



History Nugget for July 2018 : Cranmer & Beehive Bridges

Cranmer Bridge

The bridge on Cranmer Road over the railway line is owned by Network Rail, which is part of the Department for Transport. There is a plaque on its north wall:



'BTH1' is the Engineer's Line Reference, which identifies the section of track, which is *South Bermondsey Junction to Sutton (East) Junction*, with the terminus being London Bridge station. The number 1219 identifies this bridge.

Underneath the *10m 01ch* is the distance to London Bridge station, which is 10 miles and 1 chain. One chain is 22 yards, which also happens to be the length, between the wickets, of a cricket pitch. In other words, Cranmer Bridge is 10 miles and one cricket pitch from London Bridge.

Mitcham Cricket Green Community & Heritage
General enquiries: info@mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk
Web site: www.mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk

Twitter: [@MitchamCrktGrn](https://twitter.com/MitchamCrktGrn)

Registered Office c/o MVSC, Vestry Hall, 336/338 London Road, Mitcham Surrey, CR4 3UD

Beehive Bridge

In July 1933 the newly formed Mitcham Borough council wanted to have the Beehive Bridge strengthened so that it could take bus traffic. Southern Railway however didn't consider it to be of the type that could be strengthened, and so the council decided to rebuild it.

After accepting a tender of £22,433 18s. 2d. from Ewing & Salmond Ltd., the Chief Engineer of the Southern Railway pointed out that they only allow works on bridges over their lines by approved contractors, and Messrs Ewing & Salmond weren't on that list. The tender was subsequently awarded to Howard Farrow Ltd., whose bid was £22,734 8s. 3d. Adjusted for inflation, this is around £1.5 million in 2018.

Reconstruction started in August 1939. The bridge was widened to a carriageway of 42 feet, and land was taken from Three Kings Piece on the western side of the railway, as well as from the Common on the east side. The Mitcham News & Mercury reported at the time that an equivalent strip of land was given to the Common to make up for the area lost, although it didn't say where from.

The number 118 bus route, which had started in 1936, ran from Clapham Common to the Horse & Groom pub, on the corner of Tamworth Lane and Manor Road. When the new Beehive Bridge opened in 1941, this route was extended from the Horse & Groom, along Commonsides East and into the Fair Green, then to the Cricket Green and onwards to Raynes Park.

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