

THE YATELEY SOCIETY

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1998

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>
<u>Bank balances at the start of the year :-</u>		
Current account	960.24	1,089
Deposit account	1,515.30	482
Petty cash	0.96	-
	2,476.50	1,571
 <u>Add receipts :-</u>		
Subscriptions	841.20	750
Bank interest	73.84	40
Publications	281.70	559
Events : Xmas Social (net of expenses)	10.20	161
May Fayre (net of expenses)	105.18	59
Summer social (net of expenses)	52.34	49
Lectures, meetings etc	83.00	117
	1,447.46	1,735
	3,923.96	3,306
 <u>Deduct payments :-</u>		
Administration : Affiliation fees and subscriptions	78.50	76
Newsletter costs	173.01	190
Historical books and documents	-	47
Insurance	100.00	100
Secretarial expenses	-	20
Projects : Planning expenses	5.00	-
Activities : Publications	17.00	81
Conservation group expenses	7.75	68
Speaker expenses	63.15	109
Room hire for meetings	68.65	139
	513.06	830
	£3,410.90	£2,476
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 <u>Bank and cash balances at the end of the year :-</u>		
Current account	518.17	960
Deposit Account	2,863.98	1,515
Petty cash	28.75	1
	£3,410.90	£2,476
	£3,410.90	£2,476

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

I have examined the accounting records maintained by the Treasurer, and confirm that the above Receipts and Payments account is in accordance therewith. I have not carried out an audit.

Scriggins,
Beaford,
Devon EX19 8NP
11 February 1999

W.R. Foyster

W.R. Foyster
Chartered Accountant

The Yateley Society



ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31 DECEMBER 1998

1. INTRODUCTION

Once again the Yateley Society has seen a lot of hard work in its various fields of activity in the past year. Top of the list must come 'Planning'. Issues of great consequence to many areas of the UK as well as Yateley have come to a head this year, and two local planning Inquiries have become test cases. Most matters have been settled, at least temporarily, in our favour, and the long drawn out Fox Farm Inquiry has finished and awaits a decision.

A new sub-committee to handle our varied publications has at last come into being and has already made its mark. There has been a new, if as yet low key venture in Conservation and a new interest has been shown in St Peter's churchyard.

It is usual to say in these reports that the 'same old faces' appear when there is any work to be done, but I am glad to say that this is not always the case and one of our new recruits to the Executive Committee in 1998, Roger Coombes, has made his mark as leader of the Publications Sub-Committee in addition to becoming Vice Chairman of the Society.

There have been no startling innovations this year, business as normal being the general theme. This business has been very time and energy consuming and is partly responsible for the lack of our customary Christmas Social; apologies for that, but people just did not have the time to get organised. To confuse the issue the 1997 Christmas Social was in early 1998, so maybe it was really 1997 that went astray!

The traditional activities of the Society, the talks, walks and conservation working parties, have continued throughout the year and are briefly reported on. An interesting new statistic is that over 50 individual members attended on one or more occasions. This shows that these activities attracted a larger proportion of the membership than we had realised, a very encouraging result.

The special events this year were the Christmas Social postponed from 1997, the May Fayre and the Summer Social. Our grateful thanks go to all those who organised and supported these events. The May Fayre once again formed a showcase for the Society's activities and publications and the sales stall provided a much needed boost to the Society coffers, you were all most generous in providing goods and in spending your money at our stall. The Tiptons are due special thanks for organising and hosting the social held in Monteagle House, and also the Kerlakes for letting us take over their garden for the Summer Social.

I would like to thank all the members of the Executive Committee for their support and hard work during the year. Some members are standing down, but we know that they will continue to work for the Society and for the local community in other ways, we wish them well.

2. ADMINISTRATION

The Officers of the Society during 1998 were:

Chairman	Tony Hocking
Vice Chairman	Roger Coombes
Honorary Secretary	Richard Johnston
Honorary Treasurer	Peter Tipton.

Executive Committee members were:

Norma Dowling; Graham Brown (*Membership Secretary*); Philip Todd; Ken Crick; David Ashworth.

There were 8 Executive Committee meetings during the year in the regular series for Society management. There were no special meetings this year.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership numbers at the start and finish of the year were the same. We had 17 lapses, due to members moving away or failing to renew their subscriptions for at least 6 months; but in the same time we welcomed 17 new members. The current membership stands at 179.

Once again the membership work has been seasonal, with the majority of renewals in the first quarter of the calendar year, the majority of new members joining around the May Fayre, and little activity at other times.

4. CONSERVATION

Overall 1998 has been a good year for the group again. Volunteer work hours were down relative to 1997 which was an exceptional year, the difference probably reflects the volatile contribution of students.

4.1 Work Parties

The first four monthly work parties were spent on the West End of Yateley Common removing low value birch scrub, sometimes from remnants of heath. The arrival of a new Ranger to Yateley, Jane Francom, provided the group with a gruelling experience – toiling to remove an antipodean weed, *Crassula helmsii*, from the Gravel Pit pond margins. Left unchecked the weed, probably introduced by the action of someone illegally emptying the contents of their aquarium into the pond, will spread, cover the entire pond surface, and ultimately strangle the native pond life to death. This is the sort of problem regularly faced by the Rangers which is caused by the ignorant abuse of this fragile habitat.

Two work parties were spent clearing birch scrub in the area near the Gravel Pit Pond. Two more were used to clear trees and scrub from the high point of the Common between the 'Land Bank' and the A30. Three work parties were spent on

Castle Bottom National Nature Reserve, pulling bracken (and Birch) from the secondary bog, and removing birch scrub and pine from the open heath area which has been successfully regenerated above the bog.

At the Yateley Common Management Committee meeting in March 1998 HCC was accused of pursuing a 'scorched earth' policy on Yateley Common with reference to the tree clearances. This made the front page of the *Yateley News* and was countered by several letters of support for HCC from Society members, including the Chairman. Supportive correspondence with the site manager and HCC management at Winchester was entered into, with pleasing and helpful responses.

The new Chairman of the Committee, HCC Cllr. Adrian Collett made a point of warmly thanking the Yateley Society for the work of its volunteers for the HCC Rangers' Heathland Restoration programme, emphasising the importance of the support of community groups such as ours in this endeavour, and asked that the thanks of the committee be passed to all involved Society members. His comments, endorsed by the Committee, were very much appreciated.

4.2 Awards and Talks

A total of eleven certificates, awarded for more than 15 hours of work, were collected by volunteers during 1998, although some had been earned during previous years.

Two trophies were presented for over fifty hours of volunteer work; to Alison Tattershall and David Warman of Yateley School with the grateful thanks of the Yateley Society. Mr. Warman has been instrumental in bringing along many students from Yateley School Trident and Duke of Edinburgh's Award schemes and has made a major contribution to the steadily increasing popularity of our work parties. At the last count we have enjoyed the company of over 65 students during the last decade, and they have contributed a massive 1300 work hours to the Heathland Restoration Programme. It was therefore particularly pleasing that the Conservation Co-ordinator was invited to Yateley School to address about 200 sixth form students on the subject of the internationally rare habitat on our doorstep, and the merits of supporting the heathland maintenance. Sincere thanks are due to Mr Tony Davis for his kind loan of wildlife slides and equipment.

Similarly, letters and a visit by the co-ordinator to the Head Teacher of Frogmore School established a link which we hope will bear more volunteer fruit in the future. A certificate was passed to the Head, who subsequently presented it to a student at the school assembly.

4.3 Liaison with the Forest of Eversley Trust

Following the appointment of the Chairman of the Forest of Eversley Trust to the Yateley Society Executive Committee and the appointment of the author as a director of the Trust, efforts have been made to increase co-operation and

understanding between the two organisations. A project was initiated by the FOE Trust to plant a hedge on farm land in Eversley, supported by a grant from HCC. Members of the Yateley Society Conservation Group were the main stay of the work party that planted about 700 trees to create a length of new habitat. Over 80 hours of volunteer work were expended. Suggestions are currently welcomed for suggestions for strategically significant conservation millennium projects.

5. HISTORY

5.1 Activities

Individuals continued their research projects during the year. Although the Society has tried to cooperate with the church authorities concerning the memorials in the churchyard rubbish tip, as yet the memorials have not been rescued. 'Sydney's shed' in the churchyard, long semi-derelict, was demolished during the Autumn.

The Chairman contributed a small amount of assistance in churchyard maintenance as a token of goodwill.

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Carried out independently of the Society, an archaeological dig was undertaken to investigate prehistoric features on the army land of Yateley Common on the south side of the A30, under the direction of Carol White, an archaeologist who is a member of the Society.

5.2 Yateley History Project Database

During the year the database was again expanded to include a great deal more material, especially to add additional pictures and other graphic material which might be useful for the production of publications. The plans of the Yateley Hall survey (1987-1992) are now included for the first time, together with an album of photographs taken at Yateley Hall between 1900 and about 1930. Also *Phillamore's Marriages* for most of Hampshire, transcribed by a man in New Zealand, is also available. This item, downloaded from the internet, has had the layout altered to allow easy searches of the data. A number of other small items were also added.

A single update of the database (version 3.3B, dated 9.1.1999) was completed

during the year. This further expansion of the material resulted in the data exceeding what could be placed on a single CD-ROM, so the material was reorganised so that only small (often improved) versions of the graphics are now kept on the main database. The original scans (needed for paper reproduction purposes only) are kept on a separate CD. This change results in fast loading of most pictures and greater convenience. The latest version has improved support for the Windows 95™ operating system.

Much of the material in the database is not readily available from other sources – indeed some of it is not otherwise available at all – and the further advantage of the computer form is the ease with which the data can be searched for items of interest. The whole database is now available to members (only) on CD-ROM and about ten members of the Society have copies of some version of the database.

5.3 History Library

The History Library remains in the care of Norma Dowling at Brookfield House. The books and papers are available for members to borrow for both research and for general interest. Any cuttings, postcards, pictures or other information on Yateley in any format are always welcome.

6. PLANNING

6.1 Summary

The Society's planning activities have suffered from too few people being actively involved, and it has been possible only to follow up the most important or most pressing planning issues. Nevertheless letters were submitted concerning a number of planning proposals during the year, and the Society was represented at informal planning inquiries for Cottage Farm and Silver Fox Farm (which appeals were both refused), and the formal 1996 Inquiry for Fox Farm was reopened to consider further evidence.

6.2 Fox Farm Inquiry

The Secretary of State directed that the Inquiry originally held in 1996 should be reopened in order to consider the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the Appellant, British Car Auctions. English Nature, Yateley Town Council and the Society had called for such an assessment before the opening of the 1996 hearing. The Society considers that the fact that the Secretary of State insisted on the EA was a major step forward in the evolution of planning laws and procedures. The Society was invited to the Inquiry as the only non-statutory body. English Nature asked us to provide our Entomologist, Mike Edwards, as a witness to be cross-examined. Evidence which is cross-examined is given higher weight than that presented as a 'document'. Mike Edwards provided us with some superb evidence explaining the

historic evolution of common land, and substantiating scientifically the Society's evidence that the current status of the Special Protection Area for Wild Birds (SPA) was 'less than favourable' as a habitat. Our case was therefore based directly on the EU Directives and UK law (rather than just the planning guidance), we argued that development should not be allowed. English Nature were particularly keen for our evidence to gain 'full weight' at the Inquiry since they, the RSPB and Hart had concentrated on the SPA aspects whereas, in dealing with entomology (insects to the uninitiated), the Society was presenting the main case relating to the status of Castle Bottom and parts of Blackbushe Airport designated as SSSI, National Nature Reserve and SINC (Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation). The Inquiry of course went on much longer than expected, in two sessions. We now await the decision of the Secretary of State.

6.3 Other Planning Matters

Written submissions were entered for planning applications at Windy Ridge and The Limes, with mixed success.

Three successive sets of plans to turn Yateley Lodge into a restaurant have been strongly objected to, following a Society experts' visit to view the inside and outside of the property. It seems likely that this application will be the subject of an appeal, since Hart District Council failed to determine the application within the specified eight weeks.

The Society continues to be concerned about and actively involved with such concerns as the Common, the airfield, and Blackbushe Metals. As regards Blackbushe Metals, an independent assessment by consultants of its environmental impacts was commissioned by Hampshire County Council during the year, and the Society is actively involved in the Liaison Panel which oversees its work.

The large number of planning applications and appeals which the Yateley Society feels obliged to comment on inevitably include some which are by our own members or by their families. Nevertheless, if the Society believes that such an application or appeal is contrary to the best interests of Yateley and its people as a whole, then it will raise objections regardless of the originator(s). It is realised that this will be unpopular with the people concerned, but the Yateley Society cannot be seen to be guilty of favouritism, or its standing as a reliable and influential witness on behalf of Yateley at Public Inquiries, and adviser to the local councils, will be destroyed.

6.4 Outside Representations

The Society has been represented on the Yateley Commons Management Committee by Mike Mann, our Conservation Co-ordinator. He has also become a director of the Forest of Everley Trust. Peter Tipton sits on the Yateley Commons Management Committee, as a Commoner. He is also now representing the Society

on the re-established Yateley Town Centre Management Committee. Richard Johnston represents us on the Blackbushe Metals Liaison Panel.

7. YATELEY SOCIETY WEBSITE

A website to publicise the Society was established on the Hampshire County Council webserver. This provides information about the Society in general, its publications, provides notice of meetings, and a local history site has been established within it. The latter provides a brief history of Yateley from Prehistoric times to the present day. It may be found at <http://www.hants.org.uk/yateley/>

The site has attracted modest interest, and as a result the Society now has a member in New Zealand, a descendant of a Yateley family, who offered to undertake some research on 19th century Yateley families.

8. PUBLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee has been inactive for some time, but was revitalised towards the end of the year. It has discussed the format of future History publications, with a number of possibilities under consideration, one of these being a 'Yateley in photographs - then and now' type of book, which could probably be published professionally. It would, however, be a huge undertaking and the quality of many of the old, turn-of-the-century photographs which exist might not be suitable for reproduction. The idea of a video record is also being looked at, partly as a guide to the interesting and perhaps less known features of Yateley, and partly (and this is where we are very dependant on what the people of Yateley can find) a compilation of old cine film taken by individuals during this century. An appeal for such material will appear in the *Newsletter*. Thirdly, we might increase the number of small, occasional leaflets on specific topics which could build, like one of those part-work publications, into something that could later be produced as a single volume.

Members' ideas and suggestions would always be welcome.

We are planning to extend the range of Society postcards which we sell at our events and at a number of commercial outlets. A lot of photographs have already been taken, and a number of views have been identified as worthy of publication, to be revisited in the Spring or Summer to capture them at their best time. We are keen to reflect Frogmore or Darby Green in our new range, which should start to appear in 1999. The process of taking far more photographs than we'll ever need for the postcard project made us realise that we have been almost unwittingly making a visual record of Yateley at the end of this century and indeed of the millennium. Consideration will therefore be given to the most appropriate means of storing these photographs, of which there will be hundreds by the time we have finished.

Again, we welcome members' ideas and suggestions.

9. NEWSLETTERS AND PROGRAMME

9.1 Newsletters

Three *Newsletters*, numbers 68 to 70, were published in 1997, plus four *Stop Press* issues, numbers 36 to 39.

Topics have included regular series such as 'Commoners' Corner' and 'Chairman's Chat' (a title shamelessly borrowed from another organisation); natural history in many guises, comments on planning matters, specialist articles such as 'Yateley's Buses' and reminiscences such as 'Camberley and the ATS' and 'Life in the 20th Century'. The editor has been most pleased with the increase in the numbers of contributors during the year and hopes for more!

9.2 PROGRAMME

The year's programme included the traditional mixture of talks and walks, special events and participation in the annual Yateley May Fair.

The walks included an introduction to the latest section of the Blackwater Valley Footpath to open, from the Moulsham footbridge to Longwater Road in Eversley. There is always a problem thinking up new routes to take for walks, any suggestions are always welcome.

The talks had a shift in emphasis towards history this year following a concentration on natural history.

Conservation Working Parties met on Yateley Common on the last Sunday of every month, apart from December when the meeting was delayed for a week because of the threat of severe weather.

9.2 i) 1998 Talks:

- 26 March The History & Restoration of the Basingstoke Canal
by David Millett
- 23 April An Overview of the History of Yateley (From the Ice Age to Today)
by Richard Johnston
- 21 May The Protection of Conservation Areas *by Henry Caswell*
- 18 June The Traco & the Nancy Bus *by Peter Holmes*
- 17 September 'Old Camberley' a video compilation of old films of Camberley by the late John King, presented *by Roger Coombes*
- 15 October Metal Detecting *by Mervyn Lloyd-Jones*
- 19 November A Discussion on Sites of Scientific Interest, introduced *by Peter Tipton*

9.2.ii) 1998 Walks:

- 1 March The Blackwater Valley Footpath, Eversley Extension, *led by Irene Draper*
- 17 May Finchampstead, Eversley and the Blackwater River, *led by Irene Draper*
- 12 July Mytchett to Ash Vale Along the Canal, *led by Tony Hocking*

9.2.iii) Special Events:

- 31 January Christmas Social 'Candlemass Convivials'
- 26 February Annual General Meeting
- May 4th May Fair
- August 1st Summer Social

The Social in January was indeed most convivial, with extremely interesting dishes produced by Elizabeth, to be consumed in the splendid atmosphere of Monteagle House.

The May Fayre recorded record receipts this year, needless to say somewhat offset by the expenses, but the Treasurer was seen to smile afterwards! The format was the traditional exhibition, concentrating on the types of pictures and documents featured in the History Database, and appealing for any possible additions, and the very successful sales stall. Stephanie Pattenden and Mary Hocking masterminded the sales, for which the Society is very grateful, and Richard Johnston put a lot of valuable work into producing the pictures for the exhibition.

The weather for the Summer Social reverted to type, but thanks to the Society tarpaulin the revellers were protected and the buffet, games and chat were enjoyed by all. Thanks are due, yet again, to the Kerlakes for the use of their delightful garden for this event.

Anthony J F Hocking
Chairman, the Yateley Society

Report Contributors:

Richard Johnston, Peter Tipton, Roger Coombes, Mike Mann, Norma Dowling, Graham Brown, Tony Hocking.



The Yateley Society
Registered with the Civic Trust
Registered Charity No 282397

Draft

1.

THE YATELEY SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST 1998

1. INTRODUCTION.

Once again the Yateley Society has seen a lot of hard work in its various fields of activity in the past year. Top of the list must come 'Planning'. Issues of great consequence to many areas of the UK as well as Yateley have come to a head this year, and two local planning Inquiries have become test cases. Most matters have been settled, at least temporarily, in our favour, and the long drawn out Fox Farm Inquiry has finished and awaits a decision.

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2. ADMINISTRATION.

The Officers of the Society during 199⁸ were: Chairman - Tony Hocking;
Vice Chairman - Roger Coombes; Honorary Secretary - Richard Johnston; Honorary Treasurer - Peter Tipton.

Executive Committee members were:
Norma Dowling; Graham Brown (Membership Secretary); Philip Todd; Ken Crick; David Ashworth.

There were 8 Executive Committee meetings during the year in the regular series for Society management. There were no special meetings this year.

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The Society's planning activities have suffered from too few people being actively involved, and it has been possible only to follow up the most important or most pressing planning issues. Nevertheless letters were submitted concerning a number of planning proposals during the year, and the Society was represented at informal planning inquiries for Cottage Farm and Silver Fox Farm (which appeals were both refused), and the formal 1996 Inquiry for Fox Farm was reopened to consider further evidence.

6.2 Fox Farm Inquiry

The Secretary of State directed that the Inquiry originally held in 1996 should be reopened in order to consider the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the Appellant, British Car Auctions. English Nature, Yateley Town Council and the Society had called for such an assessment before the opening of the 1996 hearing. The Society considers that the fact that the Secretary of State insisted on the EA was a major step forward in the evolution of planning laws and procedures. The Society was invited to the Inquiry as the only non-statutory body. English Nature asked us to provide our Entomologist, Mike Edwards, as a witness to be cross-examined. Evidence which is cross-examined is given higher weight than that presented as a 'document'. Mike Edwards provided us with some superb evidence explaining the historic evolution of common land, and substantiating scientifically the Society's evidence that the current status of the Special Protection Area for Wild Birds (SPA) was 'less than favourable' as a habitat. Our case was therefore based directly on the EU Directives and UK law (rather than just the planning guidance), we argued that development should not be allowed. English Nature were particularly keen for our evidence to gain 'full weight' at the Inquiry since they, the RSPB and Hart had concentrated on the SPA aspects whereas, in dealing with entomology (insects to the uninitiated), the Society was presenting the main case relating to the status of Castle Bottom and parts of Blackbushe Airport designated as SSSI, National Nature Reserve and SINC (Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation). The Inquiry of course went on much longer than expected, in two sessions. We now await the decision of the Secretary of State.

6.3 Other Planning Matters

Written submissions were entered for planning applications at Windy Ridge and The Limes, with mixed success.

Three successive sets of plans to turn Yateley Lodge into a restaurant have been strongly objected to, following a Society experts' visit to view the inside and outside of the property. It seems likely that this application will be the subject of an appeal, since Hart District Council failed to determine the application within the specified eight weeks.

The Society continues to be concerned about and actively involved with such concerns as the common, the airfield, and Blackbushe Metals. As regards Blackbushe Metals, an independent assessment by consultants of its environmental impacts was commissioned by Hampshire County Council during the year, and the Society is actively involved in the Liaison Panel which oversees its work.

The large number of planning applications and appeals which the Yateley Society feels obliged to comment on inevitably include some which are by our own members or by their families. Nevertheless, if the Society believes that such an application or appeal is contrary to the best interests of Yateley and its people as a whole, then it will raise objections regardless of the originator(s). It is realised that this will be unpopular with the people concerned, but the Yateley Society cannot be seen to be guilty of favouritism, or its standing as a reliable and influential witness on behalf Yateley at Public Inquiries, and adviser to the local councils, will be destroyed.

6.4 Outside Representations

The Society has been represented on the Yateley Commons Management Committee by Mike Mann, our Conservation Co-ordinator. He has also become a director of the Forest of Everley Trust. Peter Tipton sits on the Yateley Commons Management Committee, as a Commoner. He is also now representing the Society on the re-established Yateley Town Centre Management Committee. Richard Johnston represents us on the Blackbushe Metals Liaison Panel.

7. YATELEY SOCIETY WEBSITE

A website to publicise the Society was established on the Hampshire County Council webserver. This provides information about the Society in general, its publications, provides notice of meetings, and a local history site has been established within it. The latter provides a brief history of Yateley from Prehistoric times to the present day. It may be found at <http://www.hants.org.uk/yateley/>

The site has attracted modest interest, and as a result the Society now has a member in New Zealand, a descendant of a Yateley family, who offered to undertake some research on 19th century Yateley families.

8. PUBLICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee has been inactive for some time, but was revitalised towards the end of the year. It has discussed the format of future History publications, with a number of possibilities under consideration, one of these being a 'Yateley in photographs - then and now' type of book, which could probably be published professionally. It would, however, be a huge undertaking and the quality of many of the old, turn of the century photographs which exist might not be suitable for reproduction. The idea of a video record is also being looked at, partly as a guide to the interesting and perhaps less known features of Yateley, and partly (and this is where we are very dependant on what the people of Yateley can find) a compilation of old cine film taken by individuals during this century. An appeal for such material will appear in the Newsletter. Thirdly, we might increase the number of small, occasional leaflets on specific topics which could build, like one of those part-work publications, into something that could later be produced as a single volume.

Members' ideas and suggestions would always be welcome.

We are planning to extend the range of Society postcards which we sell at our events and at a number of commercial outlets. A lot of photographs have already been taken, and a number of views have been identified as

worthy of publication, to be revisited in the Spring or Summer to capture them at their best time. We are keen to reflect Frogmore or Darby Green in our new range, which should start to appear in 1999. The process of taking far more photographs than we'll ever need for the postcard project made us realise that we have been almost unwittingly making a visual record of Yateley at the end of this century and indeed of the millennium. Consideration will therefore be given to the most appropriate means of storing these photographs, of which there will be hundreds by the time we have finished.

Again, we welcome members' ideas and suggestions.

9. NEWSLETTERS AND PROGRAMME.

9.1 NEWSLETTERS.

3 Newsletters, numbers 68 to 70, were published in 1997, plus 4 Stop Press issues, numbers 36 to 39.

Topics have included regular series such as 'Commoners' Corner' and 'Chairman's Chat' (a title shamelessly borrowed from another organisation); natural history in many guises, comments on planning matters, specialist articles such as 'Yateley's Buses' and reminiscences such as 'Camberley and the ATS' and 'Life in the 20th Century'. The editor has been most pleased with the increase in the numbers of contributors during the year and hopes for more!

9.2 PROGRAMME.

The year's programme included the traditional mixture of talks and walks, special events and participation in the annual Yateley May Fair.

The walks included an introduction to the latest section of the Blackwater Valley Footpath to open, from the Moulsham footbridge to Longwater Road in Eversley. There is always a problem thinking up new routes to take for walks, any suggestions are always welcome.

The talks had a shift in emphasis towards history this year following a concentration on natural history.

Conservation Working Parties met on Yateley Common on the last Sunday of every month, apart from December when the meeting was delayed for a week because of the threat of severe weather.

9.2 i) 1998 Talks:

- March 26th *The History & Restoration of the Basingstoke Canal* by David Millett
- April 23rd *An Overview of the History of Yateley (From the Ice Age to Today)*
by Richard Johnston
- May 21st *The Protection of Conservation Areas* by Henry Caswell
- June 18th *The Traco & the Nancy Bus* by Peter Holmes
- September 17th *'Old Camberley'* a video compilation of old films of Camberley by the late John King, presented by Roger Coombes
- October 15th *Metal Detecting* by Mervyn Lloyd-Jones
- November 19th *A Discussion on Sites of Scientific Interest*, introduced by Peter Tipton

9.2.ii) 1998 Walks:

- March 1st *The Blackwater Valley Footpath, Eversley Extension*, led by Irene Draper
- May 17th *Finchampstead, Eversley and the Blackwater River*, led by Irene Draper
- July 12th *Mytchett to Ash Vale Along the Canal*, led by Tony Hocking

9.2.iii) Special Events:

- January 31st *Christmas Social 'Candlemass Convivials'*
- February 26th *Annual General Meeting*
- May 4th *May Fair*
- August 1st *Summer Social*

The Social in January was indeed most convivial, with extremely interesting dishes produced by Elizabeth, to be consumed in the splendid atmosphere of Monteagle House.

The May Fayre recorded record receipts this year, needless to say somewhat offset by the expenses, but the Treasurer was seen to smile afterwards! The format was the traditional exhibition, concentrating on the types of pictures and documents featured in the History Database, and appealing for any possible additions, and the very successful sales stall. Stephanie Pattenden and Mary Hocking masterminded the sales, for which the Society is very grateful, and Richard Johnston put a lot of valuable work into producing the pictures for the exhibition.

The weather for the Summer Social reverted to type, but thanks to the Society tarpaulin the revellers were protected and the buffet, games and chat were enjoyed by all. Thanks are due, yet again, to the Kerslakes for the use of their delightful garden for this event.

Anthony J F Hocking
Chairman, the Yateley Society

Report Contributors:

Richard Johnston, Peter Tipton, Roger Coombes, Mike Mann, Norma Dowling, Graham Brown, Tony Hocking