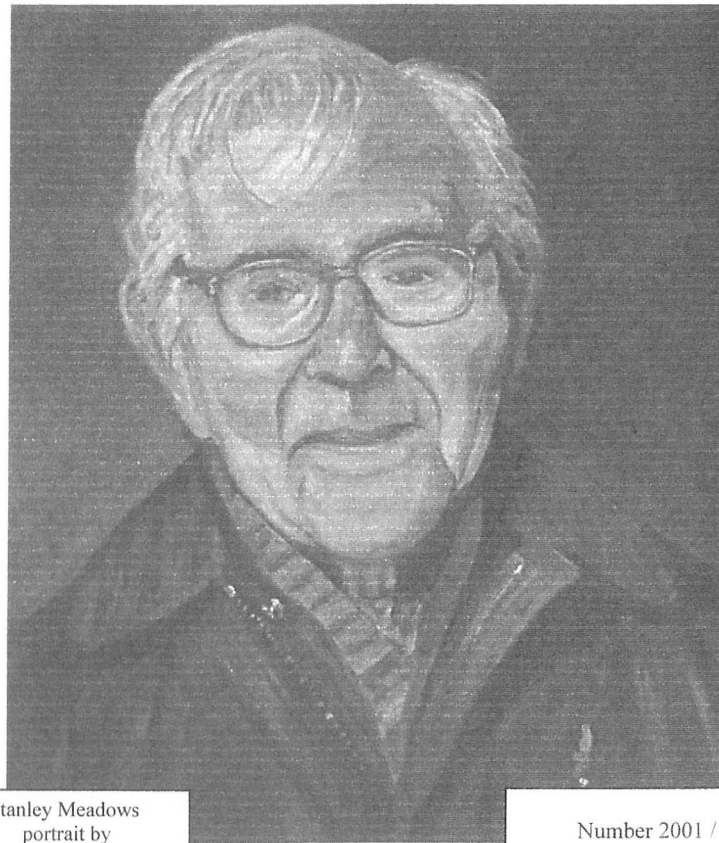


THE
BUCKINGHAM
SOCIETY



Registered as a Charity No. 268503

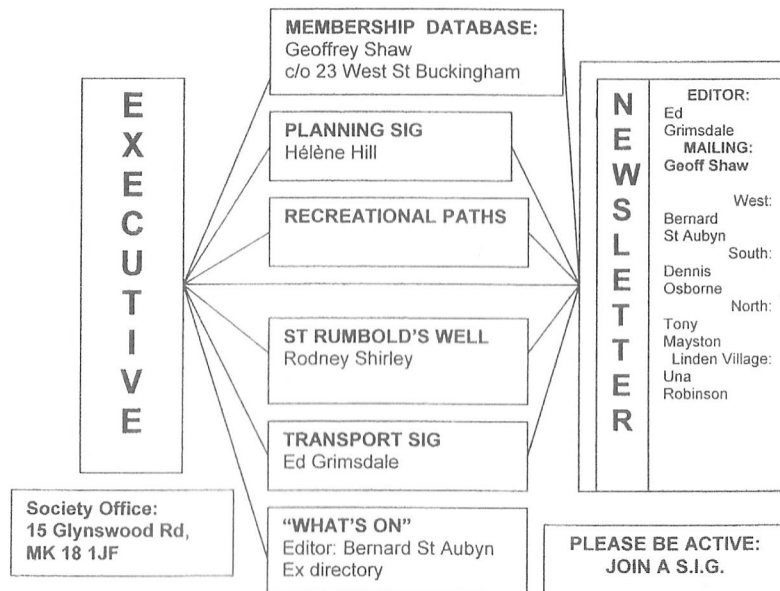
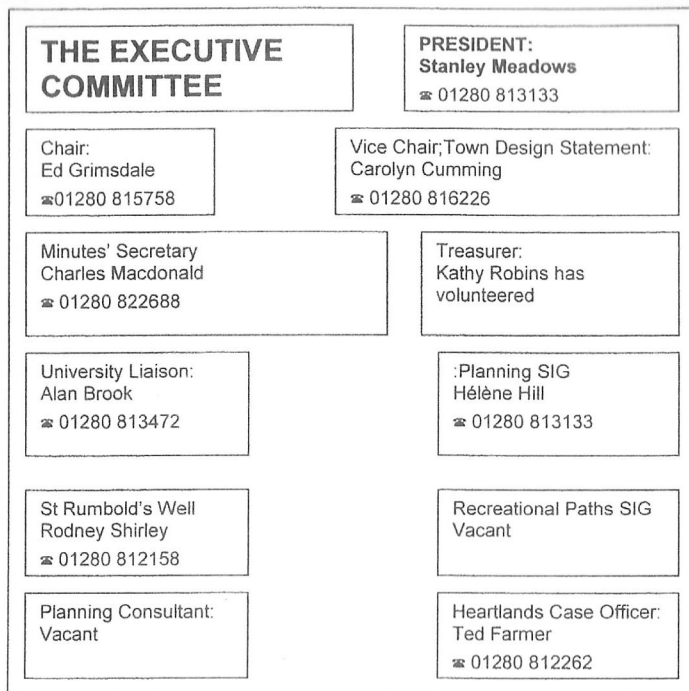
NEWSLETTER



Stanley Meadows
portrait by
Dennis Osborne

Number 2001 / 4

STRUCTURES OF BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY



THE SOCIETY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "If a due participation of office is a matter of right, how are vacancies to be obtained?"

At the AGM we have a chance to refresh The Buckingham Society. As Jefferson noted, to retain democratic control organisations must create opportunities to change personnel. Several stalwarts have tendered their resignations. Now is the time to thank them for their contributions. November is the time for new faces who will bring fresh ideas and new interests to our discussions.

VACANCY LIST:

1. **CHAIRMAN**
2. **TREASURER***
3. **ASSISTANT SECRETARY**
4. **CHAIRMAN OF RECREATIONAL PATHS**
5. **CONSULTANT-SECRETARY PLANNING SIG**

I'm happy to stay on the Executive, but would like another role. There are many members better suited to the role of Chairman. Ed

JOHN TOWNSEND
John is the most cosmopolitan member of our Executive Committee. and its finest scribe. He has undertaken a vast range of roles : Secretary, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and, in his own words, bag-carrier. How many in power in Britain are today dusting down John's History of Oman? John's willingness and sagacity will be much missed.

In his (?) vernacular, "Good on yer, Cobber!"

TONY PARKER

Tony Parker is an ex-planner. That expertise has given a cutting edge to the monthly work of our Planning SIG. Tony doesn't waste words; his pithy comments hit their targets. AVDC planners don't mess with Tony. Tony is a vital person keen to undertake new projects. We wish him well in his new endeavours and hope that he will dream still of a greater pedestrianised Buckingham.

JACK STEGGLES
Jack has planned and executed vast projects for multi-national companies. His understanding of how change is effectively managed has made our Recreational Paths SIG (our largest Special Interest Group) not just a talking shop but an agent of action in North Bucks. Jack has nursed two Society leaflets from conception to publication. Jack has found the diffuse management style and acceptance of no progress, that can characterise those who work in local government, irksome. Jack's vibrant mind will continue to have many outlets, from writing about saints for a national Catholic journal to digging (see his article in this Newsletter).

I hope that members will stop these Officers in the street and say "WELL DONE!"
* Kathy Robins has said that she will take up this challenge. Only my inactivity has stopped her from starting that work.

BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY AGM



THURSDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2001

CHANDOS ROAD BUILDINGS, UNIVERSITY OF BUCKINGHAM

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 7.00pm; BUSINESS WILL COMMENCE AT 8.00pm
AFTER THE BUSINESS THERE WILL BE A PRESENTATION BY PAUL DAVIES OF THE CIVIC
TRUST'S REGENERATION UNIT (see the article). ALL ARE MOST WELCOME TO ATTEND.

1. Welcome and Attendance Register
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Adoption of the Minutes of the last AGM (09.11.00)
4. Chairman's Report
5. Financial Report
6. Adoption of Accounts
7. Election of Officers for the coming year
8. Election of the Executive Committee 2001-2002
9. Any Resolutions
10. Subscription rates
11. A.O.B.
12. **PRESENTATION by PAUL DAVIES**

Buckingham), no later than Monday 5th November 2001.

- Nominations must be proposed, seconded and have the written consent of the nominee.
- Any resolutions must be duly proposed, seconded and have the support of at least 10 members of the Society; to reach the Meetings Secretary (see above) in written form by Wednesday 7th November 2001.

Vacancy (Kathy Robins has indicated that she will fill this position)
Newsletter Editor:
 Ed Grimsdale
Planning SIG:
 Hélène Hill
Recreational Paths SIG:
 Vacancy
Heartlands Case Officer : Ted Hill
St Rumbold's Well SIG :
 Rodney Shirley
Planning Consultant:
 Vacancy
Communications SIG:
 Ed Grimsdale
University Liaison:
 Alan Brook
Without Portfolio:
 2 Vacancies

Notes

- Copies of the accounts for 2000-2001 will be available at the Meeting
- Election of Officers and Executive Committee: Please submit written nominations to the Meetings Secretary (Charlie Macdonald, 18 Eider Close,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President (5 year term)
Stanley Meadows
Chairman : Vacancy
Vice Chair:
 Carolyn Cumming
Hon. Secretary : Vacancy
Hon. Secretary
 (Meetings) Charlie Macdonald
Hon. Treasurer:

OTHER OFFICERS:

Membership Database and Distribution Control:
 Geoff Shaw
What's On Editor :
 Bernard St Aubyn
Mail Distribution:
 West : Bernard St Aubyn
 Central : Ed Grimsdale
 South: Dennis Osborne
 North: Mary Smith
 Page Hill: Tony Mayston
 Linden V. Una Robinson

Regenerating Buckingham

Paul Davies, CTRU



After our AGM 8.30pm Thursday 8th November



A major initiative by The Buckingham Partnership

Launched at the Town Forum in October
Concerns the "Burgage Plots" behind Woolworths **AND MUCH MORE**

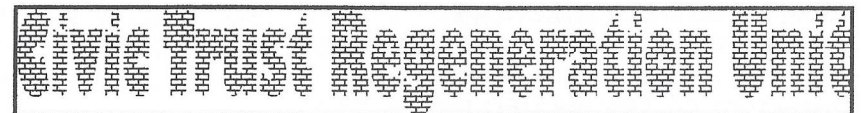
The land is in multiple ownership
Some of it is derelict

Its future matters to all of us
The CRTU have worked wonders in similar situations in other towns (eg Shepton Mallett)

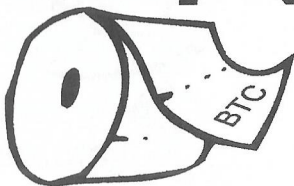
The Buckingham Society is represented on the group working with the CTRU

What advice do you want to give?
Remember the Heartlands fiasco?

BETHERE !
BE BETTER INFORMED!
ASK PAULA QUESTION
BE CONSULTED



NEWS



PUBLIC TOILETS

Our Town Council are struggling to find a cost-effective solution to the appalling Moreton Rd toilets. They have examined Superloos. Readers will be shocked to hear that the maintenance charges for 1 Superloo unit are £20 000 per year, a very high bottom line. AVDC has voted funds to improve the conveniences in Buckingham.

After the Fair, a W.C. was left in the street outside The White Hart. How desperate folk must be when to bring their own.

LITTER

More funds have been set aside to increase the number of litter bins. Rodney Shirley's plea for a bin near Lord's Bridge has born fruit. Full marks for Chris Strain-Clark's pro-active push against litter. I hear there is a new contract to clear the railway walk and that new, grey, fire-resistant bins will replace the familiar green vessels. **PAULA HEATH, OUR TOWN CLERK, ASKS FOR YOUR HELP. IF YOU KNOW OF A DAMAGED OR UNEMPTIED BIN, PLEASE RING HER BIN HOT-LINE: 01280 816426**



ROUNDBABOUTS

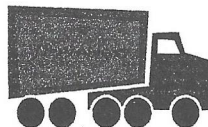
The Buckingham Partnership's lengthy battle to allow firms to sponsor our roundabouts has resulted in successful planning applications. Next spring we'll see the alchemy resulting from tlc applied by plcs. Firms will be offered two packages: standard maintenance or superior freshly designed lay-outs. Let's hope our local benefactors opt for the latter and that our roundabouts become objects of beauty and delight that tempt visitors to spend a little longer in our historic town.

THE OLD CHURCHYARD

Tom Ridgeway is planning a campaign to rescue this important site from dereliction. He has the Mayor and B.S. behind him. Tom, Rodney Shirley and AVDC's Dave Marshall have held an on-site meeting. Tom has been in touch with the Bartlett family (owners of one of the more historically important tombs); they are keen to see action. Members should prepare their green wellies and scythes ready for the order to slash the ivy that "hides the ruin it feeds upon" and restore this sacred site to its former glory.

INSPECTOR RUSS WOOTTON

Russ took charge of Buckingham and N. Bucks two months ago. His open, consultative approach is bearing fruit. He encourages you not to grin and bear it, but to give him a ring.



TRAFFIC SIG or COMMUNICATIONS

LOOKS FORWARD, NOT BACK

One of our first tasks was to write to John Bercow to express our concern at the probable loss of the East-West Rail link and to canvass for his support. This was his reply:

Dear Ed,

Thank you for your letter of 7 October, and for your message of congratulations on my new appointment.

I note the support of the Buckingham Society for the East-West rail route and have written to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) on your behalf, pointing this out to them. A number of constituents have also written to me about this; enclosed is a copy of a letter from the SRA in response to an enquiry I made on behalf of someone else. You will probably find this of some interest.

As soon as I receive anything further, I shall be in touch again.

Yours sincerely
John Bercow
John Bercow MP

A copy of the response to John Bercow from Mike Grant, the Chief Executive of SRA.



Dear Mr Bercow

East-West Rail Link

Thank you for your letter of 17 September to Sir Alastair Morton on behalf of your constituent, about the East-West Rail Link.

The Strategic Rail Authority rejected the bid for Rail Passenger Partnership funding for the Oxford-Bletchley section because evaluation showed it to be uneconomic. We also commissioned a study of the wider strategic options for services on the East-West corridor. This confirmed that services on the Oxford-Milton Keynes corridor might be economic but only if these were run as extensions to existing services utilising existing rolling stock and so creating longer-distance through journey opportunities such as Bristol-Oxford-Bedford-Milton Keynes. Additional infrastructure work would be needed on the West Coast Main Line.

We concluded that other priorities, including those relating to the key targets in the Ten Year Plan (50% growth in passengers; 80% growth in freight; and a reduction in overcrowding on London commuter routes) mean that we cannot allocate limited resources to taking forward East-West developments at this time. However, we recognise that there is strategic merit in a new East-West route which avoids London and we are exploring with Railtrack and Rail Property Ltd options for keeping parts of the route in railway ownership and safeguarding potential infrastructure alignments in the West Coast and East Coast Main Line upgrades.

I am sorry that this will be a disappointment to your constituent but I hope that this clarifies the position and gives some reassurance.

PARK AND RIDE

Just look at these figures:

~~Miranda Sawyer~~ Ed

Driving from Buckingham to Oxford's Park and Ride (and return)		
Car @ 33p per mile	50 x 33 =	£16.50
Park and Ride to Centre of Oxford	=	£5.00
Total	=	£21.50

THE ALTERNATIVE:

Drive from home to TESCO, Buckingham then X5 to Oxford Centre		
Car @ 33p per mile	2 x 33 =	£0.66
Car Park at TESCO		FREE
X 5 bus day-return ticket	=	£5.00
Total	=	£5.66

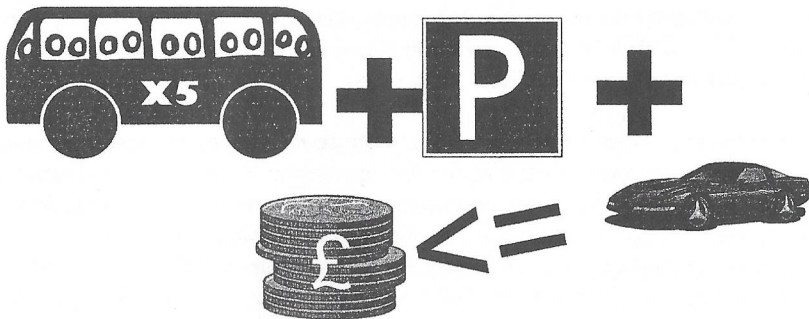
Saving for one return journey = £15.84

So, the benefits for one person travelling regularly, perhaps to a University lecture course, are considerable. (There will be money in your pocket for Tea in Tesco's)

The X5 is an hourly coach service that takes under an hour Buckingham to Oxford (Gloucester Green Bus Station or the Rail Station).

(We're indebted to John Credland for establishing this alternative transport method)

DO CONSIDER BUCKINGHAM'S PARK AND RIDE FACILITY



As they say:

Every Little Helps

Our deputy chairman, Carolyn Cumming, led HERITAGE OPEN DAYS, in which our Society played a leading role. After the success of this year's event we nominated Carolyn as "**Citizen of the Year**". She was judged to be runner-up (along with John Cornwall) . Cllr Strain-Clerk presented Carolyn (in absentia) with an inscribed salver at the Town Partnership Forum in October.

Carolyn has achieved so much for our Society and Buckingham. This is an edited version of what we wrote about her:

Dear Chris,

RE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD

On behalf of The Buckingham Society, I wish to nominate **Carolyn Cumming** for this year's Award. I will list just a few of her achievements and attempt to show how they have affected the lives of our local people.

- **Chairman of the Vision and Design Statement**

No dry text preaching architectural values to reluctant locals, but a magnificent exercise in consultation and democracy that expresses how Buckingham people see the synergy between the best of the old preserved melded to the dynamism created through new design. Our Vision and Design Statement has been recognised by the Civic Trust and the Countryside Alliance as an example to other towns and villages.

- **Chairman of the Heritage Open Days Project, Sept 2001.**

Carolyn's drive and determination made this happen. Our **HODS Days** were more extensive in scope and impact than those of much larger towns such as Oxford or Cambridge. It was marvellous to see old folk coming to the exhibition in the Chantry Chapel and being reconnected to their past. Mr Dunkley looked at a picture of the old King's Head – demolished to make way for the road to Maids Moreton - and remarked proudly to me, "That's where I was born" "

People new to Buckingham started to learn about our Community, what our values are and gained an increased sense of identity. All the Trails and Open House visits were booked fully, as people within and without Buckingham showed a common need to know who they were and who had formed them. Cllr Hedley Cadd was reminded by the Concert in the Radcliffe Centre of his days at School in Buckingham, as he movingly revealed in his "Vote of Thanks."

- **Regional Representative on the S.E Committee of the Civic Trust**

Carolyn ensures that the voices of Buckingham and North Bucks count in the determination of national policy.

- **Vice Chairman of The Buckingham Society.**

Carolyn is the Society's energiser. She is unwilling to take "No" for an answer but, leading by example, she makes things happen. She has been the rock in the Society as it has moved from the punctilious Chairmanship of Geoff Shaw to the mercurial, but erratic, charge of myself. In the last year she has played a large part in preparing and presenting the Society's case at the important Aylesbury Vale Draft Deposit Plan Inquiry.

- Carolyn is a one woman answer to Maggie Thatcher's assertion that

"There is no such thing as Society. There are individual men and women, and there are families."

Recent surveys (e.g. for the AVDC Cultural Strategy) have shown that Buckingham retains a sense of identity and community and that most of our residents rely on our town for their own cultural nourishment.

- Carolyn has an inclusive approach. She involves almost everybody she meets in her endeavours.

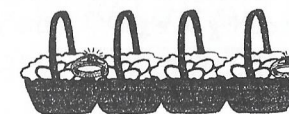
Carolyn's work defines what it means to be a Buckingham Citizen as she identifies local distinctiveness. As a garden designer, she ensures that our roots are secure, so that new branches shoot from stock raised by our ancestors.

Surely, there can be no stronger recommendation for the Award?

Yours sincerely,

Ed

BAGS OF SWAG! by John Steggles



Archaeologists have been searching for signs of medieval settlements for over half a century since the site of a village was found at Wharram Percy in N.Yorkshire. Nine years ago a team was successful with an important find at Shapwick near the Somerset Levels. Nearer home, the Whit-
tlewood Project started 18 months ago. The team is considering 12 parishes straddling our border with Northamptonshire, aiming to establish the pattern and sequence of settlements from 850 to 1250. Professor Dyer heads the Leicester University local history unit. Leicester is a centre of excellence for the study of local history.

Dr Richard Jones, the research fellow, has been field walking with local

volunteers for the six weeks ending on 8 October. Field walkers search ploughed fields for pottery shards. We began at Akeley and Leckhamptstead, finishing at Wicken. With Potterspury nearby it is not surprising that most of our finds came from its local industry that persisted for a long time in spite of the poor quality product.

The system is to mark out a matrix in order to locate the finds. Along a baseline pegs are set every 15 metres; then rows are marked at right angles to this base with pegs set at 20 metre stints. Each worker walks his stints giving them one to two minutes each, and mentally noting the number of each stint. Marked-up plastic bags are used to contain the finds.

Shards or sherds may be the size of postage stamps or larger. We

noted everything from struck flints to bits of pottery starting with Roman pieces up to medieval. It takes a good deal of practice to identify interesting finds.

My own samples ranged from a fine piece of Roman ware to the handle of a medieval jug, and even a chunky piece of bellarmine (16c or 17c), plus loads from Potterspury.

All of this swag, as Richard calls it, goes off to Leicester to be checked by experts, and logged into digitised OS maps using a computer system.

It is hard work. One walks each stint twice, once in each direction. Marking out, walking, and recovering pegs, can mean that one covers as much as ten miles a day

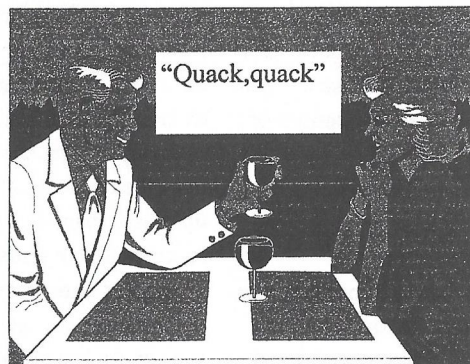
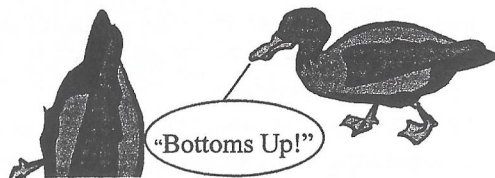
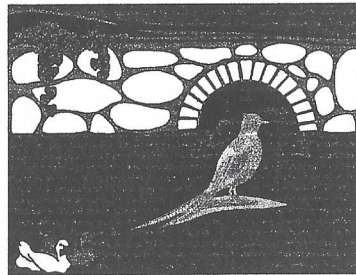
with little time to eat and drink during an eight-hour day. Two people working well together can cover 20- 25 acres before they are ready to drop. Facing a 50-acre field at 9.00am can be daunting, and the work is often tedious.

There were compensations apart from our interest in the project. We saw a skein of incoming geese, probably pinkfeet from Iceland. Pheasants, concealed in coverts, entertained us with their alarm calls. The waterfowl of Foxcote chatter like folk in a busy restaurant. Four skylarks cheered us all day at Weatherhead Farm. At Wicken dozens of house martins wheeled around us as we completed our last field.

It is too early to draw any conclusions but Richard was most excited by his finds in a part of Leckhampstead known to locals as 'tween-towns. Let us hope that we volunteers will be among

the first to hear about the people who lived here before us.

JSS 9 October 2001



BUCKINGHAM- PIONEER OF RURAL HEALTH

This article was prompted by thoughts of the De'Ath Memorial Prize awarded annually at the Royal Latin School. Who was De'Ath, and why did my first Headmaster, George Embleton, speak the name with reverence?

hero Dr George DE'ATH 1861—1901 **heroine** Florence NIGHTINGALE 1820 -1910, Nurse

Medical Officer for Health Buckingham

George De'Ath inherited his father's extensive practice in Buckingham .

He was passionate about improving conditions in cottage homes. A friend wrote, "The thing that always struck me about Dr. De'Ath was the untiring energy with which he dealt with sanitation and hygiene. I do not know of any branch of medicine or surgical work that he was specially distinguished in, but as an all-rounder he had no equal." George was a good writer, a contemporary recorded that he wrote "with ease and grace", but his daily work left him little time for his hobby.

The Buckingham Nursing Home (aka the Cottage Hospital) was the **first hospital in the world** to hold a Training Course for **rural health visitors** in 1892.

He established our Town's first sewage farm that paid for itself by growing mangel-wurzels.

George De'Ath died from overwork, it was said, a hundred years ago, in 1901 at the young age of 39.

(There are members of the Dea'Ath family living locally in 2001.)

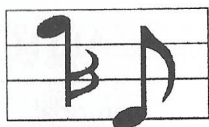
Florence established her fame in 1854-56 by fighting for better sanitation and hygiene in the hospital for British victims of the Crimean War in Scutari. Her nickname was derived from her habit of sending all her female nurses to bed at 8 pm. The only lady seen tending the sick in the night was "The Lady of The Lamp".

She returned home a heroine, a status she deplored and resisted. As was their wont, the people of Buckingham celebrated victory with gusto. Queen Victoria, too, was proud of Florence's achievements and granted her a rare private audience. Action followed —a Royal Commission into Army Health.

After her exertions in the Crimean War, Florence became ill. She was confined to her couch, living in London or **Claydon House** (her sister had become Lady Verney) for the rest of her life. Florence remained active, working intensively behind the scenes to improve health. Her especial interests were India and **rural health**, and she spent much time improving conditions for those living in **North Bucks**.

A hundred years ago in 1901 she lost her sight, and later died after 50 years of infirmity at the age of 90.

A hundred years ago, Buckingham was one of the healthiest places in Britain to live. Locals could thank the leadership shown by Dr George De'Ath and Florence Nightingale. By 1905 the annual death rate had fallen to 5 per 1000 people; a cause for celebration, suggesting a possible average longevity of 200 years! All that, 40 years before the National Health Service was established in 1948.



NOTES AND QUERIES

Trolly Hall

It's a question of derivation. Is it **Trolly**—corruption of **trollope** (aka lady of the night), or **Trolly**—a technical term in lace-making? In the former corner is the fact that **Trolly Hall** was an 18th century place for gaming and entertainment for gentlemen. If ladies of easy virtue were not installed in its attics, street-walkers, attracted by dandies with money in their pockets, may have given the building its title. Across the cockpit are supporters of the lace-making theory. When Buckingham lace-making was at its height, one of the main buyers lived in **Trolly Hall**. An alternative lace explanation might derive from his workers collecting the lace using a hand-cart or **trolley**. So, how old is the name, wherein lies truth? John, Townsend, whose cottage faces Trolly Hall, wants to know the truth.

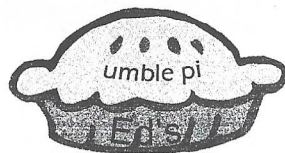
Chewar Sewer

Here's a nice, true story culled from **Angus Davison's HODS lecture**. The Chewar was always a dark, dank passage. In Victorian times it was a favourite place for prostitutes to ply their trade. The Town Council cogitated and decided to illumine the subject. They had a lamp erected. Its successor lights the alley, keeping today's birds, pigeons, at bay. The Town Clerk of the day had a problem with the lane's name. In the minutes he wrote "**The Sewer**". As it was a conduit from The Butchers' Shambles perhaps he was correct.

St. Bernardine's Way, a pleasant development by Prowting, has started to fill with householders. The second family to move in, the **Waglands**, agree with our campaign to restore the apostrophe to their road's name. **Ann Wagland suggests an alternative:**

Bernardine Way

In a long and comprehensive critique of your Editor's recent pieces on military Buckingham, **Tom Hudson** points out the crass error—the Marquess of Buckingham (1801) was referred to as the Marquess of Stowe!



Ed is eating humble p. However, should it be **Marquis** of Buckingham or **Marquess**? Both usages can be found in reference texts. Tom has found a Times article that states that both alternatives are correct!

A.R.T The new book by Buckingham Society's Robert Cumming

Advance information from EVERYMAN PUBLISHERS

A.R.T is a lively, concise, but authoritative guide to the creators, the stories, and the techniques that have made the art of painting one of the glories of Western civilization. The book is divided into three main sections:

the first explores more than 800 artists, pinpointing their unique characteristics, giving the location of principal collections and identifying their price ranges and records, the second describes the personalities, stories and symbols that representational painters make use of,

in the third section, a glossary crisply defines several hundred terms both technical and critical/historical.

There is also a chapter on Art on the Internet with the best sites at which to find information on art or artists.

Lavishly illustrated with the works of hundreds of artists, **A.R.T is thorough but never dry, enlightening, witty and often provocative.** 650 illustrations. 480 pages £15.99

You can expect this beautifully produced book to be available in bookshops during November. Robert is engaged in creating local editions for the French, German and American markets.

We shall review Robert's book in our next Newsletter.

If a painting is described as displaying ENTROPY is it being praised or damned?

Read A.R.T!

REVIEW

Rhymes and Drawings

Keith Coleman published by Phillips (Buckingham) £7.00

This volume contains an introduction by Tom Pallett and it represents another name to add to his school of Lillingstone Dayrell writers.

The glory of the of the present volume is the line drawings which are apt and display a consistent style.

The rhymes are just that: local scenes and memories caught in unaffected lilted lyrics.

Buckingham features in a railway poem about the lost Bletchley to Banbury line.

ROBERT CRAB

BORN IN BUCKINGHAM

ECCENTRICITIES

Robert Crab:

- Gave up riches
- Sold his family haberdashery shop in **Chesham** in 1651
- Lived on three farthings a week
- Built his own shelter
- Became a hermit
- Preached and disputed
- Became a fanatical vegetarian
- Was devoted to animals; he could not bear to see them harmed
- Wore a sack without any collar
- Ate roots
- Drank water, only
- Made watery broth thickened with bran his daily diet
- Graduated to a dock leaves and grass diet
- Recommended such a diet to a follower who died of malnutrition
- Prescribed herbal medicines to his followers (up to 120 souls)
- Saw visions of God in Paradise, whilst digging parsnips
- Predicted the Restoration
- Predicted that William of Orange would rule Britain



HIS LIFE

Robert Crab was born in Buckingham in the early 17th century. He related that his mother must have been wealthy otherwise his father would not have considered marriage to her. He fought for 7 years during our Civil Wars for Cromwell's Parliamentary forces. During that time he was badly injured in the head so that his skull became exposed. Enemies attributed his eccentricities and visions to that trauma

He became a Bucks eccentric and a deeply religious mystic. Robert was imprisoned in Clerkenwell Gaol for his independent views. He complained that the prison authorities failed to feed him and that his only sustenance was provided by a stray dog who shared a crust with Robert

Robert wrote a strange book, "The Wonder of the Age".

Robert Crab died in London in 1680

Because of his odd views, habits and appearance and through his connections with haberdashery in Chesham, Robert Crab was nicknamed "The Mad Hatter". So there may be a tenuous connection between Lewis Carroll's much loved character and our Town of Buckingham.