

Emmbrook Historic Hunt

How has Emmbrook changed in the last hundred years?
What features remain in place?

Have a look at these historic photos of Emmbrook
and try to find the location today.

How does a photo taken from the same position
compare now?.

If you would like a little help there is a guided walk,
complete with hints, after the last photo.

Please don't enter any private property without permission.



Prepared in March 2020 for the enjoyment of residents permitted one form of local exercise per day,
having been placed in 'lockdown' by the Government.

Pictures and hints provided by The Emmbrook Residents Association

<https://emmbrook-residents.org/>





The Ford,
Embrook, nr. Wokingham. A.443.



The Old Toilet Block - 1977



"Tin Tabernacle" 1987



Emmbrook Road, 1935

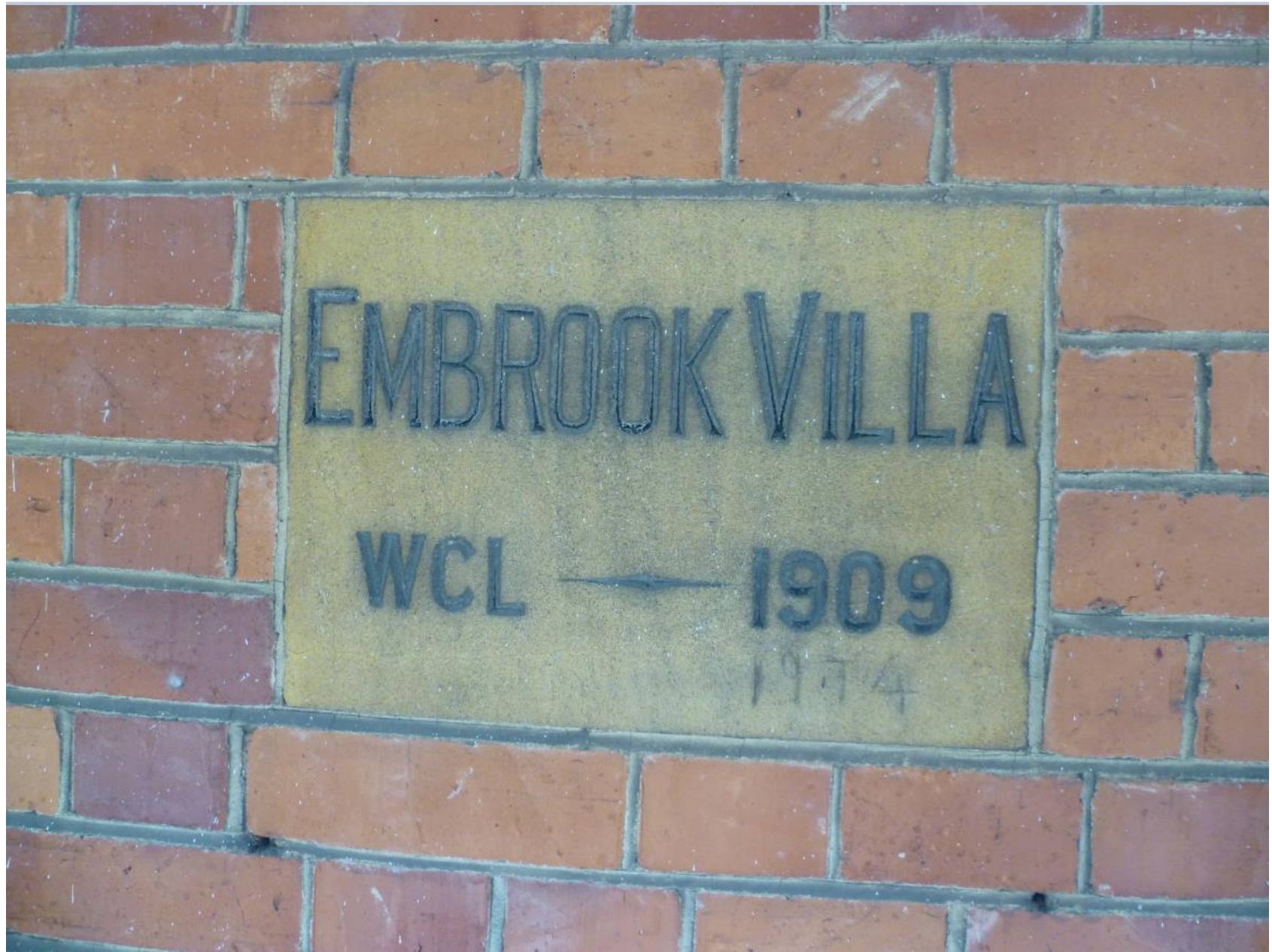




6



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Embrook
Road, With
Rifle
Volunteer

(Hint, you'll
have to cross
the Reading
Road today
to get a
similar view
of the Rifle
Volunteer)

10





11





13



14

15



16





Picture taken in 2018. Hint – this is where the anti-aircraft guns were in WW2

18

Toutley Pumping Station Plaque

Hint (March 2020) You won't find the brick memorial at the the moment. The Emmbrook Residents Association had the plaque taken out and removed to a place of safety when the demolition of the old water pumping station off Toutley Road was about to begin.

In due course, after the road construction has finished, it will be brought back again and placed in a new spot near to its original position in a new brick surround and with a plate explaining its historical significance.





Suggested Emmbrook Walk

- 1) This is clearly the Dog & Duck Public House. Instead of starting here, the tour may be walked in reverse so as to recover.
- 2) This view may be imagined by turning left on Emmbrook Road/Clifton Road – the footbridge is more up to date now, and the bridge affords a means of crossing the Emm brook without wetting one's feet. The road outside the school still floods after VERY heavy periods of rain.
- 3) Walking on up to Corfield Green, opposite is the Village Hall. These pictures show how it appeared in 1977, the toilet block was a modernisation at the end of the nineteenth century for the use of the pupils in the old village school. The “tarting up” appears in the photograph at the right (1987) – still being used for the playschool!
- 4) Turn left into Emmbrook Road and compare this view with today's.
- 5) Just before reaching here and looking to the right is the hairdresser's. This is how it was, as the village stores in about the 1920s. “The Ice Cream Man” poses with his young customers. The Stores was still operating in 1973.

6) Next to it was the Dairy and opposite was the public house then known as The Thatched Cottage.

7) Walking on towards the railway bridge and just before Lowther Road there lies a row of terraced cottages – Rose Villas. The last house on the corner before Lowther Road was the home of the YALDEN family. The father William served in the army enlisting in the King's Royal Rifle Corps in 1883. His son Leonard was killed in that infamous year 1916 (on July 1st) being posthumously awarded the Military Medal.

8) Moving on to just past Lowther Road, at Number 30 (see the number on the tree trunk) is a fine property built by Walter Collis LOWTHER. The plaque just below the roof line on a verandah cannot be seen without walking onto the private path to the house.

9) Beyond the railway bridge to the end of Emmbrook Road the view back is best seen from the petrol filling station. The only house to be seen is "The White Cottage" (15 Emmbrook Road) still there today. The Rifle Volunteer P.H. is to the right of the picture, although it has been known as "The Rifleman" in the past.

10) Walking towards Wokingham there is the concrete wall on the left for the road crossing the Emm brook (looking back towards The Rifle Volunteer). The photograph shows the original iron marker for the bridge.

11) Instead of using the busy Reading Road, retrace one's steps turning right down Emmbrook Road and then left down Lowther Road. House Number 51 on the right hand side was the home of the COOMBES whose daughter married the son of a clergyman – the incredible story surrounding her is told in the 4th book of Emmbrook History (Yet More Unfinished History of Emmbrook). At the end of the road is Toutley Hall, at the junction with what is now named Old Forest Road. This road was a Turnpike from Windsor to Reading and Toutley Hall an early Estate Agent sale advertises the regular coach service to London.

12) Still with Toutley Hall, this is a later picture with an early motor vehicle in its driveway. The property was divided after its sale in 1959 giving the appearance shown now.

13 and 14) Keep walking towards the railway bridge. On the right is the entrance (page 13) to what was the arboretum (Page 14). The gate was the entrance, now blocked off for the NDR construction works.

15) Walking further, on the Reading Road side of the bridge, and facing the Reading direction, can be seen showing the bridge number and distance from London in miles and chains! This distance dates from the first railway line which was via Redhill. The route via Ascot was much later. Looking carefully at the brickwork may be seen a bench mark (arrow for reference to Ordnance Survey spot height)

16 and 17) Turning back over the bridge and walking past Lowther Road and Commons Road (the double roadway here is because there were two paths back towards the Village Hall) comes to the next picture – Ashton Road leads to the Flagons Estate, built by Bryants around 1976/77. The fields between the Old Forest Road and the M4 are now the site of the construction of the “Northern Distributor Road” to bypass Wokingham towards Winnersh. Looking across the field just by the lay-by it might be possible to imagine what is left of the trees and shrubs (March 2020).

Looking across here in 2018 (P. 17) could be seen the investigative trenches in preparation for road construction. It was here that there was exposed the foundation concrete plates for the five anti aircraft guns, sited here in World War 2.

18) A long extension to the walk is down Old Forest Road, turn right at Toutley Road and over the small bridge (across what is known as Ashridge Stream). Approximately opposite Summerfield Close there is a boarded area (where stood a house built 1905) and a metal fence gate being the entrance to the old Water Pumping Station. The shows a plaque commemorating its opening originally here.

19) Much further on in Toutley Road and along Queens Road one arrives at the Twyford Road (A321) - crossing into Bell Foundry Lane and looking back can be seen Matthews Green Farm before the 770 home development was started.

Annotations by Peter Shilham

For more information about Emmbrook’s history, including historic maps, visit the Emmbrook Resident’s Association at <https://emmbrook-residents.org/>