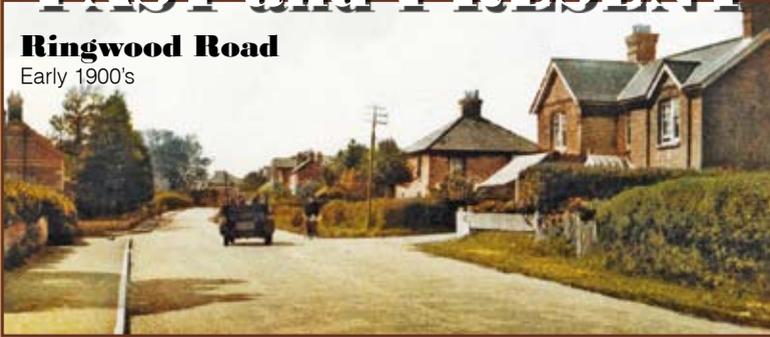


ROUNABOUT VERWOOD

PAST and PRESENT

Ringwood Road

Early 1900's



A solitary car in an almost deserted Ringwood Road. The shop on the right was originally Mr Legg's, a butcher and a clergyman! Bill Andrews took over in 1956 who then passed it on to his brother Dan Andrews in 1960. (Bill then moved his butcher's business A. W. Andrews to the current 7 Manor Road premises - now run by Billy Andrews his son, currently chairman of Verwood & District Chamber of Trade).

The shop was then a cycle shop for a year in 1988 after Dan retired and since then it has been the Indian Palace, Art of Spice and is currently still a restaurant, the Spice of India.

Apart from the turnpike road through Three Legged Cross there were no official main thoroughfares and no coaching inns for passengers' accommodation. Verwood was just a place to be passed through en-route to somewhere else.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the invention of the internal combus-

tion engine was about to change all that.

At first motorized vehicles were well outside the price range of ordinary folk and the horse was still "King of the Road". Motor cars were looked on as a wonderful rarity and able to command central position on the almost deserted roads.

Inevitably one of these 'rarities' was owned by Squire Fryer (who owned the Crossroads Pottery premises) who promoted his gardener, Oliver Thorne, to the rank of Chauffeur at least on a part time basis. Oliver apparently made a habit of putting too much oil in the engine and so acquired the nickname, "All A Fire"!

As no driving test was required until 1935 people either taught themselves or learned from those with a little more experience. Miss Gertrude Sims recalled that on driving to Ringwood, when the hills were much sharper than they are today, she would pull into the side of the road on seeing a car approach from the opposite direction and wait for it to pass before continuing on her way.

She said that in 1921 there were only four cars in Verwood, owned by herself, Job Brewer, the Vicar of Woodlands and Vince Parker who ran a taxi service.

Today many of the buildings still stand and even the telegraph pole is in much the same location. Note the infamous speed camera which now allows drivers in 2010 to travel 10mph faster than the original 1903 Motor Car Act!

