

# Heritage Trail – Goring

a circular walk starting at the lock

1 – 4 Please see map.

**5 ROYAL MAIL SORTING OFFICE** Designed for Sam Saunders as a boat showroom in 1894. He went on to found the famous company Saunders Roe on the Isle of Wight in 1927 (see Blue Plaque).

**6 GRAHAMSFIELD** Belonged to Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough and later descended to the Spencer family of Althorp fame. At the turn of the 19th century, a London solicitor living here kept donkeys in front of the house. His son, Graham, used to ride the donkeys round the field, hence Grahamsfield.

**7 GORING VILLAGE HALL** Built in 1900 as the church parish room, by public subscription, for £700. When Henry Albert Lacey Smith died in 1925 he left money in his will to pay for a clock to be placed on the roof and you can see “1925” in gold over the clock face and his initials round the clock.

**8 RECTORY GARDEN** Site of the Old Rectory. After the building was severely damaged by fire, it was given to the village in 1938 by Lord Sandford in memory of his daughter, Peggy, who drowned in a boating accident in Poole in 1934.

9 Please see map.

**10 GORING FREE CHURCH** (Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion Chapel) The High Street building, next to the one on the corner, was opened in 1793 and is one of last surviving Evangelical Revival chapels of the 200 or so founded by the Countess. In 1893 a new larger chapel was built on the corner to mark their centenary and the original building became a meeting room and hall.

**11 ROW OF FLINT COTTAGES** This row of six cottages was built in the early 1800s as homes for agricultural workers who worked for Goring Old Farm in Station Road. The cottage on the far end (Mary S) was for many years Fullbrook's Dairy.

12 Please see map.

**13 McCOLLS** In about 1875, this premises was built as a grocery shop for Alfred Cocks, who belonged to a family of grocers from Reading; it has remained a grocers for about 140 years.

**14 VIRGO BEAUTY** This old timber-framed house and shop was probably built as a farmhouse in the 17th century. A brick facade was added in 1806. In 1893, William Henry Napper, then aged 12, started work here for his uncle Thomas Hewett, a pork butcher, and later took over the business. It was 'Nappers' until 2014.

**15 THAMES COURT** Goring Brewery was established here some time before 1838. On May Days, after the First World War until the early 1930s, Mrs Ann Gundry (the Goring Brewery owner) gave school children a new penny from a big wooden bowl placed on one of the gateposts. This new penny custom continued until Mrs Gundry's death in 1933.

**16 BREWERY COTTAGES** At the end of the 19th century, the property on the corner (No. 3) housed Mr Dafter's harness and rope making business. By the middle of the 20th century, another Mr Dafter (probably his son) repaired boots and shoes here and later the building became a newsagents, before finally being returned to residential use.

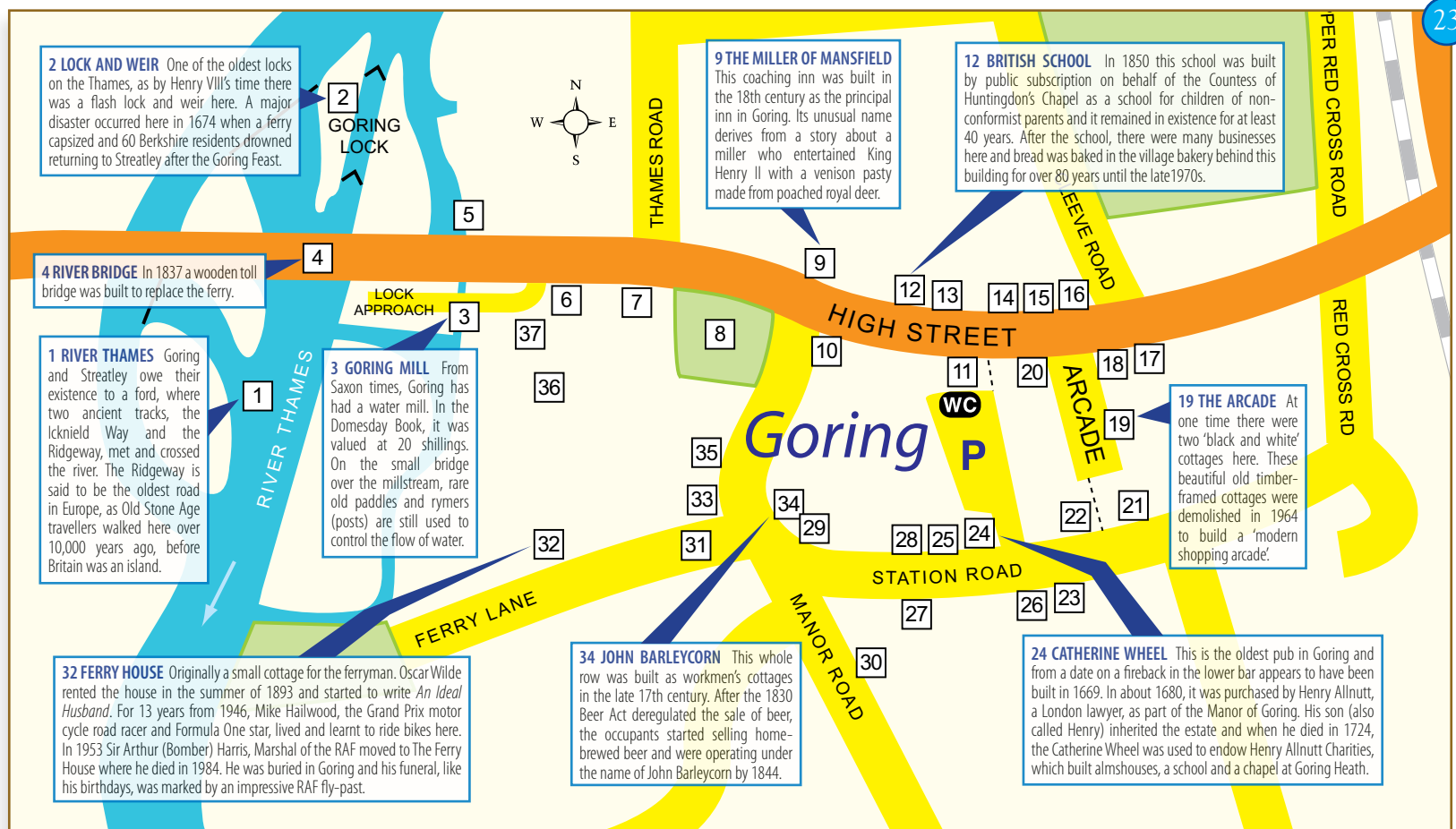
**17 MASOOM'S** Just before WWI, the house called The Laurels was extended at the front to include two shops. The building on the left originally housed Albert Savage's Boot & Shoe Shop. It then was a gardening shop before becoming a Thai restaurant and then Masoom's.

**18 PHARMACY** In 1914, the building on the right was Moseley & King's chemist's shop. There has been a pharmacy here for 100 years.

19 Please see map.

**20 TSB** Originally, a lean-to mortuary was here and coffins were frequently seen being delivered along the pathway from Station Road where the undertakers were.

Please walk through the Arcade to the Information Office. (21).



**2 LOCK AND WEIR** One of the oldest locks on the Thames, as by Henry VIII's time there was a flash lock and weir here. A major disaster occurred here in 1674 when a ferry capsized and 60 Berkshire residents drowned returning to Streatley after the Goring Feast.

**3 GORING MILL** From Saxon times, Goring has had a water mill. In the Domesday Book, it was valued at 20 shillings. On the small bridge over the millstream, rare old paddles and rymers (posts) are still used to control the flow of water.

**32 FERRY HOUSE** Originally a small cottage for the ferryman. Oscar Wilde rented the house in the summer of 1893 and started to write *An Ideal Husband*. For 13 years from 1946, Mike Hailwood, the Grand Prix motor cycle road racer and Formula One star, lived and learnt to ride bikes here. In 1953 Sir Arthur (Bomber) Harris, Marshal of the RAF moved to The Ferry House where he died in 1984. He was buried in Goring and his funeral, like his birthdays, was marked by an impressive RAF fly-past.

**34 JOHN BARLEYCORN** This whole row was built as workmen's cottages in the late 17th century. After the 1830 Beer Act deregulated the sale of beer, the occupants started selling home-brewed beer and were operating under the name of John Barleycorn by 1844.

**9 THE MILLER OF MANSFIELD** This coaching inn was built in the 18th century as the principal inn in Goring. Its unusual name derives from a story about a miller who entertained King Henry II with a venison pasty made from poached royal deer.

**12 BRITISH SCHOOL** In 1850 this school was built by public subscription on behalf of the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel as a school for children of non-conformist parents and it remained in existence for at least 40 years. After the school, there were many businesses here and bread was baked in the village bakery behind this building for over 80 years until the late 1970s.

**19 THE ARCADE** At one time there were two 'black and white' cottages here. These beautiful old timber-framed cottages were demolished in 1964 to build a 'modern shopping arcade'.

**24 CATHERINE WHEEL** This is the oldest pub in Goring and from a date on a fireback in the lower bar appears to have been built in 1669. In about 1680, it was purchased by Henry Allnutt, a London lawyer, as part of the Manor of Goring. His son (also called Henry) inherited the estate and when he died in 1724, the Catherine Wheel was used to endow Henry Allnutt Charities, which built almshouses, a school and a chapel at Goring Heath.

**21 INFORMATION OFFICE** Originally The National School and now the Community Centre and Visitor Information Office. This was built in 1855 on land given by Squire Gardiner and paid for by voluntary contributions from the church congregation so that the children of the poor could be given a Church of England education. In 1960, the new Goring Primary School was built in Wallingford Road.

**22 THATCH COTTAGE** This modernised timber-framed 17th century cottage was once the home of Miss Rose Beckenham. She had a shop in her front room and sold sweets to the school children from the lower window on the left. It was the last thatched house in Goring (except for the old boathouse) until the thatch was replaced in 1966.

**23 ELM COTTAGE** Built as a two-up and two-down thatched cottage in the 1600s. From the early 1800s until 1953, Elm Cottage was the home of the Swain family who were originally boot and shoemakers. The shop front dates back to Victorian times.

24 Please see map.

**25 EXTENSION TO THE CATHERINE WHEEL** Originally this was the village smithy and wheelwright. Although it may seem unusual today to have a smithy and pub together, it was common in the old days for thirsty customers to have a drink and a chat as they waited to have their horses shod or cart wheels mended.

**26 LIBRARY** (Temperance Hall) Built in 1878 (opposite the pub) as a part of the national temperance movement. Run by the Swain family of Elm Cottage, until Miss Swain's death in 1953, it was used for regular meetings, concerts and parties

for non-drinkers. In 1944 it was the school canteen and later provided overflow accommodation for the school before finally becoming our library in 1961.

**27 ARTIST'S HOUSE** The first occupants of this house (built in 1850) were Jane Burgess and her family who set up a boarding house here, giving it the name 'The Artist's House' to attract the many artists who came to paint and draw in the Goring Gap. At the end of the Second World War, it was the home of Admiral Sir Henry Harwood and his family. He was the hero of the Battle of the River Plate, when following a ferocious sea battle, the German pocket battleship Graf Spee was scuttled.

**28 HAZEL COTTAGE** Originally two-up and two-down, this is one of the oldest houses in Goring and may have been built at the same time as the Catherine Wheel. From the 1880s until the late 1960s, two unmarried sisters, Edith and Evelyn Beckenham, lived here for their entire lives.

**29 THE BEEHIVE** In the first half of the 1800s, these premises were a fruiterers and grocery shop run by the Hill family and called The Beehive Stores. After a very old Mrs Hill died, a much smarter grocery shop was run from here by Mr Rollings and his sister. It still traded under the name A.L. Rollings until the 1970s.

**30 MANOR ROAD** So named as it led to the Manor of Gatehampton. Most of the houses in Manor Road were built as a result of the Victorian and Edwardian expansion of Goring following the opening of the railway in 1840.

**31 FERRY LANE WITH STATION ROAD** Before the river bridge in 1837, this was the main road through the village. What is now the High Street was just a chalk

track to the mill. At this time, Station Road and Ferry Lane was simply called The Street, as it was the only road in the village for many centuries.

32 Please see map.

**33 NORFOLK HOUSE** Built at the beginning of the 20th century to house a butcher's shop. You can see the iron bars in the shop and above the front that were used to hang game and there was a slaughterhouse at the back.

34 Please see map.

**35 THE OLD VICARAGE** Many years ago, Goring had both a vicarage and a rectory. As a result of the dissolution of the monasteries, the parish was served by a 'Perpetual Curate' (not a vicar) who lived here. He was appointed and paid by the Rector who collected the tithes of the parish. The Old Vicarage was sold in 1984 and a new one built in the grounds (on the left) in 1985.

**36 CHURCH OF ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY** Built about 1100 for Lord Robert D'Oilly, who was created Constable of Oxford and Wallingford Castles by William the Conqueror. He crossed the Channel with William and was given most of Oxfordshire as his reward. From 1130 until the Dissolution in 1536, there was also an Augustinian nunnery on this site, with at one time, 36 nuns serving here. It contains one of the oldest bells (1290) in England.

**37 MILL COTTAGE** This building is featured in Turner's incomplete picture of Goring Mill and Church (in the Tate Gallery), painted in oil on canvas in about 1806.