



Lillington Local History Society



MARCH 2018

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Contents

The Manor building
estate

Lillington in Dorset

Relics from the
Lucas Brewery

The Free church

The "French
Houses"

Manor Farm

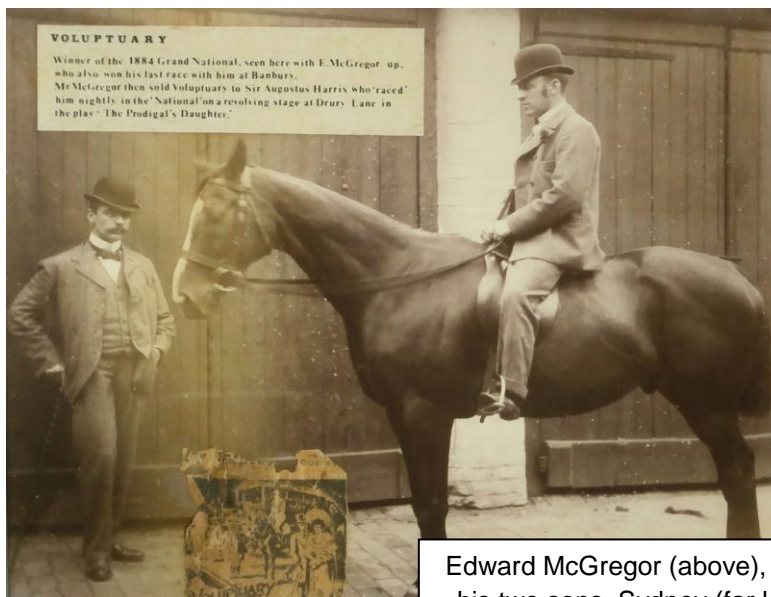
Programme of meetings

Regular monthly
meeting at the
Lillington Free
Church,
Cublington Road,
at 4.30 pm on the
first Friday of each
month.

Contact us by

-Coming to one of
the Society's
monthly meetings,
-or by referring any
queries about the
society,
contributions,
photographs or
reminiscences to
Graham Cooper –
telephone 01926
426942

The McGregors of Leamington and Lillington

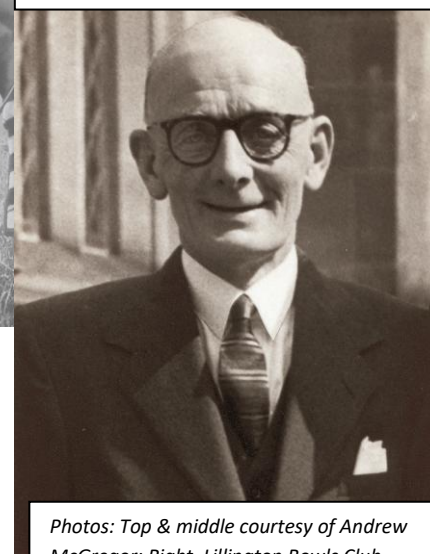


Edward McGregor (above), and
his two sons, Sydney (far left)
and Edward (below).

*Also left, April the Fifth, 1932
Epsom Derby winner, bred at
Lillington Stud.*



From the 1920's until the early
1970's, members of the
McGregor family had a key role
in the growth of modern
Lillington, through the
development of the Village
Farm and Manor Farm estates.



*Photos: Top & middle courtesy of Andrew
McGregor; Right, Lillington Bowls Club.*

PROPOSED PLANS FOR THE MANOR BUILDING ESTATE 1927

Joe Watson, Eddie McGregor's brother in law, drew up the plan for the proposed development of the former Manor Farm fields. It is interesting to compare this proposal with what actually was built.

Points of interest revealed by the plan include



Elm Bank around 1954.



The blue arrow marks a proposed crossroads at the junction of Lime Avenue and Melton Road. There was to be a second cross roads at the Lime Avenue junction with Montrose Avenue.

The orange arrow points to Elm Bank House, the then home of the Lloyd [builders] family.

Left: A footpath or track to the left of the Manor House, opposite the church, and on the line of Lillington Close.

Reference : No bricks without mortar. 50 years of A.C.Lloyd. Shirley Reading

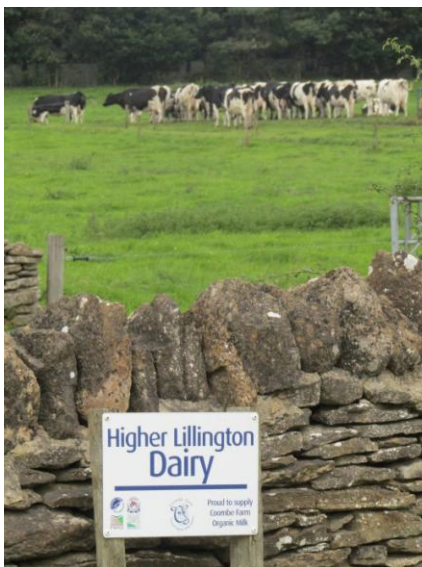
THE “OTHER” LILLINGTON

One of my life ambitions was realised last summer, when I visited the hamlet of Lillington, Dorset. I was very excited as I drove to Lillington from where my family and I were staying 9 miles away.

I had looked on the Sherbourne Abbey website and found St. Martin of Tours had a church service that very day. I entered the church and joined the small congregation as two children were ringing the bells. The people were welcoming and asked where I had come from? “Lillington”, was my reply, after a short pause, I added in Warwickshire. The church wardens asked if I would stand at the front of the church and share what ‘our’ Lillington was like. I gave them the rough population, which is vast in comparison to the 50 people of the hamlet. I was then invited to take part in the service by giving a reading, which I duly obliged.



The congregation totalled 9 people, Sister Isobelle and an Austrian Vizsla dog. I was given the tour and informed of the churches historical link to Sir Walter Raleigh: his son Walter was baptised in the font. St. Martins was used by Sir Walter and his wife Lady Elizabeth nee Throckmorton as they did not wish to embarrass Queen Elizabeth I by having the christening in the grander Sherbourne Abbey.



I said my goodbyes and went on exploring the hamlet, which is in two halves, higher (top of the valley) and lower (in the valley, where the church is). The scenery was wonderful; there are some stunning country views and some of the older buildings really do resemble the old part of our Lillington.

I felt like a boy in a sweet shop standing on the quiet lanes taking in my surroundings. Perhaps the next stage of my ‘Lillington’ tours will take in the town of Lillington, North Carolina, whose county capital is Raleigh, Yes, named after Sir Walter. My goal of linking the Lillington’s is underway as I have passed on the details of church wardens of St Mary’s and St Martins to each other.

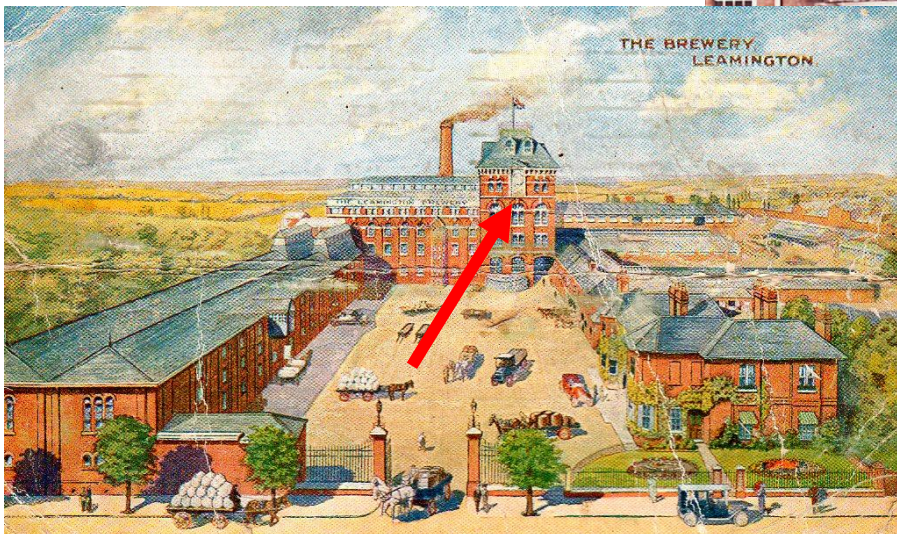
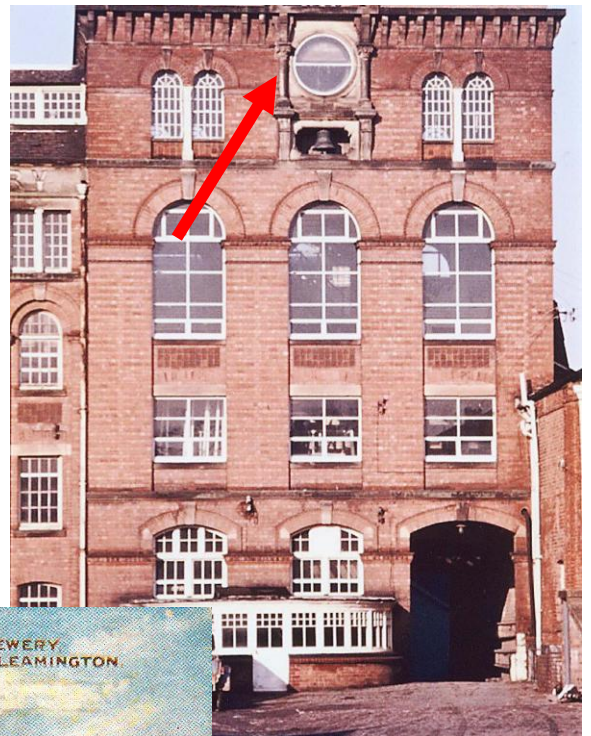
Text and images: Gary Timlin

WHAT'S AT THE BOTTOM OF YOUR GARDEN?



Images Chris Rhodes

Garden bench using two of the pillar capitals from the Lucas Brewery on Lillington Avenue



*Brewery photographic
images Derek Billings*

GROUPE MAISON FAMILIALE : STUD FARM



In 1949 a small group of builders began operating in Northern France. By 1979 this Groupe had become the largest house builders in France and their 50 companies spread over Europe, including England, where they were known as the French House Company. They had set up a base in Coventry in 1974 and had bought some of the land from the Lillington Stud Farm when Sydney McGregor's daughter decided to sell it after her father's death.

In memory of the land being formerly a Stud Farm, all the roads which lead off Valley Road in the French House development were named after race courses. Most of the houses had been completed in the Camerica VII and VIII designs along Aintree Drive, Ascot Ride, Kempton Crescent, Redcar Close and Sandown Close by 1981. Epsom Road originally led onto Valley Road but was closed after the completion of the houses. Early plans show that Redcar Close was originally to be named Chepstow. .

There are 48 houses in total, built in a mix of the two designs. The footprint of all the houses is identical but the integral garage of the Camerica VII becomes a dining room in the VIII, and then either a detached tandem or double garage is built alongside.

All the houses have either one or two sets of French doors at the front and a further set at the rear. Only the VIIs have traditional English bricks on the ground floor.

The steeply sloping roof timbers were constructed off site and transported to the plots on low loaders before being hoisted onto the walls by crane.

As in France, ground floor windows have functional shutters and the large roof overhang means that the houses are cool in hot weather.

Text: Dearne Jackson. Image Will Jackson

LILLINGTON FREE CHURCH, CUBBINGTON ROAD



Image: Peter Coulls collection

This building is in fact the second church and place of worship on the site, the first being what is locally known as the Church Hall, where meetings of the Lillington Local History Society are currently held.

The roots of this church i.e. the Church Hall, lie with Spencer Street Congregational Church, the mother church, who formed a "Lillington Committee" to progress the planning and development of a Free Church in Lillington. The search was on to find a suitable location, with various options being examined. A Public Meeting was held in Lillington Parish Hall in the Cubbington Road on 4th October 1952, the outcome being that there was a will to establish a Free Church, with a rider that there was no money. Through the beneficence of Messrs T. Pratt and C. Heritage the current site was secured and paid for, leaving the cost of a building to be raised. A variety of fund raising initiatives were embarked upon to allow the building and furnishing to go ahead. These efforts were rewarded when the Lillington Free Church (Congregational) had a foundation stone laid on 27th June 1953 with much ceremony and publicity, eventually being opened for worship on 30th January 1954.

Over the years the number in the congregation grew, on occasions more than 200 in attendance for a Church designed to hold 150. However long term, it was decided in 1959 that a new larger Church would be required, consequently in July of that year negotiations

were opened with Mr. Pratt to purchase more land. An ambitious scheme was drawn up which proved a challenge when it came to fundraising, resulting in some aspects of the proposal being dropped. The first turf was cut on 10th April 1965, prior to the construction of the New Lillington Free Church.

The project architect for the new build was Geoffrey Cox from Cecil E.M. Fillmore & Partners. The ground conditions were far from easy to deal with as the land had been part of an old sand pit. Some twenty – four bore holes were drilled, with metal reinforcing rods in each hole, back filled with concrete. A three week period delayed progress as the load bearing potential of the piles had to be confirmed, adding to the cost. The structure was to be of brick with concrete ribs and light steel slender spire on the centre of the front roof. The roof was of copper faced asbestos. There was a gallery having been built at the back of the Church which is actually at the front of the building. The ceiling comprises acoustic tiles on a light frame work. There is a cat walk running down the middle of the ceiling which is accessed by removing one of the acoustic tiles in the gallery, thereby allowing the servicing of the loud speakers to the original electronic organ.

The New Lillington Free Church was opened on Saturday 3rd September 1966 when the Reverend F. John Carrier officiated. On this occasion some 300 were present to bear witness to this historic event. The foundation stone, see below, says: “Jesus Chris is our Foundation. This stone was laid by the Rev. F John Carrier 16th October 1965.”



The Church and its associated groups and organisations grew with the passage of time. This 60's building nevertheless has reached the end of its life lacking disabled facilities, increasing costs of maintenance and heating. Two or three attempts to obtain planning permission to build a new Church with associated housing in the past did not proceed. In 2017 a developer gained planning permission to build a new Church plus some 26 housing units. As the structure of the 1960's church comes to an end in 2018, fittingly Rev. John Carrier officiated at the last service on Sunday 26th November 2017 when approaching 200 were present for the concluding chapter in the life of this Church building.

Peter Coulls

MANOR FARM INVENTORY

There has been a farmhouse in Lime Avenue for at least 300 hundred years. In 1876 the then farmer, the widow Mary Beamish, died and all her personal property was listed for probate. In addition to her 147 sheep and lambs, which must have grazed the fields between where Lime Avenue and Telford Avenue are now, she had six horses and a number of cattle. We know four of the horses' names: Captain, Prince, Poppet and Bonney. Mary Beamish had also grown crops of winter beans, wheat, barley, oats, peas and hay



The inventory for Mary Beamish's house details every one of her possessions down [literally] to the final teaspoon, of which she had 12. She also had 6 salt spoons and 18 dessert spoons. She had an extensive range of pots and pans for making cheese and butter. The cheese room was separate from the dairy. Mary Beamish had a lot of linen, including 35 pairs of sheets, 24 chamber napkins and 12 toilette covers. She kept three decanters, 12 wine glasses and 28 tumblers in

the dressing room, but the total wine stock was seven bottles of homemade wine, two bottles of port or sherry and a liqueur.

The inventory, which can be seen in the County Record Office [Reference CR2433/31/179], is written in pencil over several pages of a small red covered notebook. Each item is given a value for probate purposes, but these are in a letter code and hard to work out. Mary Beamish was buried in the Lillington churchyard alongside her husband, roughly in the area of the present Octagon. Her property was worth £1,877, 4 shillings and 6d., roughly £132,000 in today's money.

Image and text Chris Rhodes

APOLOGY

The text accompanying the two images of Cubbington Road on the cover of the Spring 2016 edition of the newsletter should have mentioned that the upper image was copied with the permission of Maurice Atkins. Our apologies for the omission.

Lillington Local History Society Website



The website address is: www.lillingtonhistory.org

This Newsletter is published by the Lillington Local History Society, The Chain, Crown Way, Lillington. All references prefixed CR refer to documents held in the County Record Office, Warwick. For further information, contact The Chain, Crown Way, Lillington. The views expressed in the Newsletter are personal to the contributors and are not necessarily the views of the Society.