

# THE BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY

Registered as a Charity No. 268503



BUCKINGHAM  
1918 - 1939

MAGAZINE

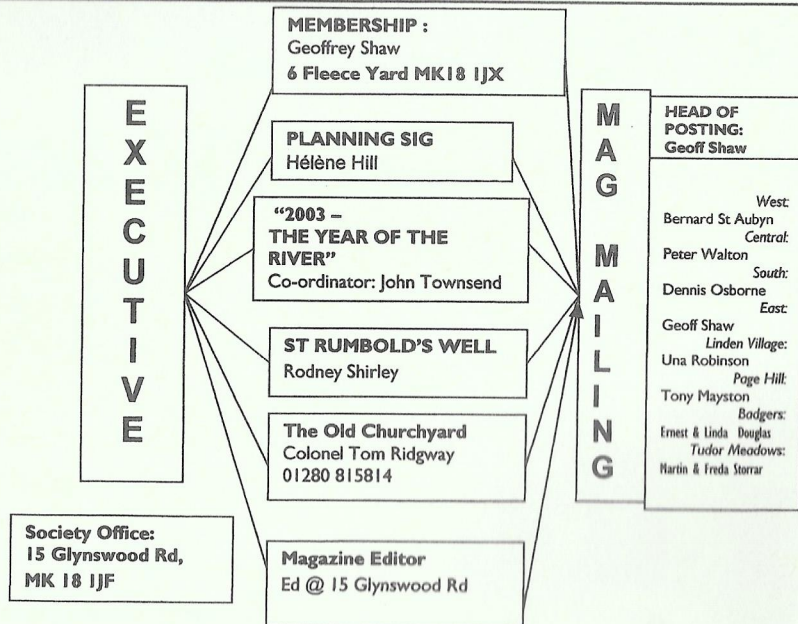
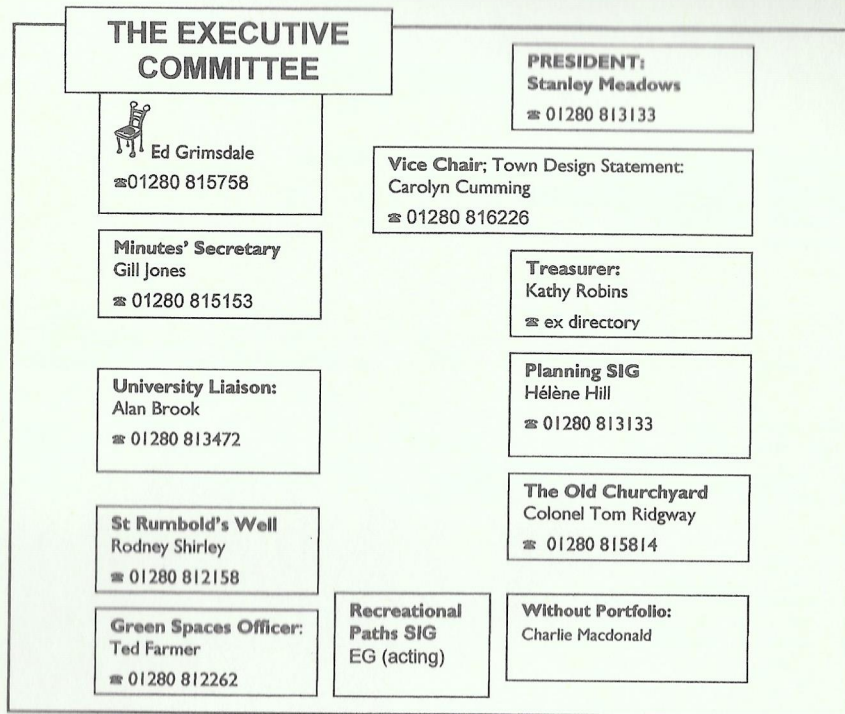


the  
civic  
trust

Issue 2003 no. 3  
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price 60p

Buckingham's Ageless Green Heart  
drawn for the Society by Kathleen Meadows  
long before DWH razed the site  
with their JCB in August 2003

# STRUCTURES OF THE BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY



## PLANNING NEWS

When Buckingham Town Council sits as its Planning Committee, it keeps a score of its "successes" at AVDC. If AVDC's development control committee vote the same way as our "Parish Council" it's a **win**, if they vote differently it's a **loss**.

Buckingham Society's Planning SIG work differently. For them it ain't all over 'til the fat lady sings in her new flat. The Hotel to be built behind the Grand Junction is a good example of how this group campaigns and acts for a better Buckingham.

The first designs for a new Hotel were truly awful in their crudity and irrelevance to context. **Carolyn Cumming** used the 15 minute "public comment" spot before a Buckingham Town Council Planning Meeting to make a **passionate** appeal that Buckingham deserved better and had expressed its wishes through its Vision and Design Statement. Her speech made the front page of *The Advertiser* and stiffened local resolve resulting in the withdrawal of the application. The second submission was radically different—it showed much better design qualities—there was much to compliment and few remaining issues. Again, the Planning Group submitted its criticisms. The group was cheered by the developers' response: a further amended plan and a letter stating how the constructive comments of The Buckingham Society and other parties had been addressed.

### The keys to The Buckingham Society's influence are:

- ☞ The Vision and Design Statement
- ☞ Experience gained through examining all planning applications
- ☞ Awareness of the national picture through **Civic Trust** Briefings
- ☞ Willingness to meet developers
- ☞ Watchfulness & sheer hard work

## THE POSSIBLE GRENVILLE COTTAGE DEVELOPMENT

Our **Planning Group** met with concerned residents on May Day. The major issues were: overlooking buildings served by a raised access road, fears about peak traffic densities in Chandos Rd and irreparable damage to a mature tree environment. The residents remain confident that they can **prevent** residential development. However, **BS** believes that development will happen **sooner or later** and wish to achieve **mitigation** through negotiation and cajoling. Residents and BS promised to keep in touch as their contrasting campaigns develop.

How do Buckingham residents view the possible major redevelopment of the area of Aylesbury from The Civic Centre to the canal basin, unveiled on May Day by AVDC Chief Executive, **Richard Carr**? Are we turning "Buckingham" green with envy or thinking "Thank God, that it is Aylesbury and not Buckingham that is being stripped of its character and thrust into the 21st century"?

We must remember that we have our difficult, land-locked, near-derelict opportunity in the **land behind Market Hill**. The Society worries that the vision of the Civic Trust's Regeneration Unit's proposals may be dimmed by irresolution in the face of multiple vested interests aggravated by fraught traffic access issues. (**Nice report**—it looks good on the shelf, but whilst food has shelf-life, reports face instant shelf-death.)

Without revealing confidential details, it was encouraging to hear, at the April Meeting of **Buckingham Partnership**, both Richard Carr and Andy Kirkham (Forward Plans) sketching an after-life for Market Hill **ONCE** proposals had become formal subsidiary planning guidance. They had grasped the point that it was no good talking endlessly of Godot coming to Market Hill. We'll watch to see if market forces can create the vibrant Market Hill we so desire.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

### TO TESCO OR NOT TO TESCO

Ed met a retired academic couple who have remained loyal to Budgens and have ignored Tesco Buckingham these past ten years. Their contribution to keeping Buckingham moving has been to use a bicycle for shopping trips. Are their other members who can claim a ten-year record for spurning "every little helps"?



Buckingham Society's most religious respondent has contacted Ed to point out for the umpteenth time the difference between Beer Houses (public houses without a spirits licence) and Beer Halls (shades of the Third Reich). Ed apologises to those readers upset by a youngster's inability to appreciate the great differences within Europe before the creation of the E.C.



Have you been stuck in a slow moving column of traffic recently? Eventually, you might have been the car behind the lorry at its head. Was it a Tesco lorry? So often it is. Buckingham Society believes that Tesco drivers are told to stick strictly to 50mph. **GOOD OR BAD?**

### CHANTRY CHAPEL BELL

Peter Barr has written from Sturminster Marshall to tell us that there was no bell hanging in the Chandos Rd RLS buildings when he was a pupil from 1939, nor was there evidence of a hole for a bell-rope. His guess is that the bell-house never held a bell. The mystery of what happened to the Chantry Chapel's bell in 1908 deepens!

Peter is confident that the pillars supporting the bell-housing were made from wood—their paint was badly peeling by WWII. Peter was amazed to find rope-operated ventilation systems still present in the old RLS classrooms when he visited them a couple of years ago. He speculates that the ropes looked unchanged from his schooldays!

### UP THE JUNCTION!

We have been asked why the **Grand Junction** Public House is so-named, given that it commemorates the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal.

Hélène Hill, stalwart of Canal and Buckingham Societies has provided the answer: Once Upon a Time *The Grand Union Canal* was termed *The Grand Junction*.

**Lime Tree Blues:** Many readers have been hacked off by the vicious late-summer, AVDC de- lopping of lime trees in the centre of Town. Professional advice suggests that the trees will survive but their nudity continues to affront those citizens who insist on skirts covering their piano legs.

### ALAN BROOK, MBE

Members will be delighted to hear that Alan Brook was recognised in the recent honours list for his services to Music and Education in Buckingham. The citation could well have added "and to Buckingham Society". Alan has been a stalwart on our Executive Committee as our link to the University of Buckingham, a relationship of great inequality that has benefited the Society so much, particularly through the University acting as host to our events. As we go to print, the Buckingham Summer "Alan Brook" Music Festival is in full swing—up to three excellent concerts each day for a week.

## MORE NOTES AND QUERIES

### An Alternative Guide to Edwardian Buckingham

Monica and Jack Steggles have breakfasted in "The Library" at the 16th century Pykerell Inn at Ixworth, Suffolk. They chose a copy of Bädeker, 1910 as marmalade to their toast.

"Naturally," Jack comments they looked for Buckingham and found it under "LONDON & NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY"

.....  
**From Verney Junction to Banbury 22miles, railway in 50 minutes. Fares 3s 10d, 2/-, 1s 9½d. The chief intermediate station is Buckingham (White Hart, Swan), a lace-making town with 3151 inhabitants. Near the town begins a magnificent avenue of elms, 2 miles long leading to Stowe, the princely seat of the Baroness Kinloss. The pleasure gardens have been deservedly commemorated by Pope (no admittance)**

*So there!* (Jack)

### A SOURCE FOR THE OUSE

Those who went on the Half-day Ouse Trip were given homework: to find the true source of the Ouse. Julian and Frank Blake rose to the challenge. Here is their solution that you may compare with that of Buckingham's great man of maps, **Rodney Shirley**. Rodney's elegant contribution will be published in "Our River", a full colour booklet edited by **John Townsend** that will be on sale (£1) during **HODS** (see leaflet).

"Julian and I did some map homework ..... and then carried out some follow-up field work. We believe that the highest source stream is at Grid Reference SP 573 426 almost due north of Brackley. It is on a 160m. contour, as compared with others (at least three) which were on or close to 150m. contours. The highest source is on the land of **Bungalow Farm**, just off the **B4525**, and although at first we were hopeful the farmer would let us walk to find the source, he then became reluctant for us to do so."

Julian & Frank found good water flow nearby reached by a public footpath and feel that water came from a spring at "The Bungalow".

**IS THIS THE SOLUTION OF THE SOURCE PUZZLE OR A SOLUTION?**

Letter to the Editor from **FRANK BLAKE**

Dear Editor,

I write to express the appreciation of my wife Eileen, my son Julian and myself to those involved in arranging the outstanding tour of the Upper Ouse on 12th June. With doubtful weather forecasts earlier in the week, the afternoon proved to be a wonderful touch of English summer.

First, our thanks to Carolyn for her hospitality as we assembled at The Mill House; drinks and cakes in a lovely garden, what a way to start!

Next our thanks to Charlie, who we understand gave the Chief Organiser (CO) valuable support in checking out the 62 mile route, travelling times, etc. and who provided the convoy of cars with guidance, particularly back through the outskirts of Milton Keynes to Passenham.

Finally of course our thanks to the CO who provided participants with an excellent booklet which outlined the tour, describing in considerable detail the route and the places to be seen with notes on interesting features. At each stop he treated us to a talk giving further enlightening and historical information, sometimes making thought-provoking comparisons with Buckingham's riverside. A masterly touch was the early evening stop at the Cowper's Oak pub, for appropriate history and refreshment at the same time.

A truly fascinating event, what a great pity that more people didn't come with us. Perhaps those who missed it should consider the forthcoming whole day trip from the Ouse in Bedford to the Wash on the 9th October, Eileen and I certainly intend to join in. Yours etc

Readers will be saddened to hear that Eileen and Frank Blake lost their other son, Christopher, who died in his mid-forties during July. The Society sends the Blake family all its love and sympathy.

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

**It is unlikely that The Society will gain sufficient supporters to run a Coach on the Whole Day Ouse Trip. The most likely outcome will be another Car Convoy with a small charge for a support booklet. Please indicate to Charlie or to Ed whether you wish to participate under these circumstances.**

# NEWS



**BUCKINGHAM HERITAGE TRUST  
@ THE OLD GAOL**

☎ 823020



## HAVE THEY GOT NEWS FOR YOU?

The TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE has been given IT support by the Southern Tourist Board that will be used to host a

## TOWN DIARY AND CALENDAR.

If you are planning a function, meeting, or "happening" in Buckingham or its environs, do telephone or visit the TIC.

Pat Ogden, Lorna Matthewman or Gaol Manager, John Roberts will show you the master Calendar and help you to avoid clashes. Once your Event is logged nobody can book that date without being informed of yours!

THE BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY THANKS THE OLD GAOL FOR FILLING THE GAP LEFT BY THE DEMISE OF BUCKINGHAM SOCIETY'S "WHAT'S ON" LEAFLET AND WISHES THIS INITIATIVE EVERY SUCCESS.

(Incidentally, the TIC wants to develop a print-out service to create a takeaway "What's On" leaflet)

## THOSE "NOSEY" PARKERS

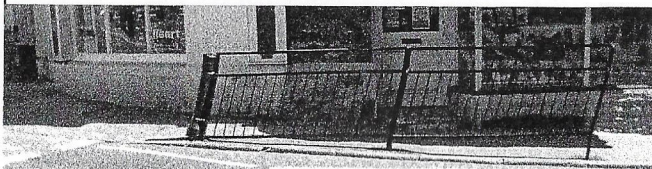
Cllr Derrick Isham has contacted the Society to counsel us, politely, that the story about a police car being rammed was a load of old bull. It was Derrick's 12 year long campaign allied to traffic regulations that got the "Old Gaol" lay-by widened. He tells the Society that positions will be set out for taxis, police cars and the disabled. Well done, that man!

The Society is monitoring the new pedestrian-controlled crossings on the by-pass and on the London Road near Verney Park. Both are great for walkers, but we must study the former's effect on peak traffic flows and have warned BCC Transport, via Tony Walton, that buses are "parking-up" nose to tail across the latter at school closure time.

## NEW POND LIFE

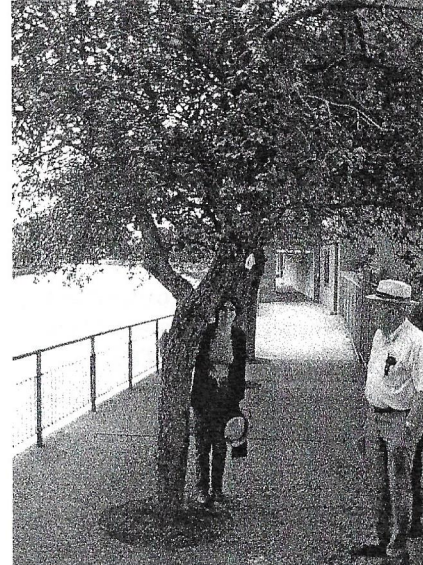
It's good to hear of bits of old Buckingham being revived. The Society's roving reporter Denis tells us that "Parker's Pond" opposite Gawcott Fields has been cleaned out, fenced off and restored.

**BRIDGE ST. BARRIER – ANOTHER BLACK MARK MAYDAY MAY DAY:** around May Day this infamous barrier was **smashed** once again. The victim or aggressor (depending on your point of view) was the driver of an articulated lorry. The result is a National Curriculum Mathematics lesson on how rectangles deform into parallelograms. For two days a spike projected, ready to impale cyclists. The historic centre of Buckingham is now leaner, if not fitter, than **Pisa**. We're told that **SERIOUS MONEY** is being laid at Ladbrokes in West St on the date of the barrier's final capitulation. If I was Peter Brewster in H&M Shoe Repairs, I'd get myself retrained quickly to be Buckingham's sole emergency barrier repair man.

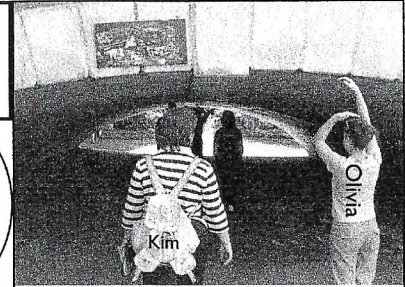


## UPPER OUSE HALF DAY TRIP

FIVE CARS FULL OF B.S. SUPPORTERS STUDY OUR RIVER



Carolyn has the measure of an urban river bank in the centre of Bedford that has Ted lost in admiration.

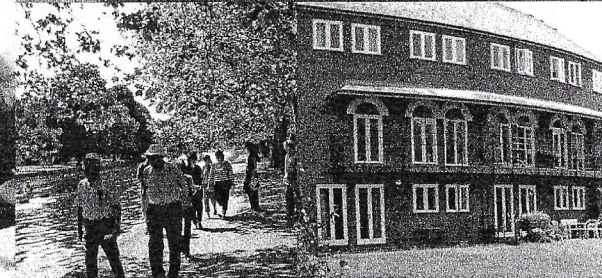


In **Buckingham**, the Environment Agency tell us we must not open the London road bridge's 3rd arch –there's not enough head-room. In **Bedford**, adults on the riverside walk must incline their heads to go under the main road bridge.

## The Hunt for Guy Fawkes

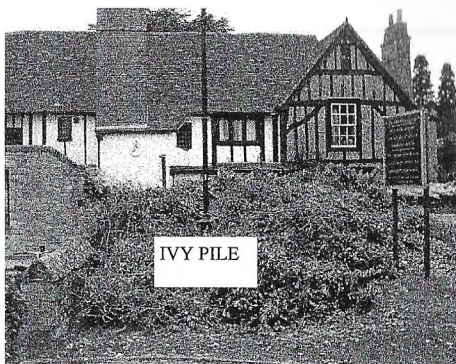


The moment in "Cowper's Oak" when the light dawned on Carolyn that William Cowper, the gentle Ouse's finest poet, was terrified by the **mountains of Sussex**.



Plane trees provide dappled shade & The Great Ouse takes on a French form

Newbuild facing the Ouse



IVY PILE

“As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone, And hides the ruin that it feeds upon”, wrote local poet William Cowper.

The Old Churchyard’s ivy has been given its marching orders by Colonel Tom Ridgway who has ordered / cajoled Church St residents and AVDC lu-

minaries, Dave Marshall and Ian Hopcraft, into Phase I of a clear-up. SITA sent a wheelbarrow to collect their output. As you can see from the massive pile, their second idea—a truck was far more suitable. CHURCH STREET RESIDENTS HAVE SET THE REST OF BUCKINGHAM A GREAT EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY ACTION.

It is rumoured that Tom’s motto was uncovered during work on the Rossetti stone: “But pluck an ivy branch for me”



“Ee, it was agony, Ivy!”

Tom and his dynamic Old Churchyard group have plans to investigate raising money to restore the historic Bartlett tombs that are in a state of shameful decay. Meantime, back in the Manor House, Rodney Shirley is consulting on how the story of what is underneath the Old Churchyard, our former Parish Church, should be revealed.



Spot the message painted by BCC: **KEEP CLEAR**

### DROP THOSE PAVEMENTS

Roving reporter Denis, has noted the excellent work that Tony Walton of BCC has instigated to make Buckingham more permeable for those with walking difficulties. Dropped kerbs have been introduced outside Barclays Bank and in the Market area to allow scooters easier access to and from our ancient pavements. Later this summer, work will be done around the Glynswood Rd entrance area to ensure that older people may travel on the pavements to the Churchyard. Buckingham’s lively “Access for All” group has suggested these improvements. Next we must press for better paths in the Churchyard. Travelling around those gravel tracks in a wheelchair is like driving across a ploughed field in a car.

### MIKE ANTHISTLE’S PLANTERS

Buckingham Society members have been critical in the past, of the build-up of detritus and weeds in the sunken area in front of Anthistle and Craven’s splendid Georgian Town House HQ on the Market. From what Mike Anthistle has told the Society, it has been a depressing battle trying to keep on top of the litter louts whose only rule is out of sight, out of mind. To add injury to indifference, on July 1st, two planted tubs that were padlocked to an iron fence were stolen from the front of the building. Mike Anthistle paints a black picture of the extent of vandalism in central Buckingham when he tells us that his parked car has been scratched by keys four times in the past year. **How may we make central Buckingham less prone to low-level vandalism? BTC are about to place planters on Buckingham’s Beach, but what is the point if they are deranged to look like tousled remains from Market Day?**

Buckingham has lost its station, but can now find Station Road—new signs have been placed at both ends.

### FLOOD PREVENTION

The Buckingham Society is keeping a weather eye on the Environment Agency’s flood prevention work in and around Buckingham. We all accept that the river’s banks in Chandos Park had been washed away and needed strengthening. Work started on lining the banks with stone in late June. We are worried by the proposed walls across both sides of The Old Ford at the end of Ford St. Carolyn Cumming is working to make these walls more than just a utility in the time of flood.

### THE RIVERSIDE WALK

News on completing the missing links and improving this leisure facility in Buckingham has been mixed in recent months. The Society was distressed by AVDC’s decision to allow building at Cooper’s Yard without a public path along the banks of the Ouse being a necessary part of the development. The Environment Agency were adamant that opening the blocked archway under the London Rd bridge would not provide a safe route for pedestrians. That flew in the face of facts, as Cllr Hedley Cadd eloquently told AVDC Development Control Committee. Until the 1970’s, that arch had been open and used as a footpath from Chandos Park to the area now known as Skateboard Park. It was blocked to inhibit flood erosion of the banks supporting the Swimming Pool when that was built, perhaps 25 years ago. Now there is no Swimming Pool is that level of protection necessary? The Good News is that Hedley Cadd (new Chairman, AVDC) assured the Society of a consultative role in the area’s development; BTC has backed our stance to complete the riverside walk and there has been an excellent visionary meeting with Ian Brearley, Tracey Aldworth (two AVDC luminaries) and others representing BCC and BTC to improve signage and all aspects concerned with increasing the profile and popularity of our riverside walk.

**CASTLE MILL BRIDGE** :Contractors are returning to snag recent work on this bridge. Nelson Street residents will enjoy another spell of traffic restrained by lights.

## DAM BICYCLES IN 2003

Bicycle thieves operate in Buckingham.

Ed, Dennis and others, have

seen the results of their actions. The robbers do not steal for gain, in the main, rather they seek the adrenalin rush that crushes boredom. The tiny thieves hunt in gangs and their favourite time to strike is on Sunday mornings in the area near Budgens. The town is quiet, boredom is high, but wrongdoing is rarely observed. A few people come to shop by bike, frequently they padlock their machines and leave them under the overhang alongside Budgens.

### ONE SUNDAY IN MAY

One Sunday, Ed saw a gang of 8-11 year olds eyeing up his bike and waiting for him to disappear into Budgens before they pounced. Ever wary, Ed feigned to go in but came back and moved his bike to the Community Centre where it was easier to secure it to a drainpipe. Good for Ed, worse for Stella. Stella had parked her bike near to Ed's. It was new and shining. She came out to find it missing. So was the gang of lads. Ed offered to search for Stella's bike. He feared, at once, that he'd find it in the river and that the most likely place would be under the wooden bridge by the Skateboard Park.

### THE CLUE OF THE WHITE BASKET

Halfway across the Budgens car park he found the clue- a white basket, clearly the sort that is attached to the front forks of a bike. Arriving at the bridge Ed's worst fears were confirmed. There at the bottom of the river was a gleaming bike, still padlocked. The thieves' modus operandi is to drag the bikes. Ed reported to Stella. Because of unequal legs, he didn't volunteer to wade in to recover the vehicle. Stella was hoping that some male relatives would be at home. When they were not she was in a quandary.

### BUDGENS BICYCLE FORCE

Help was at hand. On mentioning it to the assis-

tants in Budgens, the young Sunday staff volunteered

to go bicycle fishing. So, the story had a happy ending.

So often, children's bikes are removed and the owners do not realise where to look. The bikes are left to moulder & rust in the river. Soon, once proud bikes are mere river obstructions.

### ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Both Dennis and Ed have spotted such sad bikes in recent months. Ed reported one that was under the foot-bridge opposite Otters' Brook that leads into Bourton Park, to the Environment Agency on their Emergency hot-line number. Three days later they came back to say that the removal of such minor obstructions to river flow are the responsibility of the riparian owners (those who own the land that abuts the river). Across Bourton Park and much of Buckingham that is AVDC, says David of the Environment Agency.

### AVDC HOT-LINE

It's always useful to know who to phone. If you see something nasty on the river bed, or a minor dam like that down-stream of Bourton Mill at the end of June.

PHONE 01296 585 858,

&

ask for

TONY NEWTON  
or  
BERYL KEPLAN



**BIKE OWNERS  
SHOULD LOCK THEIR  
BIKES TO A RIGID  
STRUCTURE**

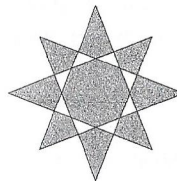
**WELL DONE  
BUDGENS!**

## BUCKINGHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE

In a recent magazine, the Society criticised the new doors at The Community Centre for impeding access by those with mobility problems.

Centre Manager, Terry Bloomfield and Management Committee Chairman, Bernard Stopps, came along to July's Access for All Meeting to talk over issues. The action they have taken is on several fronts:

- To lift the pavement outside to reduce the step-up
- To reduce the pressure necessary to overcome the door opening mechanism
- To ensure that staff advertise the flat access routes—through both fire-doors
- To enable the doors to be hitched in an open position.



**It is time to praise the work of all involved in our Community Centre that's just held its 20th birthday party. Terry and the management committee have done a marvellous job, not only in balancing the books, but also in a clear**

**policy of upgrading the facilities. This year has seen:**

- ◆ The new doors—necessary security since the glass ones kept getting vandalised
- ◆ New floors in the toilets that are now open frequently during the day
- ◆ Instant boiling water for beverages in the kitchens
- ◆ Maintenance of the roof after vandalism and spikes to deter further access.

**Buckingham can be proud of its Community Centre that is always presented in an immaculate condition—not only that but it smells clean. The Society understands that in a recent inspection for Bucks Best Village Competition our Community Centre scored top marks with absolutely no penalty marks. The Community Centre has succeeded after years when it limped along because of excellent management allied to an improved partnership between Aylesbury Vale Council and Buckingham Town Council.**

## NIGHTS ON THE TILES

It is sad to hear again that our youngsters have been sky-larking. As we move into the long summer holiday, kids' minds seem to turn to higher things.

They have a penchant for living and cycling above our heads on the roofs of Buckingham's Town Centre. Buckingham Community Centre has been fortified by spikes because £1200 of damage to tiles was caused by vandals climbing over the roof into the central, hidden gully, where they could do their worst unseen except by sky-divers.

Even more recently, AVDC did a splendid job replacing tiles removed from the roof of the ladies' loos in Moreton Rd within 24 hours of the damage being reported. Sadly, the Society's correspondent reports that within days the tiny hooch drinkers behind the Salvation Army were back on the tiles.

We can all play a role. If you see underage illicit drinking dens, please do walk by, then phone the police. The police have worked wonders in the past through regular action, but our thin blue line covers little area and we must help to locate it where it can have an immediate effect.

**What we walk by today,  
will tax us tomorrow!**

### AVDC PARKING ATTENDANTS

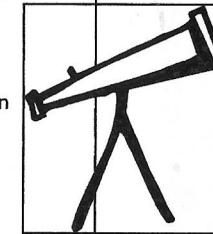
Love 'em or loathe 'em, the new parking attendants have reduced illegal parking in Buckingham and upset quite a number of residents—one was used to parking outside his home—a wall said "PARKING FOR RESIDENTS, ONLY". However, the road was double yellow-lined. Result - a £60 fine and an unhappy resident. The Society has noted how displaced illegal parkers have moved to colonise the highway around our Parish Church; so it's a bad time to have a marriage or other Church ceremony.

For money has a power above the stars and fate, to manage love.

So wrote Samuel Butler in what might have been an unheeded letter to **Buckingham Town Council**.

**The Buckingham Society** is a **non-political** body of people united in celebration of the best of Buckingham past and keen to plan a better Buckingham ahead. We are not elected Councillors, we hold no mandate except from ourselves, But, we do understand simple things. We have little money to effect change; we must work in **partnership**. We learn to love the hand that feeds our ambitions.

**Buckingham Town Council** is no more than a Parish Council with attitude. Many locals are disappointed that it is so infected by the politics of parties. Speaking personally, I feel that it is highly unfortunate when several Town Councillors hold significant positions in **Aylesbury Vale District Council ( and Bucks County Council)**, that those



representatives are treated with disdain, contempt, and envy by a few, apparently embittered, Town Councillors who wear their old party badge with pride. Furthermore, dirty laundry is cleaned in public. Since the time of the last Annual Town Meeting, AVDC/BCC Councillors serving on BTC have been silenced or restrained by repeated trivial "points of order". How does it help to lecture AVDC/BCC Councillors, but rarely to

listen to what they have to say?

**Ignorance's influence is indiscernible.**

My worry is that Buckingham largely depends on **AVDC** for financial support. It's all about biting the hand..... Buckingham Society members have tales to tell concerning Buckingham not getting a fair deal from AVDC. Similarly, the Town Council are disturbed about the lack of section 106 planning agreements that could have deflected some developers' profits into public works in Buckingham.

Peevish petulance and pettiness may win party points but party-poopers end their purblind, piteous lives scrapping over pennies around the parish pump.

**The issue is whether some Town Councillors are acting against Buckingham's better interests by words and deeds that, at the least, injure the pride of those better placed to sort out issues and fund our progress. Partnership pays.**

Ed Grimsdale

**FATHER, DEAR FATHER**

The Society is delighted to welcome **Celia Renshaw** of Nottingham to its fold. Celia was sent a copy of Ed's piece on "**The Death of Nelson**" by **Diana Collins** of the Buckingham Canal Society. George Nelson was Celia's 4x great uncle. The Society has been able to send Celia a copy of an Oath in Chancery by her 4x great grandfather, Thomas Nelson, recording testifying how many children Edward Bartlett fathered.

Celia has been researching the Nelsons, Jollys, Boxes, Milligans, Lovesays and Bartletts of Buckingham. Celia has promised to write an article on the Nelsons for this Newsletter. Judging by the impressive detail of some notes that she has sent us, that piece will add greatly to Buckingham's knowledge of its Nelson families.

**Our President** has weighed in with his own **Nelson** story. Many readers will know that Stanley Meadows' father ran a hardware business in Stony Stratford. One of its regular commissions was to service the blinds in Wicken Vicarage. Stanley was the "lad" sent to take down the blinds so that they could be taken away for their annual repair. The year was around 1924. Stanley has always possessed a keen eye for local colour and interest and he noticed in the Vicarage hallway several glass cases containing Admiral Nelson memorabilia—including his telescope. Apparently, the owner of the house was the Reverend **Nelson Ward**, descended on his mother's side from the great Horatio. Stanley regrets that he never saw **Nelson Ward**, himself, —in those inter-War days, tradesmen were met by housekeepers and gentlemen stayed screened by the green baize door. I wonder where those Nelson objects are today?

The children in Holland take pleasure in making  
What the children in England take pleasure in breaking.

*nursery rhyme.*

Schoolchildren in Buckingham have smashed Grenville Cottage and its associated terrapin huts. 11+ youngsters will arrive at Buckingham School or the Royal Latin School in September to be greeted by a fantasy playground ready equipped with the means for arson, and dens dedicated to the pursuit of alcohol, drugs, free-love and graffiti.

Beware the child who reports that he had "a smashing day" at school, or that she stayed behind (all night?) for extra-curricular activities.

This is a highly unsafe site that must be boarded up.



Sometimes dereliction is promoted by developers to undermine local opposition to planning proposals.

(Close Neighbours are better than the vandals from hell)

**W.E. Black** have submitted revised proposals for this site that do not meet what The Buckingham Society requested in a site meeting with them. If work is not to start immediately, we implore this responsible Bucks firm to

"Save The Children"

Why not send your personal view to the Editor?

GET SMASHED HERE

THROW OUT YOUR MATHS TABLES

GRASS RULES, OK?

## What's new at:

### WIXAMS

We hear a great deal about MK and Greater MK, but have we appreciated that other new towns are being planned in our area?

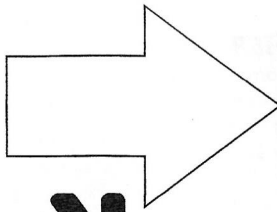
Wixams is a new town equipped with "bendy" roads and a green, park heart, purpose-designed for the site of an old munitions factory south of Bedford close to the A6.

### DESIGNED BY CIVIC TRUST

The CT Regeneration Unit has created the development framework with Alexandra Rook, who was one of Buckingham Society's trainers on our "Pathfinders" Course playing a leading part. The commercial partner is Gallagher Estates.

The concept is to revisit Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement within a sustainable 21st century context of:

- Using previously developed land
- High housing density
- Mixed housing types
- Pedestrian-friendliness
- Proper facilities that can be reached by foot or bike
- Keen to be green
- Water draining naturally to attenuation lakes
- Curving streets to create vistas
- An activity, park-based hub
- Traditional forms
- Using renewable energy sources.



KEMPTON PARK



### GREEN FLAG PROGRESS

The Civic Trust's programme to revive England's flagging parks is expanding and gaining a great knowledge base. The latest GREEN FLAG SPECIAL adapts Kipling's "IF" to suggest recipes for park success. Here, we have go stretching that idea within our Buckingham context

### BOURTON AND CHANDOS PARKS WILL BE A SUCCESS AND MORE

#### HEAVILY USED **IF**

- We revise the demetricated signage
- We install new information boards
- We distribute revised leaflets
- We motivate vandals to become park artists
- We get horticulturalists to help with flowerbeds
- We scrap for public funding
- We have park wardens
- We complete the riverside walk
- We create a café bar and place the public WC within it for security and to inhibit cottaging by men
- We mend the children's play area
- We restore & then tell the horses of their trail in Bourton Park
- We finish & whisper to lovers of the willow tunnel in Bourton Park
- We use the exercise equipment
- We create a bird biodiversity plan
- We improve paths for everyone including the disabled.
- We keep these parks litter free
- **WE CONTINUE TO CARE.**

BS has been involved recently in suggesting ideas to improve Bourton and Chandos Parks to Ian Brearley, AVDC Parks Officer. The two parks define so much of the urban context of the river Ouse in Buckingham.

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# EDUCATING BUCKINGHAM IN 1938



Opposite are contrasting plans of Buckingham's two secondary schools 65 years ago. The London Rd "Senior School" was modern and aged 3; the Latin was ancient but was finding its 30 year old Chandos Rd buildings rather constricting.

The two tiny schools and their Curricula look strange from the one-size (academic) fits all that we became accustomed to under the repressive National Curriculum regime of the 1990s. **Here** was a Grammar School based on one form per year. The sixth form was so incidental and small a matter that it did not inhabit its own space. **There** was the Senior School (the first in North Bucks) 2 forms per year, 4 year groups, with facilities that scream "You boys will grow up to toil in fields or workshops, and you will marry one of these girls whom we're domesticating for you".

Nowadays, most rooms in schools are dedicated to a subject. As the curriculum has mushroomed to more than 20 subjects, the ratio of rooms compared with groups of pupils has risen inexorably. Go into a secondary school in 2003 and sometimes you must hunt the kids—some summer days they're almost as difficult to detect as WMD in Iraq. The Senior School was purpose-built - 8 classes, 9 teaching spaces. It lacked a Library—as Francis Bacon wrote "Reading maketh a **full man**" - but that was not Headmaster Mr Bodenham's aim as he set out to create "a School second to none". Neither school's Hall was satisfactory. From day one in 1935, Mr Bodenham found difficulty in holding a whole-School Assembly. The Latin School's Hall was a flexible structure—part Hall part classroom, with a sliding partition.

In 2003 we're told that there is more than 1 bureaucrat per bed in the NHS. Go into most secondary schools (outside of the Public School sector) and you'll find more offices than toilets, occupied by heads of subject, year-heads, curriculum leaders, SENCOs, senior management team, etc. Only bog standard or new classroom teachers have no space to call their own and no door plaque to trumpet their rank. In 1938 there were two schools, two Headmasters, **two offices**. The staff rooms were the smallest rooms in the school. (One Vicar visited RLS and was wedged tight against the staff room radiator at break time. On leaving, he observed ruefully "I've burned my botty!"). There was little need for staff rooms, non-contact periods hadn't been invented.

What a story of "rural North Bucks" is revealed in

the Secondary School's lay-out with its emphasis on the great, **vocational** outdoors. New boys started by germinating seeds, later graduated through the greenhouse and the study of live fish, to the really scientific stuff: fattening pigs, and the effects of manure on spuds. No playground, no gymnasium—so, no need to buy expensive PE gear—but don't forget your wellies!

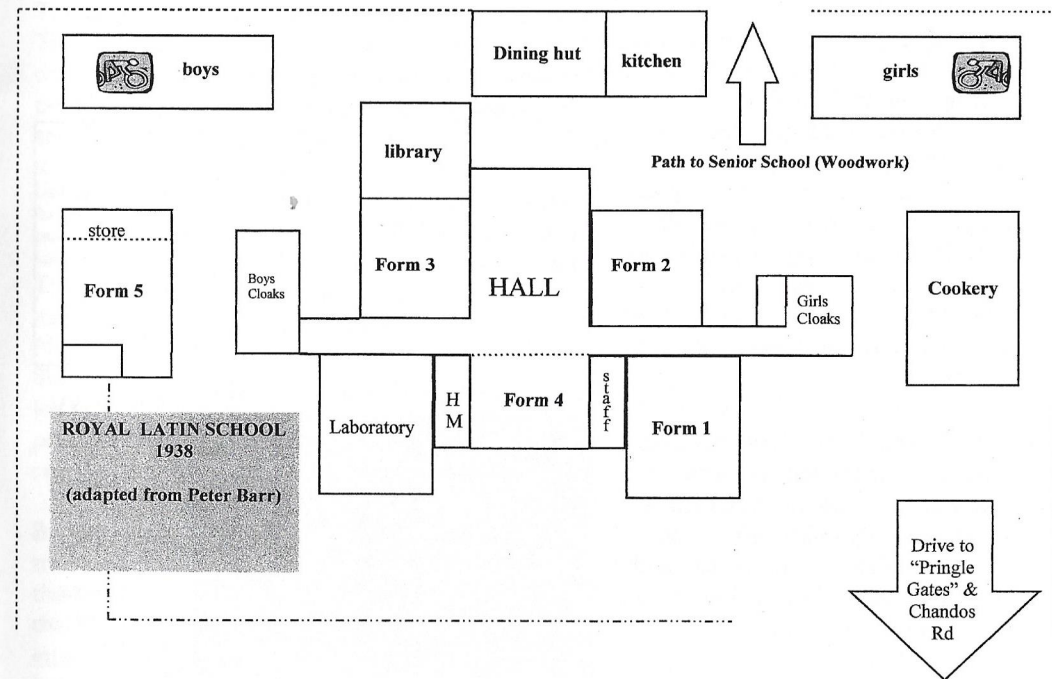
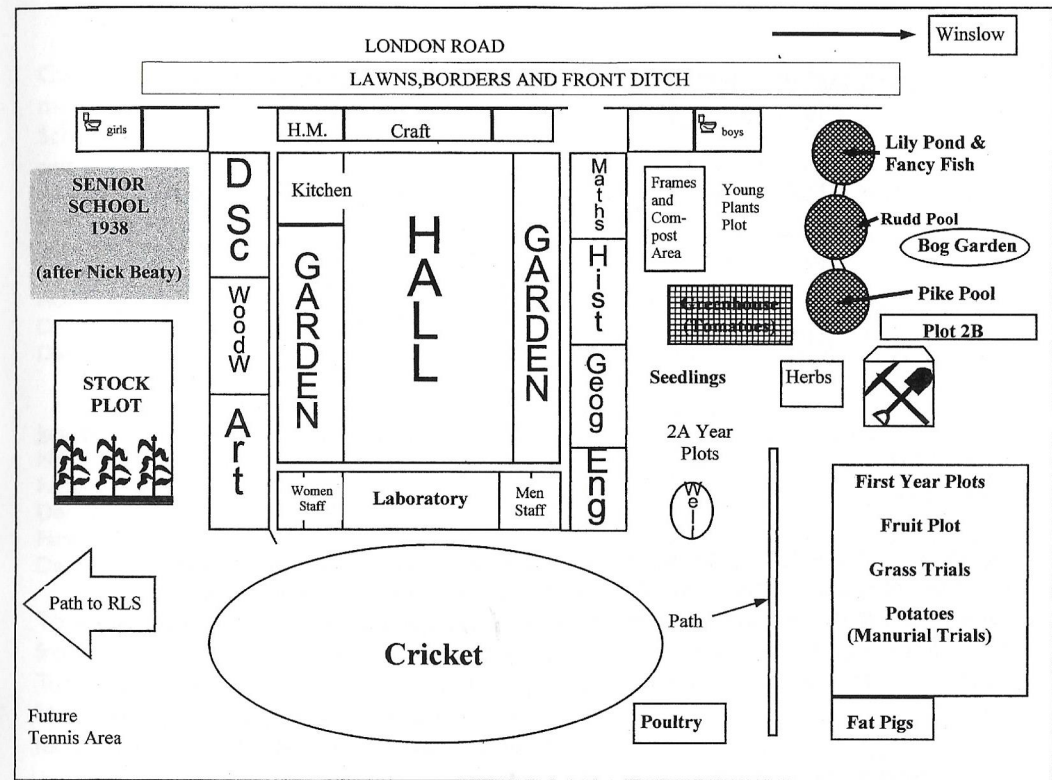


Sport and PE was not a separate discipline but an occasional activity enjoyed by pupils if there was a keen classroom teacher willing to supervise it. Music meant class singing in the Hall containing the school's only piano, or, maybe, an occasional treat—the County Music Advisor on his annual visit lugging his portable gramophone and priceless collection of 78rpm recordings—Jeremiah Clarke's Trumpet Voluntary was bound to stir them up and how neatly it fitted on one side of a 78rpm record.

Note the ample bicycle sheds at the Latin School. The school recruited from a wider area than the Senior School, and, as Peter Barr has written, the fast mode of transport of the time was the bicycle and Bucks County Council provided **free** bikes to those distant from school. They became vital later during WWII when buses were commandeered.

The two schools barely tolerated each other and were mutually ignorant. They shared the Senior School Woodwork Room and a talented Woodwork Teacher, Mr Goodger. Mr Bodenham, an arch disciplinarian, disliked the weekly visits by Latin School boys, many of whom did not treat woodwork with reverence. To the Latin School, the Senior School was a usurper and a threat; it contained some children who were bright enough to be scholars. The Latin School was not full. Pupils left early and upper school classes were distressingly small, so brighter students were accelerated to a higher year whilst others were kept back. A Grammar School in little more than name, RLS was too small and isolated to be an academic hot-house. Its leavers were far, far more likely to leave for immediate employment than to proceed to University. It was a nice school with a few talented teachers producing very pleasant citizens for North Bucks, but few of their intellects had been stretched beyond the elastic point.

The two schools taught 400 students in 1938. 65 years later there are nearly 2500 on their rolls. Education, Education, **Education!** Ed 2003



## PRE WWII, REAL EDUCATION IN BUCKINGHAM STARTED WHEN SCHOOL CLOSED

### GANDHI TO INSPECT DAIRY SHOW.

### BUCKINGHAM GIRL WINS A CHAMPIONSHIP.

Buckingham readers were delighted to read those headlines in their copies of "Daily Express" on 23rd October 1931.

Gandhi visited the dairy show to inspect the exhibits but mainly to observe some of the most productive goats in the world, who could produce almost as much milk a day as cows.

The Express went on to say:

"Principal interest in the show yesterday centred in the stock-judging contest for young countryfolk. There were fourteen teams entered and none of the competitors was more than twenty years old. They had to judge cattle of five different breeds in exactly the same way as their seniors do at the great livestock shows. The challenge bowl was won by the Buckinghamshire B team with 832 points....."

A little girl, **Peggy Busby**, aged fifteen, from the **Royal Latin School Calf Club**, Buckingham secured the individual championship. She easily defeated all her boy and girl competitors, having 300 points out of her team's total."

When histories of schools are written the great and the good, ie Headteachers, are the shakers and movers. Seemingly their mortar boards fuse buildings brick to brick and their great learning turns menial work into THE CURRICULUM.

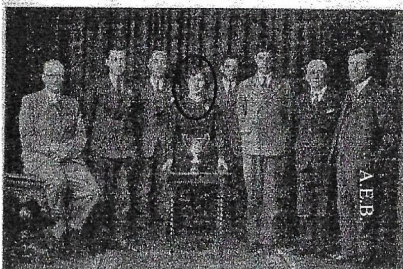
Reality is sometimes different. Just as life events are frequently the outcome of chance encounters, the direction of schools results from individual staff enthusiasms inspiring outstanding achievement by their pupils.

As has already been written in this magazine, pre WWII, RLS was a not a great institution. It lacked coherence, standards and identity. But for WWII, long term individuality might have been provided by the out-of-school Calf Club and its outstanding member, little Peggy Busby (of Maids Moreton). New Head, Mr Thomas, spotted his opportunity. *The Buckingham Advertiser* had celebrated an earlier success by Peggy Busby a month before. Mr M.W.Thomas, the Headmaster rushed an Advertisement to the *Times Educational Supplement*:

#### ROYAL LATIN SCHOOL BUCKINGHAM

WANTED for the Spring Term, 1932, a SENIOR SCIENCE TEACHER with special qualifications in BIOLOGY and AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE ..... Active interest in the work of the Young Farmers' Club necessary .....

#### NO AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION HERE!



B.A.30.10.1931 Peggy is circled, her father, A proud Alderman Algernon Busby is far right. The Headline tells us how hard times were.

Curricula in some subjects at RLS were in rudimentary form as late as the 1970's, but the School's Young Farmers' Calf Club laid its stall out clearly in 1931:

#### SYLLABUS TO CHRISTMAS 1931

In addition to the usual class work, the following meetings have been arranged:-

##### Senior Class

Nov. 27th Discussion and Social and Educational Evening

Dec. 4th DEBATE "Ayrshire v. Friesians"

Dec. 11th—PAPERS

(a) Showing (P. Busby)

(b) Judging Experience (Jones)

##### Junior Class

Nov. 27th DEBATE— "How to make the "Young Farmer" Monthly more popular.

Dec. 4th Discussion—The control of Vermin attacking Farm Live Stock animals.

Dec 11th—PAPERS—THE FARM

Three lectures had been arranged by the Club from: 1. Its "trainer", Mr **W.H.** Thomas, 2. Mr Tustin ( supported by a film on "Milk" ) , and 3. Mr. John Porter who was bringing his lantern lecture show on "Continental Rambles".

The Club was also scheduled to visit Messrs Thew, Hooker and Gilbey's Milk factory (now the University's Chandos Rd Buildings), BCC experimental grasslands plots, and Messrs Capel and Sons Prize Farm for Clean Milk production in Thornborough. **George Capel**, who became the Leader of the RLS Young Farmers Club in the 1970's still farms it, with help from his wife Margaret ( RLS English teacher in the 1960's and 70's) and their son, **Martin** ( Old Latin ).

The curriculum was leading edge. After Christmas, the school advertised in *The Advertiser* that Mr Dunlop was coming to show a film on Basic Slag Production, so that local Farmers might learn, also, of the great potential of this by-product of iron production in creating the correct acid/alkali balance for their pastures.

By 1932, Professor J A Swatson had been attracted from Oxford University to lecture on the benefits of combine harvesters and to praise that famous Young Farmer—our **Peggy!** **Every international "English" Young Farmers' Stock-judging team included at least one member of**

RLS. The team had recently beaten the **Americans**. 150 people from far and wide were present as the Headmaster climbed further aboard the bandwagon by announcing the building of a Young Farmers' hut at RLS. The event was recorded in *The Advertiser* that devoted 3 columns to it.

The School was riding the crest of a wave, so Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Roger Keyes, was invited to speak at the 1932 Speech Day. Unfortunately illness kept him away, but that left more time for the new Head to claim the credit for:

*"Perhaps the most important change in the curriculum of the School has been the reorganisation of the Science teaching. I believe I am correct when I say that this is the first school in the County to inaugurate a course in Agricultural Science. This work, although still in its infancy, promises to have far-reaching effects, and it is my hope that this department of the school may come to play in time to come a worthy part in the agricultural life of the district."*  
(APPLAUSE)

Sadly, despite *The Advertiser's* headline (see previous page), agriculture was in long-term decline in Bucks. WWII and later developments in global markets meant that RLS's agricultural bandwagon became bogged down in the clayfields of North Bucks and its cart-horse was sent to the knacker's yard to be turned into glue to bind textbooks on IT.

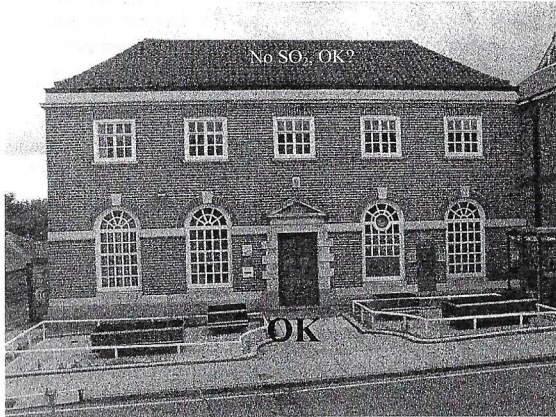
But, RLS's work in Agricultural Science was recognised by BCC in 1935, and the definite "rural" flavour of the new "Senior" School was the result, an attempt to spread RLS manure on the masses. As for Peggy Busby, she can be regarded as that School's template. It was created to fill the farmyards of North Bucks with her clones. Well, almost: BCC thought all farmers must be male. Peggy Busby never relegated herself to the role of "farmer's wife". She lived an active life, being particularly associated with the Hockey and Golf Clubs. She still lives in Maids Moreton.

# BETWEEN THE WARS NEO-GEORGIAN RULED, OK?

The former Post Office built in 1939 is the most distinguished building built in Buckingham between the wars. It is proudly neo-Georgian and epitomises good public building of its period. There are some nice plays on the theme of the golden section - "apparent" upper storey : lower storey ; height of ground floor windows: first-floor windows) The solidity and stature of "The Post Office" is emphasised by bold ashlar trimmings and the "aedicule" front door-frame establishes its importance by reference to ancient Greece. The ground floor windows may be the best iron-framed windows in Buckingham. The pantiles of the pleasantly hipped roof have weathered well and, thanks to the closure of Calvert Brickworks, now sport

a healthy green glow from lichen growth. It's good to see this building, which has seemed to be "at risk", cared for with new planters complementing freshened paving slabs.

**This Post Office is a feature of 20th Century Buckingham. There is no better Post Office building within 50 miles of it.**



A bull elephant has raped The Buckingham Fort turning a former Swan into an ugly duckling. It has smashed the 1930's lighted windows and replaced them one by one with bug-eyed monstrosities in smoked plate glass. We are told that rules governing our Conservation area have not been broken; that it is "permissible development". As you will know, local people including Barbara Edmondson, owner of, and great investor in, Castle House ( that lies opposite to the elephantine eatery) are deeply



affronted. Until recently, *The Buckingham Fort* aka "*The Barrel*" was another example of pleasant inter-War building. It fitted its corner site and context well. Our Vision and Design Statement, which is supplementary planning guidance, is clear that replacement windows should reflect the style of those replaced; the so-called RALP document agrees. BTC are at one with Buckingham Society in deploring this casual act of brutality. Oh, for planning teeth that can tackle ivory tusks. Women, editors and elephants never forget an injury, so there will be no more Indians in The Fort. (Sorry, Saki.)

## The Grenville Café

(Miss Spinks)

**WEST STREET  
BUCKINGHAM**

**Luncheons, Teas Morning Coffee  
Home-made Cakes, Fuller's Cakes  
etc., etc.**

Open on Sunday 2.30 p.m. Telephone 3113



This inter-War Café was so popular that one day a cow waddled in wanting a cup of tea! Presumably, she brought her own milk with her.

Does any reader remember "Fuller's Cakes"?

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See that your milk is accredited under the  
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in Clean sparkling Sterilised Bottles, as  
milk produced from our OWN cows by  
BUCKINGHAM'S LEADING DAIRYMEN

**BROOK'S DAIRY**  
WELL STREET BUCKINGHAM  
Phone 2181



How long before The National Curriculum requires children to be taught about glass milk bottles? Brook's Dairies has been turned into sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The days of local milk were wrecked by the selling of milk as a loss-leader in supermarkets. Buckingham's milk probably travels 150 miles to be bottled and a further 150 miles to reach Tesco.  
**House-wives don't be misled, insist on quality**

Between the Wars Adverts have been recreated from a copy E.N. Hillier's "Almanac of Buckingham" owned by Bill Howkins

We are please to announce support from these **CORPORATE MEMBERS**

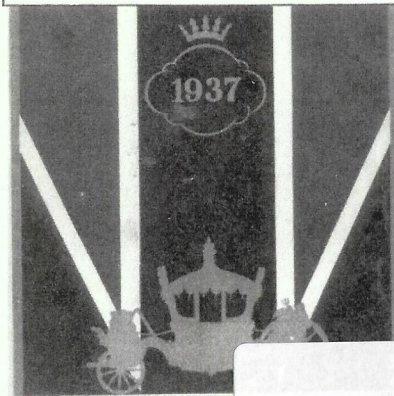
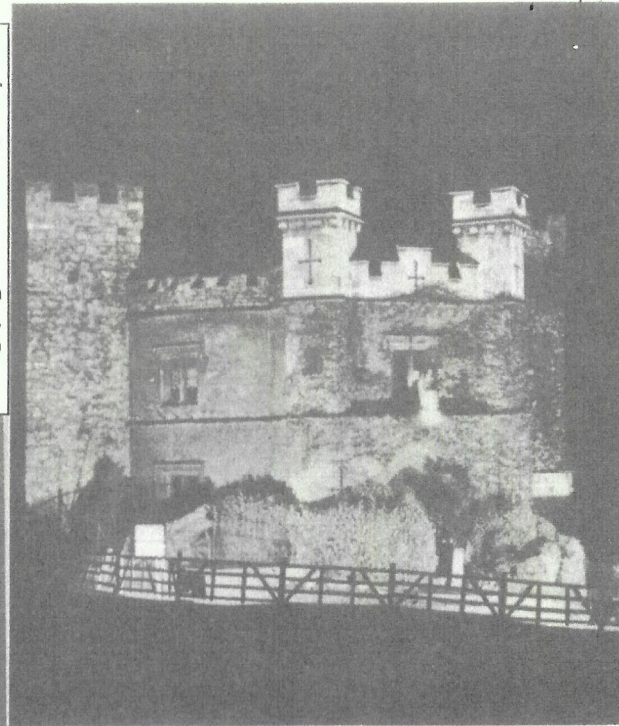
1. **CASTLE COURT PROPERTIES LTD (John Tearle)** that is heavily involved in the regeneration of land behind West Street. The Society's Planning Group has been extensively consulted on this possible major development of homes for older people.
2. **AERODEX-FLOYD (M.D. Les Floyd)** who own a factory unit on our Tingewick Industrial Park and have submitted plans for a new factory and extension to the riverside walk on land between that Industrial Park and the river Great Ouse. Unfortunately when it comes to The Environment Agency, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth".
3. Wishes to remain anonymous.

### THE OLD GAOL

Dressed and illuminated  
for the Coronation of King George  
VI  
In 1937

The whole of Buckingham was "en  
fête"

(this picture has been re-printed from  
the archives of Stanley Meadows,  
who arrived in Buckingham in 1932)



Buckingham Cor