

Feltham History Group Meeting
Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 19:45

Chairmans welcome, review of Remembrance Day events – the Act of Remembrance event was marked on the 11th November around the high street memorial by many local people both young and old and a contingent of school children from 3 different schools. On remembrance Sunday ‘the 13th’ the attendance was good - our MP was in attendance and the Mayor of Hounslow and local councillors - our wreath was laid by the Hon Secretary

Items of interest

(RC) UPDATE - Feltham (Portlane) Brook ‘heavy rain’ – the heavy rain of late precipitated a further visit to Feltham Brook and other local water ways to determine the effect that the rain was having! This was also in response to the escalation of the concern to the local MP – whose office requested a short history of the brook together with detail of ownership and responsibility!

(AP) Queens Canopy ‘planting ceremony’

RC another place of imbibe hole gone The Hussar

Forthcoming events

At St Dunstan’s Ecumenical Christmas Carol Service Sunday 11th December 2022 at 6-30pm, leaflets are available which provide the full detail of that and other Christmastide events at St Dunstan’s.

Also there is a Christmas Concert called ‘Carols for Choir and Audience’ which is being performed by the Ian Engelmann Singers - this is at St Andrews United Reformed Church Hersham Road Walton – and admission is a ‘free’

And Christmas Grotto Event hosted at Bedfont Lakes Country Park ‘clock house lane entrance’ . Saturday 17th - Friday 23rd - it does not state times

AOB

Short talk

Christmas of times yore (AR)

Christmas 'times of yore'



The season of Christmas ends on "Old Christmas Day," January 6th which is also known as Twelfth Day.

2. Old Christmas Day



The term '*Old Christmas*' relates to a piece of legislation introduced by Parliament in the mid eighteenth century 'the Calendar Act of 1751' - it did not come into effect 'however' until 1752. -- Before the reforming of the calendar England celebrated Christmas day on January 6th. purists said that the "real"

Christmas Day was not on December 25th, but January 6th, 365 days after the previous Christmas

We are told that in 1752 - what 'was' the *twelve days of Christmas* were changed from the then existing calendar, i.e., the Julian calendar, which had been used in England and Ireland for many centuries, it was changed in favour of the new Gregorian calendar as instituted by Pope Gregory XIII.

Christmas was deemed to start at sunset on December 24th and end on 12th night which was January 5th. Nowadays, we count from December 25th with Twelfth Night falling on the 6th January

People have celebrated Christmas in various ways from the giving of gifts and cards and generally cheery greetings

Oliver Cromwell 'in his wisdom' banned Christmas carols between 1647 and 1660 – he thinking that Christmas should be a solemn occasion

3. ~~It could be said that Christmas, as we know~~ particularly with his Novel 'A Christmas Carol'; although he would have drawn heavily on times of yore!





In A Christmas Carol he leans towards references such as 'glad tidings of comfort and joy' 'oh little town of Bethlehem' together with the very inspiring 'in the bleak midwinter' although this was written by the 'pre-Raphaelite' Christina Rossetti some years later and adopted into many modern productions films etc..

In the 1950's it was 'for cinema purposes' renamed Scrooge – in that remake the wonderful Alistair Sim played Ebenezer Scrooge 'an absolutely brilliant depiction and performance' and we must not forget the very underrated Jack Warner playing Mr Jorkins – some of you will recall him as Sergeant George Dixon of Dixon of Dock Green

It is not certain when Christmas become so commercialised but the twentieth century saw an immense shift to a more and more secular celebration.

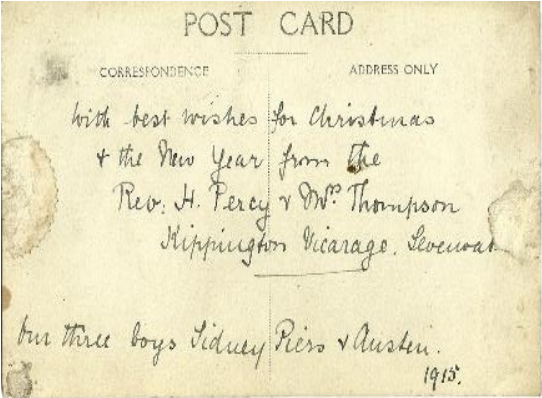
This is a Xmas card that was sent to my Aunt Rosina from her mother and father in mid-1930's, I never knew her as she died before I was born 'she was only 17' - deducing from that not all Christmas's were joyous, but with joy we should persevere


4.  These are further examples of greetings cards sent or received by my family from the early or mid-twentieth century

5.  And this is a Christmas card from my Father during WW2 - he was Private 681562 8 Coy Pioneer Corp it is dated December 1944 it being "passed by the censors" and bears the letters OAS !

6.   This post card or should that be 'photo-card' was sent to the vicarage here 'St Dunstan's' in 1915 and addressed to the then vicar the Reverend Browell

It reads "with best wishes for Christmas & the New Year Reverend H Percy & Mrs Thompson, from Kippington Vicarage Kent"

7.   The Reverend H Percy was known to Vicar Browell, as was Mrs Thompson whose husband founded the church in Kippington

8.  an array of Christmas stamps 'old money' We may think that it is only of recent times 'post Second World War' that Christmas was celebrated with so much fizz and eagerness, but adverts from the Middlesex Chronicle tell a different story.

Obviously the media that we have today means that everything is in our homes with some immediacy – - unlike pre TV days the advertising was via Newspapers or more likely word of mouth as to where 'such and such' could be had

9. In Feltham Mrs Rogers at her 'repository' said 'via rhyming prose'


List to the bells! To the merry Christmas bells
 Mark well the news all the tuneful music tells
 What is the rhyme, that is swirling in the chime?
 List to the bell! And they'll tell you all in time
 Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, dong
 We'll all go a shopping today
 All faces look smiling and gay

Then join the glad throng, that goes laughing along
And all go a-shopping today


In her shop there were all kinds of “nick-nacks” and cards of every variety – and articles for presents - these “articles” were Tobacco’s, Cigars, and everything the smokers require - it continues “Books and Newspapers etc”

Then there was Emmetts the Butchers, it could be said were almost praising their fayre – their blurb went something like this

“the time honoured Sirloin, which even now disputes the Turkeys right to the Christmas table has many advantages over the ‘forward’ bird – and should the Knight joint win the battle in your household this year – it continues “He [Emmetts] has a splendid selection of Hereford beasts from the Smithfield Show

10.  Finishing with “remember the name Emmett ‘Butcher of Feltham’ he will give you satisfaction”

Sadly ‘thievery’ was evident then as now as Miss Florence Graham would attest from this item from the Middlesex Chronicle “theft of her prized ‘birds”

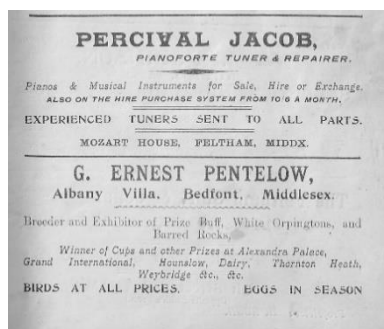
11.  Miss Graham and her mother also feature in an image ‘tri-cycling’ along Staines Road Another Butcher was Harry Ford of the High Street whose advert read “the question asked at every dinner table is where do you buy your meat ‘ “at Harry Fords who buys all his cattle at the best Markets and slaughterers”.

12.   Fords last Butchers outlet was in New Road Bedfont, I believe it closed c2006 the image on the right shows Fords delivery boy (in the background) holding his bike replete with advert set within the frame.

Then this from a store called Summers “Summers pretty presents” it says - Mr Summers of the pavement High Street Feltham is more than ever to the fore through the excellent and artistic tastes – it would appear that they sold jewellery and other such gold and silver items, e.g. silver match box and cigarette holders and lighters – the Pavement was near to what was the original Cricketers Beer house but today part of Wilton Parade

Nr 52 High Street Feltham aka ‘Mozart House’ was the premises of Mr Percival Jacobs Registrar and shop proprietor. In addition to his duties of Registrar he had an outlet that had an extensive library of Sheet Music for sale – plus Piano’s, Harmoniums and all types of musical instruments - the instruments were for sale or hire and exchange – one wonders were instruments returned and if so for what reason

13.



The advert continues “in keeping with the present season” it is filled with toys and nick-nacks for Santa Clause stockings suitable gifts for boys and girls of all ages. A paragraph at the end of the advert states that the Middlesex Chronicle will be on sale at this shop and that all customers will receive their paper with regularity and be served with every courtesy.

Mozart House was in the High Street from at least 1871 to 1926 but from about 1914 his wares were purely stationery - Percival Jacobs is buried in Feltham Cemetery. I did not clip this advert as I thought Ray may be interested in the lower part that relates to Albany Villas – which he featured in his recent talk!

Another store, Gilberts nr 11 High Street ‘roughly where new Chapel Square is today - he is noted in the 1891 edition of Middlesex Chronicle as an ‘Oilman’ but by 1914 he was an Ironmonger - a Christmas advert about that time tells us that they have the “best and largest assortment of Lamps in all the latest and most elegant designs and at every price” It continues “they present a brilliant glittering show with their vari-coloured Globes and Shades”. ‘remember these’

13.



It continues extolling “all the goods of a Colourman, Ironmonger, Window Glass and leather cutters in abundance” there was also the latest designs in Stoves, brooms, Mats, Trunks, Tools of every description – I assume that many a husband bought these labour saving tools for the wife. This is not a Christmas advert but it gives you some idea of the wares they sold!

By 1926, however, it became one of Feltham’s biggest stores Murphy’s. the cyclist is our late history group member Bill Cole

14. Murphy’s



15. Kitney’s and Murphy’s

16.



There was an item on Christmas Closure (26/11/1898) this was in the form of an appeal in the London Press which was made for proprietors to close on Saturday

24th December until Wednesday 29th - it stated that “generally speaking that very little trade would be done”

An advert in the Chronicle relates to ‘Machins Store in the High Street and was set out in rhyming prose using the name of the proprietor ‘MACHIN’ thus was displayed

Merry may you feast on jolly Christmas day

Always courting happiness always bright and gay

Christmas time when every care is drowned

Hail the smoking pudding with sprigs of Holly crowned

I give you all my greetings and this advice is free

Never trust to foreigners but buy your goods from me

The advert concludes – Machins Stores of Feltham long noted for all Christmas provisions and for a special blend of Tea

During the week preceding Christmas, the Choristers of St Dunstan's sang Carols around the Parish and were rewarded with liberal contributions towards their Choir fund

Advent music at St Catherine's Church was Maunders Cantata 'penitence pardon and peace' with the Church Organist Mr George Lane also leading the choir. He lived at North Feltham Place. St Dunstan's and St Catherine's had a variation on their service – the newspaper report informs Reverend Searle at St Catherine's produced "nothing beyond the usual Christmas hymns and Canticles" whilst at St D's the Reverend Jemmett opened with 'Stainers anthem' 'O Zion that bring-est good tidings – we are told 'the edifices of both churches were decorated appropriately with Holly and various evergreen flowers and foliage'

But we should not forget the true meaning of Christmas the birth of our Saviour, so I encourage you all to go along and take your family to the many and various Christmas services at our local Churches.



In closing this was our entry for the Christmas Tree challenge in 2015 sadly the pandemic put paid to this but it is something to think about for next Christmas

I hope I have stirred many a remembrance of Christmas past and more to the point that the story of Christmas buoys you on in hope for the future!