

Notes on historical places close to the Thames and Wey in Weybridge

Dorney Gardens

Weybridge Sailing Club, Walton Lane Clubhouse. In the 1960s employees of the construction company, J L Kier set up a Social Club and took over premises at Weybridge in 1960-61. This was the Kier Sailing and Tennis Club. In 1962 land was purchased by Walton Urban District Council – some of it went to the Keir Club – but Walton wanted the name changed and the Weybridge Lawn Tennis Club and Weybridge Sailing Club were created although Keir retained an interest – but withdrew when the firm moved from London to Bedfordshire. Both clubs are now completely separate.

The Sailing Club has had a succession of separate clubhouse buildings.

Weybridge Lawn Tennis Club. They have 5 courts and a small clubhouse with balcony and no bar.

Elmbridge Canoe Club. Further up towards the Desborough Channel.

D'Oyly Carte Island

Named after the light opera impresario who lived there in the late 19th - Before 1890 the island was known as Folly Eyot.

Bridge single span with a high arch built 1964. It replaced a chain ferry. On the right wall of the bridge is a plaque commemorating the opening of the cut by Lord Desborough. Eyot House – built by Richard D'Oyly Carte. Carte built and lived in the main building on the island, although he intended it as an annexe to the Savoy Hotel but was unable to get a licence. After his death it was later used as a hotel.

Marina providing mooring for small boats was a feature for many years.

Ferry crossing

Ferry connecting to the north side Thames towpath. With the exception of a twenty year gap until 1986, there has been a ferry between Shepperton and Weybridge for around 500 years. There is a bell for would be passengers to ring to call for the ferry. Another ferry used to exist from the north of what is now Desborough Island across to Shepperton Square.

Shepperton Lock

The first lock here was built in 1813 by the City Corporation and it was a pound lock on a cut along an existing watercourse, Stoner's Gut, to create Lock Island. It had been suggested in 1805 but there was opposition. A wooden lock was however installed in 1813 and a stone lock was built in 1899 Stonors Gut - this channel not really used for navigation. It is believed that there was a little wooden church built on piles over the river which was washed away by constant floods. The gut was thus dammed.

Weirs – one between Lock Island and Hamhaugh Island and the second larger weir is between Hamhaugh Island and the south bank.

Shepperton Lock Island

The island was created by the construction by the City Corporation of a lock in 1813. It is connected to Shepperton Lock and also to Hamhaugh Island via a walkway over the weir

Thames River Police station

Weybridge Mariners' Boat Club. This is a club for motor boat enthusiasts and dates from 1960. Their first club house was a barge called Greywell moored at Harmsworth's Wharf. When this was condemned by public health they took over the old Thames Conservancy building at Shepperton

Lock doing all the work themselves. Then it was burnt down so they built another one.

Hamhaugh Island

This island was once called Stadbury with the tapered end being called Hamhaugh Point and owned by Lord Portmore of Weybridge. It was created from a mainland peninsula in order to aid navigation and help deal with flooding. Along with Shepperton Lock Island it was formed, when Shepperton Lock was built in 1813 across a narrow neck of land spanning a loop of the Thames. The river often breached and flooded through this neck, which was called 'Stonor's Gut'. In 1898 the lock was rebuilt, and a new weir channel was created which split Hamhaugh Island off from the Lock Island. It was then owned by the Dunton family, and from 1900 they let plots for camping later to be replaced by houses. The water supply came from the river and there was one communal lavatory on the central green for everyone. Electricity came in 1948, and mains water in 1959. It is accessed only by boat or by foot across the weir. It is covered in housing with a central green

Whittets Ait

Accessed from Jessamy Road over a steel bridge.

The island is between the river and the Wey Navigation with a public park and homes. In the past the site of various mills alongside the Navigation and boathouses on the Thames/Wey confluence. Thames Lock. This is the lock between the Wey Navigation and the Thames. It is also sometimes called Ham Haw. The lock was opened in 1653 and built of timber. It was rebuilt in 1863 with an early use of concrete on the Thames.

Lock cottage. This dated from 1765 but the cottage but was rebuilt in 1975 by the National Trust with the same appearance. Lock keeper had to collect and record transit fees paid by the barge owners.

Housing. There is modern housing around the lock in a gated estate.

The Pound. This was not an original feature of the Navigation. Towards the end of the 18th 'pound' locks began to be built but they required a dam and when Sunbury Lock Thames was rebuilt in the 19th the level of water in the Thames became lower. At Thames Lock loaded barges could not then get over the cill. So, the gap between the island and the lock was filled and a wooden dam with a single gate in it was installed as a pound lock between the Thames Lock and the Thames. This extended the island and created a channel which boats had to navigate. This is called the Pound. The level of water in the Thames Lock can be changed by opening or closing the gates in the other lock. Weybridge Rowing Club. Established 1880. They operate on the extension to the island created by the building of the Gate Lock. The area is open only to rowing club members. The Weyfarers Club is their branch for leisure rowers.

Weir. There is a large weir by the side of the mill. It was built in the 1930s as part of the River Wey improvement scheme. It is controlled by National Trust Staff.

Harmsworth's Wharf. This was once the name of this wharf. Harmsworth's were barge masters on the Basingstoke Canal which they eventually owned the canal which they bought in 1923. There was a rail line on the wharf with a crane.

Ham Haw Mills stood on the island created by the overflow stream. It dates from at least 1693. It was also called Ham Mill, and was used for making paper but from 1720 was an iron mill. In 1817 was out of use but by 1840 it was an oil mill crushing seed and a second waterwheel was added. This was owned by Walter Flockton in 1841. The Flocktons had tar works in Bermondsey and elsewhere in this period. The mill was demolished in 1963 following a fire. Housing here dates from 1989.

The Bull Dogs

A private island accessed via Whittets Ait over the weir. At the other end is Bulldogs Weir across from which was Butler's Boat Yard, built in the 1880s. It is a long building close to the river edge where punts and skiffs could be hired. Converted to a large house many years ago and fronting onto Wey Road

The Wey and its Navigation

The Navigation is not a canal – it is part of the river made navigable

The River Wey Navigation forms a continuous waterway between Weybridge via Guildford to Godalming. It is owned by the National Trust. The Wey was the second river in England to be turned to a navigable waterway. The Navigation opened in 1653. Through the efforts of Sir Richard Weston an enabling Act was passed in 1651 and, despite Weston's death, work was completed in 1653. It was for transporting barge loads of heavy goods to London – timber, corn, flour, wood and gunpowder. The coming of the railways from the 1840s marked its decline. Members of the Stevens family took over the running of it in 1930. In the 1960, the navigation was no longer viable and Stevens gave it to the National Trust in 1964.

Bulldogs Weir. This was built to cross the natural river in order to divert water into Ham Haw Cut. It was rebuilt in the 1850s.

Coulson's Bay Weir. This is at the upstream end of Ham Haw cut and is called Coulson's Bay. Water overflows into a channel which winds back to the Thames.

Beales Lane

An Engineering works is marked at the junction with Thames Street pre 1900s

Church Walk

Site of the old Weybridge Generating Station. It was built in 1889 to supply 119 street lights. By 1890 some of it has been converted to housing and in the 21st century the remaining part was made into houses.

Has a public footpath going to a footbridge over the Wey to Whittets Ait. The bridge was built 1868 – 1898. It is made of cast and wrought iron with a segmental arch with twelve wrought iron latticed panels, each capped with iron balls. There are cast iron bollards at each end.

Thames Street

104 The Minnow Pub. This was previously the Lincoln Arms from at least the 1830s and maybe in the 18th was the Anchor. It was named for the Earl of Lincoln who is said to have had a Tudor hunting lodge here. It was renamed the Minnow in 2000

87 Weybridge Marine. Lincoln Arms Boathouse

83 Old Crown pub. The building dates from the 17th. Until 1832 this was called The Crown but later it was the The Old Crown. It was tied to Hodgson's Brewery in 19th but was later taken over by Courage after the Second World War. It is now a Free House owned by the same family since 1959.

Dorney House. This was Crown property which was leased by Elizabeth I to John Woulde who died in 1598. It was sited slightly north of what is now the Minnow. It had a number of distinguished residents and was demolished in the early 20th C.

St. Maur's Convent, now St George's Junior School. The first St Maur's school in England opened in Camberwell in 1897, and the sisters moved to Weybridge in 1898. The order was founded in Rouen in 1666 as the Charitable Mistresses of the Holy Infant Jesus to educate the daughters of the poor.

They were based in the rue de Saint Maur, in Paris. In Weybridge, they relied on the Josephites to minister the sacraments. In the 1960s some of the Sixth form girls took A level courses with the St. George's boys. In 1999 St Maur's became part of St. George's and the premises in Weybridge became the Junior School.

Clinton House. Now the large old building, part of the St. George's School complex. This was once known as Colomb House and the name changed for Hon. George Clinton, the inventor of the naval semaphore. It was also the home of Mary Ann Clarke, mistress of the Duke of York.

Portmore Pillars. All that now remains of the 18th and 19th century Portmore Estate is at the end of Portmore Park Road – two thick gate piers with trophies which once marked the Thames Street entrance to the estate.

33 Kings Arms. This pub was known as The Farnell Arms at time of closure in 1997. Now demolished. Site of Farnell Mews.

41 Crest House. This was the head office of construction firm Crest Nicholson. It may relate to the Upholstery Works - this very large works is shown on maps from the 1960s at the rear of the Kings Arms. This is the site of Lincoln Grove.

Grotto Road

Named for the Grotto which stood in the grounds of Oatlands House until 1948 when it was demolished. The Grotto was in the grounds of what became St James school.

Oatlands Palace

The site of the Palace is in an area bounded by Grotto Road and Old Palace Road, Weybridge. After 1922 the whole area was developed for housing.

The Palace replaced an old moated manor house and was built using stone which came from Chertsey Abbey. Henry VIII took the house over in 1538 and rebuilt it for Anne of Cleves and it was later extended with building over what had been the moat. It had a high Prospect Tower. It is thought the original house partly remained there into the 17th C. Various subsequent monarchs lived there. During the Commonwealth it was sold and demolished. Oatlands House – to the east – later became the principal residence.

Old Palace Road

Girl Guide HQ – hall and open space

Brick vaulted culvert, with vaulted chambers at either end, which runs below the Girl Guides' Association property. These are remains from the Palace.

Palace Gardens

Tudor gateway. The principal visible remains of the Tudor Palace are two brick carriage gateways, with heavily moulded brick four-centred arches, set in an ancient brick wall on the northern boundary of the properties

Monument Green

Ship Hotel. The hotel claims to be 400 years old. It is said to have been a pub on the last staging post between Portsmouth and London. From 1729 the Manorial Courts of Weybridge and Byfleet were held and in the early 18th it was an army Recruiting Office. In the 1960s it was part of the Thistle Hotel Group and is now Best Western.

Monument erected in 1822. This monument was originally built in Seven Dials in central London but was demolished in 1773. In 1820 the Duchess of York who had lived in Weybridge for 30 years died, and local people wanted to erect a memorial to her. The duchess lived at Oatlands House following an unhappy marriage and devoted herself to numerous pet dogs. The Monument was being stored

in the gardens of a local architect, James Paine in Addlestone and a collection was organised by the landlord of the nearby Ship Inn to buy it to commemorate the duchess. The original Pillar was topped by six sundial faces, the seventh 'dyle' being the column itself but for Weybridge these were replaced by coronets. The sundial part with a plaque is situated by the side of Weybridge Library.

Portmore Estate

Between the Wey River and the town, the Duke of Norfolk bought land and built a large house. When he died in 1684 it passed to James II, who gave it to his mistress Catherine Sedley. In 1688 she married David Colyear, and he became the first Earl Portmore in 1703. In 1861 the land was sold and in 1887 roads were laid out for building plots.

Portmore Way

Christ the Prince of Peace Catholic Church. Weybridge originally had a Catholic church on Heath Road which still stands. In 1988, it was decided that a new Church and Parish Centre should be built together with the new St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School. The first mass in the new church was celebrated in 1989.