

Newsletter Number 10 for June 2016



First my apologies that the June 2016 Newsletter is a little late.

Some readers will know that I damaged my left knee rather badly when playing golf in April. I am now on week 10 of a 12-15 week recovery. Sadly I lost some time in April/May due to the injury. My apologies for the delay.

A Love of History

In a recent issue of BBC History Magazine the journalist Dan Snow explained why he loves history. He described history as a reservoir of stories of the most interesting events that have happened to anyone who has lived. History, he wrote, expands our own set of experiences. This looked like a good way to start this newsletter. If you could name one event that has been important or enjoyable or has just stayed with you and expands your life today what would it be? Here is a short starter list of events but do include many others as you consider your history. Do send me your entry or list to john@hancojohn.plus.com.

1937 The Duke of Windsor marries Wallis Simpson in the Château de Candé

1942 Radio programme *Desert Island Discs* first broadcast

1947 Restrictions on foreign travel imposed during World War II lifted

1952 The magazine *New Musical Express* publishes the first UK Singles Chart

1957 End of petrol rationing following the Suez Crisis

1962 BBC television broadcasts the first episode of *Z-Cars*

1967 Harold Wilson announced the United Kingdom had decided to apply for EEC membership

1972 The BBC quiz programme *Mastermind* was first broadcast

1977 The last Rover P6 rolls off the production line after 14 years

1982 Argentinians land on South Georgia Island, precipitating war

1987 Channel Tunnel construction is initiated

1992 Cones Hotline introduced enabling members of the public to complain about traffic cones

1997 Princess Diana, Dodi Fayed and driver Henri Paul were killed in a high-speed car crash in Paris

2002 The Euro becomes the official currency of twelve of the European Union's members

2007 Destructive floods occurred in parts of the UK including Gloucestershire

2012 London hosts the 2012 Summer Olympic Games

Special Folders in the Winchcombe Museum

Over the years the volunteers at Winchcombe Museum have put together a large number of folders on many topics. These folders tend to focus specifically on Winchcombe and are a very helpful way of getting to know, in some detail, about a range of historical topics in the town. They can be viewed when visiting the museum. Come in, take a seat and browse away. One of the folders focuses on the Cinema in Winchcombe. Here is a taste of its contents.

Winchcombe Cinema Folder (researched and produced by B.K. Edward)

Winchcombe Cinema was in Silk Mill Lane. It opened in 1933 and had a number of names including the Picture House, the Old Tanneries Cinema and The Tudor. It had a staff of seven, three ladies and four gentlemen. The Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic for Saturday 30 December 1933 carried photographs and details of the opening. The former tannery had been converted by Mr L.W. Barnard and was open by Sir Philip Sidney Stott, Bart. F.S.A.

The Old Tanneries Picture House

Manager Mr. S. T. G. Ball

Secretary Mr. R. W. Greenhalf

Architects Messrs L.W. Barnard & Partners

47 Promenade, Cheltenham

Builder Mr H. J. Trigg Cheltenham

DAILY CONTINUOUS PROGRAMME		
Manager Mr. S.T.G. Ball	From 2.30 Boxing Day, Thursday & Saturday; 6.0 all other days	Sound by British Thompson Houston
1933 - 34		
December 26th	Soldiers of the King	Cicely Courtneidge
	Hotel Splendide	Jerry Verno
December 28 th	Yes Mr. Brown	Jack Buchanan, Elsie Randolph
	Strangers of the Evening	Zasu Pitts comedy mystery
January 1 st	Roman Express	Esther Ralston, Hugh Williams
	Bailiffs	Chesney Allen & Bud Flanagan
	Song of the River	<i>No names listed. Ed.</i>
January 4 th	Blarney Stone	Tom Walls, Anne Grey
	Dynamite Ranch	Ken Maynard, Ruth Hall
January 8 th	After the Ball	Esther Ralston, Basil Rathbone
	The Iron Master	J. Farrell MacDonald
January 11 th	Just My Luck	Ralph Lynn, Winifred Shotton
	Forbidden Company	Barbara Stanwyck, Adolphe Menjou
Also at every performance a Mickey Mouse Cartoon or Silly Symphony		
<i>The programme is subject to alteration at the discretion of the management</i>		
Prices of Admission – 1/6, 1/-, 9d. Children when with adults, half price		

Details of the programme for January 8th, 9th and 10th 1934

“After the Ball”

“The League of Nations Conference at Geneva figures in the story’s action. The philanderings before, at and after a ball of a certain English Courier, Jack Harroway, played with great charm and finesse by handsome Basil Rathbone, form capital material for fun. The word sophistication has been overworked, but the farcical materialism of this flirtatious story cannot be expressed in any other term.

Esther Ralston is always charming. In "After the Ball" her attractiveness is embarrassing. And what praise could be adequate for the performance of Marie Burke as the wife of a foreign diplomat, feather-headed purloiner of a seal of State. Cheers for H.M. Harwood for his witty adaptation of the story. And hand-claps for George Curzon and Jean Adrienne, not forgetting Clifford Heatherley, whose pomposity and funniness were of tremendous value to the picture."

Special Cinema Bus Service

Luxury motor coach services were arranged for the benefit of patrons of the cinema

Dep	Winchcombe	6.40pm	Dep	Winchcombe	10.30 pm
Arr.	Didbrook	6.50	Arr.	Greet	10.35
"	Stanway	6.55	"	Gretton	10.40
"	Newtown	7.00	"	Alderton	10.50
"	Toddington	7.05	"	Toddington	11.00
"	Alderton	7.15	"	Newtown	11.05
"	Gretton	7.25	"	Stanway	11.05
"	Greet	7.30	"	Didbrook	11.15
"	Winchcombe	7.35	"	Winchcombe	11.25
Tuesday and Friday Evenings only to commence with.					
A.W. Gillett, Proprietor : Gretton Road, Winchcombe					

Note the route included Newtown between Stanway and Toddington. What is Newtown called today? (editor)

TO THE PATRONS OF THE NEW CINEMA, WINCHCOMBE Christmas 1933

In extending an invitation and greetings to the inhabitants of Winchcombe, the surrounding districts and villages; the Old Tanneries Cinema opens its doors on Boxing Day, 1933, fully confident that a longfelt want will now be supplied. Relaxation from work, comfort in seats and surroundings, education, amusement, real music and above all, a well ventilated hall, properly heated and lit. These are some of the advantages which you can obtain from the entertainment now brought so close to your doors.

The Old Tanneries, which many of the Winchcombe inhabitants will remember, have gone and all the older buildings have been pulled down. The two remaining which were, it will be admitted, the more modern and better built than the others, have been converted to their new uses, one as a cinema and the other as a useful hall for any purpose, dancing, whilst drives or anything that is required. Pulling down the old factory has also given an opportunity to form a park for motor cars and cycles, free for the benefit of all.

Now as to the entertainment itself. To start with a glorious selection of pictures await you, beginning with the Boxing Day programme - "Soldiers of the King" - the pick of all the 1933 British Talkies. Those who have seen it will almost certainly want to see it again and those who have not must not miss this golden opportunity. Unfortunately it will be for two days only. This will be followed by "Yes Mr. Brown" on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and with two new programmes every week, till we finish up with the new edition of "Sunshine Susie" at the end of the month. There is not one of the programmes that ought to be missed and in addition to these main features of the programme, which by the way is in every case a British production representing only British sentiments of the better type, there are the delightful Mickey Mouse Comedies or Silly Symphonies. But this is not all, for in addition to the main feature of the programme there is always a good second film, giving as good and up to date a double feature programme as can be seen anywhere in the county. As soon as possible it is intended to add one of the weekly news films.

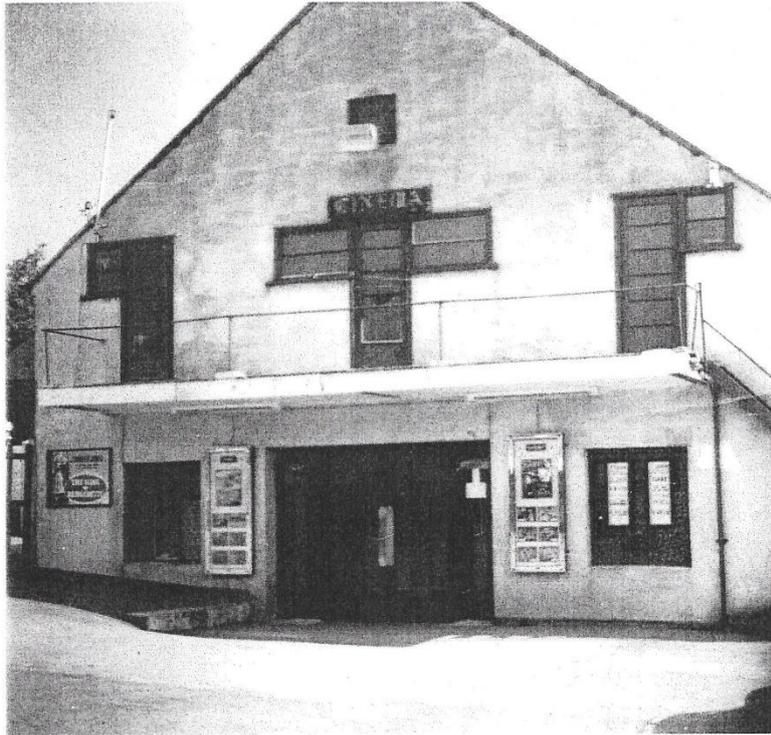
The management have gone to considerable trouble to obtain the best and most up to date appliances. Electric light with "graduated" dimmers which give such a soft pleasing effect - the best and safest fittings to exits - the only really reliable and pleasing talkie apparatus, the B.T.H. Sound System, a very costly set of machines of British Manufacture.

These are a few of the specialties of Winchcombe's new Cinema. You will note the feeling of comfort, if not luxury, directly your feet are on the thick carpets and you sink into the softly padded seats.

S.T.G. Ball, Manager.

The cinema in the 1950s

By the 1950s the cinema was known as "The Tudor". The cinema was leased by Craven Cinemas. The son of the then owner of Craven Cinemas kindly donated this photograph. The main film advertised was "The Song of Bernadette".



We need an up date

The museum would welcome any further information about the cinema.

We have three recent pieces of information.

1. The doors of the old cinema are now part of the interior fabric of a house in Winchcombe.
2. Linda Shakespear was for a time an usherette at the cinema. She remembers that when the film 'The Cruel Sea' was shown there were queues and full houses for every night of its showing. The story of the film was as follows:
Despite his guilt over a recent harrowing sea battle in which many of his men were lost, Lt. Cmdr. George Ericson (Jack Hawkins) is assigned to helm the new H.M.S. Compass Rose with the help of steadfast seaman Lt. Lockhart (Donald Sinden). When the small vessel is sent to escort convoys of ships fighting German U-boats in the North Atlantic, the mettle of the novice crew is tested by the weather, the turbulent sea and enemy attacks -- one of which nearly destroys the Compass Rose.
The 1953 film was based upon the book by Nicholas Monsarrat.
3. The film 'Soldiers of the King' was voted 4th best film in 1934. A good choice to open a new cinema in Winchcombe.

Responses to Newsletter Number 9

Thank you to the following readers for finding time to respond to Newsletter 9. Your interest sustains the editor in his lonely shed.

John Silcock responded to the maps which were the focus of Newsletter 9.

“The George Hotel was owned for many years by Royston (Roy) G Newton and his wife Marjorie. They were very ably assisted by Doreen Newton (no relation, I believe) who, following the sale of the George Hotel, lived for many years in Gloucester Street before moving into the Cleeve Hill Nursing Home. The public bar at The George was an extremely popular haunt for both locals and visitors coming for the races at Prestbury Park. There are amusing stories about interactions between locals and racegoers, probably best not repeated!

Marjorie Newton's sister, Jacqui, was married to Tom Graveney, the Gloucestershire and England batsman. They lived in Hailes Street (at No 9, I think) for many years before Tom retired from cricket and took over as landlord of the Royal Oak in Prestbury. After he gave up the pub, they moved into Cheltenham where they lived until they died only last year (Tom) and 2014 (Jacqui). As regards the tannery behind the George, locals have always called Castle Street "Tanyard Bank" or "Tanyard Pitch".

Jackie Thomas wrote: “What I was going to tell you was that the wool/haberdashery shop which was at the old hospital/Bostock House site was open when we moved here in 1975, and for some while afterwards. Barbara Edward would know if it was still open when they moved here some while later.”

Derek Cooknell wrote: I have now had a closer look at the map extracts. As in all early maps it is notable that publicly used footpaths (and bridleways) are indicated by parallel dotted lines. After the passing of the 1949 "National Parks and Access to the Countryside" Act all Highway authorities had a duty to prepare definitive maps showing all such footpaths, bridleways and other routes, which were then given a legal status as public rights of way. It was not until the 1980s with the publication of the second edition 1:25,000, and the 1:50,000 maps that rights of way were shown in a distinctive way (colour) on such maps.

Our hard-won rights of way should be guarded well, as there are always attempts to deprive us of them.

**And finally a view of fields near Winchcombe in June 2016
(Photograph by permission of Ray Woods)**

