



Hello to all Fleetville Diaries members.

We would normally see each other at our meetings, and perhaps occasionally pass each other while walking or shopping locally. We'll surely return to our normal routines before long. In the meanwhile we will keep in contact by alternative routes – a newsletter, for example. It may be brief, but hopefully you'll agree it is on-message on matters to do with Fleetville, our interests and our projects.

ON OUR EXERCISE WALKS

It seems that we are less rushed than usual; our minds less cluttered with what we need to do next; there is more time to think and perhaps to appreciate the people and places around us. Already a few people – not necessarily FD members – have discovered something new on their essential exercise walks. Maybe you have just noticed something you hadn't spotted before. Although the FD website is not set up to handle these conversations, you could raise a question and email via St Albans' Own East End (www.stalbansowneastend.org.uk saoee@me.com and we will make use of the blog, the Your Turn page or a section of the front page – or perhaps the next edition of this newsletter.

BOUNDARY POSTS

One direct question came from an observant resident who had discovered remaining posts set up in 1879 and 1913 when the city's boundaries were expanded. She wished to know the reason for the specific wording used, and I think we have an answer for her, in fact for all of us. Visit St Albans' Own East End (web address above) next weekend to discover more.

WONDERFUL RECOLLECTIONS

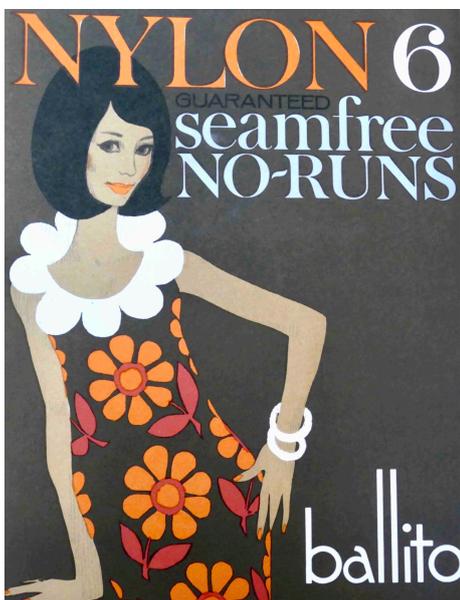
Our projects often give us the opportunity to meet wonderful people who have a rich resource of memories about where they had lived, a company they had worked for or particular events which had touched

their lives. Here is an enticing snippet

from one such conversation with Rita, which formed part of our Ballito project:

“So, when you went past all the small offices you went through two doors into the big offices where we worked on the Power-Samas machines. Just before you got there was a door on the left leading into the factory. Our door was always open because the factory would write their orders out, come into our room, put them in a tray and that's when I took over. You went into the main office and my desk was in the far corner. I think we had six punch card machines. The girls were brilliant. You had a small square alpha-numeric keyboard to enter everything.”

Just a hundred words from a total of 3,700. Manufacturing stockings didn't only involve making the product; there was a myriad of supplementary roles. And this was one of them.



INFORMATION NEARLY MISSED

The parade of shops west of Fleetville Recreation Ground was built c1930, but to begin at the beginning, the site was originally purchased by Benskins as the possible location for a public house and hotel for a district which in 1900 hardly existed. Many of the new residents objected and Fleetville remained “dry”, There were many battles and eventually Benskin’s purchased a corner shop and rebuilt it as The Rats’ Castle. That much many of us already know. But did



Benskins retain the first site? As there was little or no chance of the company making use of it, the land was sold. The surprising purchaser was none other than the Salvation Army; the deeds are in the name of Bramwell Booth, son of General William Booth.

The question is, did the SA intend to build a citadel or perhaps a Sunday school next

to the rec, or was its intention to prevent the site from being acquired by another brewery? We may never know, but the Salvation Army hung on to their acquisition until the late 1920s.

VIRTUAL HOLIDAYS

David has alerted us to some exciting excursion opportunities which were available, as advertised in the *Herts Advertiser* on April 7th 1900. Just board the train from Hill End or Smallford stations. Another advert suggests more excursions from St Albans Station. Wow, where shall we visit?

BUY LAND

Or we could remain at home and purchase land for building a villa on a 50-foot wide plot in New Clarence Road opposite Clarence Park. Now that would be an investment! These opportunities were available in the same issue.



Excursions.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY.

EASTER HOLIDAY EXCURSIONS.

T **TO LONDON** each **THURSDAY** until further notice from St. Albans (G.N.) at 11.56 noon, 1.30, and 4.14 p.m.. Hill End 11.59, 1.33, and 4.17, Smallford 12.2, 1.35 and 4.20, Hatfield 12.17, 1.55, and 4.30; also **SATURDAY, APRIL 14th** (Alexandra Park Races, and **EASTER MONDAY, APRIL 16th**, from St. Albans (G.N.) at 8.58 a.m.. Hill End 9.1, Smallford 9.4, Hatfield 9.15 and 9.50.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12th, for 5, 9, or 16 days, to **EDINBURGH, GLASGOW, PERTH, DUNDEE, ABERDEEN, INVERNESS, &c.**, from St. Albans (G.N.) at 7.5 p.m., Hatfield 7.30.

Tickets, bills, &c., at stations.

CHARLES STEEL, General Manager.

VIRTUAL DAY TRIP

In the real world of 2020 Mike is planning a few day trips to new places by making use of Google Earth and Google Street View. You get there in no time, and save on hotel and travel costs. There are lots of online links to the interesting locations which will be discovered.

NEXT NEWSLETTER

We will collect another miscellany of local information soon and send it out for you to keep in touch with Fleetville Diaries.