



Drawing by Mr. Alfred Meridith



Photo: Courtesy of Mr. A.E. Tims

Leatherhead & District Local History Society

Potted Histories No: 21

Fetcham Village Hall - The Street, Fetcham

The Fetcham Women's Institute was founded in 1927 and rapidly became popular to an extent that the Reading Room in Cobham Road where they met was deemed too small and the possibility of building a suitable Hall was investigated. Fund raising was commenced but the target of £3,000 was formidable so the purchase and scheme of conversion was adopted of the century-old Home Farm barn. This was for sale and the cost of conversion estimated at £1,800.

With the help of the fund raising and grants from the National Council for Social Service and the Carnegie Trust, the project prospered. Much of the work of conversion was with voluntary labour and artisans helped on a 'cost only materials' basis. The Hon. Architect, Charles H. Rose and S.G. Blaxland-Stubbs as Clerk of Works, supervised the work and by May 1933 it was opened by Viscountess Castlereagh and dedicated for the use of the people of Fetcham. The initial loans were paid by 1938. Later additions of a British Restaurant would increase the size of the building.

The scope of this achievement should be measured against the population of the village (around 1500 at the time) and the enthusiasm that they, and the Women's Institute, generated in providing a meeting place for social occasions, clubs, theatrical presentations and recreation which continue to be enjoyed to this day.

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