



Account of Purley on Thames

Chronicles 1990-1995

1990 - 38/39 Eliz II

January 1990

Acorn House was opened by the Mayor of Reading, Maureen Lockey in January. This was one of the half-way houses at Purley Park Trust (Chron 12/1/90)

Tracey Edwards skippered her all-women crew in the Whitbread Round the World Race. At the halfway stage in New Zealand she was 16h5min in the lead. (EP8/1/90)

David Evans resigned as rector to become vicar of St Mary's Bryanston Square, London.

February 1990

There was considerable flooding in Purley in February after torrential rain. (Post 6/2/90 , Chron 7/2/90)

April 1990

Tracey Edwards arrived in Fort Lauderdale in April with a cracked boom after having been plagued by bad weather crossing the Pacific and rounding the Horn She had slipped back to fourth place. (EP19/4/90)

May 1990

Tracey Edwards sailed into Southampton on May 28th at the end of the Whitbread Round the World Race. She had been sailing for nine months and covered 33,000 miles (EP 29/5/1990)

1991 - 39/40 Eliz II

Roger Howell was inducted Rector of Purley on May ?. He had formerly been vicar of Bedgrove in Aylesbury.

The changes to the Civil Parish boundaries took effect on 1st April. Purley lost all its land to the west of the Sul Brook to Pangbourne, straightened its border with Sulham and lost the Oregon Avenue area and the former bypass area (Cornwall Close etc) to Tilehurst. In return Purley gained only one house on Long Lane.

At the District Elections in May John Chapman was re-elected as Newbury District Councillor for the Conservatives. He polled votes against for Henry Lawson (Liberal Democrat) and for Bob Tutton (Labour) Overall the Conservatives lost control of the Council to the Liberal Democrats.

Ben Tozer of St Mary's Avenue was killed when he rode his tricycle in front of a car outside his home on August 30th (Post 5/9/91)

The National Rivers Authority consulted the residents of Purley River Estate and the Parish Council about a scheme to build a barrier around the estate to alleviate flooding.

A schoolgirl was injured after a Bee line bus struck a hanging branch on the Oxford Road on Sept 4th (Post 6/9/91)

Christine Stevens of Thames Reach was accused at Reading Crown Court in September of attacking Sally Ann Stevens with a rolling pin in St Mary's Avenue. (Post 24/9/91)

Lord Crickhowell, the chairman of the National Rivers Authority opened the new salmon leap at Mapledurham Lock on Sept 4th. (Post 6/9/91, Chron 6/9/91)

An Anglo-French film company were making a film by the lock at Mapledurham. It was not practicable to get all the equipment down Mapledurham Drive and a very large crane was parked for a while in the layby by the Knowlsley Road roundabout

The Trenthams site was sold by the receivers of Egerton Homes, first to TriHomes who sold it on to Bryant homes.

The stopping up Order for the extension of Westbury Lane into Springs Farm was finally agreed in November. (ref 6)

Hilary Soaper of Purley won a holiday to Hollywood and about £10,000 worth of toys after winning a competition in 'The Family Circle' magazine. (Post 11/11/91)

Derek Hopkins the first Headteacher of Denefield School died at Woodcote on December 13th (Chronicle 20/12/91)

Elizabeth Burstow announced her resignation as Headteacher of Long Lane School. She had been headteacher since 1974.

Honor Gutch died when an electric fire in her bedroom set fire to the Garden House. She was in her 90s and had formerly been married to the sub-Postmaster, keeping the shop at the Post Office. She had been a Parish Councillor and was the local correspondent for the Chronicle for many years.

1992 - 40/41 Eliz II January

Denefield School became Grant Maintained on Jan 1st. This followed a ballot of parents and the approval of the Secretary of State for Education. It meant that it received its funding direct from Westminster and severed its relationships with Berkshire County Council. Several people from Purley were among the Foundation Governors including John Chapman and Phil Hadfield.

Bernard Theobald died on January 19th. He had become nationally known for his pioneering work as a wine grower and was a real local character. He had been chairman of Purley Parish Council from 1953 to 1979 and a member of Bradfield RDC and Newbury District Council from 1963 to 1979, being the Chairman of NDC in 1975-6. A tribute to him was one of the first items broadcast on the new Radio Berkshire when it opened on Jan 21st.

The body of Joan Abery was found in her garden in Long Lane by police in March . She had been dead for about three weeks and her body had been largely consumed by animals. She had for some time been a ver eccentric person and was well kown in the area for her whited face and ragged clothing. The case made international news and a composer in British Columbia was set to make a musical of her life. A few weeks after her funeral her house was gutted by a fire.

At the General Election on 9th April Sir Anthony Durant was re-elected in Reading West. He polled 28048 against 14750 for Peter Ruhemannn (Lab), 9572 for Keith Lock (LibDem) and 613 for Philip

Unsworth (Green)

1993 - 41/42 Eliz II

1994 - 42/43 Eliz II

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