

# The Citizen



Newsletter of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association

June 2004

We are 80 this year -  
help us celebrate on July 10th  
Why not come to our garden party?

The venue is Woodcock Hill  
(Near the top of Durrants Lane)

The date is Saturday 10th July 2004

The time is 2:30 to 5:00

Sideshows - entertainments - free cream tea -  
tombola - celebration of 80 years of the BCA  
hat competition

Come and enjoy yourself and bring the family!  
(If wet, undercover, so no excuse!)

Tickets from 'Bookstack' or any committee member

Members £3.50 - Non-members £4.50  
(under 16 free if accompanied by paying adult)  
Or on the day/gate £5.00

Easy parking in Egerton-Rothesay School car park opposite  
Disabled drop off outside the house

Venue provided by kind permission of committee member Tony Statham and his neighbours

## “Berkhamsted Trades & Industries through the Ages,”

An Exhibition in the Civic Centre, Berkhamsted, from 8<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> June 2004,  
daily from 10am- 5pm.

Jenny Sherwood writes

On 13<sup>th</sup> December 1924 the *Berkhamsted Gazette* reported under the title “Relics of Bygone Berkhamsted” the success of an exhibition staged by the Berkhamsted Citizens Association, which had demonstrated, in addition to displaying old photographs and artifacts, “a number of old industries”. These included woodwork and woodturning, boot making, ironwork, lace making, straw plaiting, basket making and wallpaper making. Less than thirty years later, again under the auspices of the Citizens Association, a group of citizens concerned to preserve the heritage of our town, formed the Berkhamsted & District Local History Society, now the Berkhamsted Local History & Museum Society. A year later in 1951 the History Society held its first exhibition.

In 1924 Berkhamsted still had a woodenware factory and, if straw plaiting and lace making, together with wallpaper making had already gone, the town had a large chemical works and a large clothing factory, neither of which remains today. The forthcoming exhibition will trace the development of trades and industries in Berkhamsted from early times, when the Bulbourne valley was noted for its iron industry, to the present day. Documentation is inevitably somewhat sparse until the mid eighteenth century, when militia lists enable us to identify various trades and the names of those pursuing them. Nevertheless, there is enough evidence from documents and charters of the earlier periods to know that a market existed from very early times and that the wool industry was of considerable importance during the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Additionally the importance of the Castle must not be forgotten.

With the trade directories from 1792 onwards and the census returns from 1841 to 1901 we have a detailed record of the various trades and industries carried out in the town and of their geographic distribution. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards we also have a photographic record.

Patterns of trade changed markedly during the twentieth century. Industry that once formed an integral part of our High Street and the surrounding area is now on the edge of the town in Northbridge Road or Riverside. Most of the “corner shops” away from the town centre have now gone and the rich variety of shopping opportunities which once existed in our High Street is no more. Food shopping is almost entirely restricted to our two supermarkets and the wide range of other goods they stock has forced many smaller shops out of business. We have a High Street peppered with cafes, restaurants, estate agents, building societies and charity shops!

A number of artifacts from our collection will be on display in addition to some lent to us for the exhibition. Come and see William Cooper’s notebook containing his ‘unique’ prescription for sheep dip! We hope that the exhibition will provide a ‘trip down memory lane’ for older and long-standing residents of Berkhamsted, and also make children and newcomers to Berkhamsted aware of the rich heritage of the ancient town in which we live. Don’t miss this opportunity. Admission is free.



On the left is the scene we can expect along many roads in our conservation area next year (all day, every day!).

Add another bin per property, plus two smaller bins, plus the odd (!) vehicle - exactly where do they expect pedestrians to actually walk?

Oh yes, we also have hills, whereas this part of Hemel only has slopes!



During the expected warm weather this year, remember we did see some snow early this year

# NEW CHAIRMAN DECLARES WAR ON LITTER

- AND IT IS EASIER THAN YOU MAY THINK TO HELP HIM

**If you feel powerless to do anything about the litter problem, take heart, writes Graham Spittle,**

I hold the possibly controversial view that young people are not usually the cause of the litter in the streets of Berkhamsted. From what I see, they will usually make an effort to find a litter bin. But too often the bin is full.

When I recently witnessed black bags being unloaded from a car into two different bins filling them to over-flowing, I took the car number and descriptions of it and the driver, and noted the time and location and what I had seen happen.

I then telephoned 228666 and received a recorded message that they re-opened at 7.30 the following morning. Anxious to report the matter before the refuse lorry was dispatched and the evidence lost, I rang again at opening time. I was told that all that was required was a report that a bin appeared to have been misused in the way I described. They will then send an investigator, who will search the refuse for clues as to its origin, and the perpetrator will be fined.

There is no need to witness the wrong-doing and no need to take a description.

So you can all help; with a minimum of effort.

What is more, if it becomes known that the public will do this, it will be a powerful disincentive against the misuse of our town's litter bins. These will then be available for their proper purpose of keeping litter off our streets.

You know what to do. You know the number. Tell others; as many as possible. Together we can make a difference.

DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S NUMBER FOR REPORTS IS 228666.

A vehicle registration number and other particulars will, obviously, be helpful, if the refuse may be difficult to trace.

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## **Our suspicions confirmed (continued)**

*Norman Cutting reports:*

I'm not sure I can believe what the Borough/County Councils are now doing to our roads.

First they start by putting yellow lines over the small number of 'parking areas' we do have; then they remove existing yellow lines which should remain; then they change the colour to a 'nice' bright yellow (which look suspiciously like 'conservation area' style - hurrah). Our Town Clerk told me that it would be referred to the next 'Liaison Committee' and I should report other problems to the 'Information Point'.

On the other hand, some of our street light columns are being replaced and the odd pothole loosely filled

with black granules, so we should be grateful for the efforts of our highly visible Town Warden.

Oh yes, the official Dacorum skateboard park will now be in.....Gadebridge Park - just a few minutes drive from all parts of the Borough.

To be fair, we do have a shortage of 'public open space' in the town, so I suppose the idea of building anything in the existing areas would be difficult to justify. Perhaps it would be better to fund existing facilities for our young people - such as the Youth Club and/or Gatecrashers rather than let them die as 'they are not our responsibility'.

The trouble is, that even the old Berkhamsted Urban District Council had a similar attitude - I know, I was one of the young people affected.

## Activities Sub-Committee

Rita Jones reports

As you will see from the cover, we are celebrating 80 years of the Citizens Association with a Garden Party in the grounds of Woodcock Hill. The estate itself dates from 1607, but the house was built in the first half of the 19th century. The house and grounds are well hidden and in private ownership, so not normally open to the public. We are grateful that committee member Tony Statham and his neighbours are letting us use the grounds and barn for the Garden Party, giving us all the rare opportunity to see the attractive gardens, the outside of the house and the views across the valley. Arrangements are well underway, including entertainments throughout the afternoon, sideshows, cream teas/coffee/fruit juice (see below), additional drinks (including fruit cup), for sale, and, finally, celebration cake for the toast to the BCA and prize presentation at 4.15p.m.

We are planning a sociable and entertaining afternoon so please enter into the spirit of the occasion and join the committee in **wearing a decorated HAT celebrating 80 years of the BCA. THERE WILL BE A PRIZE.**

Entry is by ticket (Members £3.50, Non-members £4.50), which includes a cream tea. They will be available from June 19th at 'The Bookstack', Graham Spittle's Office (10am-4pm Mon-Fri) or from other committee members. Please remember your **Membership Card** when buying your ticket. On the day, tickets will be sold at the entrance for £5 for all. Do consider bringing your friends, even if they are not members, and all the family. Remember under 16's have **free entry** if accompanied by an adult. Don't worry if it rains as we can all move to the barn. There will be a disabled drop-off point in the grounds.

### **\*VOLUNTEERS NEEDED\***

If any member would be prepared to give up half an hour during the afternoon, to help with stewarding, sideshows, serving etc. please let a committee member know before or on the day.

### Christmas Celebrations

The Activities Committee were pleased that the future of the BCA Christmas Celebrations was raised at the open forum part of the AGM. We have always tried to vary the entertainment (2002, an excellent 'classical' choir and 2003, the jollier 'songs from the shows'), and a new layout of smaller tables and the introduction of a quiz, enhanced last year's celebration. The discussion indicated that changes would be welcome. At least half of those present even agreed to a complete change of date, as the weeks before Christmas are always busy, and the competition from other attractions is huge. Please think about this during the next year and pass on any ideas you may have to a committee member. This is a celebration for all members and we should like to know what you want, as well as trying out our own ideas.

This year the Christmas Celebration will be in the Great Hall of the Town Hall on Saturday December 4th. We are grateful to the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society who have invited us to share their speaker Derek Fowlds of ITV's 'Heartbeat' fame, who will talk about his early days in Berkhamsted in 'A Berko Boy Remembers'. Further details will be available nearer the day.

### Meetings Past and Future

The last talk of this season was a welcome return of Nick Siney. Unfortunately his slides for the advertised talk on 'Bricks: Restoring the Past' were stolen. In spite of that he gave a very interesting and informative talk, with a brief recap on brick manufacture and on some of their projects. The good news is that he is prepared to make a return visit complete with slides.

We have arranged the following dates for the 2004/5 meetings - full details with the next issue:

October 14th, November 17th, February 24th and April 14th.

Please note that we are moving the meetings from the Great Hall to the Sessions Hall or Clock Room, apart from the AGM on March 17th and the shared talk with the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society as part of our Christmas celebration on December 4th. Both these rooms take up to a 100 people so should be of sufficient size for our meetings, and will be a great saving.

Please do put these dates in your diaries and we look forward to meeting you all on July 10th.

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Derrick Smith

Mr Derrick Smith who was a member of the Management Committee of the Association for five years, passed away suddenly on 9th April 2004.

A memorial and thanksgiving service was held at St Peter & St Paul Church, Little Gaddesden on 22nd April, at which the Association was represented. The service was well attended by Derricks' many friends and business associates.

Derrick was an architect, who practiced locally. He was a family man and many enjoyed his remarkable sense of humour. He was most generous and always prepared to help those who sought his assistance.

It has been said 'How empty the world already seems without our Derrick'.

We tender our condolences to his widow, Doreen, and his two sons, Greg and Rod.

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### Contributions to:

The Citizen

c/o 15 Chestnut Drive, BERKHAMSTED, HP4 2JL

E-mail: [bca@normcall.com](mailto:bca@normcall.com)

Web site: <http://www.bca.normcall.com>

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Chairman: Graham Spittle, 85/87 High Street, HP4 2DF Tel: 871344

Membership Secretary: Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby, 38 Kitsbury Road, HP4 3EA Tel: 865882

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association

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