

## A New Era for an Old Stalwart

The King's Arms in Market Square has been looking rather neglected for some time. Last year it closed completely and there was talk of it being converted into flats or sheltered housing. But, after getting a good clean and a lick of paint, it's due to reopen early next month.

Principally an 18th century building, though some parts may be earlier, and with 20th century additions at the rear. It was certainly an inn in the early 18th century and it seems to have always been one of Bicester's main coaching inns. Competing only really with the Crown Hotel in Sheep Street.

Favoured by Royal Mail it became the town's posting house and the stopping point for the mail coach. In 1830, when Edward Deakins was the proprietor, the mail coach from Birmingham to London stopped there every night at 12:30am while the London to Birmingham coach arrived two hours later.

Some stagecoach services called at the Crown Hotel but most, like the Rising Sun Coach from Oxford to Northampton, used the King's Arms. But by 1842 all the coaches passing through the town went to the King's Arms, including the daily coaches between Leamington Spa and London.

In 1847 Joseph Shepherd is recorded as the proprietor but by 1864 it had changed



to his wife, Mary. Also by that year it was hosting the monthly County Court sessions and continued to do so until the courthouse in Sheep Street was built a few years later. It also housed the local Inland Revenue office, Charles Cheverton being the officer at the time. And by 1876 the Excise office was located there too.

In the late 19th century the King's Arms was the centre for the Bicester Hunt and hunters could be bought, hired or stabled in the hotel yard. William (Harry) Bonner, the then proprietor, operated his livery stables there before moving down to the Causeway in 1911 when Halls Brewery purchased the pub for £2,325 at auction. In directories of the same year it was referred to as the "principal" hotel in the town.

It's stood the test of time so far and hopefully this new lease of life will help to keep it going for another few hundred years.

- Matthew Hathaway



### Contents

Marj's Memories . . . . . 2  
Bygone Bicester . . . . . 2  
Chairman's Ramblings . . . 3  
Project Updates . . . . . 3  
Interview with Gill King . . 4  
Appeal . . . . . 6  
Wordsearch . . . . . 6  
Village History . . . . . 7  
Roll of Honour . . . . . 7  
Talks Update . . . . . 8  
Building Materials Talk . . 8

### Dates For Your Diary

#### History of the English Parish Talk

16th March - 7:30pm

see page 7

#### April Newsletter Submissions Deadline

27th March

#### Travelling in the Middle Ages Talk

20th April - 7:30pm

### H. J. Preece,

GENERAL DRAPER  
AND  
LADIES' OUTFITTER

We always have in stock  
a large selection of . . .

#### Ready-to-Wear Garments

Our prices are most reasonable and  
no charge is made for alterations.

A large stock of  
all classes of . .

#### Household Linens and Furnishing Fabrics

BICESTER'S  
UP-TO-DATE  
DRAPER

London House, Sheep Street

Advert taken from  
The Bicesterian - 1939

## Marj's Memories Our Lamp

I have just read the February issue of the Bicester Historian. I was amused to see the article about the street lamp in the 'Bygone Bicester' section. The lamp (a Windsor lamp) was, in fact, in the garden of our house, 89 Bucknell Road. The lamp had been there since the first houses were built up Highfield and the address was then 41 Highfield.

This row of houses, on the left at the top of Bucknell Road, were the first to be built in Highfield and my Grandfather, James Ayris, and his sister (my great Auntie Liz, two doors down at 85) were the first tenants to live in Highfield. My Grandfather and his siblings were the grandchildren of Queenie (real name Eliza Massey) of Lark Rise.

They moved into these lovely new houses with their families just before Christmas (around 1930), but recalled what a lonely Christmas it

was, being way up the road away from the town.

We loved "our lamp"; it made it easy for people to find us; it lit our garden at night; it was always surrounded with pretty flowers, but it possibly deterred a few good night kisses!

The lamp wasn't lit during the war of course, so the middle two palings of the gate were painted white so that my Grandfather would know our house when he came home late on a Saturday night!

I remember well, after I left home, how the council came and told my parents that they were going to auction the lamp. They didn't mind, in fact they were amused by it, and the auction took place by the front gate. I think someone from Chesterton bought it.

- Marjorie Dean MBE



## Bygone Bicester (Taken from the Bicester Advertiser & Mid-Oxon Chronicle)

### 23rd March 1865

**PENNY READINGS** - On Tuesday, March 14th, the eleventh of the series of readings was held in the National School room. There was as usual a crowded room. In the unavoidable absence of Mr W. Johnson, FRAC, of Banbury, the chair was taken by Mr Josiah Smith.

After a few opening remarks, in which the chairman congratulated the committee on the success of their endeavours to interest their neighbours here, the programme commenced by Mr J.F. Seabrook reading an interesting original essay on "Songs and Ballads". Mr Seabrook illustrated his subject by singing several of the ballads referred to in his essay.

The following items were also very successfully carried out:

Reading - "The story of the Willow Pattern Plate" Mr White  
Flute Piece - "Stanco di Peri Combattere" Mr Castle  
Reading - "Unlucky Goodfellow" Mr Josiah Smith  
Song - "Sweet Spirit hear my Prayer" Mr White  
Reading - "The Prisoners of Chillon" Mr S. Baker  
Pianoforte Solo - "Gaité de Coeur" Mrs Nunn  
Reading - Selections from "Pickwick Papers" Mr C. Fowler  
Concluding with the National Anthem.

### 5th March 1915

**PETTY SESSIONS SCHOOL CASES** - The adjourned cases against Annie Coppock and Alfred Butler, both of Bicester, for not sending their children to school, were brought up for hearing. Mr I.G.P. Durrant (school attendance officer) appeared and stated that although Mrs Coppock's child had missed eight times, it was on

account of illness. The other defendant's child had made perfect attendance. He considered both satisfactory and they were dismissed.

William Hawkes, of Fritwell, was summoned for not sending his daughter Margaret to school. Mr Dew (school attendance officer) said the girl had missed all the attendances. Defendant had been fined three times. A fine of 10s with 5s costs was imposed, time being allowed. Mr Dew asked for an order for the payment of the 23s still owing by the defendant in respect of fines, and it was decided to grant a distress warrant.

### 26th March 1965

**BICESTER HEADMASTER TO STAR IN USTINOV'S PLAY** - Peter Ustinov's play "The Love of Four Colonels" will be presented at the Bicester Grammar School by the staff of the Bicester Grammar and Highfield Schools on April 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Mr S.W. Percival, headmaster of both schools, will play Colonel Desmond de S. Runder Sparrow one of the four colonels. The other three will be played by Messrs. A.M. McMurray, V. Redfern and J.M. Coxon. Tudor Jones will be an admirable Major of Herzonburg. Other members of the cast are L.J. Perren, Janet Russell, Brenda Hall, Penny Patterson, Geraldine Meers, Joan Reeve and Margaret Hudson.

Uniforms and advice have been given by the Bicester Garrison, USAF Upper Heyford and the County Fire Service to ensure greater detail and authenticity.

Mr A.J. Manners is the producer.



# Chairman's Ramblings

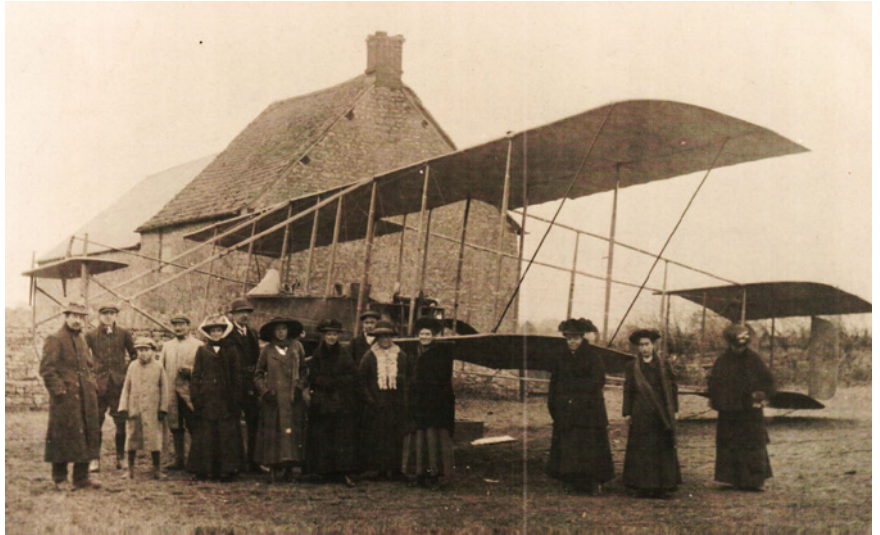
Continuing the aircraft theme from last month's "Ramble", I came across this photograph that was on a postcard dated March 22, 1913.

Nothing on the card tells you where or what the picture is about. But the postmark is Bicester, the photographer is James & Son, Stow House Studio, Bicester and it was addressed to a Miss Adams, Stoke Lyne, Bicester – so a fairly strong suggestion that it is a local scene!

The story behind the photograph is as follows: In February 1913 the War Office decided to send No.2 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) from Farnborough to a newly formed base at Upper Dysart near Montrose in Scotland - a distance of nearly 400 miles (as the crow flies – or should I say as the aircraft flies, assuming they fly in a straight line). And five pilots were ordered to fly their aircraft across country to the new base.

It certainly wasn't a straight line – aiming for Port Meadow as their first stop, they ran into fog. Two pilots turned back to Farnborough whilst the other three landed at Mapledurham. Bad weather stopped them from taking off again for 3 days. After taking off and heading north, one pilot, Capt. G.W.P. Dawes landed in Scotland Field to ask his way. It was purely coincidence that the field had the same name as the country of his destination! It was in Scotland Field, Ardley, that this photograph was taken. Dawes flew on to Bloxham and later to Towcester and then on towards Newark and eventually on to Montrose some 13 days later (only 9 of the days were actually spent flying).

It just goes to demonstrate the quality and resilience



of the airmen. And it looks as though the total population of Ardley turned out to watch!

And now down to earth in more ways than one. Last year saw our second archaeological dig at "The Old Priory" where we uncovered what appears to be part of a stone wall. I'm pleased to say that Rob Parkinson has agreed to let us visit again this year and continue where we left off! No date has been fixed as yet but it is likely to be late August / early September.

Finally a cry for help! We need a Publicity Officer. Someone who could notify the Bicester Advertiser and Bicester Review of monthly talks, put up notices in Sainsbury's, the Pop-In Centre, and the Library – also to contact local radio stations. You don't need to be on the Committee but we'll be happy to take you on, if you wish. Please contact me or one of the Committee if you think you could fill this vital role!

- Bob Hessian

## Projects Update

Those of you who were at the meeting in February would've seen that the Society is working on a number of projects at the moment.

We are looking into ways of preserving or replacing the Cholera Stone in St Edburg's Churchyard. It has been badly damaged in the past and the deterioration over the last 20 years has left it almost unreadable.

Using Heritage Lottery Funding, we intend to preserve the existing memorial stone, erect a replica that is readable and provide information on the importance of such outbreaks in Bicester and the resulting improvements in sanitation.

Our second DVD, an exploration of the buildings and architecture of Bicester, is well underway and

will hopefully be published by the end of the year. We have identified all the buildings which illustrate the different periods of development of Bicester and started approaching people to appear on screen. Once we have a script in place the filming can start.

We're also working on a new Historic Town Trail leaflet for Bicester. With an artist designed map, lots of information and QR code links to further information on the BLHS website.

Next year will be the 30th Anniversary of the formation of the Bicester Local History Society. We're in the early stages of planning events and things to celebrate this but one thing we will be doing is a Calendar with photographs of Old Bicester.

# An Interview with Gill King

## Please can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I was born in Oxford, raised in Littlemore, and moved to Bicester at 15 when my father was appointed Postmaster. I attended Speedwell Infants School, Lawn Upton Primary School and Littlemore Grammar School (later Peers), none of which now exist, sadly.

When I moved I went to Bicester School (now Bicester Community College). My great interest, as well as history, was R.E. and I later went on to study theology at Oxford Brookes University. I have worked for Oxford University all my working life, mainly at the Bodleian Library (Radcliffe Science Library) in acquisitions.

## How did you get interested in local history?

In 1988 the Rector of St. Edburg's Church, Fr. John Baggley, asked me to do some research for him on Wretchwick from any information available at the Bodleian. Through this I discovered the rich histories of Kennett, Dunkin and Blomfield and got 'hooked'. I ended up spending hours at the County Record Office, then in County Hall, developing my own research projects.

The Patronal Festival had recently been re-introduced at the church. This had been celebrated way back in the days of Bicester Priory, so I wanted to find out more about both the Priory and St. Edburg herself.

I ended up publishing a small



Gill's first booklet - 1989



Gill, with Mark Lawrence & Bob Hessian, at the Requiem Mass for the Anglo-Saxon skeletons - 2011

booklet to raise funds for the church, and followed that one with one about the church and clergy. They look very amateur now, but they raised some funds at the time. Twenty-seven years later I am still discovering new things about Edburg and the Priory, and I am still fascinated by them.

## Do you have an interest in any other areas of Bicester's history?

I have found that local history and family history overlap. I started tracing my family history a few years ago, and was amazed to discover ancestors from Bicester.

My great great great grandmother, Ann Nix, gave birth to four illegitimate children in Bicester workhouse, which prompted an interest in that.

Ann was not a good mother, and was later sent to prison for deserting her children. Her father, William Nix, was a brewer and died from smallpox in 1864. He lived in New Buildings (now North Street). His wife was Elizabeth Haddocks and her parents Thomas and Ann also lived in Bicester, so I can trace this line back to 1740. The places where they lived and the lifestyle they would have led

are of huge interest to me.

I also have a particular interest in St. Edburg's Hall in London Road, founded by Rev. John Blackburne-Kane, and St. Edburg's School, founded by Revd. John William Watts. Both vicars put so much time and effort into improving facilities in the town and this has always impressed me. The Society is currently trying to get both of these buildings listed to preserve them for the future.

## Have any events, other than the Patronal Festival, been important for you?

I have loved taking part in the Local History Exhibitions and the digs at the Old Priory. I was also very moved by the Requiem Mass held



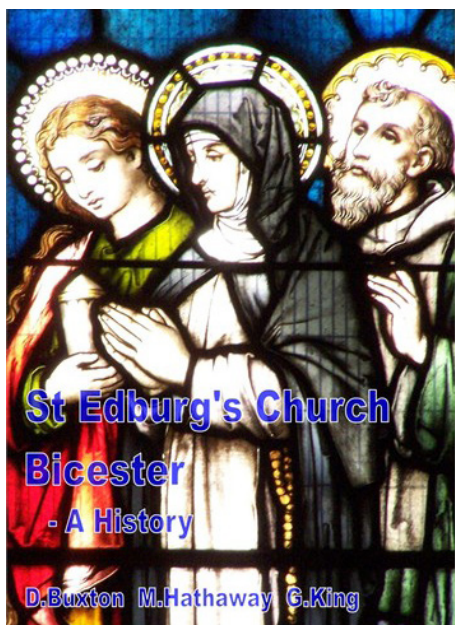
Gill's father, George King (right), outside the sorting office with Derrick Allen (left) and two unknown men



for the reburial of the Anglo-Saxon skeletons in 2011. I would love those found under Bryan House to also be reburied, as I think these people deserve to be treated with dignity and to rest in peace.

### **What about your work on St. Edburg's Church?**

As well as being a historic, beautiful building, and the centre of Christian worship for the town over the centuries, St. Edburg's Church also represents family for me. My Bicester ancestors were baptised, married and buried there, and more recently, the funerals of my parents took place there. It has a very special place in my heart, so it has been a joy to research it again. The late David Buxton, Matthew Hathaway and I produced a book about its history in 2010 and Matthew and I are still hoping to produce a follow-up on its people and events. Memories, photos, etc. welcome!!



### **Are you working on any research at the moment?**

I have been working for several years now on a biography of our local historian John Dunkin. It has been a real labour of love as so much information has proved elusive. Research can be very slow, and often frustrating, but when you finally discover the missing link, it is so exciting. It is a bit like doing a difficult jigsaw puzzle, and keeping at it until the last piece fits.

One of the most time-consuming issues has been trying to find the date when the cottage where he was born, in Crockwell – now the location of Dunkins Close – was demolished.

I had to search through years of local newspapers, council minutes and demolition records at the Oxfordshire History Centre in Cowley to find the answer.

I hope people will find the book interesting. To me, Dunkin is an inspirational figure, as he overcame poverty and physical disability to achieve. As well as his brilliant books, he also undertook the first archaeological excavation of Bicester Priory, so that also makes him special for me.

### **What has been your involvement in BLHS?**

Well, my first contact with BLHS was when I gave a talk on St. Edburg with Rob Parkinson, back in 1990. But, because of work and home commitments, I didn't actually become a member until 2007.

I was invited to join the Committee in 2011 and now hold the role of Archivist, which I love. I have always worked with books and journals so the paper collections are of particular interest to me, and I am passionate about preserving them for historians of the future.

### **So what does being our Archivist involve?**

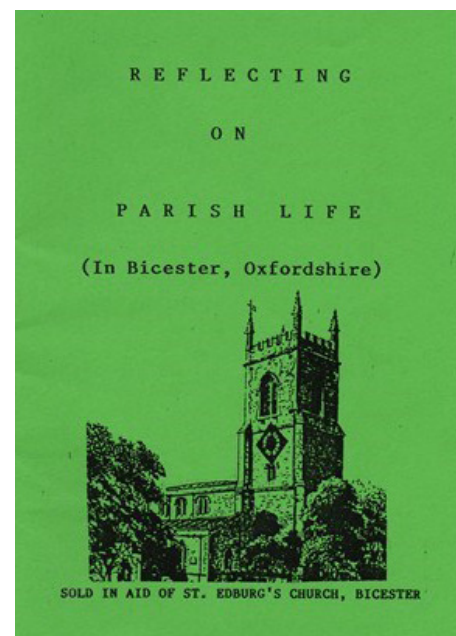
My first task was to sort out what we had in our store in the Garth and catalogue it. Then adding to it as items were donated or I came across them.

I have been able to photocopy a number of articles held in the Bodleian and elsewhere to add to our collection. We hold a wide variety of material now, from Bicester Grammar School magazines to sports programmes. Our plan is to have a searchable catalogue of them all on our website once it has been updated, and to make them available in a central location for our members and the general public to use.

### **Do we hold anything of special significance?**

The Dannatt collection is an important part of our archive. This includes papers Miss Dannatt wrote, items she kept, such as newspaper cuttings, and handwritten copies of old wills. It also has items relating to the old Bicester Local History Circle, and in particular the exhibitions they held. For a small group they achieved an awful lot.

Other people have also donated personal items, such as school



Gill's second booklet - 1990

exercise books and we have a rent book which runs from 1898 through to 1955.

The conservation of our older items is another responsibility for me as archivist, as they require specialist care.

### **What would you like people to donate?**

Anything really that relates to Bicester of the past – or any of its surrounding villages – Books, newspapers, posters, programmes, letters, photographs, postcards – and memories, of course. We welcome all donations. Paper items can be scanned and returned to their owners if they would like to keep hold of them.

When we have our display space in the new library we will hopefully be able to borrow items to show there as well.

### **Apart from the archive, are you involved in any other aspects of BLHS?**

The whole Committee meets at least once a month, sometimes more if we have something urgent to discuss. Sub-committees also meet regularly, so it is quite a big commitment.

We have some important projects ongoing at the moment, not least the possible restoration of the cholera stone in the churchyard, which is in such a sad state of disrepair. I suggested this as a project as I think it is important that we serve the town in preserving its history whenever we can. I also feel personally a strong sense of responsibility towards those who have gone before us, and to keep their memory alive.

# Appeal for Information VE Day & Recipes

This May will mark the 70th anniversary of VE Day and we would like to mark the occasion with a special feature in that month's edition of the Bicester Historian. But to do that we need your memories (or those of your friends and family) of the local VE Day celebrations.

Can you remember the bonfire in Market Square? The street party outside The Star? The evening firework display? Or were you living in one of the villages, doing their own thing? If so then we'd love to hear about it.

Next year will be the Society's 30th anniversary. The committee have a number of ideas for ways that we can celebrate this momentous occasion and one of the things that we would like to do is a recipe book.

We already have a few recipes from Mrs Coker and her

friends, as well as a few wartime favourites that were published in the Bicester Advertiser. But we'd really like to fill it with as many recipes as possible from our members.

It can be for anything you like, savoury or sweet, food or drink, but preferably ones that have been handed down through generations or developed yourselves. And if you can supply an anecdote or bit of backstory to go with it then so much the better.

If you can help with either of these then please get in touch through one of the contact methods listed at the back of the newsletter, or by talking to one of the committee members at the monthly meetings. Thank you.

- Matthew Hathaway

## Wordsearch

Can you find the following thirty names from this month's newsletter in the grid below?

(Answers at the bottom of page 7)

AYRIS  
BAGGLEY  
BLACKBURNE-KANE  
BLOMFIELD  
BONNER  
BUXTON  
CHEVERTON  
COPPOCK  
COXON  
D'IVRY  
D'OYLY  
DANNATT  
DUNKIN  
HADDOCKS  
HALL  
KENNETT  
KING  
MANN  
MANNERS  
MASSEY  
NIX  
NUNN  
PARKINSON  
PATTERSON  
PERREN  
REEVE  
SEABROOK  
SHEPHERD  
WATTS  
WHITE

B	O	N	N	E	R	R	Y	M	A	N	N	S	Z	S	W	Q	A	Y	M
L	O	U	B	N	E	P	S	Y	E	K	N	E	H	F	G	P	O	I	A
A	Y	R	I	S	F	A	N	S	W	Q	V	A	N	E	M	X	W	T	S
C	H	E	V	E	R	T	O	N	M	U	Z	B	A	W	P	P	R	O	S
K	I	D	W	C	S	T	P	L	I	Y	H	R	C	R	S	H	P	N	E
B	Y	H	V	O	Z	E	A	D	I	X	T	O	W	E	M	U	E	H	Y
U	E	A	J	P	E	R	I	W	Q	N	V	O	D	B	A	C	R	R	B
R	X	D	C	P	W	S	A	S	N	R	Y	K	I	N	G	U	R	G	D
N	E	D	I	O	D	O	Y	L	Y	E	O	K	V	T	R	G	E	Q	W
E	G	O	H	C	J	N	K	L	P	E	O	I	R	U	Y	T	N	R	E
K	F	C	D	K	K	S	A	Z	C	V	X	V	Y	B	N	M	F	Y	U
A	W	K	E	R	E	T	Y	U	I	E	O	D	U	N	K	I	N	P	P
N	Q	S	M	A	N	N	E	R	S	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	U	K	A
E	Y	T	R	E	N	W	Q	Z	E	F	X	C	V	B	N	M	N	L	R
U	H	I	O	P	E	L	K	B	L	O	M	F	I	E	L	D	N	J	K
D	A	N	N	A	T	T	V	C	X	W	B	Z	A	G	F	D	S	H	I
N	L	M	R	H	T	U	L	I	E	S	A	O	A	Q	C	V	U	O	N
W	L	E	R	M	P	O	S	A	W	H	I	T	E	W	S	T	R	M	S
E	R	T	I	Q	B	A	G	G	L	E	Y	R	T	I	L	O	S	Z	O
D	O	B	U	X	T	O	N	G	H	I	W	E	R	S	C	O	X	O	N

# Village History Arccott

The village of Arccott is made up of two areas, separated by the Bicester Military Railway. The larger neighbourhood of Upper Arccott to the south and the smaller Lower Arccott to the north.

The Domesday Book records that in 1086 William, son of Mann, held Lower Arccott. In the 12th century Roger of Caux granted it to the Augustinian Missenden Abbey to say Mass for his late parents and in 1232 the abbey sold it to the Augustinian Bicester Priory. As a result it became known as Arccot Prioris. After the dissolution of the monasteries the Crown granted Lower Arccott to Thomas Martin, of Ambrosden.

Meanwhile, in 983AD Ethelred the Unready granted the manor of Upper Arccott to the Benedictine Abingdon Abbey and it became known as Arccot Abbatis. The Abingdon Chronicle, a version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, records that Adelelm of Jumièges (Abbott of Abingdon 1071-83) let Upper Arccott to the Norman barons Robert D'Oyly and Roger d'Ivry. They, in turn, granted it to Saint George's Church in Oxford Castle. In about 1149 Henry D'Oyly transferred it to Osney Abbey, which remained lord of the manor until the church of the former Priory of St Frideswide replaced Osney as Christ Church Cathedral, then it reverted to the Crown, which sold it to the Martin family.

A Methodist congregation developed in Arccott from 1823. A Wesleyan Methodist chapel was built in Upper Arccott in 1834 and enlarged in 1847. It became Upper



Arccott Methodist Church and was a member of the Buckingham, Bicester and Brackley Methodist Circuit. In 2010 it was closed and converted into offices.

A parish school was opened in the nearby village of Ambrosden in 1818 and Arccott had its own school by 1833. Both seem to have ceased operating by 1854, but temporary schools existed in both villages in 1868. A permanent parish school built in Ambrosden was opened in 1876 and in the same year an infant school was opened in the parish mission room in Arccott. In 1920 Arccott School was closed and the children transferred to Ambrosden.

- Matthew Hathaway

## Roll of Honour

*These are the local men who died in the Great War, 100 years ago this month.*

**Captain James Dixon**, of Fringford.

Died: 10<sup>th</sup> March 1915      Aged: 30

Served in: Middlesex Regiment

**Private Herbert Bignell**, of Finmere.

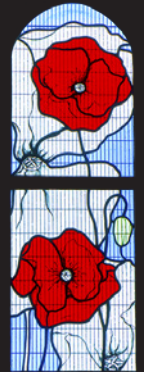
Died: 14<sup>th</sup> March 1915      Aged: 30

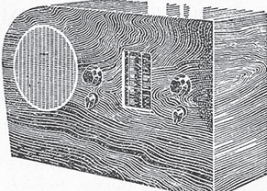
Served in: Northamptonshire Regiment

**Captain Harold Caffyn**, of Islip.

Died: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1915      Aged: 33

Served in: North Staffordshire Regiment





### SERVICE!

FOR  
**RADIO & CYCLES**

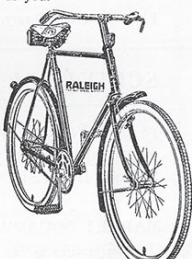
Our Service Department is unequalled. Fully-trained and Technical men ensure this for you.

Our Radio and Television Staff has been trained at Messrs. Murphy's Radio School. This means a better and quicker service for you.

**TRINDER Bros.**

BANBURY :: BICESTER :: DAVENTRY  
(phone 2546)      (phone 170)      (phone 49)

Agents for Murphy and Bush Radio and Television, also B.S.A., Raleigh and Royal Enfield Cycles.



### Wordsearch Solution:

B	O	N	N	E	R		M	A	N	N	S		M
L				P				E	H				A
A	Y	R	I	S	A				A	E			S
C	H	E	V	E	R	T	O	N		B		P	S
K		C	T		I			R		H	P		E
B	H	O	E		X	O							Y
U	A	P	R					O	D		R	R	
R	D	P	S			R	K	I	N	G	R	D	
N	D	O	D	O	Y	L	E			V			E
E	O	C	N			E		R					N
K	C	K	K			V		Y					
A	K	E				E	D						P
N	S	M	A	N	N	E	R	S					U
E						N							N
H						E	B	L	O	M	F	I	E
D	A	N	N	A	T		W						R
L						T				A			N
L										W	H	I	T
										B	A	G	G
										L	E	Y	T
										B			S
										C	O	X	O
										N			

Advert taken from The Bicestrian - 1939



## Talks Update

Over the next few months we have a varied itinerary of talks that we hope will prove very interesting.

### Monday 16th March

Chris Day talks to us about **A History of the English Parish**. Emerging in the early Middle Ages as an ecclesiastical unit, in England it later became a unit of local government as well. This talk outlines how very different it used to be to be a parishioner.

### Monday 20th April

Dr Rowena Archer discusses **Travelling in the Middle Ages**. How much people travelled and where they went during the mediaeval period. It includes some material on the logistics (roads and bridges etc) and some stories of great journeys.

### Monday 18th May

Mark Davies explores the social histories of **Oxford's Historic Waterways**. The River Thames is the very reason for Oxford's existence and name. Whilst the Oxford Canal was one of Britain's first four 18th century trunk canals.

## Bricks & Building Materials in Bicester

For February's talk Pat Snelson, who gave an excellent presentation, took us on a historical journey of the town through its buildings.

She began with basic information about bricks, that they require little maintenance and have been made since Roman times. However, they were slow and costly to make so they were expensive. As Bicester is in a limestone area, that was what our town was mainly built from.

St. Edburg's Church is a prestigious building but built of rubble. When the south aisle was added it was more worked and dressed, and when the West Tower was built they used squared stone but

smaller. The type of stone used gives us an insight into the development of the Church.

The types of stone used in buildings reflected the wealth of the people who built them. The Hermitage in London Road, for example, was built from good ginger stone and had been well worked. Whereas 5-7 Field Street was built from big rubble stone.

By the 1800's people were becoming more aware of what their houses looked like. John Nash, a friend of the Prince Regent, introduced stucco facades. Examples can be seen in the Market Square and Sheep Street, such as Edinburgh Woollen Mill, Bean Around The World and Barclay's Bank.

Blackthorn, Horton-cum-Studley and Brill were all major brick makers. There have been three types of Brick Bonds – English, Flemish and Stretcher. Flemish is the earliest we see in Bicester, in the Congregational Chapel. There is chequered brickwork at the rear of Wadley's old shop and Claremont House. The Courtyard is English Bond, as is Bicester North Station. The Garth was built with cheap Flemish Bond. Modern houses use Stretcher Bond.

- Gill King



## Committee & Contacts

### Editor:

Matthew Hathaway  
[mathat298@gmail.com](mailto:mathat298@gmail.com)  
01869 246530

### Assistant Editor:

Gill King

### Website:

[www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk)

### Committee Members:

Bob Hessian (*Chairman*)  
[info@blhs.org.uk](mailto:info@blhs.org.uk)  
01869 350662

Sally James (*Treasurer*)  
01869 243804

Sally Dexter (*Minutes Secretary*)

Peter Crook

Matthew Hathaway

Gill King (*Archivist*)

John Roberts (*Membership Officer*)

### Meetings Address:

The Clifton Centre  
Ashdene Road  
Bicester  
OX26 2BH

### Postal Address:

BLHS c/o Sally James  
14 George Street  
Bicester  
OX26 2EG