
PAST TIMES

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Introduction

A belated Happy New Year to all our members. This will be the first time that some of you have received your copy of Past Times by email but a printed copy will always be available for you to collect at our talks.

Last September we had a recruitment drive and delivered a surplus old copy of Past Times to Galleywood residents along with a recruitment leaflet asking if they would like to become a member. My thanks to a new member, Elspeth Kelly, who received Past Times no. 60 which featured the singer Monte Rey, also known as James Montgomery Fyfe. Elspeth responded to the recruitment leaflet and also sent me information about his hobby. James Montgomery Fyfe was born on 5th October 1900 in Dennistoun, Glasgow. Whilst Monte Rey was a famous singer little was known about his considerable skill at breeding prize Schnauzers.



His dog breeding career started in around 1933 when he was presented with a bitch schnauzer puppy by the Duchess of Montrose. This was the foundation of his kennels. The Duchess of Montrose was one of the first to take up this breed and had bred with great care. The Brodick Castle dogs were well renowned and enjoyed much success in the show ring. The schnauzer dogs are smaller than an Airedale, to which they have an approximate resemblance to except for their colour and they are not terriers. They have close hard coats which are easy to care for. James started well and made a careful study of the blood lines. Along with his sound judgement it did not take him long to get together a strain that could be relied upon to reproduce the desired points. He did so well that an American offered him a blank cheque for one of his bitches and was surprised to meet with a refusal from Mr Fyfe. The American had difficulty understanding that a man might prize one of his dogs beyond price. By 1939 the dogs bred by James Montgomery Fyfe had won 28 challenge certificates which was a remarkable feat.

In October 1938 the Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News featured an advertisement for the Schnauzers Montfyf Kennels. *Since the Kennel Club show last October, Schnauzers bred or owned by this kennel have won over 40 Firsts, 8 Challenge Certificates and 8 times Best of Breed awards. Puppies for sale: Apply to Fyfe, 'Strofield', Galleywood, near Chelmsford, Essex.*

The Essex Chronicle reported on 24th March 1939: '**Galleywood Champion Schnauzers.** Many Essex successes at the championship show of the Ladies' Kennel Association, including several by Mr. J.M. Fyfe, of Galleywood with his Schnauzer **Montfyf Gramont** puppy bitch. These dogs are a hobby with Mr Fyfe, who is well known in the broadcasting world as Monte Rey. During the last two years, Schnauzers born in Galleywood have dominated the show bench and at the four recent big shows in London – the Metropolitan and Essex, The Kennel Club, Crufts and the Ladies' Kennel Association. Galleywood air has produced five champions, a record for the breed.'

By 1939 James Montgomery Fyfe made the decision to retire from the show ring as it was interfering with his singing career. The kennels were in Galleywood and James would spend most week-ends with his dogs. This, invariably, had a detrimental effect on his income as he had to refuse '*engagements of a remunerative nature and he did not care to put the dogs in the charge of someone else*'. *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, June 30th 1939.*

We were saddened to hear of the passing of two of our long-standing members in January this year – Artin Cornish and Wendy Cummin.

Artin Cornish was born in 1929 in the Borough of Newham. After leaving school he joined a Marine Insurance company. He married in 1965 and moved to Keene Way, Galleywood. In 1983 Artin and his wife, Wendy, moved to a house in the Stock Road which was formerly a ladies hairdresser shop named **Renoir's**. The house was re-named **The Ark**. Artin became a Common Warden in 1997 and walked on the common twice each day. He wrote the following poem entitled **Two Thousand years on Galleywood Common**:

On Galleywood Common beneath an azure sky, I like to sit and think of times gone by. Of ancient Britons rubbing their woad, watching the Roman soldiers on their road. With a club and sharpened spear they stood shoulder to shoulder with Boadicea; to repel the foe who had crossed the Channel, all dressed up in tin and flannel. Each one hundred men with their Centurian with his shield and leather skirt on.

Of Charles the second in regal state, awarding his prestigious Plate for the fastest running horse to complete the gorse fringed course. With a saucy wink and cheeky grin received a squeeze from his Nell Gwynn.

Of Boneparte who, our shores did threat with his offence, and King George the third said 'build a stout defence'. But before this could be completed Nelson had the French fleet defeated.

So with a hip hop hooray they sold the spoil and clay to a new Chelmsford railway. And in each hollow, they bunkers made for nine hole golf they played.

Then in the early eighteen seventies Mr Pryor fell upon his knees and said 'cut down that oak, fell that birch, for I'm going to build St Michael's church'. And so the hill became hallowed ground and now the horses must go round and round.

Then when murder struck at the Admiral Rous the landlord did not escape the gallows' noose. For judge and jury did prevail and he was the last man hanged in Chelmsford's gaol.

But will the hunt still meet at the Horse and Groom; will men still drink in a log-fired room; standing around with their beers; will the church bells still ring in New Years; On Galleywood Common in two thousand years?

Wendy Cummin

Wendy lived in Galleywood for over 45 years. She and her late husband, John, were involved with the fund raising and research for Galleywood Heritage Centre which opened in November 2009 and she became its first archivist. At the same time Wendy began a campaign for a War Memorial in Galleywood and sought donations from individuals and groups. The erection of the memorial began on 6th April 2010 and was completed on 30th April with the Dedication ceremony taking place on Sunday 16th May 2010 which was attended by many. The Galleywood Heritage Centre holds the many booklets she produced on various aspects of Galleywood's history including the two World Wars and details of the 43 casualties recorded on the memorial. She spent a considerable amount of time researching local families including their military history. Members of the Society may remember her from the many exhibitions, talks and displays at the Galleywood Heritage Centre.

Forthcoming talk by John Turkentine on **Wednesday 12th March:**

Permanent Markers?

John will be talking about Galleywood's Boundary Stones and other permanent markers. Please join us in the Keene Hall at 8pm, guests welcome.

Galleywood Heritage Centre – forthcoming events:

Annual Reunion of the old Galleywood School will take place on Tuesday 22nd April at 1.30pm.

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Chairman: Graham Mundy *Treasurer, Membership and Editor:* Geraldine Willden.
Secretary Pat Stuart. *Committee:* Stephanie Troop and John Turkentine.

Programme Director: Vacant.

Comments and contributions to the newsletter are welcomed by the Editor.

Email: Geraldine.willden@hotmail.co.uk Please note our new website address:

www.e-voice.org.uk/ghs/

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