

FEDORA

FEDERATION OF OXSHOTT RESIDENTS AND ASSOCIATIONS



A VOICE FOR OXSHOTT

www.fedora.org.uk

Spring 2016

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FEDORA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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To advertise in the next FEDORA magazine, in Autumn 2016, please contact advertising@fedora.org.uk. The magazine is produced on a non-profit basis, keeping advertising rates as low as possible, and is delivered to 2750 households in the Oxshott - Cobham area.

Further information is also available on our website or to contact FEDORA members you can e-mail to the appropriate position above, @fedora.org.uk; e.g. planning@fedora.org.uk or chairman@fedora.org.uk, etc., or for general enquiries info@fedora.org.uk.

FEDORA

FEDERATION OF OXSHOTT RESIDENTS
AND ASSOCIATIONS

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, 10th May, 2016
7.30 for 8.00pm

OXSHOTT VILLAGE CENTRE

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Chairman's Comments

by David A. D. Cooke

A3 Trees

I was surprised in late October to be informed by a resident in Beechwood Drive that trees on Oxshott Heath were being taken down along the A3 without any prior discussion with the local community. The clearance extends to a depth of 30m from the road for a length of approximately a mile from the roundabout on the A244.

After discussing this with one of our local councillors it appears that the council were concerned that trees from council owned land could blow over in a gale and fall across the A3 making the council potentially liable for accidents. There was no consultation because the council considered that the health and safety aspects overrode any obligations to the community.

Tennis Dome

There is currently a controversial planning application 2015/0059 in progress for an inflatable tennis dome at the Oxshott Village Sports Club behind the clubhouse. This has generated over 25 letters of objection from residents in nearby Webster Close, Lyfield and Steels Lane.

Whilst an indoor tennis court might be an attractive facility to local tennis players the considerable bulk of the structure is an eyesore for local households and the continuous noise of a generator and blower is also not welcomed.

FEDORA has advised the spokesman for local residents who will be entitled to speak at the Planning meeting. The outcome will probably have been decided by the time this magazine is delivered.

Victoria Public House

I expect many regulars will be mourning the passing of the Victoria pub and Thai restaurant at the end of last year.

The White Brasserie Company have bought the premises, and after redevelopment expect to open as early as possible in the summer of 2016. One of the directors is Raymond Blanc who oversees the menu of the brand.

This sale was believed to have fallen through at one stage but the plans show seating areas for those who only wish to drink rather than dine.

Disclaimer: FEDORA, its officers and committee members make every effort to publish this magazine on time, to give correct information and advice in good faith, and to accommodate advertisers by including desired copy with accurate content. No responsibility or liability, however, can be taken for any inadvertent errors or omissions.

What is FEDORA?

I have been told that many people may not be aware of what FEDORA is.

FEDORA is the Residents Association of the Village of Oxshott. It comprises representatives from all (about a dozen) the residents associations of the various private estates in Oxshott as well as elected officers and other members representing other parts of the community. The constitution of FEDORA is on the website at www.fedora.org.uk and this best sums up its aims and purposes:

1. To take such actions as deemed necessary to protect and conserve the Oxshott environment and to preserve the amenities of Oxshott village and its surroundings.
2. To bring the Federation's views to the attention of appropriate authorities and other relevant parties, and
3. To raise funds as required to carry out the Federation's objectives.

Applications for Donations

Fortunately FEDORA has managed over the years to generate more funds than its running costs, and has been able to give considerable donations to various village organisations. Applications are now invited for donations for further projects that will preserve and enhance the amenities of the village. Please send these to chairman@fedora.org.uk to be considered at our early September Management meeting. Successful applicants will be announced in the Autumn edition of the magazine.

Dates for your diary

Oxshott Village Day (oxshottvillageday.com)	Mon 2 May
FEDORA AGM	Tue 10 May
Patients Participation AGM	Tue 17 May
Royal Kent School Fete (royal-kent.surrey.sch.uk/parents/summer-fete)	Sat 11 June
Prudential RideLondon-Surrey Cycle Classic	Sun 31 July

Oxshott Calendar

FEDORA would like to make available to local residents a 2017 wall calendar featuring Oxshott scenes. We would welcome photographs for possible inclusion in the calendar, preferably in landscape format and containing the location of the photograph, the date it was taken and who took it. Copyright will be strictly respected. Please send any pictures to chairman@fedora.org.uk.

Councillor and Mayor Jan Fuller

Our heartfelt thanks go to Jan Fuller, who is retiring shortly after many years service to our community as one of Oxshott's Elmbridge Councillors. Best Wishes for the future.



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Castles in the Air – Aviation in Oxshott

by Stephen Spark

The worst thing about flying is driving. In the time it takes to reach Heathrow from Oxshott you could have been in Rome or Berlin. But if a 1930s plan had taken off, London's airport might have been just 10 minutes away at the end of Fair Oak Lane. Had that happened, our village would have become a very different place, so this is the story of how Oxshott avoided turning into Crawley.

In June 1908, less than five years after two American bicycle-makers, Wilbur and Orville Wright, achieved the first powered, controlled human flight, Alliott Verdon-Roe made a successful powered flight at Brooklands. From then on, Surrey was to play a crucial role in Britain's aviation development.

The Weybridge motor racing circuit soon became a magnet for pioneer aviators and by 1912 Brooklands was hosting at least four flying schools. One was run by Thomas Sopwith, who started manufacturing aircraft in Kingston. The First World War catapulted this fledgling industry to prominence, and Sopwith rapidly expanded his factories, making the town the centre of Britain's military aircraft industry.

Like the Wrights, William Chapman was a bicycle engineer and probably typical of many who were bitten by the flying bug. In 1913, while working in Leatherhead, he bought himself a French-made 29hp Deperdussin aeroplane. He taught himself to fly the fragile machine, which looked like a bicycle with wings and a tail.

After the war, Chapman set up Leatherhead Aviation Services, using a secondhand De Havilland DH 6 biplane, registered G-EANU (its propeller survives in Leatherhead Museum). LAS operated from a small aerodrome at Byhurst Farm, Malden Rushett, then owned by Prewett's Dairy and bounded by Prince's Coverts on the west, Fair Oak Lane to the north and on the east side by the Kingston to Leatherhead road (A243). Other flying grounds existed at Chessington, Hook and Tartar Hill, Cobham, so Oxshott residents became familiar with the puttering of these contraptions as they passed overhead, mostly offering short joy rides for well-to-do thrill-seekers.

Chapman wound up LAS in August 1922 after he was badly injured in a crash, but he subsequently worked for Brooklands Aviation and Tom Sopwith's Hawker Aircraft Ltd, also based at Brooklands. There he would have met Sopwith's chief engineer and Hawker co-founder Frederick Sigrist, who was living at Wychwood, Leatherhead Road. While he was in Oxshott in the late 1920s and early 30s, Sigrist took

out several patents for airframe improvements.

Technological advances – many of them developed in Kingston and Weybridge – turned aviation into a serious business. On the ground, though, the infrastructure was still rudimentary. London's airport was at Croydon, but it had been cobbled together from two separate wartime airfields separated by a road, was hemmed in by houses and lacked a direct rail connection. Kingston Borough Council reckoned it could do better.

Although the north of the borough was built up, to the south there was open country – ideal territory for an airport. Better still, it was about to be rail-connected, as the Southern Railway was building a line from Motspur Park to Leatherhead. In May 1934, the council commissioned a survey of likely sites for a municipal aerodrome and quickly settled on Byhurst Farm, close to a planned station at Malden Rushett. With no green objectors to worry about in those days, what could go wrong?

As soon as he heard about Kingston's 'castle in the air', Sir Herbert Walker, the Southern Railway's highly capable but irascible general manager, fired off a broadside, protesting at this threat to the profitability of his new railway. "The Company view with very much concern the proposal to establish an Aerodrome in this position," he fumed. "The existence of an Aerodrome has an extremely detrimental effect upon the amenities of the surrounding property and most seriously affects the development of the neighbourhood which becomes practically sterilized, so far as housing development is concerned." After Walker threatened to cancel the new railway, the council retreated and by mid-1935 its aerodrome dream had faded away.

Oxshott may have been spared an airport on its doorstep, but now the way was clear for the house-builders. The speculators outpaced the railway-builders, snapping up fields and whole farms, forcing land prices to absurd levels. Even the Crown Estate was caught up in the frenzy, buying, among other estates, Byhurst Farm. By 28 May 1939 the trains were running to Chessington South. As the contractors continued to push the railway embankments southwards past the newly opened zoo towards Malden Rushett, pulling the house-builders along with them, the tide of mock-Tudor suburbia seemed unstoppable.

But, just in time, it did stop. Britain's declaration of war on Germany in September halted the Southern Railway in its tracks, but drainage played its part, too. The vast increase in population meant new drains and an upgraded sewage plant were needed, but the council could not pay for them and, when asked to contribute, the get-rich-quick house-builders lost interest. The Crown Estate could have started work, but its decision-making was slow and cumbersome. By the time it had

decided to develop its land-holdings around Oxshott, it was already too late; the tide had turned.

During the conflict, aircraft production was at full throttle in Brooklands and Kingston, and the skies over Oxshott became part of the theatre of war. On 26 August 1944, Merlin-engined Spitfire AA833 ran out of fuel and hit a tree near Fair Oak Lane, necessitating a forced landing. Sadly, the pilot, 29-year-old Flt Lt Edward Goy, was killed in the accident.

The postwar expansion of Green Belt controls ought to have prevented further development south of the Kingston Bypass, but London County Council had other ideas. In 1946, it sprung upon a horrified Surrey County Council plans for an 800-acre estate to re-house the bombed-out slum-dwellers of east London. Local councillors and MPs put up a fierce fight. They pointed to the natural beauty of the area and the fact that it had been specifically zoned as open space in the 1944 Greater London Plan. The LCC backed down and Crawley New Town was built instead.

So Oxshott survived intact as village rather than being absorbed into a vast suburban sprawl or becoming a mere adjunct to London's airport. It was a lucky escape.

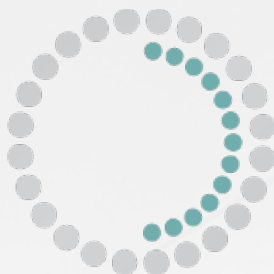
However, Byhurst's peaceful green fields should not be taken for granted. In 2014, influential pressure group London First advocated building 70,000 homes at Malden Rushett. Its Housing Task Force was chaired by Roger Bright, former CEO of the Crown Estate, which owns Byhurst Farm and much of the freehold in and around Oxshott. LF's separate report on funding the £30 billion Crossrail 2 scheme, which is expected to take over the Chessington branch, suggested: "Allowing more intensive development... around Chessington South, to take advantage of greatly improved public transport links, could create significant new value."

So once again Oxshott must look warily down Fair Oak Lane as schemes for expansion of housing and railways threaten the tranquillity that lies beyond Prince's Coverts.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the staff at Kingston Archives, Surrey History Centre, The National Archives and Leatherhead Museum for their help with the research for this article. Readers interested in William Chapman's exploits should read Peter Tarplee's article on Leatherhead Aviation Services in *Proceedings of Leatherhead & District Local History Society*, vol 7, no 1 (2007), pp26-32.

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The Entrepreneurs of Oxshott in the 40's and 50's (and more)

by Bob Jones with assistance from Ann Collis, Joy and Pete Redding (entrepreneur, painter, decorator and mine of information gleaned mostly from the top of his ladder.)



Budding Entrepreneur? Spring 1940, the Battle of Britain is about to begin. The writer in his back garden at No1 Little Heath Farm Cottages, Steels Lane overlooking the haystacks in the Rick Yard of Aylings Farm with the Brickfield chimney just visible in the haze.

Behind the unlocked front door of No 1 Laneside, Steels Lane you would find Lucy Ackerman selling newspapers, sweets and cigarettes from a counter in her hallway, her brother George, apart from sweeping the chimneys in the area also organised Newspaper rounds and sold Newspapers and Magazines from his wooden shack hidden in the trees just over the crossing (now Hazelhurst, Little Heath Lane). He had taken over the shack from Ernie Neal the cobbler in about 1950.

In a shed at the bottom of his garden at No 2 Crown Cottages you would find Tommy Wiles also cobbling boots and shoes; unfortunately Tommy spent most of his life in a wheelchair which he propelled around the village pumping the hand levers energetically. Despite his disability he was always particularly cheerful especially when playing the 78rpm records on his wind-up gramophone in the village hall for the Old Time Dance Club on a Monday night. Master of Ceremonies Albert Watling always did a cartwheel to kick off the evening!

For a fine selection of groceries etc. it was Brown's on Brown's Corner of course. Jack, Nora, Maud, Mabel and Vi ran the shop which was attached to the left of the house still standing, you could stock up with all the essentials (except alcohol) provided you had enough stamps in your Ration Book. Plenty of parking space for your pram or bicycle.

Behind the small door in the same house (still there) around the corner next

to the post box you would find, usually Vi or Mabel, behind the counter with cigarettes, tobacco, a glittering array of sweets in large jars full of liquorice allsorts, liquorice sticks, barley sugar, black jacks, toffees, humbugs, sherbet lollipops etc . also Walls Ice Cream, Lemonade, Tizer, Cream Soda, Ginger Beer and goodies of many varieties. If you collected the discarded bottles on the common Vi would give you tuppence on each bottle which would soon add up to enough for 5 Woodbines!

Across the road in No 8 Little Heath Lane you would find Mr Patrick selling vegetables, fruits of the season, eggs and honey all from his back garden.

Arty Simmons in his yard at the bottom of Donkey Lane (now Beechwood, Knipp Hill) would supply you with logs and gardening services along with his Polish 'Muscle Man', George the Pole, who could often be seen riding his racing bike around the village, he would only need one turn of the pedals to propel himself down the entire length of Little Heath Lane!

Opposite Arty's yard was Scrivens abandoned brick yard (now Pony Chase), home to old Ben living rough in his brick built shack with his Gladstone Doctors Bag filled with his treasured possessions. He and his bag were a familiar site up and down Little Heath Lane but beware of his walking stick!

At the top of Knipp Hill you would find The Griffin Pub which unfortunately was closed around 1939. Just for the record the current owners of the building have uncovered the old sign and are restoring it to its former glory – but not the pub!

The Oxshott Brick Company (The Brickyard) next to the crossing, probably the largest employer, started by local land owner and philanthropist John Early Cook in 1866 where you could buy bricks at 1000 for a farthing (spotted in an old ledger) although at this price it was probably way before 1940. If you worked for Mr Cook you would enjoy free medical care and at Christmas you would receive a goose, a ton of coal and a bottle of brandy. Unlike his rival William Scrivens who wasn't so generous.



Cook's Crossing c. 1910 – A view from Ayling's Corner.

Orlando Hussey (or Banjo) at his Gaydon Motor Works (now Hazel Cottage on Steels Lane) would take his time delving into his pile of carefully! stored junk and come up with batteries, bulbs, brake blocks and a myriad of bits for your bicycle, car or motor bike. Banjo's front room furniture included salvaged car seats from various vehicles that had come his way. His yard looked like a bomb had hit it – well in April 1944 a bomb did hit next door! (see The Lucky Jones' Fedora Magazine Spring 2014 also Allan Simmons account of WW2 memories on the Fedora website). Banjo's trusty two shafted 'truck' fitted with what looked like spoked 1920 Bentley wheels was always in demand carting furniture and other household effects up and down the lanes.

If you needed a taxi Mr Todd would oblige with his highly polished Daimler operated from his cottage in the wood (now disappeared) on the left just before the railway bridge down Blundel Lane.

In a thick hedge row behind the wood at the back of Todd's Taxi's you would find Bill Stacy with his two dogs, another village character living rough but cosy, amongst his pots and pans hanging from the branches. He made frequent trips to the butchers to collect a sack of bones for the dogs although I am guessing that the dogs didn't get all of them.

For a sack of coal you had the choice of Jack Rodda or Mr Taylor at the Station Coal Yard.

Instead of Lavender Gate on Steels Lane you would find H G and A Osman's builder's yard who would supply you with all manner of building services. Geoff Osman, together with Percy Chew and Wally Letts, would provide you with electrical services from his shop in the village (now Trenchard and Arlidge) including charging your acid filled accumulator battery for your 12 volt radio if you didn't have electricity.

The Oxshott Mens Club on Oakshade Road would supply you with a misspent youth around the snooker table (if you weren't careful) including occasional charabanc trips to the seaside, now called The Oxshott Club. If you needed a haircut Johnny Pike would oblige in the Club or, if you weren't a member Mr Price a visiting hair dresser would oblige having travelled all the way from Claygate (Mr Price's jokes were better than Johnny's.)



The Oxshott Mens Club charabanc outing c. 1956.

Jim Sawyer, Tom Brown, Joe Johnston, Harry Gray, Ernie Woolton, Bill Gray, Knobby Farrow, Chum Neil, Norman Viney, Johnny Pike, Jim Barton, Percy Chew. Squatting - Bob Jones (no relation), Abe Skelton, Jim Griffin, Todd Gray.



And the children of the members of the O.M.C. Amongst them are Caroline and Gordon Jones, Michael Woolton, Peter Gray, Tim and Heather Chew and Brian Johnston (with the cap)

A bit further up Oakshade Road Denise and Rosemary (Jenny) Wren at Potters Croft (opposite the new Royal Kent School) could supply you with a range of decorative pots and plates. They moved to Devon in 1978.



Aylings Farm House, fresh milk at the back door, bring your own can.
(if Prewetts Dairies had failed to deliver),
(Now roughly on the site of White Gables, Blundel Lane.)

The room behind the Village Church Hall (now the car park on the corner of Oakshade Road) could be hired for a variety of occasions it was also the Library, the Mothers Union meeting place and the venue for Whist Drive evenings.



Harold Harkett's wedding party in the room behind The Village Hall in the Spring of 1957.

The sports ground, apart from cricket, hockey, tennis, bowls and archery was the venue for the highlight of the year – The Oxshott Fete – held usually the first weekend in September. The Fete drew crowds from all around and was mesmerising. The fruit, vegetable and flower marquee was always spectacular as were The Dagenham Girl Pipers who strutted their stuff regularly in their mini-kilts! The loud fairground music blasting from the Carousel card fed organ along with the prancing horses mounted on twisted golden poles were often the spark for many a relationship.

For petrol at 4 gallons (18 litres) for a £1 (in 1958) it was the Garage in the High Street run by Arthur Aslett and Ron Holst. Up the alleyway next to the garage you would be drawn by the smell of freshly baked bread from Charlie Newman's bakery which was delivered around the village by Ginger the horse hauling the bread wagon ably assisted by Bert (Spooners) and Pete (Redding), Ginger knew the route backwards which is just as well as Bert and Pete sometimes got distracted.

Next door to the alley was Mansers the grocers later to become Cullens (now The Oxshott Village Stores). Then Mays Estate Agents later to become Barclays Bank (now Merci Marcie), then Jack Williams the Chemist (now Centre for Sight), then Hastings the Butchers later to become Grimditch and Webb (now Surrey Hills Butchers). For a Black and Tan or a Brown and Mild at 1/10 a pint (one shilling and tenpence or 9p) in 1958 it was The Victoria. Landlord Charlie Stear behind the bar with Cyril Ransom following (c. 1955), you had the choice of the noisy Public Bar, the Bottle and Jug or the Saloon Bar for quiet contemplation.

Over the hill the Bear beckoned with landlord Bob Steer later run by his son John, keenly fought Crib games on a Sunday night were the highlight for the evening.

Opposite the Vic' in the High Street you would find an Ironmongers, a Haberdashers run by Nora Strudwick (now Babayan Pearce) then Johnstone's Stores (now Charnay) with newspapers, sweets and cigarettes and then the Post Office (now Boyce Thornton).

The other side of Oakshade Road was The Teashop (now The Raja Restaurant), Helene's Hair Salon (now Trenchard Arlidge), Capels the Greengrocers and Browns Fishmongers arriving in the late fifties (now Swan Dry Cleaners and West One Bathrooms).

For Spiritual guidance you had the choice of the Reverend Gerald Ford followed by Herbert Evans at St Andrews Church. The small Catholic Church and Hall on Steels Lane (now Canterbury Mews), which also put on monthly dances of the modern ballroom variety complete with live bands on a Saturday night. Also the Baptist Chapel on Sheath Lane where tea and sandwiches were available to all on occasions.

Any spare sandwiches which were not hoovered up by the pigs in the farm opposite the Baptist Chapel would be swept up by Pat Wyatt with his barrow and broom always on duty from his home in Crown Cottages; Pat unfortunately had a wooden leg which permanently cried out for a spot of lubrication.

Sandwiches were also available at the Tea Rooms outside the station on Oxshott Heath which were popular with cyclists and walkers enjoying the 'quirky and welcoming atmosphere'. The combustible mix of creaky floorboards, timber

construction, log fires and cooking facilities sadly resulted in a devastating fire in the 80's.

If you could find your way through the pea soup smogs on a Friday night to No 9 Blundel Lane you might see parked opposite in the gloom the Fish and Chip van with its smoke stack advertising its presence (very useful in 18 inches visibility). How it got there in the fog is a mystery.

If you needed medical help Doctor 'Ginger' Berridge on Birds Hill Drive would be on call or later it was Dr Lytle from his house and surgery on Holt Wood Road (opposite The Oxshott Centre) or Dr Glover on Charlwood Avenue. Nurse Davis with her bicycle was also on call as the District Nurse or Midwife.

For the dreamers you had the Boeing Stratocruisers, Lockheed Constellations, Convairs and Viscounts from BEA, BOAC, Pan Am, TWA and others clawing the air overhead heading out of Heathrow destined for faraway places.

For adventure it was 'The Woods', Poly Apes or abandoned Bomb Shelters. For a swim it was a bike ride through the woods, across Sandy Lane, negotiate a safe passage with a snarling Alsatian loose on the common, across Esher Common (no A3) to Black Pond where you would find the luxury of male and female changing facilities, a diving board and mud oozing between your toes. Unfortunately the changing facilities developed 'see-through' walls in late summer due to the leaves falling from the brushwood construction!

Police Constable's, Arthur Mays and later Bob Jenner with his dog from the "Police House" on Blundel Lane certainly had their work cut out.

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DESIGN AND BUILD



OXSHOTT VILLAGE DAY 2016

by Felicity Bond

This year's Oxshott Village Day will take place on Bank Holiday Monday 2nd May. This family-friendly annual event is now a well-established part of the community calendar. All your favourite attractions will be returning again, including the fun-fair, jazz band, Punch and Judy, face painting, climbing wall, bungee trampoline and circus show. There will be plenty of eating and drinking options like the hog roast, afternoon tea, icecreams and snacks plus the Sports Club Bar. We anticipate having over 60 stalls this year, offering lots of shopping opportunities, and the chance to meet local businesses and organisations.

As many of you know, every year, once costs have been covered, OVD aims to make a donation to a local charity or organisation. This year our chosen beneficiary is the Cobham Area Foodbank. This local charity also covers Oxshott, Stoke D'Abernon and Downside – all villages from which many of our visitors are drawn. Most who live in this area lead comfortable lives, but sudden unemployment, illness or family breakdown can leave families struggling to put food on the table. A variety of agencies are authorised to give Foodbank vouchers to those in need, who are then able to collect provisions. As well as gifts of food, the Foodbank is always looking for volunteers to help at the distribution centre, the warehouse and with driving. To keep this essential community service operating costs money, and so OVD is delighted to be supporting this very worthwhile charity in 2016.

So join us for a fun-filled day out for all the family on Bank Holiday Monday 2nd May at the Sports Club on Steels Lane. For more details visit us at www.oxshottvillageday.com or catch us on Facebook and Twitter.

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Oxshott Village Day 2016

**A fun day out for
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**Bank Holiday
Monday 2nd May**

11:00 am to 5:00pm

**To be held at
Oxshott Village Sports
Club, Steels Lane**

**Adults £2.50, children
under 12 free**



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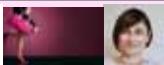


This little piece was sent to us anonymously. Please reveal yourself!
It seems rather apt.

The End Of The Vic

I sat at the bar with Pedder
on a soft night, half a lifetime ago.
We gazed through the door at the streetscene,
the orange lights and tall trees of Oakshade Road.
I don't know how the idle chat got there,
but I said this one thing for sure,
"If the buggers take down those tall trees
it won't be our village any more."
And now Woodman Pedder has left us,
and the tall trees developed away,
and Mike's bar where we sat and we pondered,
serves its last pint of bitter today.

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Cobham Area Foodbank - Learning Lessons in our Second Year

by Hugh Bryant, Foodbank General Manager

2015 has been a challenging time for Cobham Area Foodbank. Early in the year a new policy was introduced, intended to avoid a 'dependency culture', which required food voucher issuers to obtain clearance from the manager if more than three food vouchers were to be issued to a client.

As a result - partly because voucher issuers did not have time to make the calls required, and partly because the clients were put off - usage of the Foodbank dropped drastically. At the same time we were told, for instance by Oasis Childcare Centre and Cobham Centre for the Community, that many former clients were still hungry and without the means to purchase food.

The policy of restricting the number of vouchers was quickly withdrawn, and the previous commitment was reinstated, that we should provide food for as long as the clients need it and are unable to buy it, without limit.

We have recognised that the concept of 'dependency' is not relevant in today's circumstances in this area. Clients find themselves without enough money, even when they are employed; there are no council houses left, and all must rent from housing associations or private landlords, there being no limit to the amount of rent increases which can be imposed, and in circumstances where government benefit changes have reduced the housing benefit available.

We have, for instance, encountered a situation where a Cobham family, husband and wife (employed but on very low wages), with two teenage children, found themselves on a Monday with only a few vegetables to feed the family until pay day, Friday. We delivered food to them immediately.

We continue to work closely with Oasis Childcare Centre, whose clients are often the victims of domestic violence, mothers with dependent children, who need long-term counselling and support before there can be any chance of a return to work.

These sort of scenarios are becoming more common. It would be cruel and inappropriate to restrict the number of food vouchers, where there is no realistic chance of the clients being able to improve their own finances by their own efforts alone in the short- and medium-term future.

We remain subscribers to the Trussell Trust network. Our experience locally mirrors the Trussell Trust's national perspective, according to which the network is being refocused away from short-term emergency need towards a holistic 'More than Food' approach.

Thanks to the generosity of many donors, including St Andrew's, Cobham, St Andrew's, Oxshott, Berkeley Homes, RS Williams Ltd, FEDORA, Cobham Combined Charities, The Bishop of Guildford's Foundation and many individuals, we now have sufficient funding in hand to cover the next 12 months' planned expenditure. We will continue our efforts in order to build up an endowment for future contingencies.

The Foodbank has now rebuilt its client base - most weeks we are providing food for 20-30 people, including a varying number of children. We still need to try to reach old people, who may not be aware of what we can offer, or may be shy of asking for vouchers, although they are in need.

We are very grateful to our volunteers for their hard work, and to our many generous donors.



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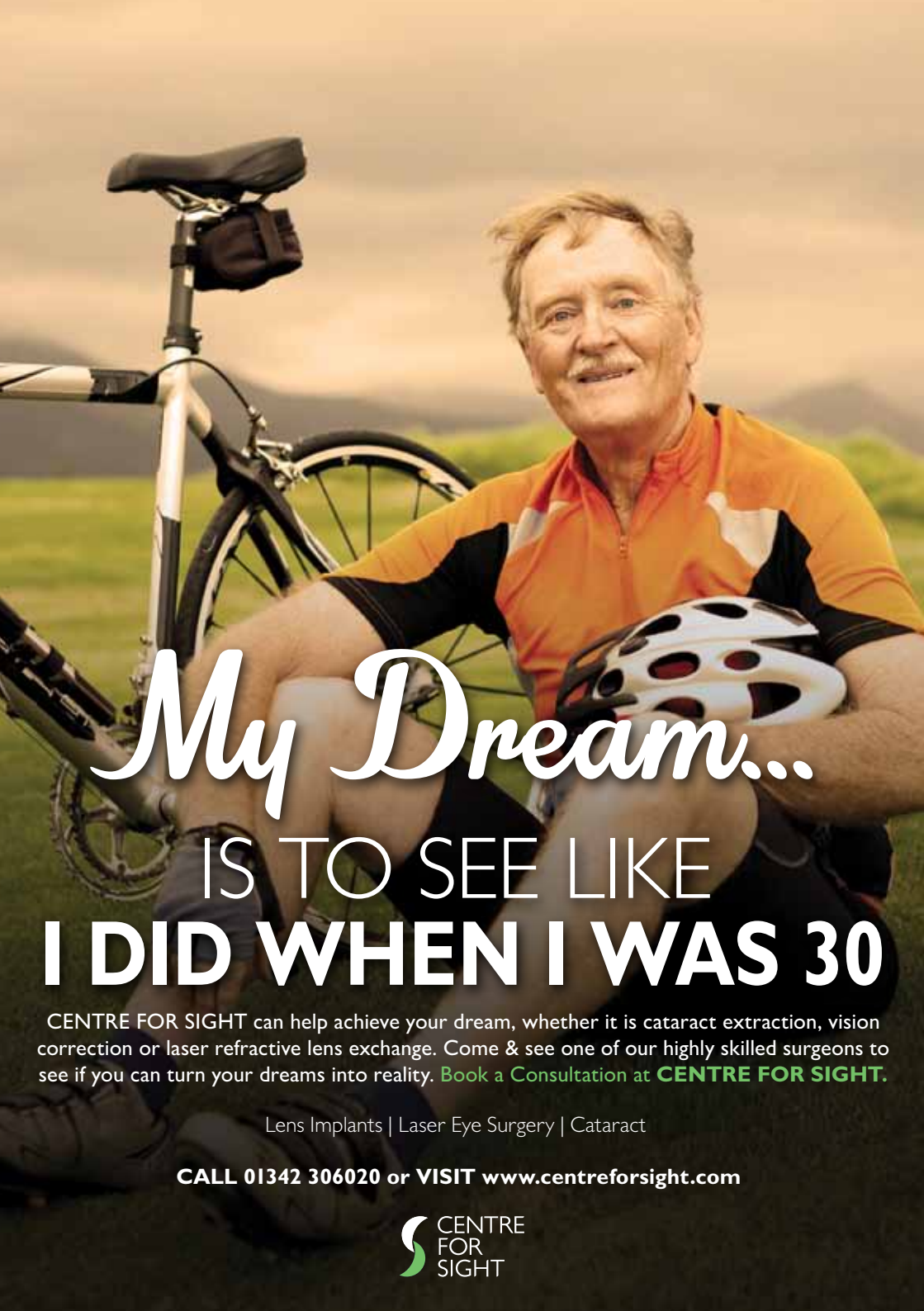
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My Mayoral Year

by Councillor Jan Fuller

On May 18th, my year as Mayor of Elmbridge will come to an end. It has been a hectic, fascinating year.

By definition, the Mayor is the first citizen of the Borough and as such represents the Borough at many official events. It was in this context that my husband, John, and I had the honour of being at Runnymede last June for the Magna Carta celebrations, attended by members of the Royal Family. Weeks later, we stood in Guildford High Street to celebrate Armed Forces Day. It was a magnificent occasion, giving us all the opportunity to mark the work and dedication of so many men and women. During the autumn, Elmbridge played host to 4 of the Rugby World Cup teams and I was honoured to be invited to the Guildhall in London to see Prince William present their caps to the Welsh Squad. Subsequently, I hosted a reception in Esher for the Italian Squad. A visit by any member of the Royal family is always very special and I was delighted, in February, to help Ashley School welcome the Prince of Wales who came to see their work on Environmental issues. In addition, we have attended events hosted by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, the High Sheriff of Surrey and all of the other Surrey Mayors.

However, this is a very small part of my role. Much time is spent visiting schools, local businesses, scout groups, Care Homes etc. all of whom seem to be pleased to see me and want to hear a few words from me. I have also had the immense honour of inspecting local air cadet corps. In addition, I have presented Duke of Edinburgh Awards to a group of approximately 200 students and long service certificates to many of the 600 volunteers who help Elmbridge to maintain their services. After 9 months in office, I had completed more than 250 engagements.

As an apolitical member of the Council, I chair all meetings of the Full Council. With 59 other members all with their own very firm opinions, this is quite a challenge but one that I have thoroughly enjoyed. There have been some very interesting topics for debate this year, including a proposal to reduce the number of Councillors from 60 to 48 with some resulting changes to ward boundaries. The outcome of this debate means that Oxshott remains unchanged although the Oxshott and Stoke d'Abernon ward has been extended to include some of Cobham Fairmile. As a result of these changes, there will be "All out" elections this year with all 48 seats being contested.

Fundraising has also been very important. During my Mayoral year I have been raising money for my Mayoral Charity, SPARKS.

Sparks raises money to fund pioneering children's medical research. 1 in 30 children is born in the UK every day with a condition which may affect them for life. Sparks supports clinicians and scientists who have the skills, innovation and passion to improve children's lives forever.

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UK and overseas. Each new project is carefully reviewed by both medical professionals and a panel of parents. This ensures that Sparks are funding high quality science as well as investing in those projects most likely to have a benefit for children and families across the UK and beyond.

Every child matters - that's why Sparks support research into any medical condition affecting children's health, from rare diseases to the most common illnesses.

So far this year, I have hosted a 7 a - side football tournament, a Lady's Lunch, Concert, Bridge Tea and John has hosted a Men's Lunch. In addition, on the run up to Christmas, Waitrose in Cobham offered me a bag packing day. With the help of scouts from Oxshott, we packed shopping bags for freight shoppers. This day raised nearly £1300 for my charity and I am greatly indebted to the boys who helped.

We will be holding a ball at Sandown Park on 19th March, a golf day on 11th April followed by a fun quiz night on 14th April. I do hope some of you will come and join us. I am determined to raise as much money as possible for such a good cause. Anybody who wants more information is very welcome to contact me at jfuller@elmbridge.gov.uk

My Mayoral year is proving to be a great experience but hand in hand with that I doing my best to maintain my duties as a ward Councillor. Whilst it is several years since I sat on the area planning committee I am still available to help with any problems that arise in local planning applications or indeed anything else and I work closely with our County Councillors where Highways issues arise. I have now served as a Borough Councillor for 12 years and I hope that during that time I have made some contribution to our community. However, I have decided that "Now is the time to say Goodbye" so I will not be seeking re-election in May.

Best wishes

Jan



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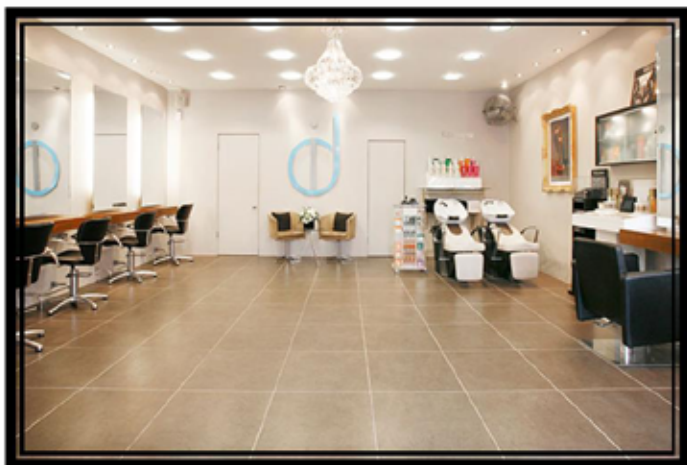
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BRIDGE CHAT

by R. Clair Sexton EBU Professional Teacher

REVERSE BIDDING

One of the more severe headaches for learners (and some quite experienced players) is the concept of 'REVERSING'.

Rarely properly explained, it takes on all sorts of mantles, most of which are incorrect. So let us try to put the matter straight, once and for all.

- (1) A 'Reverse' bid is a second bid (a rebid) made in suit of higher rank than the first bid
suit, either by the Opener or Responder.
- (2) It is a strength showing bid and is **100% forcing** for one further round of bidding,
- (3) It always shows a longer holding in the first bid suit,
- (4) It only applies to rebids at the 2 level (or higher).

You must not reverse if you have a WEAK hand as you do not wish the bidding to get too high.

Why should a 'Reverse' show a strong hand, and consequently be forcing?

Opener's Reverse

Let us look at a typical reverse sequence:

You	Ptn.	(Your rebid of Hearts is at the 2-level and
1D	2C	your suit is of higher rank).
2H		

The deliberate result of your bidding should be to say to your partner, "if you wish to give preference to my first bid suit (diamonds), I am quite happy for you to do so at the three level; thus implying that you are strong enough to play a 3-level contract despite your partner having a possible minimum holding of 9HCP.

Responder's Reverse

A typical responder's 'reverse' would be:

Ptn.	You	(This is similar to an Opener's Reverse. Your
1D	1H	rebid is at the 2- level and your suit is of higher
2D	2S	rank.)

Again the result is that you should be strong enough for opener to give preference for Hearts at the 3-level. The reverse bid therefore shows a strong responding hand, which can make at least nine tricks opposite a minimum

opening hand.

A further advantage of the 'Reverse' bid is that:

Because it is **100% forcing** for one round, it is possible to avoid other more clumsy forcing rebids.

e.g. with a very strong hand you can bid 1D - 1S rather than 1D - 1S
2H 3H
without fear of partner passing.

In fact, I don't think the real problem arises with recognising that a 'Reverse' has been made, but with realising that **you** are reversing when **you** make the bid.

Maybe it would be clearer if we look at a hand or two:

with	AKxx	As your hand is minimum your	You	Ptn.
	AQxxx	rebid should be a weak repeat of	1H	2C/2D
	xxx	the suit, not a rebid of 2S.	2H!!!!	NOT 2S.
	x			The total count
				may not be
				enough for game.

But if we strengthen the hand to:

AQxx	Now the rebid should be a 'Reverse'	You	Ptn.
AQxxx	in order to show a strong hand.	1H	2C/2D
Axx		2S!!!!	
x			Now, the total count
			will be enough for
			game.

An example of a '**responder's' reverse** would be:

Ax	After partner opens 1C, your response is 1D. If he rebids
Axxx	2C it is superficially attractive to rebid 3NT.
KJxxx	However, it is better to 'reverse' with 2H, which is 100%
Kx	forcing, especially as partner may also have four hearts
	and five clubs, and be a weak opening hand.

If you would like any advice, please feel free to telephone 01372 843 846,
or send an e-mail to reginald.sexton@ntlworld.com

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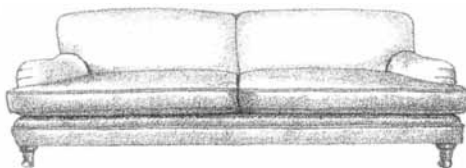
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