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Orpington *Remembered*



Films from the archives of Bromley Local Studies



LOCAL HISTORY

FOOTPRINT PRODUCTIONS is a small group of film-makers based in West Wickham, Kent, who have worked closely with Bromley Local Studies to create videos of old cine films dating back to the late 20s, held in their archives.

We believe that old films recording local events are an important part of our national heritage and a valuable resource for historians. They are also of great interest to the general public but, as film, viewing was virtually impossible.

Now, however, the films have been digitally transferred, re-searched, and are being made into DVDs, to help Bromley Local Studies make them available for public viewing.

This, the first of the series, covers Orpington from the late 20s, and includes new material showing some of the places in the old film as they are today, along with a commentary covering the many events depicted.

We hope you enjoy the fruits of our labours and trust you will find the events of yesteryear as fascinating as we do.



Bromley Archives are situated in Bromley Central Library

The London Borough of Bromley was created in 1965 out of the former Beckenham and Bromley Boroughs, Orpington and Penge Urban Districts, and part of Chislehurst U.D.C.

At the same time Bromley transferred from Kent to become part of Greater London.

Penge had been in Surrey before 1889 and in the County of London until 1900.

Before Beckenham [in 1935] and Bromley [in 1903] gained their Borough status they were Urban District Councils in their own right. In 1934 there was a series of changes when Orpington Urban District was formed from the major part of Bromley Rural District and the former Chislehurst Urban District was amalgamated with Sidcup.

MAY CARNIVAL QUEEN CROWNING



Lana Morris

In May 1950, Miss Madeline England of Chelsfield was crowned as the Fifteens' Association Carnival Queen. There was prolonged applause as Lana Morris placed the glittering crown on Madeline's Head. After the crowning Miss Morris was presented with a bouquet of carnations by Mr. Frank Davies, manager of the Commodore Cinema.

Born on March 11, 1930, in Ruislip, Lana Morris was a popular film, stage and television actress during the 50s and 60s.

As her roles in films became less she became a TV panellist.

She died suddenly in Windsor, at the age of 68 and was survived by her son.

A VISIT MADE TO LOCAL FACTORIES

Producer and star of "Chance of a Lifetime" Bernard Miles and his wife Josephine Wilson, visited local factories on 26th June to talk about his film which was showing at that time at the Commodore cinema.

Beginning their tour at Klingers factory, Sidcup by-pass, they walked round the canteen and chatted to the workers. They also visited Electro Dynamic Company Works at St. Mary Cray, where the factory gardener presented to Miss Wilson, a bouquet of roses picked that morning.

Later, 300 or so employees gathered for the opening of the new canteen at Farnborough engineering works, where Miss Wilson cut a white ribbon and Bernard Miles claimed to be the first person to eat there by begging a sandwich from one of the works people.

Bernard James Miles, an English character actor, writer and director, entered the theatre in the 1930s, and was made a CBE in 1953.

In 1969 he was knighted and in 1979 was granted a life peerage as **Baron Miles, of Blackfriars** in the City of London.

1950

COMMODORE CINEMA



Commodore Cinema
Orpington High Street

The Commodore Cinema was built in 1933 by the local Spencer-May family . It was intended to be a more modern alternative to their Picture Palace at the other end of the High Street. It was designed by architects Leslie H. Kemp and F. E. Tasker.

In the 1960s the Commodore was sold to the Shipman and King chain and later passing to EMI, it closed in May 1982 , the intention being to convert it to a bingo hall, the fate of many of its contemporaries. This never happened; instead it was demolished and replaced by a branch of McDonald's.

15'S ASSOCIATION

The Fifteens Association was founded during World War II and named after the Warden 15 Post. The Association was a local group who organised the annual Orpington Carnival and May Queen Festival.

The Palace Cinema originally opened as a roller skating rink. In 1911 a cinema replaced the rink when Albert Spencer-May (landlord of the Old White Hart) opened the Picture Palace on the premises. Refurbished in 1951 it was renamed the Carlton. Finally closing in 1959, it became a garage but was soon replaced by shops adjoining Carlton Parade.



Palace Cinema—Orpington

ORPINGTON

HISTORY (IN BRIEF)

If you dear Sir, will deign to pass a day, in the fair vale of Orpington and Cray...

Rev. Francis Fawkes, Vicar of Orpington 1774-1777.

The first record of the name Orpington occurs in 1032, when King Cnut's treasurer gave land at 'Orpedingetune' to the Monastery of Christ Church at Canterbury. The parish church also predates the Domesday Book.

Over two hundred years ago Orpington was almost entirely self-supporting, producing its own fuel and lighting. In the early 1800s Orpington was described as a picturesque little village with quaint old houses, but in 1868 the South Eastern Railway arrived linking Orpington to central London and Sevenoaks and life began to change.

Further expansion of the railway led to much housing development. In 1904 the station was rebuilt and enlarged, allowing the train service to be improved considerably.

From this time developers began to take an interest in Orpington as a potential new suburb, several buying land along the east side of the railway line and starting to build before the First World War. (The population in 1911 being around 5,000, rose to 49,500 by 1939.)

Development continued throughout the interwar years on both sides of the High Street. The High Street itself changed from a village street to a suburban shopping centre complete with its own cinemas.



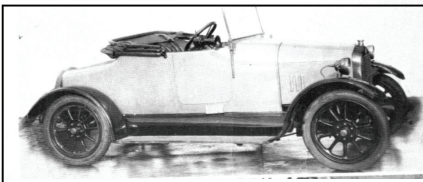
The Walnuts c 1900

Some pre Victorian buildings survived in the High Street into the 1970's but many of these were swept away by the Walnuts development, to the east of the High Street, which consisted of shops, offices, a large college of further education and a new police station.

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ORPINGTON

After many years of breeding poultry, Mr. William Cook produced the Buff Orpington hen making Orpington famous throughout the world, and in 1897 produced the Diamond Jubilee Orpington Hen which was presented to Queen Victoria.

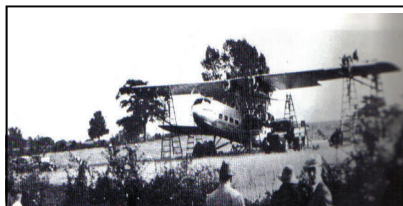
The Orpington Car, made by Frank Smith and Jack Milroy, was shown at the 1920 Motor Show. It was a two-seater convertible, with a dickey seat, and a 10 horsepower (7 kW) engine. Although briefly successful, Smith and Milroy could not compete with mass production and the last car was built in 1925. Unfortunately, there are no surviving examples.



The Orpington Car

Until recent times the valley of Orpington was wet and water would flood the main street. This was caused by the overflowing of the gravel pits at the junction of the High Street and Station Road.

The first sizeable housing development was in the early 1900s, when the Borough Guide advertised picturesque houses that were *'immune from the invasion of electric trams, so detrimental to property.'*



Landing of Standard Imperial Airways—1930

Flying has had some important connections with the area.

Amy Johnson made a force landing in 1936.

Land speed record holder, Sir Malcolm Campbell, practiced flying from the fields at Broom Hill.

A Standard Imperial Airways plane was forced down near Goddington Park in 1930.

In World War 2, the town suffered incendiary bomb damage, as well as V1 and V2 attacks, because of its location on the flight path to London and its nearness to Biggin Hill.

The last British civilian killed by German bombing was Mrs. Ivy Millichamp, 34, who was killed in her home at 88 Kynaston Road by a V2 on 27th March 1945.

The roads of the Grassmead housing estate were named after pilots from Biggin Hill who fought and died in the second world war.

ORPINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL

CORONATION TREES PLANTED

To commemorate the Coronation of King George V1 and Queen Elizabeth, nine English grown trees were planted in the playing fields of the Orpington Central School. (Now a housing estate)

They were gifts from Mr. William Mansfield (Chairman of the Orpington Group of School Managers) Mr. E. H. Joynson and Mr. E. Thompkins of Chelsfield, school managers.

The majority of the trees were planted on the eastern side of the school.

Beautiful sunshine prevailed while the trees were being planted. And Mr. Joynson planted the first tree, a cedar. Mr. Mansfield said the trees would commemorate the Coronation of their Majesties and the growth and development of each tree which would be watched with interest.

After the ceremony the managers and their friends gathered in the main hall of the girls' school.

Lieutenant Colonel Kirkhope, Vice-chairman of the managers and chairman of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee made an appeal for the preservation of all

trees in the district, including those along the highways.

The captains of the boys and girls on behalf of the staff and scholars, handed Mr. Mansfield a framed photograph (an aerial view) of the school and the trowel he used which had been made in the metal room of the school.

Cheers were given for the managers, and later the school choir sang songs, including George Dysons' *Thanksgiving*.



Tree planting at Orpington Central School 1937

1937

KING GEORGE VI

After the abdication of King Edward VIII, to be free to marry twice-divorced American, Mrs. Wallis Simpson, the Duke of York became King George VI and the lives of his young daughters were changed forever. Princess Elizabeth became Heiress Presumptive to the throne of England because if the new young queen had a son, he would have been next in line.

George and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyons were crowned at Westminster Abbey on 12th May 1937.

Born at Sandringham on 14th December 1895, King George VI died peacefully in his sleep at the early age of 57 on 6th February 1952, at the royal estate of Sandringham where the family had gathered for Christmas. The King's funeral saw the royal women veiled and in full black.

In 1940, when the civilian population of Britain was subject to mass bombing by the Luftwaffe, King George VI instituted the George Cross for 'acts of the greatest heroism or the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme danger'. The award, which is second only to the Victoria Cross, the highest military decoration, is usually

given to civilians and can be given posthumously. The award consists of a silver cross. On one side is depicted St. George slaying the dragon, with the inscription 'For Gallantry'. On the other appears the name of the holder and the date of the award.



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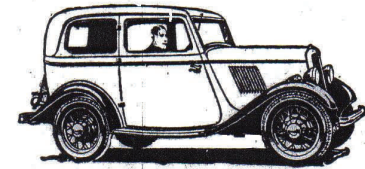
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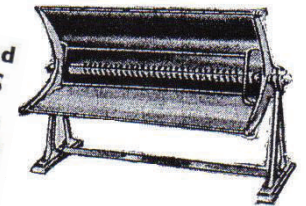


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1929

THE WEDDING OF HELENE SPENCER-MAY

The 21st September, 1929, saw the wedding of Christine Helene Spencer-May at All Saints Parish Church. This was a wedding of considerable local interest, her father being a prosperous business man and the owner of both cinemas in Orpington.

Christine married Mr. Archibald Walter Tietjan. The bridesmaids, dressed in yellow, mauve, blue and pink, were the bride's and groom's sisters together with a friend.



The bride arrives at
All Saints church

The bride was dressed in cream satin and carried white carnations, a gift from her future husband. The couple left the church to Mendelssohn's Wedding March where the public had gathered to see the happy couple.



The wedding cars were supplied by Burton and Deakin of Orpington. At this time it was the custom to print the wedding presents received in the local paper. The happy couple were presented with a dining room suite from Helene's parents and cut glass and other gifts from Mr. & Mrs. Tietjen.



The newly wedded couple

ORPINGTON JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS



Our debt to the throne by Sir Waldron Smithers
(later to become Member of Parliament for Orpington)

"In adding my humble tribute to our King and Queen on the occasion of their Jubilee, I cannot do better than to quote Disraeli's words:

'Since the settlement of that constitution, now nearly two centuries ago, England has never experienced a revolution, though there is no country in which there has been so continuous and such considerable change. How is this? Because the wisdom of your forefathers placed the prize of supreme power without the sphere of human passions.' **you owe all these to the throne.**

'Whatever the struggle of parties, whatever the strife of factions, whatever the excitement and exaltation of the public mind, there has always been something in this country round which all classes and parties could rally, representing the majesty of the law, the administration of justice, and involving at the same time the security for every man's rights and the fountain of honour.'

..... It means the continuous order which is the only parent of personal liberty and political right. And you owe all these to the throne."

1935

KING GEORGE V

George V (George Frederick Ernest Albert; (3.6.1865—20.1.1936) was the first British Monarch belonging to the House of Windsor, which he created from the British branch of the German House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. As well as being King of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth Realms, George was also the Emperor of India and the first King of the Free Irish State.

George reigned from 6th May 1910, through World War 1. From the age of 12 George served in the Royal Navy but upon the unexpected death of his elder brother, Prince Albert Victor, he became heir to the throne and married his brother's fiancée, Mary of Teck. Although they occasionally toured the British Empire, George preferred to stay at home with his stamp collection, and lived what later biographers would consider a dull life because of its conventionality.

On 6th May 1910, shortly before George's 45th birthday, his father King Edward VII died, and the Prince of Wales ascended the throne. George was now King George V and Mary was Queen. Their coronation took place at Westminster Abbey on 22nd June 1911.

During WW1 he relinquished all German titles and styles on behalf of his relatives who were British subjects; and changed the name of the royal house from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to Windsor.

George was plagued by illness throughout much of his reign and on 20th January 1936 lapsed into a coma. and on his death was succeeded by his eldest son Edward.

The Silver Jubilee celebrations of 1935 were a massive demonstration of the popular affection for the king.

King George is buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH ORPINGTON

The Parish Church "All Saints", stands upon pre-Norman foundations.

Mentioned in the Domesday Book, it is Early English in style, but some Saxon work is still visible.

In 1173 it was endowed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The tower and steeple were damaged by a storm in 1771, but unfortunately the new steeple, built in 1809, was hit by lightning and was never replaced.



Image Source: 1928 postcard

In 1957 restoration was carried out by Geddes and Hyslop. It was greatly enlarged and now has a seating capacity for a large congregation.



All Saints church Orpington

1929

ARMISTICE SUNDAY

The annual remembrance parade took place in commemoration of the Armistice and to pay homage to fallen comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice in the Great War.

Contingents marched from All Saints in Orpington and St. Mary's Church in St. Mary Cray, passing St. Andrews, culminating at the War Memorial in Orpington.

Those included in the parade were the British Legion, Territorials, Friendly Societies, Scouts, Fireman and brass bands.

ST. MARY CRAY

In the churchyard there is a 1st World War Memorial in the form of a tall slender column with a Celtic Cross, unveiled by Mrs. R. Berens of Kevington in 1919. Made from Portland stone, the original inscription, unreadable because of weathering, was replaced by a metal plaque in the church.



St. Mary's Church War Memorial



Salute at All Saints Church

At the memorial, wreaths were laid in remembrance of those who fell.

ORPINGTON MEMORIAL

The memorial was unveiled on Sunday 28th August 1921 by Colonel A. Wood-Martyn, DSO. The Roll Call of names was read aloud by Dr. A. Tennyson-Smith, and included that of his son, John Allan.

The memorial was designed by Charles Heaton Comyn FRIBA, of Hill Cottage, Station Road, Orpington. The design is a triangular column of Portland stone about 6 metres high with the names of the fallen cut into each of the three sides. At this time there were only 3 roads. Spur Road, as its name suggests, was built to connect to Court Road (the Orpington by pass) in 1926.



The orphanage was run by the Presentation Brothers, built in 1893 and became a boys' school in 1955.

The original orphanage was divided into wings, one for boys and one for girls. The children were taught basic agriculture, a subject that many of them would later put to use 4,000 miles away. The young people ready to leave the Orpington Orphanage, and who lacked friends or relatives, emigrated to Canada to homes set up by the Catholic Canadian emigration Society to help them adapt to their new environment, before being placed with mainly Irish-Canadian Catholic farming families.



New arrivals at the orphanage

ST. JOSEPHS ORPHANAGE

In 1887 Bishop Butt founded the Southwark Diocesan Education Council & Rescue Society for poor and neglected children from South London, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. He was inspired by the work of Canon Crea at Southwark Cathedral, who had acquired a disused carpenter's shop as a shelter for such children, becoming the first General Manager of the Society.

In 1891 a 60-acre site at Orpington was put up for public auction but did not reach its reserve figure. The Bishop was attracted by this opportunity, and the following day the Society purchased the land, which allowed sufficient space for the proposed buildings, as well as fields in which to teach the children basic farming methods.

The building of St Joseph's Orphanage and School (for 200 boys from the age of four on-ward) was completed in 1892. On 23 July 1893, the Presentation Brothers, with Brother Louis as Superior, arrived from Cork to undertake their task of training and educating the boys.

Typical examples of early arrivals were James McCarthy, who was admitted on 18 September 1893 at the age of 10, from the parish of St. Olave's, having spent the previous two years in the work-house; and John Gorman, aged 11, admitted 14 days earlier from the parish of Lambeth, where he had spent four years in the work-house. For the next seven years St Joseph's Orphanage and School was also occupied by girls, under the guidance of the Sisters of Mercy, whose Superior was Mother Mary Martha. The first chaplain was Father Martin, whose tenure was only brief. He was followed in 1894 by Father Linnett, who served until his death in 1912.



Bishop Butt



Preparing Spur Road

Two sides have a simple cross at the summit and the third side, a horse rampant, the symbol of Kent. The cost in 1921 was £900.

It originally recorded the names of the 111 local men who died in the 1st World War but 4 names have been added over the years.

After WW2 a committee was set up to advise on the manner in which the people of Orpington would wish to honour local people who died during the war and a plaque was attached to the memorial in honour of all who had died, together with the support of the purchase of Priory Gardens and other public areas in Orpington.



Preparing the new road



Completion of Spur Road

CANADIAN CORNER



Ontario Military Hospital—Orpington

THE BEGINNINGS OF ORPINGTON HOSPITAL

In the cemetery of All Saint's church are buried 88 Canadian soldiers who died during WW1. In 1914 Canada joined in the war with Britain and organised an expeditionary force to France.

After only a few short months of fighting it became obvious that hospital provision for the wounded was inadequate.

In August 1915 two Canadian military officials came to England and the site of Orpington was chosen for the Ontario Military Hospital, the building of which was paid for by the Government of Ontario. The Hospital known as the 16th Canadian General became one of the most up-to-date Military Hospitals in the world. It was in this year that the Canadian Government sold the hospital to British Ministry of Pensions.

Most of the old wards were demolished in 1979 to make way for a new building. The Clocktower was removed and placed outside where it fell into disrepair until renovated by a League of Friends in 1993 and placed in the courtyard.

The opening of this hospital made it necessary to provide a burial place for those who died there and a section of a meadow was chosen and consecrated. There are 116 graves here including soldiers from Australia and England. On Christmas Day 1918 there were around 1000 patients in the hospital. In the summer of 1919, King George V and Queen Mary paid a private visit to the hospital.

SILVER JUBILEE LOCAL CELEBRATIONS DECORATED SHOPS COMPETITION



2nd Prize: Gayfer Silversmith

Traders in Orpington decided on decorations and window displays were made ready for a public inspection of their decorated shops when the judges chose the three prize-winners.

1st prize

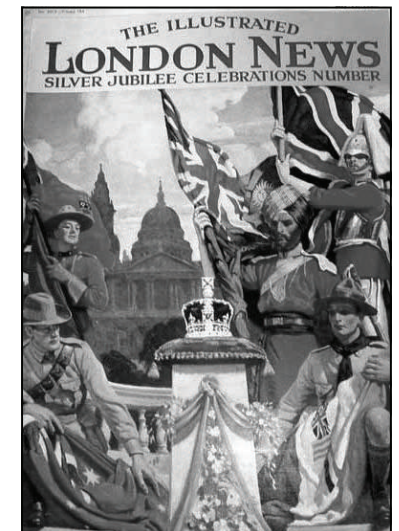
E.J.Elton, butcher
126 High Street—now a sandwich bar and butchers.

2nd prize

Gayfer, the silversmith and jewellers
108 High Street—now New Image hairdressers.

3rd prize

Madame Louie Hats
93 High Street—now Machin's Bakery



ORPINGTON JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS



Sports took place in many locations on the day, including St. Josephs Orphanage. Almost 900 entries for sports on Orpington Recreation Ground were received and prizes for each sport were distributed in the evening.



The parade wound its way through the streets of Orpington and in the evening the Orpington Silver Band played.

ORPINGTON VILLAGE HALL

LIBERALS LOSE ELECTION H.Q. IN FIRE

A fire which severely damaged Orpington Village Hall (February 1962) deprived Orpington liberals of their by-election headquarters 16 days before polling.

The fire, spotted by a patrolling policeman, started in a first floor room and quickly spread to the roof which was destroyed. The clock tower (the clock of which had not worked for many years) was left in a dangerous condition and the building was stated to be "almost a write-off".

Smoke hung over the High Street when fireman from Orpington, Bromley, Bexley and Sidcup arrived at 1.15am to try and gain control of the flames.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr. Ralph stated that they would have to go into the matter very thoroughly. If they decided to entirely rebuild the hall in its original form it would cost about £30,000, but a modern design was preferred.

One important point which was borne in mind in reaching a decision was that the High Street widening scheme would involve the sacrifice of some premises.

The Hall was given to Orpington by a Mr. Alfred Brown and was opened in 1896. During World War I it was used as an auxiliary hospital and until shortly after World War 2 was the only public hall in the town.

It was later replaced at the top of the High Street.



Firemen busy at the height of the blaze

VAD HOSPITALS

The Kent Voluntary Aid Detachment operated throughout the period of the First world War. Over 80 hospitals were set up in Kent in houses, schools and church halls etc., to receive wounded and sick soldiers brought home from the battle-fields.

On the outbreak of war, the Kent Territorial Force Association, the British Red Cross and St. Johns Ambulance, combined together to form the Kent VAD. Headquarters were at the home of Dr. Yolland at 53 Bromley Common. These hospitals provided accommodation for 4,730 patients.

Although the War Office paid a daily allowance for each patient, a large part of the running expenses was met through local funding and support.

The village hall in Orpington was one such hospital or small convalescent unit.

Soldiers from Belgium, Australia, Canada as well as England, were brought to these hospitals.

The first voluntary aid detachment in Kent was formed in 1910 following the publication by the War Office of a scheme for groups of volunteers to support the medical services of the territorial force.

BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING 1919

"Mrs. C. Tennyson-Smith ARRC, Commandant and Lady Superintendent of the Village Hall Auxiliary hospital, Orpington, was presented with the Royal Red Cross (First Class) for her services during the war."

THOUGHTS FROM AN UNKNOWN—WORLD WAR 1

There are two kinds of people on earth to-day, Just two kinds of people : no more, I say. Not the sinner and saint, for 'tis well understood, the good are half bad, and the bad are half good. Not the rich and the poor, for to count a man's wealth, you must first know the state of his conscience and health. Nor the humble and proud, for in life's little span, who puts on vain airs is not counted a man. Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.

NO; the two kinds of people on earth I mean are the people who lift, and the people who lean. Wherever you go, you will find the World's masses, are always divided in just these two classes. And oddly enough, you will find too, I wean, there *is* only one lifter *to* twenty who lean. In which class are you? Are you easing the load of over-taxed lifters who toil down the road. Or are you a leaner, who lets others bear your portion of labour and worry and care.

EVENTS

Mrs. Drinkwater, Head Mistress of the Orpington Infants' School, was general supervisor for a children's' tea party. Well over 1000 children attended and souvenir mugs made in Staffordshire, purchased by the Orpington Urban Council, were presented to each and every child on the Monday afternoon in all wards in the district.

Thanks were given to the caterers, Messrs. Battle, for organisation in the preparation and delivery of teas at the five Orpington centres which was plentiful, and last, but by no means least, thanks was given to Mr. Spencer-May, whose gift of patriotic caps was made to all the children, stressing the note of loyalty so evident at the tea tables.

Bonfires were lit by the Scouts in the evening and at St. Ann's and St. Joseph's further bonfires were lit which could be seen as far away as Sevenoaks.

A large firework display also took place, provided by the Urban Council, and the local fire brigade took charge of the 'big bang'.

Silver Jubilee Medal



Scouts prepare bonfire for the Jubilee celebrations

Ms. Lillian Salter of The Drive, wrote that warmest thanks should be accorded to Messrs. A. Buckwell and Sons, nurserymen, for their attention to the Orpington War Memorial and the beautiful flowers supplied by them free of charge.

Mr. Joynson, chairman of the Council, expressed publicly the Council's appreciation for the hard work performed by everyone concerned in making the King's Jubilee Day such a success.

Presentation of Medals

Police-sergeant George Jell and Police-constables Rogers and Taylor, each with 24 years service, were presented with the King's Silver Jubilee Medal.

1935

ORPINGTON JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Orpington certainly celebrated the 1935 Silver Jubilee in style. Entries for the decorated vehicle procession were numerous and all the vehicles assembled at Spur Road after a united service of thanksgiving at the Parish church.

The SS Commodore was awarded first prize in the procession, the costumes of which were made by Mrs. Maude Smith, wife of Sergeant Smith the commissionaire at the Commodore Cinema.

The film of the Silver Jubilee procession was later shown on the screen at the Commodore cinema.



Start of the Parade from Orpington Memorial
SS Commodore—1st prize winner

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1930

LEGION STANDARDS DEDICATION

CEREMONY AT KEVINGTON

August 10th 1930, four hundred members of the British Legion, from Bromley, Beckenham, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Westerham, Sidcup, Well Hall, Halstead, Knockholt and Dartford, marched on Sunday afternoon from the Cray Wanderers' Football Ground at Fordcroft to Kevington Park, where the new standards of the Orpington, Crays and District, and the Chelsfield branches of the Legion, were dedicated and presented.

The parade formed up on the football ground, where, in addition to the members of the Legion itself, there were also present representatives of the Special Constabulary Reserve, St. Johns Ambulance Brigade, Salvation Army, Girl Guides, Orpington and District Territorial's, The Oddfellows, RAOB, and the National Union of Railway Men, with the women's section of the Legion, with their own standard.

After the singing of "O God, our help in ages past" Mrs. Nash, wife of Major W. Nash, MBE, presented the standards to the Orpington and Crays branch, and Mrs. Norman Butler that of the Chelsfield branch.



Legion Standards Dedication march past

Nearing the end of the ceremony they sang "Fight the Good Fight" and Canon H. Knight, of Shortlands, gave a short address.

The choirs of Orpington and St. Paul's Cray churches were accompanied in the service by the Orpington and District brass band, and the band of St. Joseph's Orphanage was also present. Captain G. Birrell, M.C., the organising secretary of the south east area, was the parade marshal, assisted by Messrs. W. Walsh and Mr. H. Collyer.

Those assembled for the dedication then marched on to the war memorial in Orpington.

1935

BOXING DAY FOOTBALL MATCH

BROMLEY POSTAL V ORPINGTON PALACE CHARITY MATCH



Boxing Day 1935

A hundred hardy souls who braved conditions to visit Cray Wanderers' ground at Fordcroft on Boxing morning, saw enough to convince them that local football was both flourishing and entertaining. One only regretted that the weather was so unkind to the energetic organiser, Mr. Jordan.

Palace opened strongly, and took the lead, but threw away several chances to add to this before half-time. The Postal were not long in arrears, and even though Postal made every effort to save the game, they failed to get that elusive goal which they deserved.

After the game, Mr. E. Joynson, who lent the ground, distributed medals.

Cray Wanderers' Football Club ground was owned by Mr. Joynson. The Crays were known to be one of Kent League's 'poorest relations'. Some of the Kent League clubs had wonderful facilities at this time, but at Cray they had only one bath which filled up with mud as each player took it in turn to wash.

7th in the Kent League, 1935 was arguably Crays' best League performance, during this period, but in June of that year Mr. Joynson gave notice to the football club to quit the ground which had been their home since 1898, a decision which would haunt the club for decades to come.



Awarding medals

Founded in 1860, they are the 2nd oldest Association Football Club in the world. They now play on the grounds at Hayes Lane.

GODDINGTON PARK

As far back as 1300, Goddington Manor was owned by Simon de Godyngton. In the 1700 ownership had passed to a Mary Harris, whose son, George, designed St. Paul's Church, Crofton and the old Orpington Village Hall. In 1875, many years after the original manor house had been demolished, a new manor house was built. Today it is owned by the Methodist church and used as flats.

Goddington House, as it is called today, became a Grade 2 listed building in 2004.

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In 1981 an association was formed to preserve and protect Goddington Park and to ensure free and full public access. It has 64 hectares of grass and trees and a number of rugby and football pitches, plus tennis courts and children's play areas.



Manor house at Goddington park

KEVINGTON HALL



Georgian Mansion—Kevington Hall

The ordnance survey map of 1876 shows Kevingtoun and Kevington, the former at the top of the hill, the latter on it's slope.

The manor of Kevington belonged to the two families of Manning and Onslow from the late Middle Ages to the mid-eighteenth century when it was sold to Herman Berens, a City merchant from Amsterdam. The Berens family owned the hall until the Second World War, when the Government requisitioned it for Canadian troops.

It was later used as a primary school until the 1980s.

The present owners have carried out the huge task of restoration which is now complete. This grand Georgian mansion is set in sixty acres of parkland.

Kevington Hall is situated south-east of St. Mary Cray. and was designed and built in 1767-69 by the architect Sir Robert Taylor.

1930

RUGBY AT ORPINGTON

BOXING DAY MATCH IN AID OF THE CRAY VALLEY HOSPITAL



ORFC v Sevenoaks and Maidstone

Cray Valley Hospital, spectators and players, must have all been pleased when, in perfect weather, a Boxing Day match was played between Orpington and Sevenoaks and Maidstone.

Half-time saw Orpington two points down though they had so far been the superior side.

Pressure was kept up against the visitors on the re-start.

Undoubtedly, the credit for the win went to the forwards who were excellent in the scrums.

The attendance was around 450, half of which purchased tickets on the ground. It was thought that from the number of tickets sold that a record contribution was paid to the Cray Valley Hospital.

Score:

Orpington

9 points

Sevenoaks and Maidstone

5 points

An umbrella was raffled on the ground which brought in £2.5s. Fortunately its winner had no need to use it

The first ORFC had run from about 1922 to 1939 and, during this period, established the first Orpington Sports Club to incorporate other sports like hockey and cricket. When war broke out, the ground was requisitioned by the military and by the time the war was over Westcombe Park had moved to the Goddington Park area from Blackheath. ORFC had ceased to exist. On re-launching the Club in 1969, contact was made with a player from the pre-war club who donated a jacket which before a fire at the club house in recent years was displayed in a glass case.

1937

CORONATION OF KING GEORGE VI



1936

CEREMONY AT ORPINGTON WAR MEMORIAL

BRITISH LEGION PARADE AT ORPINGTON

Parading from the Drill Hall of the Royal West Kents, the procession marched to the Orpington Memorial with bands playing lively tunes along the route.

Coincident with the laying of wreaths on the Orpington memorial, a poppy wreath was placed on the memorial at Canadian Corner in Orpington churchyard by Mr. W. Joynson. They left the processions at the by-pass and after paying tribute to the memory of the Canadians and Australians who died in Orpington, they rejoined the main body at the junction of Church Hill and Orpington High Street.



The parade later stopped again at St. Andrew's Church, Lower Road on their route to St. Mary Cray, and finally marched to St. Joseph's Church.

At the end of the ceremonies there were sharp military commands and the band played "Where are the boys of the old brigade and thence to the Parish Church War Memorial.

CRAY VALLEY HOSPITAL



Cray Valley Cottage Hospital

Built in 1882 by the Chislehurst, Sidcup and Cray Valley Medical and Surgical Aid Society, Cray Valley Cottage Hospital was opened to the public in 1884.

Over its 90 years history it was used for maternity and geriatric patents.

It was substantially rebuilt in 1924 and by the 1940s was one of the area's leading hospitals.

Unfortunately, by the 1960s it was in decline and on the opening of the Queen Mary Hospital at Sidcup, was closed.

1930

OPENING OF NEW RECREATION GROUND

The opening of the new Orpington Recreation Ground (Goddington Park) by Mr. Henry S. Howard, the son of the first Chairman of the Orpington Parish Council, marked the successful termination of a scheme formed very many years ago.

As early as 1894, the Parish Council had the idea of a public recreation ground in mind, and they worked steadily to achieve this ambition in the face of many difficulties.

By 1930, the council possessed 19 acres of ground, laid out for tennis, cricket, putting, and bowls.

With swings and roundabouts for the children, it was one of the most pleasant situations in the neighbourhood.

"This constitutes what is possibly the finest public ground for many miles round", and it was to be hoped that all who used the ground would take to heart the words of Mr. Waldron Smithers, by remembering that it was a place of beauty, to be treasured and not filled with rubbish. Litter baskets were placed around the grounds, and others were promised to the Council, so that there would be no excuse for throwing anything down.



The Pavilion

MR. WALDRON SMITHERS

Smithers is a town in the province of British Columbia on the Bulkley River. It was named after Sir Alfred Waldron Smithers, Chairman of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway.

Born in England, he spent most of his life here, making periodic visits to Canada while chairman. He was involved with railway management in England and served as Chislehurst MP from 1918—1922 for the Coalition Unionists and was knighted in 1919.

On 5th October 1880 his son was born. Educated at Charterhouse and in France, he became a member of the London Stock Exchange. After the death of his father in 1924, in the general election of the same year, he stood for his father's constituency and won a three-cornered fight with a majority of more than 10,000.

In his 30 years in the House of Commons he was always a backbencher. Described as a *diehard Tory* he was well liked by all.

He remained as member for Chislehurst up to 1945 when he moved to the newly created Orpington constituency.



Sir Waldron Smithers

Winning the election Sir Waldron Smithers held the seat until his death in December 1954. He was knighted in 1934.

The New Recreation Ground:

Remarks made by Mr. Smithers at the opening of the new grounds, had an immediate effect on at least one member of his audience who, in the act of throwing away a match used to light a cigarette, picked it up and put it in his pocket!

He went on to say that when the plants and flowers promised by many people were in bloom, and the Orpington band played on Sunday evenings, the Parish Council would truly be entitled to look on their work and be gratified at the happy outcome of their efforts.