

PAST TIMES

GALLEYWOOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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GALLEYWOOD MEMORIES.

Early in March this year Stephanie Troop and I interviewed Ronald Eve of *Well Lane*, Galleywood as part of the Oral History project. Amongst many things Ron talked about Galleywood when he was growing up, especially the horse racing on the Common. Also he spoke about his service in the Galleywood Home Guard at the mere age of sixteen years (shades of 'Dad's Army'?) and later of his service in the Essex Regiment during World War Two.

A month or so later quite by chance I discovered that Ron had written some of his early memories in a very early 'Past Times' – Number 8 of May 2004. So I thought it would be appropriate to repeat his recollections some thirteen years later.

"An interesting and exciting time for Galleywood children in the Thirties would be the National Hunt Race Meetings that were held on Galleywood Common, during the Autumn, Winter and Spring months of each year if I remember correctly.

We always had a half day holiday on race days. It was a very colourful time; hundreds of people would come to Galleywood. Golden Miller, I believe was stabled somewhere near the White Bear Public House. Cars and other forms of transport would line the side of the road from the Eagle Public House, down Watchouse Road to, and some way past the White Bear, which I suppose is about a 10 minute walk from the Eagle.

We would go up to near the Grandstands down to the start. Many were the time I would pick out the winner of the race just by the look and the number of the horse but we wouldn't be able to increase the size of our piggy banks by having a bet. We used to watch the bookies waving the arms about not realising what all these movements meant, of course. All in all we enjoyed the hustle and bustle of the day's racing and went home, tired out and ready for our tea and bedtime.

In the summer the annual flower show and fun fair was held near the Grandstands and beside the racecourse and the large marquees that were erected to display the flowers. Competitions were organised for the children, such as collecting the best bunch of wild flowers (a practice not allowed today!) and children's races were run near or on the racecourse. At Christmas the Galleywood Football Club (known as "The Woods") would hold a Christmas Party for all Galleywood children in the old Grandstand. A lovely tea was provided by the Football Club and then at the end of the party, each child received a Christmas present."

In his house in *Well Lane* Ron has a splendid framed Black and White photograph of a race crossing *Margaretting Road* opposite *The Eagle*, and prominent in the foreground of the photograph are two ladies with a pram. One of the ladies is Ron's mother and Ron is in the pram!

These memories of Ron's perfectly illustrate what the Oral History project team are trying to capture in all their interviews, so that these will be recorded on tape for posterity. By the way Ron is also a regular attendee at the GGN coffee mornings.

30th ANNIVERSARY OF GALLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL.

For those members, who do not live in Galleywood and thus do not receive a copy of '*Galleywood Grapevine*' may be unaware that on 1st April 2017 the Parish Council celebrated its

30th Anniversary as a Parish Council in its own right. Of the ten original Councillors two of whom later became members of the Historical Society – David Stevenson and the late Ted Hawkins.

Some other Galleywood news – the Galleywood Festival will be held from 30th June to 9th July. Also, in the light of our forthcoming talk on *'The Blue Plaques of Chelmsford'*; on 1st July the first Galleywood Blue Plaque will be unveiled at the Heritage Centre, which will be followed by another four at The Old School in *The Street*, The Keene Hall, Rous Cottage and *The Horse and Groom Inn* to commemorate the formation of the Chelmsford Golf Club on Galleywood Common.

Our Next Meeting

Wednesday, 14th June 2017. 8pm at Keene Hall:

'The Blue Plaques of Chelmsford'.

A talk by Nick Wickenden.

Nick Wickenden is the Manager of Chelmsford Museum at Oaklands Park.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

Wednesday 5th July.

'Gone For New England'

A Talk by Graham Smith.

I will be talking about Essex's long connections with America, which date back even earlier than the famous Pilgrim Fathers' voyage on the *Mayflower* in 1620.

Please note that this talk will form part of the Galleywood Festival and as such it will take place in **St Michael's and All Angels Church** and will commence at **2.30 p.m.**

Wednesday 13th September.

'One Day in the Battle of Britain' by Neil Wiffen

SOCIETY NEWS.

At the time of writing the Society has **eighty members**, (including **nine honorary members**), which is an increase of **six**

members on our March membership. Geraldine, our Treasurer, will be sending out reminders to those past members who have not yet renewed their membership. Our present funds stand at **£1,851.63**, which is virtually the same as our March financial situation and very healthy.

Whilst mentioning anniversaries, it should be noted that the Society will celebrate its 20th anniversary on **26th November 2018**. Your Committee will be looking at ways the Society can mark this special occasion.

THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT.

The project team has now conducted 16 interviews and all the interviewees now have their own personal copy of their interview. Furthermore, it is anticipated that by November of this year these interviews can be listened to on a lap top with head phones in the Ted Hawkins Heritage Room at the Heritage Centre. It is also planned that snippets of these interviews can also be heard on **The Listening Bench**, which will be sited at the Heritage Centre as from 1st July.

GALLEYWOOD GOOD NEIGHBOURS.

The next Coffee mornings will be held on 9th June, 14th July, 11th August and 8th September, which will also be the Annual General Meeting. As you are aware all take place on the second **Friday** of the month between 10.00 – 12.00 am at The Keene Hall. The Committee wish to encourage more people to come to **'It's Time to Chat'**. All our regulars enjoy the mornings when they meet their friends again and also make some new ones.

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GALLEYWORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President David Stacy.

Chairman: Graham Mundy. Vice -Chairman: Graham Smith.
Secretary & Programme Director: Gillian Parker. Treasurer: Geraldine Willden. Committee: Alex Gilbert, Ken Edwards & Stephanie Troop.

Any comments or contributions to this Newsletter would be welcomed by the editor: Graham Smith 28 Russell Gardens, Chelmsford, CM2 8DB Email: grahamsmith99@hotmail.co.uk