

Elstree & Borehamwood Museum Friends Newsletter January 2014 Issue Number 4



A NEW MUSEUM at 96 SHENLEY ROADNOW OPEN!

The new Elstree and Borehamwood museum at 96 Shenley Road opened on Monday, 18th November 2013. It is housed in the three storey building and located on the top floor in a self contained area. Work was still in progress but the public were able to enter and enjoy the state of the art interior. The ground floor has a large reception desk plus a coffee lounge and a small exterior patio & garden, which will open in the new year. At the rear is a large hall available for functions.

The new museum is similar in size to the original one in Drayton Road with all available space cleverly utilised to present an excellent variety of photographs and displays for the interest of our visitors.

As shown in the picture there is a high level frieze of local places, people and events. Under this the museum photographic displays include two large aerial views of the town in the 1960's which have proved very popular, showing as they do, the considerable changes that have taken place in the Borehamwood area over the last 50 years. There are also features on prominent people associated with the locality, the history of local public houses and schools (some long since demolished), the growth of Elstree and Borehamwood and a time line detailing the development of the area from prehistoric times.

Glass fronted units and drawers house items of historical interest and these displays can be changed on a regular basis to provide alternative presentations.



The new Museum Interior

Two large screens at the rear of the museum provide visitors with scenes from films made in Borehamwood and interviews with prominent people in the film industry who have associations with the town. A touch screen computer will enable visitors to view photographs and videos of our town.

There are many articles for sale at the reception desk including histories of the Borehamwood & Elstree film industry, cards by a local artist and also fridge magnets. Old photographs of Borehamwood and Elstree are also available to view and purchase.

Since opening many visitors have enjoyed their experience at the new museum and some have shown considerable knowledge of our history. Museum Manager Dave Armitage said "We are very encouraged by the public response with over 1400 visitors to date".

90 Years of Jam and Jerusalem

The Borehamwood Women's Institute held its first meeting on **12th October 1923** at All Saints Church Hall and recently celebrated its 90th Birthday.

A committee was formed with Mrs Wellington as President and Miss Jarrow as Vice President. At the first December Meeting members witnessed 'How to make a Christmas Pudding' which cost £1.10 shillings and six members sang. The Bring & Buy Sale stall made of profit of 16 shillings.

The Year's programme was prepared including a Trip to the Wembley Exhibition and help was given to the Elstree Flower Show assisting Aldenham WI with the Clockwork Golf Competition. Other notable events of the year was the purchasing of Crockery and the recovering of hats (an essential item of women's clothing at the time). First Aid Instruction to help care for the sick was given by a nurse, as Doctors visits were very expensive.



Founding members of the Borehamwood Women's Institute in 1923

1925: Dancing, Whist Drives and speakers were included in the programme and a choir was formed. Borehamwood won the County Talent Competition and the prize was a ton of coal. A Drama Section was also formed and meetings were closed with the singing of the National Anthem. A unique 'Best Supper Competition' for one person totalled the princely sum of 6d (sixpence) was held at such a meeting. A Thrift Club was also formed. By **1929** membership had grown to 107.

1930's: The Minstrel Group was formed and they also collected 160 Eggs for Wellhouse Hospital for Elderly Ladies. An outing was held to the Port of London. The Choir attained 4th Place at the Musical Festival and plants were given for the War Memorial. The Potato Competition made a four shilling profit. Mrs Sands showed fellow members how to make loose covers for furniture. At a **1937** meeting members were entertained by the St. Dunstan's Blind Concert Party. At the Hatfield Produce Show members obtained 34 first places and 9 second place prizes.

1939: A Christmas Party was held for 100 children who went home with a bun and an orange. Jam, eggs and cakes were collected for the Pawling Home.

The declaration of War meant that afternoon meetings were held at the Baptist Hall. Cloth was collected for the First Aid Post. National Savings were started and woollen comforters knitted for the forces. WI was given 4 cwt of sugar to make Jam from fruit collections. Hot Water Bottles were collected for First Aid Casualties. Instead of previously donating eggs and Jam to Pawling Home they requested Spilt Peas, Haricot Beans and lentils.

1940's: Knitting for the forces was ongoing and a social for the Land Girls was to be arranged. At Christmas, 24 toys were donated for Red Cross Distribution. In **1944** Mr Lancashire, Clerk of Elstree Council asked WI members to help at the British Restaurant. Hertfordshire County WI appealed for

emergency volunteer WI members. 10 tickets were offered to members to visit a factory making houses. In **1945** a written request was received from a devastated Holland resulting in Members collecting gifts for them. Also requests were made by the ERDC (Elstree Rural District Council) for ideas to construct a village hall including a Kitchen, Craft Rooms, and welfare facilities.

During the **1950's** the population of the area increased substantially as many Londoners moved here to the new council estates being built. In **1952** ERDC wanted suggestions for the Railway Station Sign which was originally Borehamwood for Elstree. Crosse & Blackwell's provided a guest Speaker. **1957** marked the 35th Birthday of the WI. In **1958** a trip to see 'My Fair Lady' was arranged. Raffle Profits were sent to the Philippines Scout Rally.

1960's: Membership had grown to 200 and evening entertainment ranged from Cooking Demonstrations to Fashion including Spirella and the use of 'Formica in the Home'.

By 1970 membership had dropped to 97. The Drama Group were still doing Pantomimes and talks included Eastern Gas, Green Shield Stamps and Love Spoons.

1983 marked the 60th Birthday and a talk called 'Hunting Treasure with a Metal Detector'.

During 1990 members attended the Family Fun Day at the Bowes-Lyons Home, St. Paul's Walden Bury and it was a great success. At the December meeting members were entertained by Mr John Heddle Nash, an Opera Singer who had sang for the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace and Sandringham. The new Millennium 2000 Strathglade Dancing Group entertained members and talks included "Bats in the Belfry" and Tudor Fashions.

We hope to see an increase in membership as our 90th year begins.



Current members from left to right: Janet Martin (Acting Treasurer), Wynn Botterell, Pauline Ashbolt, Betty Hayward, Elsie Roberts (President), Christine Smith and Florrie Cowley (Secretary)

90 Years

*Boreham Wood was a village small
With cottages, farms, pubs and hall
Then from London the railway came
And village life was not the same*

*Our air was pure, with London near
Soon Film Studios did appear
The village glimpsed, on silver screen
And many famous faces seen*

*Women tired of their daily round
Decided a club they would found
In nineteen twenty three, a group
Formed our Women's Institute*

*Friendships are made in our WI
Hobbies, drama and crafts we try
Monthly programmes for our leisure
Full of interest, joy and pleasure*

*Buildings now the fields do cover
We're a town in Hertsmere Borough
But as the years go swiftly by
We still enjoy our W.I.*

Florence Cowley - October 2013

2013 Activities in Brief....

In October the Museum provided a Power Point presentation entitled 'Boreham Wood Then and Now' for the Dementia and Alzheimer's Awareness Day event held at the Community Shop in Leeming Road. Shanie Huttan, organiser of the event said it was a fantastic presentation which encouraged plenty of discussion and re-awakening of memories.

In November, Vania Ermolly, Community Learning Officer, David Armitage and Alan Lawrence presented an Armistice Day Presentation to the staff and pupils of Cowley Hill School. Teacher Moira McCarthy said 'A lovely assembly'. Many of the children and staff remarked on the poignancy of the assembly. The children really loved finding out about real local people.

Cowley Hill School has offered to work with Vania and the Education Team as the Museum's pilot school and plans are underway to put together resource loan boxes and educational resources to be used in classrooms in line with the National Curriculum.

Both an education pack and flyers for all primary and secondary schools on Boreham Wood and Elstree has been produced by Vania. She is hopeful that more schools will be involved with the museum. Flyers will also be issued to Local Community groups in the New Year.

*The Museum provides talks and presentations on local history to community groups, social clubs, care homes and charities. Please contact Vania Ermolly, Community Learning Officer on **Email: v.ermolly@btinternet.com** or **Mobile: 07842051231.***

*For presentations on various aspects of the local film and television heritage, contact Elstree Screen Heritage at:
www.elstreescreenheritage.org*

Thanks for the Memories!

Thirteen years (and one day on) since we opened on 11th November 2000, the original Museum in Drayton Road was the venue to meet and reminisce with the earlier stewards, committee members, faithful visitors and to remember former members of the team with their great contributions to recording our local history, including the superb photographic collection, compiled by David Taylor.

Many of our guests had contributed information, photographs and knowledge of the area for our displays, were researchers, or spent time at the front desk.

Our old friend Peter Beal, photographer with our former neighbour, the Elstree and Borehamwood Post, visited with reporter Ruth Halkon.

Cute baby Eva, grand daughter of a Museum helper was an appealing subject for Peter's many photographs, involving various Museum people.

One welcome guest, Mrs Olive Koziel nee Greenfield, was our very first ever visitor - in 2000, before we were officially open. Olive that day, told the editor next door of her sailor brother, the first WW2 fatality from Borehamwood. Editor Rod, said she must tell us as we were due to open on Armistice Day.

This may have been the start of the extensive research by our colleagues, Deborah and David Taylor. They visited cemeteries of the two World wars and then created the 'Debt of Honour' collection, on local men killed in conflict. This project, still in progress will have a special cabinet in the Museum.

Olive was again interviewed about her memories, this time by reporter Ruth Halkon.

It was a pleasure to see former helpers and earlier well known visitors. We all enjoyed meeting and chatting with everyone again.

A pleasant surprise was an impromptu visit by new Trustee Norman Shuker bearing Champagne! Norman proposed a gracious toast to 'Past and Future'.



*Museum members through the years: Lesley Davis
Liz Stoneman and Olive Earwood*

Thanks are due to all who helped, over forty people attended that day. Alan and I thank Dave Armitage for creating our nostalgic multi-signature card.

Happy days - Great Memories!
Ann Lawrence

Our thanks to all the people who have been with the Drayton Road Museum from the early years:-

Derek Allen, Rod Brewster, Bob Brooke, Florrie Cowley, Lesley and Peter Davis, Joan Dorrington, Olive Earwood, Dennis Edwards, Ann Griffin, Mary Hanson, Pam Hardy, Peter Hedges, Tom Ibbetson, Barbara Kennedy, Ann and Alan Lawrence, Julie Massey, Stan Mason, John Page, Jim Phillips, Pauline Poole, Don Putman, Phil Rose, Tim Sandle, Anne Smith, Peter Smith, Joyce Steward, Liz Stoneman, Deborah and David Taylor, Irene White.

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Open 12pm - 6pm Tues, Wed & Thurs
10am-3pm Sat



Supported by Hertsmere Borough Council
Elstree & Borehamwood Town Council
The Heritage Lottery Fund

Registered charity No 10900848