

Account of Purley on Thames

Project Purley Social Events

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The two key social events of the year have always been our Christmas Party and the Summer BBQ. For many years the Summer BBQ was held at the home of Pat and Tony Deane beside their swimming pool. This was an ideal opportunity for members to imagine a scene on the Riviera and laze in the sun. Maybe it is just a false memory but we have no recollection of rain or inclement weather.

Then we moved to the home of Ron and Rita Denman using gazebos provided by members and seating borrowed from the Memorial Hall. Barbecues are notoriously subject to the weather and we had a few really bad days, however on the whole we all had a good time and enjoyed meats cooked on the Barbecues by various members and feasted on all sorts of other delights contributed by members.

Then in xx we moved to the home of Ben and Dorothy Viljoen on Beech Road using their front garden and for many years a tent loaned to use by the Scouts as well as the gazebos loaned by members. The format and weather were very much as before but on at least one occasion the weather was so bad we had to eat indoors and build a shelter around the barbecue. The usual practice was to erect the gazebos in the morning but on one occasion we did it Thursday evening and when the wind got up overnight two of the gazebos were blown away and badly damaged.

Project Purley decided to purchase a gazebo of their own after Cliff Debney died and we were not able to use the scout tent.

The Christmas party has always been indoors, for obvious reasons. Initially we visited several members' homes but then settled on Purley Lodge, the home of Jan and Rick Jones. Members brought their contributions of either a savoury or a dessert and almost every year we were never able to eat it all. The atmosphere was always very intimate and cosy with intense competition for the chairs. Jean Debney usually provided mulled wine and David Downs devised some fearsome competitions, often with a football theme. One year he posted one of the clues under a toilet seat which was not noticed by most members.

Then in 2015 as the numbers attending had grown too large for Purley Lodge, we moved to the Barn to a very different atmosphere. Here we had tables and plenty of chairs but the effect was that people stuck to their table and there was very little interaction. Also in 2016 as many members brought friends, they omitted to double the size of their contributions to the menu so we suffered an embarrassing shortage of food.

We are in the process of compiling articles to document various aspects of the history of Purley on Thames. The one you have tried to access has either not yet been written or has not yet been converted to pdf.

