



Issue: 88 May 2022

Bicester Historian

The monthly newsletter for Bicester Local History Society

Getting Back Out There

As things continue to return to a new normal, we too are getting back on track and starting to move forward as we had intended to back in 2020.

Since we resumed hosting our monthly talks in person back in March attendance has been steadily increasing, though we are still, understandably, a long way short of the numbers we used to get. But as we get better with advertising the talks things are improving, and this month's Alchester talk had 23 members and 12 visitors in attendance. For those members who are unable to attend we are still recording the talks and making them available on our website, though this doesn't seem to be all that popular so far. We still have two talks left before the summer though, and hopefully numbers will continue to grow over time.

We have also resumed a programme of walks and outings, beginning with Liz Woolley's walk around Lord Nuffield's Oxford in March (pictured) and continuing, thanks to the wonderful Pat Snelson,

with some guided tours around Bicester's buildings (see page 8). For which there are still some places available in July and August so get your bookings in now.

There are no village walks planned for this year, but for those interested in the history of any of the local villages we have started adding some village history pages to our website. These are just basic summaries to start with, but hopefully we can expand them over time as more gets researched. Also on our website is the photo gallery, which is desperately in need of updating and has been on the to do list for quite some time. But now that we've done a bit of work behind the scenes to organise things a bit better we can hopefully address that next. So if you have any photos, postcards or images that you think would be of interest then please do get in touch. We're always eager to expand our collection, even if it's just digital copies for research purposes.

Our other big photo project at the moment is a 2023 calendar. We are



Contents

Geoff Miles	2
Bicester's Boer War (3)	2
Talks Update	6
Bygone Bicester	6
Summer Walks	8
Bicester Reflections Talk	10

Dates For Your Diary

Bicester Market	3rd June
St Edburg's Jubilee Fare	4th June
	See pages 5
June Newsletter Submission Deadline	12th June
Bicester Buildings Walk (1st date)	12th June
Bicester Advertiser Article	16th June
Victoria County History Talk	20th June @ 7:30pm
	See pages 6
Bicester Buildings Walk (2nd date)	3rd July
Bicester Advertiser Article	7th July
Shelswell History Festival	16th July
	See pages 9
Career in Ruins Talk	18th July @ 7:30pm
	See pages 6

teaming up with Coles Books once again to produce one that we aim to have available ready for members to purchase at our AGM.

There are a number of events in the coming months that we will be taking part in to promote the history of the town and also to promote ourselves. Over the Jubilee weekend we will be on the community stall in Sheep Street during the Friday market on 3rd June and we also have a display and stand at the St Edburg's Church Jubilee Fare on Saturday 4th June. Then on Saturday 16th July we will

be taking part in the Shelswell History Festival.

With any luck those events will help us draw in more members to help bolster our numbers, which have reduced a lot since before the pandemic. But another approach we're taking to reach a wider audience is boosting our online presence. Our Facebook page has been resurrected and will be receiving more content moving forward. Any of you already on Facebook can find it at:

facebook.com/bicesterlocalhistorysociety

We will also be launching our YouTube channel in the coming months. Initially opening with some short excerpts from our first Bygone Bicester DVD, but then going on with some newly recorded items that will hopefully be of interest.

Lastly, on a personal note, I've also started a bit of a side hustle in the form of a local history blog. Talking about some of the things I come across while researching that I can't use here or in my Bicester Advertiser articles. Anyone who is interested in taking a look can find it at: www.bicesterhistorynerd.uk

- Matthew Hathaway

Geoff Miles

Geoff Miles, a BLHS member for over a decade, died on 8th April 2022, following a bad fall at home.

Geoff was part of the team that renovated the old Bicester Fire Engine (Geoff Miles, Dave Pearse, Peter Crook & Bob Hessian), and used the engineering skills that he had learnt during his time in the Royal Navy to help restore the 250 year old engine to full working order, just in time for it to be displayed at the BLHS 25th Anniversary Exhibition in May 2011.

Geoff also built model steam engines, some of these being displayed at local events and children in the area will remember being taken for a ride on a small "cart" being pulled by one of Geoff's fully working small scale traction engine.

Closer to home, Geoff would help set up the sound system for our local history meetings. Always willing to lend a hand when needed. A big man, with a big heart – I and many other members will sadly miss him.

- Bob Hessian



Bicester's Boer War (Part 3)

Continuing the reminiscences of Lewis Turney.

The Bicester Advertiser in 1900, in its account of the town's celebrations of the relief of Mafeking, also reported on an unfortunate incident that marred the festivities and involved a family whose surname was and continues to be associated with the town – Hedges. Frederick Hedges ran a jewellery business in the Market Square, and "For some time this gentleman has had the reputation of being a pro-Boer" the report related. On the day in question, he displayed a flag which "was certainly red, white

and blue, but the white parts of which appeared to have been steeped in red ink or some other fluid of that colour." The crowd took offence that it represented the British flag, soaked in blood. This was torn down, burnt in the Market Square, and replaced with a more patriotic flag. His home in Newport Terrace, Victoria Road was found to be displaying a similarly disfigured flag which suffered an identical fate. Naturally, he informed the police, but when he emerged from his shop, in addition to being booed and ridiculed, was pelted with stale



Lewis Turney, circa 1915. From a group portrait of the Bicester Post Office staff.

margarine, butter, rotten eggs, oranges and lemons, and several pig tails – presumably representing boar/Boer tails. “It is doubtful what might have happened to him had he not been accompanied by a child of tender years, but it is certain that nothing short of ducking would have satisfied the mob should they got hold of him.” The police guarded the premises while the victim cleared the shop window, packed up his stock and shortly after one o’clock “a truly pitiable sight, emerged from his premises and repaired to his private home.” He was observed later that afternoon, on the London Road, “skedaddling” away from the scene of his troubles with all possible speed. His wife and children left Bicester by train an hour or so later. “Passing the place of action between one and two o’clock was an unpleasant, if amusing, experience. One of the upstairs [sic] window panes was broken, and adhering to the shop front and walls of the house were great lumps of the bad margarine already mentioned, while the pavement was also strewn with it. Exposed as this was to the heat of the sun it constituted a horrible mess, and gave off a most offensive smell.” No mention is made of on whose shoulders fell the task of clearing up the mess, but it was considered a sight worth preserving, and was recorded by a local amateur photographer. The police managed to keep a clear space in front of the shop which was surrounded by a human wall on both sides and the kerb from which stones were thrown at the windows “with steady regularity, a great cheer bursting forth every time a fresh smash was heard.” This was kept up until the early hours of Sunday morning when “the shop window and that of the door were so entirely demolished that there was nothing in the world to prevent anyone going inside and helping themselves to whatever valuables they pleased.” The police remained on watch until daylight when the damaged shop front was boarded up. In vain did the party on the stage attempt to calm the “few of the crowd who had injudiciously imbibed to [sic] much alcoholic liquor”. In vain were two or three songs and a recitation rendered; in vain did the Rev T. H. Norton describe the Relief of Mafeking as one of the greatest events in the history of the nation. This was given up as being a bad job and the celebrations were concluded with the National Anthem. In his defence Mr Hedges stated that the flags had got wet on a previous occasion and that the red dye had run into the white areas and so had been the cause of all the bother.

The incident made the local newspapers outside of Bicester. Both the Banbury Advertiser and Banbury Beacon of the 24th and 26th May 1900 respectively carried identically worded reports, and Jackson’s Oxford Journal, also of the 26th, devoted most of its report to the Hedges incident. It argued that he had brought the trouble on himself by his open antipathy to the British and expressed hopes that the Boers might be victorious.



As an example, it gave his refusal to support the widows’ and orphans’ portion of the Lord Mayor’s War Fund and when “...a lady well known hereabouts for her benevolence and untiring efforts on behalf of the sufferers of the war, innocently dropped in at Hedges’ shop in the course of the round she was making for the purpose of collecting for the local fund ... He not only refused point blank, but proceeded to demonstrate to Mrs Thomas the evil of her ways, whereupon she quitted the establishment.” It seems that he was the only local person not to subscribe to the fund. The Boer War created nearly 5,000 British working-class war widows: three-quarters of a million pounds was raised by public subscription to support them. When roused, the wrath of Bicester was a fearful thing to behold, as was demonstrated by the riot of 1826 that led to the demolition of The Shambles. The Oxford Times, whilst repeating many of the details in the Oxford Journal article, went one better and included an artist’s rendering of the disturbance in the Market Square (shown above) with the offending flag being ‘captured’ from the upper floor window. Hedges’ shop is now J. B’s Barbers, next door to Bicester Wools.

It is not known for certain what became of Frederick Hedges and his family afterwards – the surname is missing from the 1901 Census return for Newport Terrace.

The Relief of Mafeking entered the national psyche, and it brought a new word to the English language: to maffick – to celebrate publicly and extravagantly – as the people of Bicester and the surrounding villages did. The Court Circular reported that “The Queen received last night, with the greatest gratification and thankfulness,

the news of the relief of Mafeking, after a heroic defence of over seven months by Colonel Baden-Powell and the troops under his command.” Even William McGonagall recorded the event in his own inimitable style, three stanzas of the longer poem quoted below:

“Colonel Baden-Powell is a very brave man,
And to deny it, I venture to say, few men can;
He is a noble hero be it said,
For at the siege of Mafeking he never was afraid.”
“And during the siege Colonel Baden was cheerful and gay,
While the starving population were living on brawn each day;
And alas! the sufferings of the women and children were great,
But they all submitted patiently to their fate.”
“For seven months besieged they fought the Boers without dismay,
Until at last the Boers were glad to run away;
Because Baden-Powell’s gallant band put them to flight
By cannon shot and volleys of musketry to the left and right.”

Lewis Turney’s notebook simply records that: “Heard as Mafeking was relieved on 17th May.”

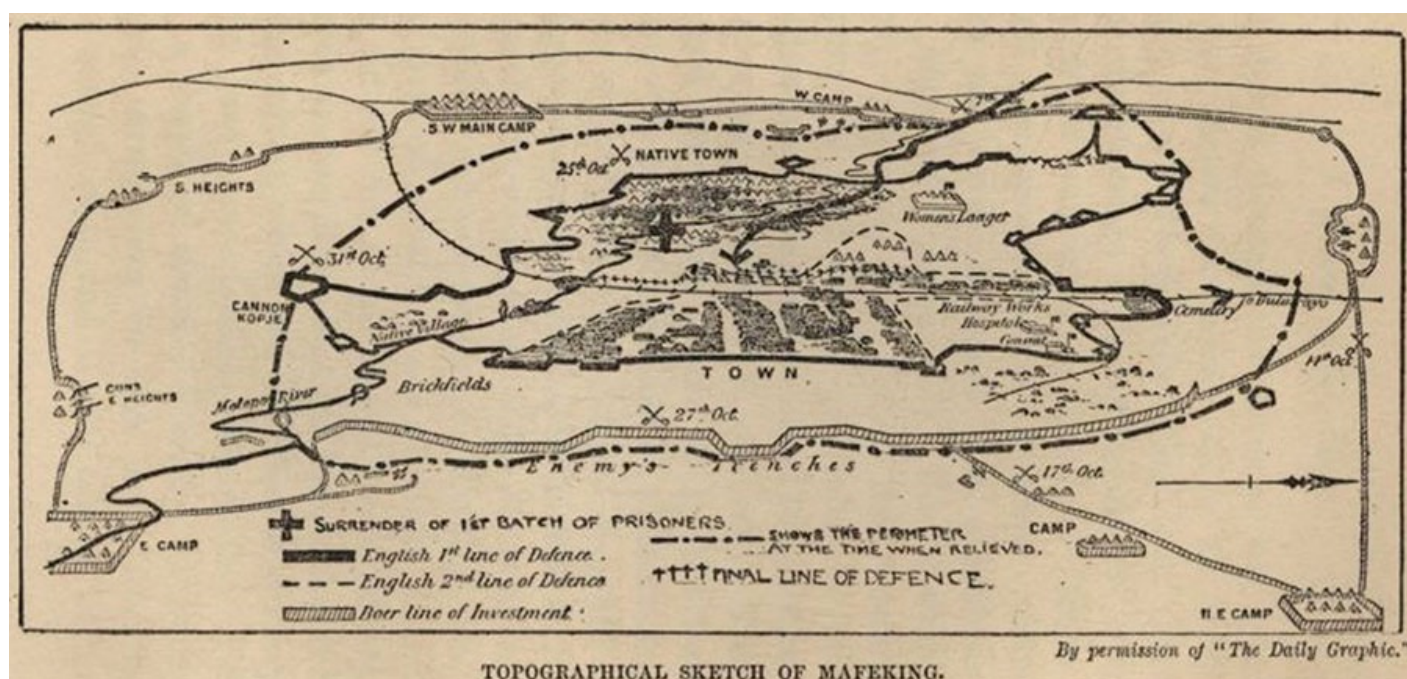
Following this, Lewis Turney’s notebook records that he left the camp at Ingogo, and marched to Majuba Hill, via Inkwelo, the scene of the Boer victory on 27th February 1881, commenting on the ongoing heavy shelling from the Boers. At 12 noon on 6th June he records that he heard the news that Lord Frederick Roberts, the Commander of the British forces, had entered Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal on 31st May, and that the, presumably British, flag was flying. Lewis Turney continues to note the ongoing heavy bombardment, this despite the heavy fog that came down during the night and lasted until late Saturday morning, 9th June. The next day, Sunday 10th June, he describes as being quiet, but on Monday, at 7.00 a.m., Long Tom opened fire, shelling nearly all day. The 155 mm Creusot Long Tom was a French siege gun (artillery piece) manufactured by Schneider et Cie in Le Creusot,

France and used by the Boers in the Second Boer War as field guns. Four of these along with about 8,800 shells of various types were purchased in 1897 and placed in four forts: Schanskop, Klapperkop, Daspoortrand and Wonderboompoort around the capital, Pretoria.

Lewis Turney records that the Boers vacated the Majuba Hills to the southeast of Pretoria on the night of 11th/12th June taking their Long Tom with them. Lewis mentions going past O’Neil’s Farm, where the peace treaty had been signed at the end of the First Boer War in 1881. On a more human scale, Lewis also mentions that on 13th June his unit had received the tents that they had been waiting for since 8th May. He continues; “We also passed the place where General Colley was buried, there’s a square wall built around his grave with a tree in the centre.” Major General Sir George Pomeroy Colley, KCSI, CB, CMG (1st November 1835 – 27th February 1881) was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Natal and High Commissioner for South Eastern Africa. Colley was killed in action, at the Battle of Majuba Hill. He continues; “Went on top of Majuba Hill June 16th 1900 in the afternoon & in the center [sic] of the hill is a small heap of stones where General Colley fell [?] ... in memory of 1 N.C.O. and 29 privates of the 92nd Gordon Highlanders who fell in action on the 27th Feb. 1881 and are here buried, a monument erected by the officers, N.C. Officers & men of the 68th Reg. in memory of their comrades who fell in action were killed or died of wounds received in action at Majuba on 27th Feb. 1881, the Boers held an excellent position which were something marvellous with walls [?] & entrenchments, and also at the top of Laing’s Nek were excellent trenches what the Boers had made.”

By 19th June, Lewis Turney’s unit was on the move...
[To be continued.]

- Mark Lewandowski





Join us to celebrate!

Jubilee Coffee Morning

At St Edburg's Church

Saturday 4th June ~ 10.00 am—1pm

*All your favourite coffee morning stalls,
plus*

*History Society, bottle tombola, games, plants,
hot dogs and much more!*

Talks Update

Unless the situation changes again, these talks will all be held at the Clifton Centre, with appropriate safety measures in place. Recorded versions will then be available to view on our website afterwards.

The recordings of our April and May talks are available on the website now.

Monday 20th June

Simon Townley gives an insight into various broad themes in the VCH's approach to towns in his talk on **Towns in the Victoria County History**.

Monday 18th July

Anni Byard covers her career to date as an archaeologist and ancient metalwork specialist in her talk **Archaeology, Artefacts and a Career in Ruins**.

Monday 19th September

This will be our **2022 AGM**, followed by the official release of our **2023 Calendar**.

Bygone Bicester (Taken from the Bicester Advertiser)

5th May 1882

WORKMEN'S DINNER

The firm of Messrs. W. And T. Grimsley, builders, of Bicester, on Thursday week last very successfully fixed a large iron safe weighing 3 1/2 tonnes in the Bicester Bank. To mark the event the workmen to the number of nearly 20 were kindly regaled to a supper by Mr George Tubb, on the Saturday following at the Red Lion Inn.

Mr T. Grimsley took the chair and the vice-chair was occupied by Mr Young. The usual loyal toasts were proposed and drank, also that of Mr George and Mrs Tubb and Mr Henry Tubb. At intervals some capital songs were rendered, which passed a very pleasant evening.

Mr Grimsley's health was drunk and the recipients of Mr Tubb's generosity dispersed at about half-past ten.

11th May 1917

SHOCKING RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT ISLIP

A shocking railway accident occurred on the London and North Western Railway at Islip on Saturday evening last. A woman named Sarah Jane Ford and her child, Thomas Roy Ford, having arrived by train from Oxford were crossing the metals in order to get to the village side of the platform, when they were run into by a light engine coming from the opposite direction, and killed. What makes the accident still more depressing is the fact that the woman's husband was a witness of the deaths, and is now left with a baby less than twelve months old.

The inquest was held at the Red Lion Inn, on Monday, the following jury being elected: Rev. J.H Carter (foreman), E. Payne, G. Wastic, W.M. Illing, T. Allen, H.T. Edginton, J. Medcraft, W.J. Tubb, H. Bagnell, C.G. Young, W. Miles and W. Webb. Mr A.H. Franklin was the coroner.

The first witness was the husband, Thomas Ford,

speaking with a good deal of emotion, who said: I live at Bletchley, and am a goods guard on the London and North Western Railway. Sarah Jane Ford was my wife and was twenty-seven years of age last birthday. Thomas Roy Ford, my son, would have been five years of age on the 8th of May. My wife and baby had been away on a visit near Bristol, and on returning it had been arranged that I should meet them at Islip, and that we should spend the weekend together at the residence of my mother. I went to the station to meet them, taking my son with me, and was there when the train arrived. My wife alighted from the carriage and handed me the baby (a girl). She seemed so pleased to see us there, and she kissed the little boy and walked to the end of the platform with him. I followed with the baby. When she got to the end of the platform she commenced to cross the line in front of the standing train taking the boy with her. I saw the other engine approaching from the opposite direction and shouted to my wife to stop. She evidently did not hear me however, and continued crossing. The engine then ran into them both, although I thought my wife had got clear. I may mention that she was shortsighted from girlhood.

Harriett Bagnell, a schoolgirl, was the next witness. She deposed: I was a passenger on the train which leaves Oxford at 6pm on Saturday. I saw Mrs Ford at Islip station also her husband and two children. My mother and little sister were with me, having come by the same train. Mrs Ford's husband took the baby from her after she had alighted from the train. My little brother who had come to meet me, ran on to the bottom of the platform, and I hurried after him, as I wanted to assist him across the line. When I got to the bottom of the platform I was stopped by the driver and fireman, as they had observed the approaching engine. Several people were behind me, including Mr and Mrs Ford and

their children. Mrs Ford had hold of the little boy's hand, and commenced to cross the line in front of the standing engine. The driver and fireman who had stopped me, shouted to her, but she did not appear to hear them, and continued to go across.

A juryman - Did you see the approaching engine?

Miss Bagnell - Yes, but not at first.

Continuing she said: The standing engine was shutting off steam. The reason I heard the driver and fireman shout was because I was so near them. I was standing against the far buffer of the standing engine at the time. I did not hear the whistle sounded. Very strong wind was blowing at the time. I saw the engine strike Mrs Ford and her son. It seemed to catch her first, hitting her left shoulder and head. She was carried a short distance.

John Sinfield said: I was the driver of the train from Oxford to Verney Junction on Saturday, with my fireman, Arthur Jarman. I arrived at Islip at 6:21pm, and when I stopped, my buffers were level with the public crossing. I first saw a man cross to the village side of the platform, then a little boy ran to meet him. I shouted to them both to stand back, as I could see an engine coming from the direction of Bicester. I next saw Mrs Ford and her little boy halfway across the line, but it was too late to stop her. I told the other passengers to stand back. The engine was over a quarter of a mile away when I first saw it. I did not hear any whistle, but noticed that the signals were down, indicating that all was clear for it to pass. I was not setting off steam at the time, but had my injector on, and was creating vacuum, in order to restart my engine. This would cause a slight noise. A very strong wind was blowing at the time, against the approaching engine. I did not actually see the engine strike Mrs Ford or her son, but saw their bodies lying across the metals after it had gone by. The light engine runs down about the same time every night.

A member of the jury asked witness if he was sure as to the direction the wind was blowing. He replied in the affirmative. Several members said they thought it was blowing towards Islip, and therefore if a whistle was sounded it should have been heard.

The coroner said he did not propose calling the fireman on the train from Oxford to Islip, as his evidence would be similar to that given by the last witness.

Thomas Foolkes deposed: I am an engine driver, and live at Oxford. On Saturday last I was driving a light engine from Verney Junction to Oxford. When nearing Islip I saw a train standing in the platform. I saw the people standing ready to cross, and blew my whistle three times, once for about 30 seconds. I came quietly through the station, still blowing my whistle. A very strong wind was blowing against my engine at the time. I saw no one cross the line with the exception of a man when a considerable distance away. I noticed nothing

unusual, although I imagined I felt a slight vibration when going through the station. I was on the left side of the engine. My mate suddenly called for me to stop, which I did within 200 yards of the scene of the accident. I have been a driver for nine years, and prior to that, was a fireman for twenty-seven years.

In reply to a juryman witness estimated that at the time of the accident he was travelling between eighteen and twenty miles per hour.

Frederick James Sear deposed: I am a fireman of the London and North Western Railway Company, and live at Oxford. On Saturday last I was on the light engine which was driven by Thomas Foolkes between Verney Junction and Oxford. I was on the right-hand side of the engine, and he on the left-hand side.

A juryman - Do you come to Oxford on the engine every night?

Witness - No, we are sometimes on a different shift. We have as a rule one week in a month on the shift, Saturday night last having completed our week.

Continuing, witness said: I saw a train standing in Islip station when some distance away. I heard Foolkes give a long whistle. I saw a man go over the crossing when I was some distance away. I always keep a sharp look out, in case anyone should cross in front of the engine. All went well until we were within ten yards of the platform, when suddenly a woman darted out with a little child, and attempted to cross the line. I shouted to my mate to stop, at the same time putting on the handbrake. My mate pulled the reversing lever back, but it was too late. I felt sure the engine had hit the woman. There was a slight mark on the left side of the left buffer. It was impossible for the train to be stopped quicker.

Captain John Harry Hebb, M.B.R.A.M.C., said: About 6:30 on Saturday evening I was called to the Islip Railway Station, being told there had been an accident. The station-master showed me two bodies, one of a woman and the other of a child. Both were quite dead, and the injuries in both cases were extensive enough to be the cause of death.

The coroner said no doubt the woman and child had met their death by the engine running over them. It was for the jury to decide whether death was due to accident or negligence.

After a short absence the foreman of the jury returned a verdict of accidental death, but added a rider to the effect that in their opinion there was not sufficient protection at Islip station for passengers crossing from one platform to another. They also expressed sympathy with Mr Ford in his sad bereavement.

Inspector Hall, of the Permanent Way Department, also expressed sympathy on behalf of the London and North Western Railway Company.

9th May 1941

LOCAL GARDENS OPENED

Gardens of a number of country houses in Oxfordshire are again being opened to visitors this summer, to aid the funds of district nursing. These are usually situate well within walking or cycling distance.

Next Sunday three gardens in this neighbourhood are open: Bucknell Manor (Mrs Babington), Shelswell Park (Mrs Slater-Harrison), and Tusmore Park (Lord Bicester).

The Bucknell Manor gardens are open every Thursday and Sunday from 2pm to 7:30pm, a small charge of three-pence per person, or 1s per family, being made. Bucknell is within walking reach of the town, and it is refreshing to spend an hour or two in such peaceful and lovely surroundings amid a profusion of flowers.

5th May 1989

U.S. MAY QUIT ESTATE

The USAF may pull out of 300 houses and bungalows in Bicester built specially for American families 20 years ago. So far the USAF authorities in West Germany have refused to sign a new lease on the homes. If they fail to come to terms with the owners, Threshold Investments, by the end of next year, the homes may be sold on the open market.

The Anglo-American estate, as it is called, was built by Bicester Real Estate, a subsidiary of Threshold, between Bucknell Road and Shakespeare Drive. There are 100 houses and 190 bungalows of various sizes.

Until recently the Americans also leased from Oxfordshire County Council a school opposite the estate. But the Americans moved out of the school after the American raid on Libya and the buildings have become King's Meadow Primary School.

A spokesman for Threshold said: "So far the Americans have said they will not sign a new lease. The 20 year lease runs out in December next year and we have been trying for about two years to get them to sign. But they are not saying very much."

He said that the USAF paid an annual rent which had been increased slightly every year to take account of repairs to the houses, which were undertaken by Threshold. The spokesman added: "But these increases have not kept pace with the phenomenal increase in repair costs over the past 20 years. The basic rent is still comparatively low."

He added that it was known that most of the Americans in the houses were due to return to the United States during the next 18 months.

"We still have not decided what to do should we be left with 300 empty homes, but I expect we would sell them rather than rent." said the spokesman.

The USAF at Upper Heyford declined to comment, other than to confirm that their authorities within the USAF in Europe in West Germany handled the details of the leasing.

There are more than 2,200 Americans living off the Upper Heyford and Croughton bases where they have houses and barrack blocks. Some of those living off base are housed at Caversfield. The Americans built 300 homes at Caversfield through a subsidiary of British developers, John Laing, and moved in during November 1987. They also rent 169 former British service married quarters and a further 48 former British officers' houses on two estates at Caversfield. The rest of the American families live in homes rented through the private market in Bicester and numerous villages around the Hayford and Croughton bases.

Summer Walks



We still have some places available on the second and third runs of Pat Snelson's Walk Around Bicester's Buildings, so book in now before they're gone. These are due to take place on Sunday 3rd July and Sunday 7th August, starting outside St Edburg's Church at 3pm. The walk then lasts about 90 minutes and ends outside the Methodist Church near the top end of Sheep Street.

Places can be reserved for the small fee of £3 per person, with optional tea afterwards at the Littlebury Hotel for an addition £4. Parking is also available at the hotel for anyone coming on the walks.

For further details or to book a place please contact Sally James (Treasurer), 14 George Street, Bicester, Oxon. OX26 2EG - Tel: 01869 243804 - Email: sallyjames46@hotmail.com

ART & HISTORY FESTIVAL



Saturday 16th July 10am-6pm

FREE Family fun day, vintage displays & stands

Our new location for the festival: Elms Farm,
alongside the A4421 in Newton Purcell, MK18 4AY

www.shelswellhistoryfestival.org.uk



ARTISTS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

An exhibition featuring local artists celebrating
the British countryside

artinthecountryside.co.uk

Saturday 16th July 10am-6pm

Sunday 17th July 10am-4pm

Bicester Reflections Talk

For our second face-to-face talk this year Matthew Hathaway took us through some of the visible changes in Bicester's streets and buildings that had become apparent through working on his recent book. By comparing old photographs with new, it was possible to uncover even small details that would otherwise not even be noticed.

But rather than try and describe them all here, it seems best to show you a few of the photographs so that you can see some of the changes for yourselves. Anyone who is interested in seeing the full talk can still find it in the 'Members Area' of our website.



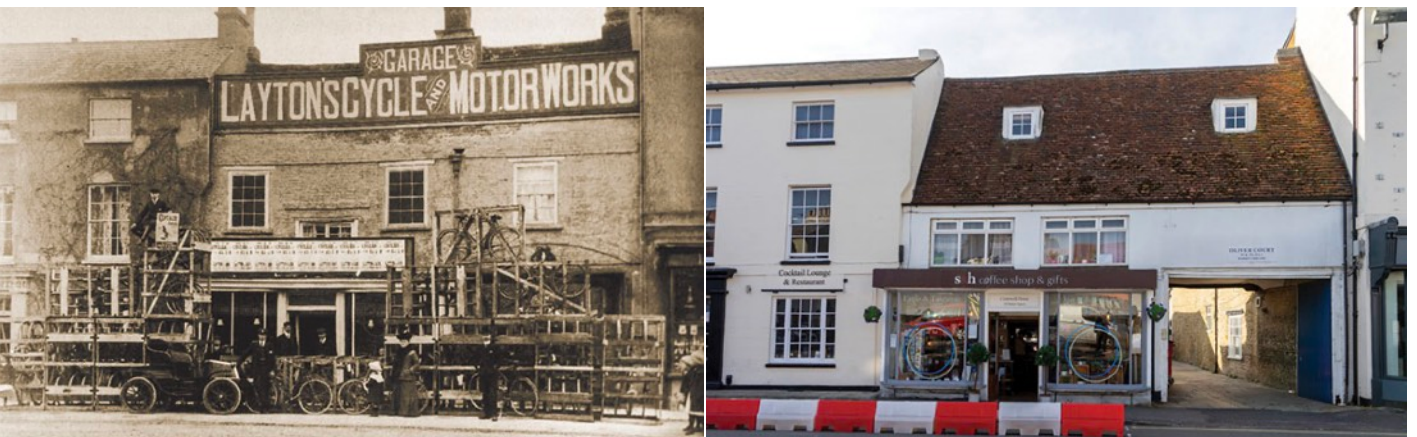
Oxford Road - 1910 & 2021

The obvious difference here is the right end of the row of cottages, where the end building has been completely removed and the other workshop bricked up. But we can also see that the building to the left of that has had its door and window swapped around, and the two cottages to the left of that used to be thatched.



St Edburg's Church - 1890 & 2020

Comparing these two views its easy to see how most of the old gravestones have been removed. Some of this must've happened in 1920 to make space for the war memorial, but all the rest were cleared in the 1940s to tidy the place up. The graves were left untouched though.



Cromwell House - 1911 & 2020

This building seems to have had many different uses over the years, and almost as many different appearances. Comparing old to new it would seem that most of the upper floor in the old photograph is fake. A façade hiding the

roof behind and making the building seem a lot grander than it actually was. The steep pitch of the present day roof implies that it was originally thatched, but that must predate the old photograph. So the building we see today is probably closer to the original structure than the Edwardian version was.



Sheep Street - 1910s & 2022

The differences in these photographs isn't quite so subtle. Basically the only buildings still there today are the White Hart, just visible on the left side, and the Island Block, tucked away in the distance. The George Hotel went after the First World War, Hedges Block was demolished in 1963, and Goble's was replaced sometime in between.



Evans Yard - 1910s & 2020

Alf Evans moved his fledgling business to these two shops in 1902, but by 1918 it had grown so much that he had to relocate to a much larger store across the road. But the alleyway between the two shops has been known as Evans Yard ever since. The big change to notice is the roof of the right hand building, where the top floor has been completely removed, but it's also interesting to note that the shopfront of the left hand building is still the same as it was over 100 years ago.

Committee & Contacts

Editor:

Matthew Hathaway
editor@blhs.org.uk

Website:

www.blhs.org.uk

Committee Members:

Bob Hessian (*Chairman*)
chairman@blhs.org.uk
01869 350662
Sally James (*Treasurer*)
01869 243804
Sally Dexter (*Minutes Secretary*)
John Roberts (*Membership Officer*)
Matthew Hathaway
Peter Crook
Mark Lewandowski

Meetings Address:

The Clifton Centre
Ashdene Road
Bicester
OX26 2BH

Postal Address:

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