



# RECTORY NEWS

FOR THE SUPPORTERS OF CARSHALTON OLD RECTORY

Issue 21 - March 2020

## More about the Byne Family

The Byne portraits are a fascinating record of a reasonably well to do landed family. The later Bynes were lawyers as well as land owners and their family home was an opulent house in Carshalton. From the late 17th to the early 19th century, Carshalton was renowned for the many country houses of London merchants and professional men that crowded the village: *'...some of which are built with such a profusion of expense that they look rather like the seats of the nobility, than the country houses of citizens and merchants...'* (Daniel Defoe).

Although we don't know exactly where the Byne family house was, we do have an inventory of the interior fixtures and fittings in an attachment to the will of Charles Byne (1672-1725). Therefore, we know that the house had a Long Gallery and Great Staircase; a Great Parlour and Drawing Room; a Little Parlour; six major bedrooms, butler's office and closet; a well-stocked kitchen; a bake house and laundry; larder and well cellar; small beer cellar; coach-house and stables etc. etc.

Among the paintings mentioned in the inventory were 16 family portraits. These were hanging either in the Long Gallery or on the walls of the Great Staircase and are the portraits that Charles Byne's widow, Elizabeth, brought with her to the Old Rectory when she married Rev. William Hollier in 1727.

The image shows Henry Byne (1608-1654) as a young boy and the portrait tells us something of his character. Note the cherries he is holding. These symbolised the sweet nature of the sitter and were most often to be seen in paintings of Christ as a young child. Henry married Ann Bray of Chobham and the couple had 14 children.



## The Neglect of the Old Rectory

As you know we have been very concerned about the general deterioration of the Old Rectory. Last year, we wrote several times to Helen Bailey, Sutton's Chief Executive, which did lead to the damaged back window being repaired.

We have been monitoring the roof, gutters and the wooden soffit boards, all of which have been showing worrying signs of decay. The slates have slipped on the south end of the east side of the roof which may well have resulted in water finding its way into the building and damaging the structure.

The gutter at the south west corner of the original building is either leaking or blocked and water has been running down the wall. A building of this age won't have a cavity wall and the water may have soaked right through damaging the interior. Both the ground and first floor rooms at this corner of the building have 18th century panelling and are among the best preserved.

As a consequence of our growing concerns about the house, we recently contacted the Carshalton Ward Councillors and they arranged a meeting

with Mark Norrell, the new Assistant Director of Assets at Sutton Council, and Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member of Resources. John Phillips, our Chairman, provided the ward Councillors with a list of questions to ask about the state of the building. We hoped to find out when the roof and gutters were going to be repaired and if the inside of the building is being regularly checked for damage. We also wanted to know when a formal written condition survey was last carried out.

We have some good news. Following this meeting, Mark Norrell contacted John on the 27th February to say that repairs to the roof and gutters were to be carried out within the week.

As to the condition survey, the last one was conducted in 2015, the year in which CORA was set up! Mark Norrell plans to commission a condition report as soon as practically possible. He has also confirmed that he will arrange a meeting with CORA to discuss the findings of the report.

Something positive at last.

### Annual General Meeting

A date for your diary. This year's CORA AGM will be on **Friday 12th June 7.30pm at Carshalton Water Tower**. We hope you will come along to hear the latest news on the Old Rectory and meet the committee. After the meeting there will be light refreshments followed by our after meeting talk: 'Portraits of the Byne Family - paintings that once decorated the walls of the Old Rectory' by Sue Horne.

### **KEEPING IN TOUCH**

We'd like to hear from you. Your comments and suggestions would be very welcome.

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