

## Do You Remember...

I had planned to write an account of Botley's lost pubs, but there is a lot to say, so this will just be a brief outline and I'll go into more detail in a later issue. The first pub to go was the Black Horse, which was at North Hinksey turn in the Botley Road from Victorian times till the 1960s. The centre of Botley was moving eastwards, so, also in the 60s, Morrells built and opened a new pub – the Fair Rosamund – in the middle of Elms Rise. In the 1990s it was bought by a building chain and demolished to make way for more housing. Locals did their best to keep it. It was at the heart of the estate, in a good position next to the shop. Now it's gone, the playing fields car park is a poor substitute as a central meeting place!

When the Black Horse closed, the Carpenters' Arms, 100 paces to the east, took over its custom. It was a thriving pub on the outskirts of Oxford (though still in Berkshire at that point) which had been there since the opening of Botley Causeway in the mid 18th Century. There are rumours that it was a great venue for rock and roll, when young people queued round the block to get in, but no one has confirmed this. (Were you there? Can it be true?) In 2002 it was taken over by McDonalds.

Cheaper places to drink and socialize, with rules that were more family friendly, were the social clubs, of which Botley seems to have had two: the Seacourt above the Library, and Dean Court Social Club in Pinnocks Way. I think the Seacourt went a while ago, and I'm told that Dean Court, well used and much loved over the decades, is now likely to close as well. If you have fond memories of any of the above, I'd love to hear from you.

A follow-up from last month's account of the Botley Shopping Centre comes from Ray Rook who says: "Mr Taylor, the clock repairer and jeweller traded from a hut roughly where the TESCO shop is now. It was at the side of a path which led through the field from Arthray Rd to Mrs Beechey's toyshop" (now the car parts shop). A sentence from the Oxford Mail supplement had to be left off for reasons of space, but it was too good to lose, so I'll put it in here. In the immortal words of the journalist, Waldo Skipsey, "A point to remember for motoring housewives living in such places as Woodstock and Witney, Eynsham and Charlbury: Botley Centre with its attractive variety of modern shops is within easy driving distance, and you can reach it without driving along congested roads." I love to think of the 'motoring housewife' making her way to Botley in her Morris Minor – or perhaps her Mini – for an elegant shopping experience! Did you spot her? Was she your mum?

**Ag MacKeith**