

I have decided to run this article again. The formatting in the April magazine went a little awry and the final two paragraphs were lost! Here it is, but this time in its entirety and exactly how it should have appeared last month, my apologies. Zen George, Publisher



Leatherhead & District Local History Society

Potted Histories No: 16

Leatherhead Court - Woodlands Road Leatherhead

Leatherhead Court in Woodlands Road was once part of the Woodland Park Estate. The owner at the time was Frederick Carkeet Bryant, a son of the founder of Bryant and May, the match manufacturer.

In 1904 it was leased to Martha Wood-Tullis and often referred to as a 'high class school for young ladies'. Among the famous pupils who attended the school were Winifred O' Shaughnessy de Wolfe Hudnut, who married Rudolph Valentino and Fay Compton the well-known British stage and screen actress.

In 1933 a small committee was formed by Dame Georgiana Buller, Vice Chairman of the Central Council for the Care of Cripples, her aim was to establish a Training College for the disabled so that such people might be able to find suitable employment in either commerce or industry, and to regain their self-respect. The ten-acre site of Leatherhead Court was deemed ideal and was duly purchased for the sum of £8,000. The first 16 trainees were received on the 1st November 1934 and the establishment was formally opened by HRH the Duchess of York (the late Queen Mother) as the Cripples Training College (London and District) on the 27th June 1935. In 1942 Her Majesty expressed the wish that the college should, in future, be known as Queen Elizabeth's Training College for the Disabled.

In January 1989, Leatherhead Court was the victim of a horrendous fire. The front of the building was totally destroyed. Following a big fund raising effort, a new front was built on to the remaining buildings. The new building was officially opened by the late Queen Mother in November 1992. The front building is now the Headquarters of the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for Disabled People.

The College, now called QEF Vocational Services celebrates its seventy fifth birthday this year and still strives to maintain its original aim of helping disabled people find suitable employment, and to regain their self respect.

For information regarding Membership, Lectures and Museum opening hours contact: Leatherhead & District Local History Society, Leatherhead Museum Hampton Cottage, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8DP

Tel: 01372 386348

mail to: staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com

Website: www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk