my pictures are purely for 'historical' purposes only.

I did later get into trouble myself when without thinking I started taking photographs inside the Wolsey Place Shopping Centre. Having been given the pictures of shops in the 70's I thought it would be a good idea to try to record the all shops of the town as they are now. But being 'private property', a security guard stopped me thinking perhaps that I was a terrorists or robber working out a heist. Having explained my purpose to the guard, and received permission from the Centre Manager to continue, I now have a picture of

(above) Transport enthusiasts can probably date this scene by the make and model of bus, whilst the 'fashion' and hairstyles probably give the game away to most!

Unfortunately by the 90's (top right) the fashion of the era is nowhere to be seen, although again the vehicles help to 'date' the scene.

Even on a busy Saturday afternoon in 'sunny' June the shoppers appear to have deserted the street.

every shop front in Woking Town Centre as at the beginning of June 2012. I intend to go on to record all the other shops of the borough over the coming weeks, so if you see someone with a camera in Knaphill or West Byfleet or Horsell (and you are parked illegally) don't be alarmed, it is probably just me.

Local Links to Cornwall

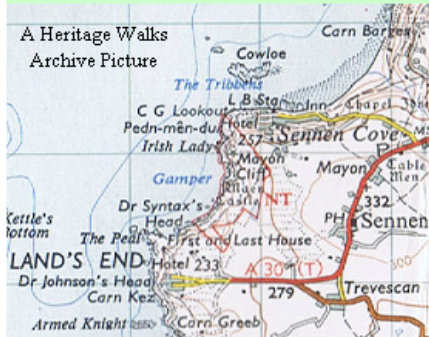
(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 22nd June, 2012)

Last week I was on holiday in Cornwall and to my family's annoyance I played my usual 'game' of trying to find connections to Woking's history. There are not many parts of the British Isles that we haven't visited over the years and very few where I have been unable to find a local link, so I was confident that something would turn up. It took a while, however, and a few attempts before my daughters conceded that I had found a legitimate link.

At first I tried to use the fact that the London & South Western Railway, which obviously passed through Woking, had lines that spread right down to almost where we stayed (near Wadebridge) – but that was ruled as too tenuous. It was pointed out that if I was allowed to use the railway as a connection, then the road we had come along had 'links' with anywhere I liked. I did then say that the A30 did link North-West Surrey to Cornwall, but the look on their faces meant I had to quickly concede the point.

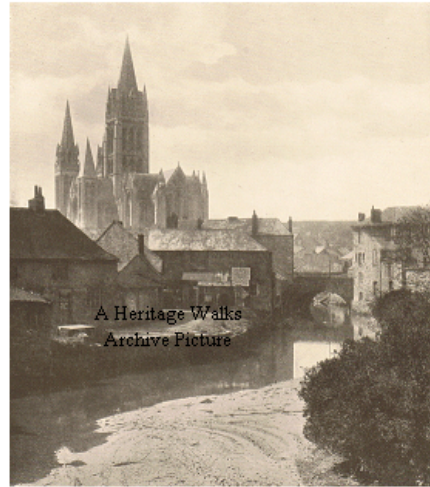


For some reason the A30 at Bagshot being obviously the same road as the A30 at Lands End wasn't good enough



It did remind me of a comment an old gentleman once made to me. 'You know' he said 'the good thing about Woking, is that you can get anywhere from here'. He was right, that is one of Woking's main assets – it is a wonderful place to stay if you want to go somewhere else! Not only do we have an excellent train service (although getting to Cornwall by train may not be as easy now as it used to be), but via the M25, A3 or M3 you can easily (if not always quickly), get to most places in the South East. And with the coach to Heathrow the world is your oyster.

Designed in 1878-9 Truro Cathedral was built in three stages between 1880 and 1910.



Although Pearson mainly worked on churches he also designed several 'domestic' buildings, with the main buildings at the St Peter's Convent dating from 1884.

Although the main convent building has been converted into apartments, the chapel (completed, if not designed by his son, Frank) is still in use for worship today by the Society of St Pius X.

But getting back to Cornwall, my little moment of triumph finally came in Truro where I managed to point out in the guidebook that the architect of the Cathedral was John Loughborough Pearson – who also designed the St Peter's Convent buildings at Maybury. Still pretty tenuous I know, but enough for me to 'win' my game.



Hugh Butcher's Furniture Store

(copy sent to the Woking Informer for print w/e 29th June, 2012)

The other week we printed some views of the station end of The Broadway – this week I want to concentrate on the other end and in particular the shop of Messrs Hugh Butcher.

Hugh Butcher opened his furniture store in 1897, before the road was even called 'The Broadway'. Originally it was just part of Maybury Road and not officially renamed until 1923, although the row of shops (mainly constructed in the mid to late 1890's) had been known by that name locally for some time.

The picture of the shop front was taken during the Second World War. I don't know whether the shop ever received any bomb damage, but this view shows the steps that were taken to ensure that the windows were protected as much as possible.

I acquired the picture when the shop was about to close, along with a large number of old invoices and other items that had previously been 'shoved' in the loft. They were being cleared out in preparation for work being carried out before re-letting the premises. Unfortunately I didn't manage to save every item and I fear that some old ledgers and other things ended up in the skip, but at least I managed to save some things for posterity. I filled a number of large plastic bags and cardboard boxes and borrowed the works van to get them all home to be sorted (to my wife's alarm). Some of the items dated back to the 1930's, but most were post-war, including a number of brochures and invoices from furniture manufacturers – particularly in the High Wycombe area. I passed those onto the 'Chair Museum' in



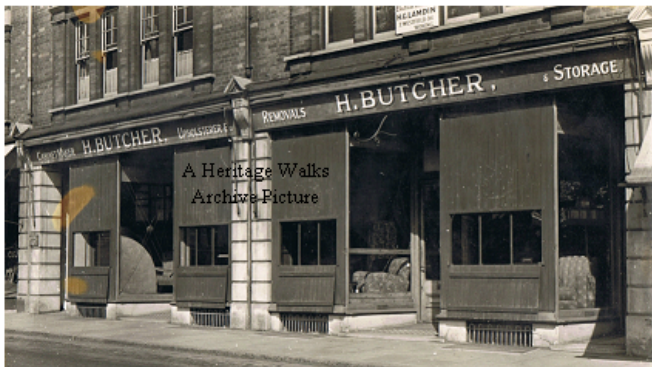
A Heritage Walks Archive Picture

A couple of views of The Broadway from the 1970's, showing Hugh Butcher's shop.



A Heritage Walks Archive Picture

By reducing the amount of shop window exposed, Hugh Butcher's presumably prevented any damage from bombs or flying debris.



A Heritage Walks Archive Picture

that town, with other 'Surrey' items going to the History Centre, but I kept most of the 'local' items, some of which I am now (gradually) starting to scan for my website.

Looking at the old invoices and letter-headings it struck me how much more 'elegant' they are compared to the ones we have today..



A Heritage Walks Archive Picture



These two letterheads (one from the 1950's the other from slightly earlier) show how 'elegant' letters were compared to today. Certainly better than receiving an email or 'text'.