



History Nugget for June 2017 : Buck's Head Parade

The block of five shops, with flats above, north of the White Lion of Mortimer pub is believed to have been built in the first decade of the 20th century, and was originally called Buck's Head Parade. The original name of the pub was the Buck's Head.

Originally numbered sequentially from 1 to 5 going north, they are now odd numbers, going south, from 213 to 221 London Road. With that renumbering, the name "Buck's Head Parade" fell out of use.

It's not certain when this renumbering was done, but two clues point to sometime in the late 1920s and the start of the 1930s. The first of these clues is the 1925 street directory which still referred to the parade, showing George Shepherd junior, wheelwright, at number 1 and W.H. Jenner, cycle agent, at number 5. The second clue is an advertisement in 1932 which announced that "Dyne's of Clapham Junction" had acquired the business at 213 London Road from the late W.H. Jenner.

As stated in that advertisement, Dyne's was an official Rudge sales and service depot. They sold Rudge cycles from two shillings and threepence per week (around £7 in 2017 money). The shop also sold radios and gramophone records, and opened on Sundays. On the north wall of this block was an advertisement for Dyne's Raleigh moped and Raleigh, Rudge & Triumph cycles. At the bottom of this were the words 'MOPED SERVICE' which have been retained as a *ghost sign* and can be seen today, above the mural that was put up as part of Rediscover Mitcham, which has the words 'Lavender Parade'.

Mr Dyne died in 1966, and the shop later became a Chinese takeaway.

North of Buck's Head Parade is a block of shops, with flats above, called Abinger House. Built around 1939, it was set back from the London Road in anticipation of the widening of that road. An abandoned road widening project from 1937 would have included the demolition of Buck's Head Parade.

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage

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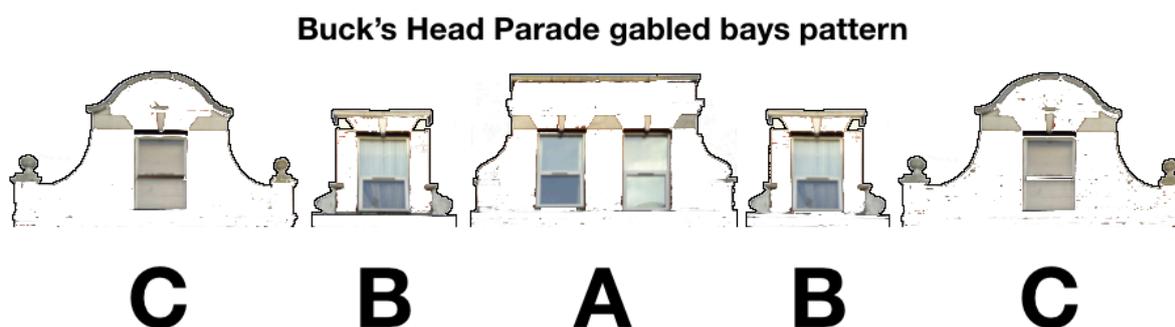
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In common with other late Victorian/Edwardian shopping parades, the architectural features at street level, between or above the shops, have been painted over, covered or removed by the various owners. The gabled bays at the roof line of Buck's Head Parade remain though.

Historic England have produced a document called *Shopping Parades: Introduction to Heritage Assets*. In it they describe the various patterns formed by these gabled bays. Some of these may be a repetition of the same bay, or alternating two or more different designs. The symmetry was preserved across the whole parade, even if it straddled streets. Sometimes with long parades, to break the monotony, a pattern was used of a central bay flanked by different designs.

Historic England suggested using letters of the alphabet to identify each gabled bay to describe the pattern. In the case of Buck's Head Parade, 'A' would be the central one, surrounded by two letter 'B's and further flanked by two letter 'C's. Which makes the pattern for this parade as CBABC, as shown below.



It may well be unusual to see a pattern like this used on such a short parade.

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