BROOKWOOD NEWS

March 2025

EDITORIAL

Included in the usual variety of articles this month is information on some current and planned changes happening in Brookwood, Woking and Surrey. If you want to ensure we have a voice in what happens in our village, I encourage you to consider helping with the Brookwood Neighbourhood Forum in any way you can.

John Power – Editor

ROAD WORKS

We have all been painfully aware of the work that has been happening at the west end of the village for the last few months. At the time of writing, the road under the railway bridge is due to reopen in late February with a four-way temporary light system in place until 21 March. It is assumed that the work to complete the pavement from St John's Court to the end of Connaught Road will take place some time after these temporary traffic lights have been removed. Let's hope that the new pavement on Connaught Road, the planned improvements to drainage and creation of a safer crossing place for pedestrians make all the disruption worthwhile.

BROOKWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Some readers may remember the 'Brookwood and Bridley Neighbourhood Forum'. The objectives of this were:

a) To improve the area known as Brookwood and Bridley (the Neighbourhood Area) for the benefit of individuals living and working within the Neighbourhood Area and local business organisations.

b) To promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Neighbourhood Area.

c) To prepare in partnership with the Local Planning Authority a neighbourhood plan for the Neighbourhood Area.

d) To encourage the goodwill and involvement of the wider community.

e) To foster community spirit and encourage civic pride.

The forum has become dormant in recent years, but we need to revive it so that we can have a say in local planning and in updating the Woking Borough Neighbourhood Plan, which is due in 2027. We also need to have an active Neighbourhood Forum in order to benefit from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) spending, which has a small budget for local improvements and which has been mentioned in previous editions. The area to be covered is the Brookwood polling district (that is the homes using the Brookwood Memorial Hall polling station).

This is a call for a few (5–9) volunteers to join a Brookwood Neighbourhood Forum and help to put together proposals for spending CIL money and updating the Brookwood Neighbourhood Plan. Once we have a core group of volunteers, we will get help with the details of the process from Woking Borough Council. The aim is to make this as painless as possible by focusing on updating the original plan.

Please contact our Heathlands Councillor, Leslie Rice, if you can help or would like more information on what is involved. You can contact him on CllrLeslie.Rice@woking.gov.uk or 07932 700586.





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SURREY COUNCIL CHANGES

In December 2024, the Government proposed the creation of more Mayoral Strategic Authorities in areas like Surrey that don't currently have one. This approach means that additional power is given to the local communities who know their areas best, giving them more control over decision-making and implementation of services.

The government also outlined plans to create more unitary councils to simplify and streamline local government. At present, Surrey has a two-tier council system, with 11 district and borough councils and a county council. As a result, different services are currently delivered by the district and borough councils, and the county council.

The government expects all two-tier areas to reorganise in the coming years, and has confirmed that Surrey will be on an accelerated programme to do so. If Surrey were to move to a unitary model, the county and district and borough councils would all dissolve and a new unitary council or councils would deliver all the services. We could also see a new Strategic Authority created, led by a new Mayor. This could cover the whole of Surrey, or Surrey could join together with neighbouring councils with a Mayor sitting across a larger geography.

It has also been confirmed that Surrey's County Council elections that were due to take place in May will be postponed until 2026; this will enable the detailed work for reorganisation and devolution to take place.

SHEETS HEATH



Sheets Heath is a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and is managed by the Surrey Heathland Partnership. The heathland is home to three types of rare birds that nest throughout the spring and summer months: woodlarks, Dartford warblers and nightjars. These birds nest on the ground or in low-growing vegetation, in open areas of heather and gorse from March until September. It's especially important to keep dogs under control, as birds are easily scared off their nests. It's not necessarily that dogs hunt the birds, but, if the birds repeatedly leave their nests, they'll eventually abandon them. If you see anyone acting inappropriately then please report it to heathlandproject@surreycc.gov.uk.

AARON'S ADVENTURE ARCHIVE

Nine-year-old villager, Aaran Harle-Hosein, has a YouTube channel covering his interest in train travel. Aaron's Adventure Archive features episodes on local train history including the St Edward Brotherhood train museum in Brookwood Cemetery, the Beeching Axe stations of Ash Green Halt and Tongham Halt, the Farnborough RAE street railway of 1917–1967, the Bisley to Blackdown abandoned railway of 1890–1952 and a farewell to Ash level crossing.

His channel also investigates the train maintenance units housed at Woking sidings, and covers a number of London train travel challenges and local transport museums. Aaron's channel can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/@AaronsAdventureArchive.

PIRBRIGHT PLAYERS AUDITIONS

Our next production will be Ladies Day by Amanda Whittington, a comedy, based upon the lives of four ladies who work at a fish filleting factory, whose fortunes change when they head to Ladies Day at the races. Pirbright Players will be holding auditions for, and a read through of, this at 2pm on Sunday 9 March in the Club Room of Lord Pirbright's Hall. There are parts available for both men and women. Everyone is welcome to learn about this fun event.

COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

Mike Sherwood is looking for volunteers to help establish a community speedwatch project for Connaught Road. To be able to do this, a minimum of six volunteers is needed to undergo online training by the Police. Please contact Mike Sherwood at mikesherwood180@gmail.com if you're interested.



BROOKWOOD CLUB

All members are invited to attend Brookwood Club's AGM at 7.30pm on Monday 14 April. From mid-March, nomination forms for Committee roles will be available in the club. If you are a member of the club, please consider giving up some time to become one of the volunteers who keep the club running.

Brookwood Club would also like to thank everyone who took part in or donated money for the darts marathon held on Saturday 15 February. It was a great day, enjoyed by all and raised over £500 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Particular thanks go to Michael and Penny Collyer, Kevin Davis and Caz Halls who worked hard to make the event a success and to Wildflour Bakeries for their donation of food that kept everyone going for the whole 12 hours.



BROOKWOOD CEMETERY SOCIETY WALKS



All walks start at 2pm at the Society Lodge adjacent to the Cemetery Office, just off Cemetery Pales. Booking is essential and may be done via walks@tbcs.org.uk or 07714 289375. A donation of £7.50 per person includes refreshments afterwards at the lodge. The money raised from the donations goes towards the society's restoration projects. Your place on the walk will be confirmed once the booking is received.

Sunday 2 March

- Introductory Walk – North Side; Alison Leech will focus on revolutionaries and a few other notables.
- Introductory Walk – South Side; Alison Vince will explore the former Anglican section, with burials from many different beliefs and diverse backgrounds.
- Mausoleums Walk; join Jon Leech as he unlocks the cemetery's notable mausoleums and tells the stories of those within.

Sunday 6 April

- Introductory Walk – North Side; Kim Lowe will explore the former non-conformist section, with burials from many different beliefs and diverse backgrounds.
- Symbolism Walk – North Side; the Victorians placed great importance on symbolism on their graves to help the living mourn and ensure their loved ones went to heaven. Alison Vince will help you understand these symbols.





welcome. Please contact community@brookwood.org.uk before the 20th of the month

Medal of Honor Day Talks



TUESDAY 25 MARCH

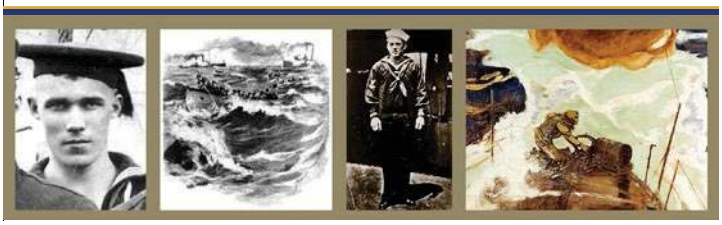
Throughout Medal of Honor Day we are offering free talks

To guarantee your spot or for more information please email brookwood@abmc.gov

Suitable for all ages

All talks are taking place in the Chapel at Brookwood American Cemetery

Talks will start at: 8:30am, 10am, 1pm, and 4pm



The Medal of Honor is the United States' highest award for valour in action. It is equivalent to the Victoria Cross in the United Kingdom. The National Medal of Honor Day was established by Congress to 'foster public appreciation and recognition of Medal of Honor Recipients'.

The first National Medal of Honor Day was celebrated on 25 March 1991. Throughout Medal of Honor Day there will be free talks on the history of the Medal, the day and some of the recipients who are commemorated at Brookwood American Cemetery.

ab EVENT HIRE

A B Event Hire Ltd are based here in Brookwood and hire out a variety of equipment for all sorts of events such as weddings, conferences, school functions, private parties or any other social gathering that you care to mention!

As you can probably guess our busy period will soon be upon us and we usually try to recruit 2-3 people to help out during the summer. Ideally, we like to hire local people so if you know of anyone who is looking for summer, or part time work, then please let us know. In the past we have hired a range of people such as students, retired people or anybody looking to earn some extra money. Hours can be flexible to suit individual circumstances.

You can call us on 01276856440 or email: sales@abhire.com
We would be pleased to hear from you.





SUMMER TIME

The clocks next go forward by one hour at 1am on 30 March 2025



VILLAGE DIARY DATES (also see the village website at www.brookwood.org.uk)

Every Sunday	Evening Service, 6pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
Every Monday	Babies and Toddlers Playgroup, 9.45am, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Friday	Brookwood Art Group, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Friday	Pop-up Coffee, 10am to 12pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
Sunday 2 March	Various walks (see article), 2pm, Brookwood Cemetery. Meet at the Society Lodge by the entrance to the Cemetery off Cemetery Pales
Saturday 8 March	Bingo, Brookwood Club, from 8.30pm
Tuesday 18 March	Brookwood WI birthday celebration supper with entertainment from The Vox choir, 7.45pm, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Tuesday 25 March	Medal of Honor Day talks (see article), Brookwood American Cemetery Chapel
Sunday 6 April	Various walks (see article), 2pm, Brookwood Cemetery. Meet at the Society Lodge by the entrance to the Cemetery off Cemetery Pales

Would you like to advertise in the newsletter?

The cost of advertising is £30.00. The advert will feature on the back of the newsletter and will be no less than a 1/4 of a page. We do not normally put advertising anywhere else in the newsletter. For more information on advertising please contact us on community@brookwood.org.uk

NB: DEADLINE FOR APRIL NEWSLETTER IS MIDDAY 20th MARCH preferably by e-mail to community@brookwood.org.uk or telephone 01483 480273 or a note through the door of 78 Connaught Road.

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