

**Elstree & Borehamwood Museum  
Friends Newsletter  
January 2026: Issue Number 34**



***EASTENDERS 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION  
OPENS TO THE PUBLIC***

Over the Summer, preparations were underway for an exhibition marking the 40th anniversary of EastEnders. Dave visited the set at BBC Elstree Studios to get inspiration for the exhibits. Subsequently, Tony de Swarte built a replica fruit & veg stall and Queen Vic bar, the latter featuring original props including pump clips and a bust of Queen Victoria. The BBC also supplied us original costumes and props, including Dot Cotton's handbag, Sonia's trumpet and Pat Butcher's earrings; along with a behind-the-scenes video of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary live episodes last February, to display over the video monitors.



The exhibition was opened by Adam Woodyatt (who plays Ian Beale in the program) at a pre-launch event on 4<sup>th</sup> November, with a number of local councillors, trustees, mayors and BBC production crew also in attendance. The exhibition officially opened to the public the following day, and has since become very popular with over 550 visitors attending during November alone. This exhibition will be open until later this May.

***MUSEUM TALKS***



Several events took place last Autumn. In October, Anne Shuker hosted a Friends Evening, where she did a presentation on the history of Schopwick House, using 30 photographs of the building and local area over the years. The following month, Dave held a Reminiscence Meeting on the local Civic Festival and May Queens, including a combination of early photos from past festivals, and 8mm film footage unearthed from the Borehamwood Cine Club dating between the 1950's and 1980's; featuring processions from Brook Road carpark to the town centre that included floats from local schools, businesses, charities and even the Hare Krishna temple.

***BLETCHLEY PARK TRIP***

Back on 10<sup>th</sup> September, we organised a trip to Bletchley Park. 20 people joined us on our visit which lasted around 4 hours, giving us plenty of time to look around the exhibits. Overall, it was an enjoyable and rather informative day out.

## **ELSTREE & BOREHAMWOOD FILM LOCATIONS**



Over the past 110 years, the local area around Elstree and Borehamwood has been a hub of film and television production with a slew of film studios operating over the years. With such a proliferation of studios in the area, production units were keen to film in nearby streets for location material, a common practise in the postwar film industry. So, it comes to no surprise that the likes of Elstree and Borehamwood have prolifically appeared in hundreds of films (and TV programs) given its close proximity to the studios. In a century of continuous filmmaking activity, a vast array of streets and buildings (both extant and former) have featured in a slew of films over the years, that help form a patchwork of the area's eventful and illustrious history.

The approach roads towards Elstree and Borehamwood have featured in films, Watford Road provides an essential plot element in *Cross-Roads* (1955) where Harry Cooper investigates the site of his sister's car crash. Further east, Stirling Corner/ Way along the A1 has appeared in a few films, including *Intimate Games* (1976) where John tries to hitchhike, in *The Scamp* (1957) the road appears on several occasions through the film, at one point even the Kings Arms pub features. Borehamwood has several major roads that intersect the area, these include Furzehill Road, which has appeared in the likes of *Dusty Ermine* (1936), *School for -*

*Scoundrels* (1960), *Magnificent Six and ½*: *Kontiki Kids* (1968) and *Confessions of a Pop Performer* (1975). Going northwards, Theobald Street briefly appears in *Where the Spies Are* (1966) when Dr. Love brings his car to a stand. Markedly, Shenley Road has appeared the most, featuring in over two dozen films. It extensively appears in three *Confessions* films, the opening scenes of *The Scamp* (1957), the first two *On the Buses* films, the climatic sequence in *Digby, the Biggest Dog in the World* (1973) when a cortege of armoured cars trails the gigantic dog, and briefly features in *The Meaning of Life* (1983) where Gaston leads the film crew hundreds of miles back to his birthplace.

Elstree and Borehamwood are connected by a number of residential streets. Manor Way is a major artery through the south of the area, its parade of shops can be seen in *Alive & Kicking* (1958) when a motorcycle police patrol is seen passing, the same parade appears in *On the Buses* (1971) where Blakey accosts Stan and Jack; the nearby road crossing features in *Confessions of a Pop Performer* (1975) during a sequence involving a pantomime horse. Nearer to Elstree, the roads that branch off Allum Lane date to the interwar period. No.45 Barham Avenue appears in an early scene of *No Time for Tears* (1957), whilst No. 24 The Rise is the location where the Allens live in *Return of a Stranger*

(1961), while next door at No. 26 is April's house in *School for Scoundrels* (1960). Deacons Hill Road can be seen in *Magnificent Six and ½: Pee-wee's Piano* (1968) when a runaway pianola careers down a hill, while a block of flats at No.183 briefly appears in *The Lamp in Assassin's Mews* (1962).



**Return of a Stranger (1961)**

The roads around North Borehamwood date from the postwar housing boom, where thousands of homes were built over acres of former farmland. Leeming Road appears in a few films, including *Percy's Progress* (1974) where a TV reporter broadcasts outside the fictional Whitbread Institute. Whitehouse Avenue was used as the location of the Roper's house in *George and Mildred* (1980); and Beech Drive features in *The Battle of Billy Pond* (1976) when Billy and Gobby trail a suspect. Even minor roads have featured like Malden Road which appears in both *On the Buses* (1971) and *Mutiny on the Buses* (1972).

A number of locations around the area have been utilized in films, several appear in *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), the opening scene set at the Korova Milk Bar was filmed at the disused McKinney Foundation Factory (now a petrol station), the sequences set in Alex's family flat were shot at the newly built Canterbury House completed in 1968, where director Stanley Kubrick spent £5,000 on redecorating a flat for filming, temporarily moving the residents out. When further filming was required, he had to repeat this. During the sequence when Alex throws himself out

from a window, this was shot in Room 10 at the Edgwarebury Hotel. The grounds around the hotel have appeared in a sizeable number of films, usually portraying a manorial setting. Occasionally other parts have featured including the tennis courts in *School for Scoundrels* (1960), the dining room and stairwell in *Endless Night* (1972). Other manor houses have also appeared in films, such as Aldenham House (now Haberdashers' Boys School) where it utilized invariably as a military hospital in *Invasion Quartet* (1961) and a research base in *Quatermass 2* (1957). High Canons, a Georgian manor house dating to 1800 which was originally a monastery for Augustinian canons, has appeared in a number of films including *The Devil Rides Out* (1968), *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974) and *Half Moon Street* (1986). The estate was heavily utilized in *The Boys in Blue* (1982), the farmhouse represented the police station, while one of the cottages is Hilling's residence, and the mansion is where Mr. Lloyd lives. A similar technique was employed in *Digby, the Biggest Dog in the World* (1973), where the cottages and manor house were utilized.



**Intimate Games (1976)**

Near the outskirts of Elstree, Aldenham Overhaul Works features in the opening scene for *Summer Holiday* (1963), which was filmed during the annual Summer shutdown. The same year, Elstree Aerodrome makes several appearances in *Wings of Mystery* (1963) where it features as an airfield set in South Yorkshire. The nearby Battle Axes pub also features in the film when Jane and Don spot McCarthy's car outside a pub. This pub has also featured in several films. Other pubs that

have appeared include The Mop and Brooms in Diplomatic Passport (1954) when a policeman spots crooks heading towards the Belgian border, The Fishery briefly appears in Small Town Story (1953) while The Red Lion features in Confessions of a Pop Performer (1975) when a group of people gather by a van parked outside the pub. Another building on Elstree Way, the now demolished Studio 70 Cinema also appears in the same film, where it was used to represent a concert venue. The nearby Thatched Barn Hotel has made a few appearances including Hysteria (1964), Man at the Top (1973) and Intimate Games (1976). Another former building, Elstree Police Station briefly appears in Return of a Stranger (1961). While a branch of the Fine Fare Supermarket chain (now Savers) on Shenley Road also appears in a sequence where Pam encounters her stalker.

A number of locations around Shenley Road have been featured, including the Wimpy Bar in Bedazzled (1967) where Stanley Moon works. Whites Chemist briefly appears in The Best Pair of Legs in the Business (1973), and The Dutch Oven restaurant (now The Arch) was used a driving centre in Confessions of a Driving Instructor (1976). Going towards Station Road, the former Borehamwood Gasworks features in the opening scenes of Home and Away (1956) while Elstree & Borehamwood Station has appeared in various films; the former 1868 station building can be seen in School for Scoundrels (1960) and Return of a Stranger (1961), while the platforms appear in Girls Will Be Boys (1935) where it represents the fictional Kings Compton Station, and later in Portrait of Clare (1950) where Clare meets her fiancé's cousin. Overall, there is a wealth of movie locations around the area to seek out and find, from suburban streets to historic buildings, that help highlight the long-standing movie-making heritage of the wider area. - **MG**

## **MIKE'S NOTE**

Thank you for supporting the museum this year, we look forward to your continued support over the coming months ahead. Please note that deadlines for renewing annual subscriptions is the 31<sup>st</sup> August, after which those who have not renewed will no longer receive Newsletters or invites to Friends events.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Two evening events are currently planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of this year – dates TBC.**

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Trip Advisor: <https://goo.gl/RTbKQi>

Open: Tues, Wed & Thurs: 12pm – 6pm

Sat: 10am – 3pm

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