



## Bicester's Shopping Boon

The 26th November will mark 28 years since Crown Walk Shopping Centre was opened in 1988.

Some of you probably remember it as if it were yesterday, but the town centre has certainly changed a lot over those 28 years. Considering the number of empty shops we now have, and the number of local businesses that have disappeared, it can't necessarily be said to have changed for the better.

Just after the grand opening ceremony, which featured clowns, jugglers, a balloon race and a guest appearance by Rod Hull and Emu, the Bicester Advertiser ran the following article which highlights just how much things have changed.

Bicester was once a very ordinary market town, comprising a main thoroughfare, a triangular market place and a few side streets in which local residents could meet their basic shopping needs.

Now that simple image belongs in the past. Bicester has been transformed into a bustling shopping area with an intriguing network of small shopping lanes - all within easy walking distance of the town's large car parks.

Within the last decade Bicester has come of age, and now competes favourably with the shopping facilities of many Oxfordshire towns.

Crown Walk, the latest of Bicester's small shopping developments, is now fully operational and offers the same high standards in small specialist shops which can be found in Evans Yard, Wesley Lane and Dean's Court.

The architecture and overall design of Crown Walk differs a great deal in style from that adopted for Bicester's other lanes, passageways and yards. But then planners did not have to adapt their plans to accommodate existing buildings, small cottages or workshops.

Crown Walk shopping centre is owned by Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada and managed by Lambert Smith Hampton, a leading national firm of commercial surveyors. It offers the very latest design techniques and has been tastefully developed, to blend in with

FOR THE PICK OF THE BUNCH JOIN  
**ROD HULL AND EMU**  
FOR THE

**GRAND OPENING**

**CROWN WALK SHOPPING CENTRE BICESTER**

Tomorrow, Saturday 26th November 1988, at 11am

W.H. SMITH	MILLER & SANTHORNE
PETER JOHN WALLPAPERS	CANDY BOX
SOUND & VISION	BUYWELL'S STORES
THOMAS COOK	J.M. SARGEANT PHARMACIE
GENTE UOMO	JUST FOR YOU
H. SAMUEL	BALLOONS -
OCTOPUS BERRY	SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY
COMMERCIAL CARPENTERS IN HOUSE	BONUS PRINT
THE OVEN DOOR	OXFORD SPORTS

**BALLOON RACE**

CLOWNS  JUGGLERS

**CROWN WALK**

FOR ALL YOUR SHOPPING NEEDS

Bicester's main shopping centre.

There are 23 shops, each offering an exciting range of goods and the usual friendly service one comes to expect from Bicester.

One of the first things you notice as you enter Crown Walk from either the Market Square or car park is the wonderful perfume from the buckets of fresh flowers and the florist shops.

A spacious chemist's shop provides all the toiletries and perfumes one could wish to choose from. Photographers are catered for too, with a one hour development service available.

Purchasing food can be done with ease here. Fruiterers provide a self-service selection at very competitive rates. Butchers' windows are filled with tempting joints of meat, steaks, chops and sausages. And no shopping centre would be complete without a sweet shop.

Shoppers also have an excellent opportunity to purchase fresh doughnuts and all manner of baked items, either to take away or served with a beverage in the centre's spacious pine furnished restaurant.

In fact, with a jeweller, newsagent, fashion boutique, travel agent, wallpaper shop, electrical specialist and fabric seller, Crown Walk appears to offer the shopper almost everything he or she needs.

- Matthew Hathaway

- Article taken from the Bicester Advertiser, 25th Nov. 1988

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### Dates For Your Diary

**Drovers' Roads Talk**  
21st November - 7:30pm  
see page 5

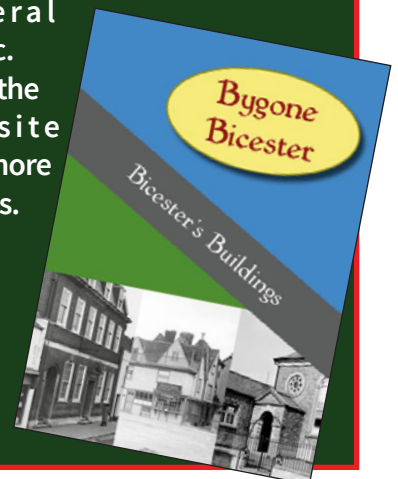
**December Newsletter Submissions Deadline**  
2nd December

**St Edburgh's Christmas Tree Festival**  
9th-11th December

**Festive Social Event**  
19th December - 7:30pm  
see page 5

### AVAILABLE NOW!

Our new DVD, **Bicester's Buildings**, is on sale now. £5 to members or £6 to the general public. See the website for more details.



# Village History Horton-cum-Studley

The village of Horton-cum-Studley lies about 7 miles north-east of the centre of Oxford, on the south-east edge of Otmoor.

It originally comprised of two hamlets, Horton in Oxfordshire and Studley, partly in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Both hamlets were originally part of the ancient parish of Beckley but the Buckinghamshire part of Studley became a separate civil parish and stayed so until it was transferred to Oxfordshire under the Reform Act of 1832, long after Horton and the Oxfordshire part of Studley had been separated from Beckley to form the civil parish of Horton-cum-Studley. The two parts of Studley were reunited in 1932 when the Studley and Horton-cum-Studley civil parishes were finally merged.

The oldest known record for the manor of Horton is a charter from 1005 that records the manor's agricultural land as five hides. However, the Domesday Book of 1086 has no separate entry for Horton as it had been part of the manor of Beckley since before the Norman Conquest.

The founding date of the Benedictine Studley Priory is not known, but the earliest known record of its existence dates from 1176, when Bernard de St Valery granted half a hide of land at Studley to the priory. At one time the priory had fifty nuns, but by 1445 their number had fallen to nine. In 1520 there were still only ten nuns and the priory was significantly in debt. In 1530 the debt was £60 and the buildings were in disrepair.

Under the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Studley Priory surrendered its lands to the Crown in November 1539, which sold them off in February 1540. John Croke bought the priory's lands at Studley and Horton.

In 1621 another Sir John Croke sold Studley to George Croke, who was a lawyer. Sir George died in 1642, leaving his estates to his wife for the remainder of her life, with reversion to their son Thomas and thence to other members of their immediate



St Barnabus' Church

family. Thomas Croke was a Royalist in the English Civil War so Parliament sequestered his estates in 1644, but they were discharged in 1646.

Sir Alexander Croke succeeded to the estate in 1777. Alexander became a maritime lawyer and was the senior justice of the vice admiralty courts of Nova Scotia from 1801: a term of office that included the War of 1812 against the USA. Sir Alexander also wrote satirical verse, many letters and a genealogy of his family.

In 1877 Sir Alexander's younger son John Croke sold Studley to John Henderson. In 1953 Studley was still in his family, with his grandson Captain John Henderson being lord of the manor.

Horton and Studley are more than 2 miles from the church of their ancient parish of Beckley. There is an isolated record of a chaplain serving Horton in the 13th century, but there are no subsequent records until 1553 when a chapel at Horton is recorded as having been there for some time.

Then, in 1639, Sir George Croke had the north wing of Studley Priory converted into a chapel. The old village chapel was allowed to fall into disrepair and by 1685 it had gone completely. Villagers worshipped at the new Priory chapel, and the residents of the almshouses were duty bound to do so or else half of their weekly allowance would be stopped.

Saint Barnabus' Church was built in 1867 on the site of the former

village chapel. This made the Priory chapel unnecessary, so when the Croke family sold their property in 1877 the Priory chapel was converted into a kitchen and offices.

The present church was designed by the Gothic Revival architect William Butterfield and is built of yellow brick relieved by red and blue brick detailing. It has no tower but there is a bell-turret at the west end of the nave with two bells.

Studley had a windmill in 1539, when it was listed among the estates of the priory that had just been dissolved and sold to John Croke. It was later recorded on maps in the 17th and 18th centuries and finally on the parish of Beckley's inclosure maps of 1827. Its site is marked today by the name Mill Field, at the end of Mill Lane.

Sir George Croke established the Studley Almshouse Charity in 1631 by an indenture that gave it an income from land at Easington in Buckinghamshire. The houses were built in 1639 for four local men over 60 years of age and four local women over 50 "well reputed for religion and of good character and conversation". A further endowment to the charity was added by Sir Richard Ingoldsby in 1668. The Otmoor Inclosure Award of 1825 added two acres and eight perches to the charity's endowment. The number of beneficiaries was reduced to two men and two women in 1880.

- Matthew Hathaway

# Bygone Bicester

(Taken from the Bicester Advertiser)

## 1st November 1856

AN OLD OFFENDER - Joseph Clarke, a blind inmate of the Union Workhouse, was charged by Mr J.H. Mansell, the governor, with misbehaviour in the workhouse on the previous day. The prisoner, who was brought up in custody, has been twice charged and convicted of a like offence.

It appeared that he had set the workhouse regulations at defiance, and used abusive language to the officials.

Committed for 21 days to hard labour.

## 6th November 1896

SOUP KITCHEN - It is proposed to begin the distribution of soup in the small kitchen at the back of St Edburg's Hall at twelve o'clock on Tuesday 24th November, and to continue it upon each Tuesday at twelve and Saturday at eleven during the winter months.

It is requested by the managers (Mrs Goble and Mrs Tubb) that each poor person, upon receiving a subscriber's order (entitling him or her to one quart of soup twice a week for four weeks), shall at once take this order to his or her district visitor. In exchange for this the district visitor will give eight small tickets, one of which must be presented at the soup kitchen upon each day of distribution. The subscriber's order must be taken no later than Friday 20th November, in order to allow time to judge what quantity of soup will be required.

For some years a few aged persons, who cannot take the soup, have been allowed instead a small piece of meat once a week. But, as it is not thought desirable to increase this number, only those who have received it before can do so again.

## 13th November 1936

BICESTER COUNTY SCHOOL REUNION - The autumn term reunion was held on Saturday, the Old Scholars engaging the School at rugby and hockey.

At half-time in the rugger match the Old Boys were

leading by 10 points to nil, two tries by A.E. Phipps and T.G. Harris respectively having both been converted by S.G. Alexander. Just on time Wickson dropped a goal for the School, Jenkins having previously failed to convert Carter's try, and the Old Boys thus proved winners by 10 points to 7.

The School put up a good performance in defeating the Old Girls at hockey. M. Causby and J. Pankhurst scored for the School in the opening half, and M. Morgan later got one for the Old Girls, who were defeated 2-1.

About 60 old scholars attended the dance in the school hall in the evening, the music being provided by the "Blue Racketeers". Mr G. Best was M.C.

## 10th November 1976

SHOP TRADE CUT BY ONE-WAY STREET - Some traders in Bicester have lost as much as £300 a week since the Causeway was made a one-way street, it was claimed at a meeting of the Town Council on Monday.

A letter from Mrs Rose McKeon of the Littlebury Hotel complained of a serious drop in trade since the traffic system was introduced.

Customers were no longer calling at the hotel because of the diversion and extra distance they had to travel, said the letter, appealing to the council to oppose the reintroduction of the one-way system at the end of the present trial period.

Miss Irene Johnson presented a petition signed by traders in the north end of Sheep Street, complaining about the loss of trade since the Franklin's Yard car park was closed to traffic from Sheep Street. Traders were losing money because the car park was no longer being used, she said.

When the one-way system was brought in, no one realised the effect it would have on tradespeople. It was introduced for a trial period of six months and there will be a review when objections can be made, said Mr Joe Leach.

## Marj's Memories Rigdon Hall

Rigdon Hall is now a private house on the left as you go into Stratton Audley from the main Buckingham Road but in the thirties, during the war, and for some years after, it was the hall where Scouting took place. Many children from Bicester and surrounding villages enjoyed time spent there.

I was one of a group of very young girls, around 8 years old, who cycled to Stratton Audley on Saturday mornings to go to "Brownies". We had no adult supervision for the journey but there was not a lot of traffic, apart from military vehicles. Bicester RAF Station was a hive of activity; the runway crossed the main Buckingham Road. When "flying" was taking place the road was blocked by a barricade. The barricades on the outskirts of Bicester were made of a very large tree trunk with a big wheel on the end, which could be manoeuvred across to block the road. We had to go through the RAF station when coming up from

Bicester and sometimes the barricade would be across and we would not be allowed to go through, but not being deterred, we would go the long way round.

Mr and Mrs Smiley and their daughter, Betty Rigden ran Scouting in what we called "The Scout Hall". In Brownies we had several patrols with nominated Patrol Leaders and Seconds. We learnt different things and sometimes we marched through the village.

The Smiley's house was further down, on the right, now visible from the road. We often went into the gardens where there were little pools that we named after our patrols, for example "Pixies", "Elves", "Gnomes" and the like.

When the session was over we went into the kitchen of the Smiley house and were given a mug of cocoa and sometimes stewed apple before setting off on our bike ride home.

- Marjorie Dean MBE

# Roll of Honour

*The following local man died in the Great War, 100 years ago last month.*

**Private Isaac Smith**, of Bicester.

Died: 7<sup>th</sup> October 1916    Aged: 25    Served in: Ox & Bucks Light Infantry

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

**Acting Bombardier Thomas Varney**, of Middleton Stoney.

Died: 10<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 21    Served in: Royal Garrison Artillery

**Private Vincent Ayres**, of Merton.

Died: 13<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Served in: East Yorkshire Regiment

**Private William Coles**, of Bicester.

Died: 13<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Served in: Ox & Bucks Light Infantry

**Private Arthur James Scrivener**, of Bicester.

Died: 13<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 25    Served in: Ox & Bucks Light Infantry

**Lance Corporal Ronald Anthony Walklett**, of Bletchingdon.

Died: 13<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 19    Served in: Ox & Bucks Light Infantry

**Sergeant Frederick Pym**, of Horton-cum-Studley.

Died: 14<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Served in: Australian Infantry

**Private Edward Duncan Righton**, native of Fritwell.

Died: 14<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 20    Served in: Royal Fusiliers

**Private Joseph Avery**, of Islip.

Died: 19<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 31    Served in: Gloucestershire Regiment

**Lieutenant Corin Henry Benedict Cooper**, of Upper Heyford.

Died: 20<sup>th</sup> November 1916    Aged: 24    Served in: Royal Engineers



## 2017 Calendar

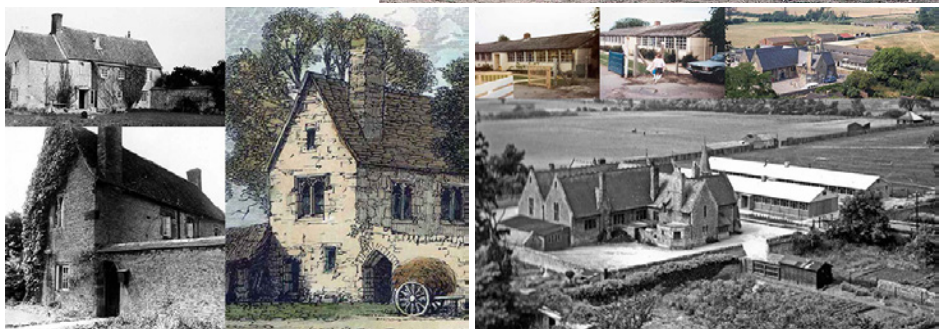
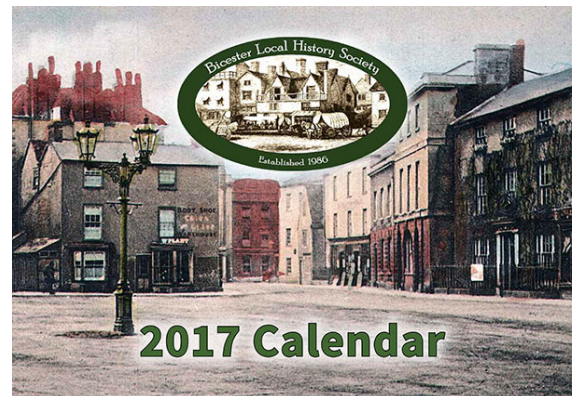
A year ago we produced a 2016 calendar as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations. A free copy was given to each member to commemorate the anniversary and the remaining copies were sold to members and, through Coles Bookstore, to the public.

These proved so popular with the public that Coles approached us this year to produce another calendar for them.

Taking our recently released DVD as inspiration, we have designed a calendar to showcase some of Bicester's more iconic and interesting buildings. Using old photographs and pictures to show each of them off in a new way.

We've also included the historical event information that we featured in the 2016 calendar and marked on the dates for our monthly talks.

The calendar is available to purchase from Coles Bookstore, as well as a number of other local retailers, now. They're priced at £6 each and the society will be earning commission on each copy sold.



## Talks Update

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

### Monday 21st November

Tim Healey visits us again, this time to talk about **Drovers' Roads in Oxfordshire & Beyond.**

### Monday 19th December

This will be our **Members Festive Social Event.**

### Monday 16th January

Tba.

## Mediaeval Women Talk

The talk, given by Rowena Archer, concentrated on the dichotomy which existed in the Middle Ages between women of rank and those from the poorer sections of society, the contrasting influences on their positions in social structures at this time and the gradual erosion of the fixed expectation of women.

The theoretical basis for hierarchical attitudes to women was derived from Western Christian sources, i.e. Genesis and the myth of Eve, the concept of Original Sin, and the monopoly by the church of teachings about the afterlife. The contemporary stereotypes attributed to women were those of the seductress, weakness and fickleness. They should not teach, preach, or even talk in Church.

In the 12th Century the cult of the Virgin Mary took hold. She has humility and accepts her destiny. The view of women's role was shaped by texts written by ecclesiastical men who had taken the vow of celibacy

since the 11th Century. Women were mostly illiterate so were unable to question these dictates.

Women who were unmarried and under 21 were subjects of their fathers; married women were subjects of their husbands. The ages of consent at this time were 12 for girls and 14 for boys, resulting in remarriage being common, but they were still expected to obey their parents. Women could not own land, be witnesses, make wills or contracts, and Canon Law allowed for wife-beating.

In practice however, for women to cope with the demands of secular life some of these rules and expected norms of behaviour had to be relaxed. In some exceptional cases hierarchy cut across patriarchy so that, for instance, the Queen governed a male Council. In addition, higher ranking women instructed servants and townswomen often had apprentices under their command.

During the heyday of the Crusades,

womenfolk at many levels of society were instrumental in keeping the country functioning, dominating the cloth trade, for instance.

In England, the law was mitigated to give widows over 21 parity with men such that they had expanding entitlements. They could inherit their parents' land, and Magna Carta already awarded them a third of their deceased husband's estate. In addition, in the 14th century a jointure could be set up at marriage which was a contract which settled a man's property on a wife to be enjoyed after his death.

Alice Chaucer (the granddaughter of Geoffrey Chaucer), through a process of several marriages and inheritances, accumulated great wealth with which she purchased a lot of Oxfordshire land. She built a palace at Ewelme in the 15th Century along with almshouses and a school which supplied scholars to Oxford University.

- John Roberts

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