

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group NEWSLETTER

Volume 12 – March 2025 Editor: Sue Tatham

The Chairman, Ben Tatham writes ...

The group has had another successful year. The talk at the AGM in February 'The lives and legacy of the wartime Canadians in Surrey', given by Lorraine Spindler, created much interest and sparked a lot of stories from the audience which added to Lorraine's information. In April we had an interesting visit to the Jacobean Slyfield House near the Menuhin Hall – this was a private tour strictly limited in numbers.

In June we had a wander round Centenary Wood, near Langley Vale. The Woodland Trust purchased the site in 2014 as the First World War Centenary wood for England. We just covered a small part of its 641 acres. Afterwards we had lunch at The Cock Inn in Headley.

In September Judith Long and I gave a guided tour of Mickleham to a small group from Bookham. We finished up at the church where Sue gave them as short tour. Two members of the group had attended Mickleham School and found the tour evoked any memories. This was followed a few days later by Bookham WI giving some of us a guided tour of Bookham Street ending up with a visit to a privately owned tithe barn which is used for various events.

In the autumn I had an email from BBC Radio Surrey requesting us to show them Westhumble Cave. They came on 13th November and were shown the area around the cave by Anne Weaver and Paul Beck. The result is on the BBC Radio Surrey website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p0hy6kcq

The theme of this year's Heritage Open Days was Connections, Routes & Networks and our group mounted a display entitled 'The A24: 'Mickleham's Old London Road and the Mickleham ByPass' in Mickleham Church. Judith Long prepared a selection of maps, articles and pictures from our archives and Sue Tatham produced a digital presentation on the same theme.

On 24th November Sue gave another of her tours of the church which as usual sparked much interest and many questions.

In my report last year, I paid tribute to our much-missed founder librarian Judy Kinloch who died in November. We are joining with the Horticultural Society to plant a row of trees in Norbury Park near Lodge Farm in memory of Judy but are still awaiting the go ahead from Surrey County Council.

Fuller accounts of our various activities as reported in the Mickleham Parish Magazine have been included in the newsletter and well as other items of interest.

Task Group Report: The Churchyard



One of our original tasks when the group was founded in 2012 was to make a record of the graves in the churchyard. Past records were incomplete and it was often impossible to answer queries about the location of specific graves. Countless hours have been spent by Judy Kinloch, Judith Long and their many helpers compiling a huge database which is nearing completion.

However, the whole project is now on hold until the Church Establishment makes a decision about whether the publication of burial records complies with data protection legislation.

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The Group's website

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Manager: Roger Davis

PROGRAMME 2025

Tuesday 18th February AGM followed by talk on The History of

Newlands Corner by Trevor Brook

Thursday 29th May Gatton Park Tour

Monday 29th September Tour Behind the Scenes at Polesden Lacey'



Burford Bridge Hotel circa 1917

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group

OVER HERE: The lives and legacy of the wartime Canadians in Surrey

ollowing the AGM, we were delighted to welcome back local historian Lorraine Spindler to talk about the Canadian troops in our area during WW2. Canada declared war on Germany on 10th September 1939, with the declaration signed by the Governor General of Canada, Lord Tweedsmuir (better known here as John Buchan, author of The Thirty-Nine Steps). In peacetime the regular army only had 4,500 men and almost no modern equipment. However, 50,000 Canadians immediately enlisted and in December, three Canadian Infantry Brigades embarked for the UK arriving at Greenock before moving south to Aldershot. Over the course of the war, 330,000 Canadians passed through Aldershot Camp and 23,000 came to Surrey. Many of them formed lasting relationships with English women and, as a result, at least 40,000 war brides and wives, plus 20,000 children, went to live in Canada. Surrey had the largest number of any county.



More than half of the Canadians arriving were raw recruits who expected they would soon be crossing the Channel to fight the enemy. Instead, they spent their time doing training exercises in preparation for the defence of the UK or, in the case of those at Witley Camp in Surrey, playing war games with the Home Guard. Boredom quickly set in, and some soldiers found themselves in front of the local magistrates, often for exploits involving alcohol, although one Canadian soldier was given a ninemonth prison sentence for obtaining money by forgery. He had opened a bank account at Leatherhead Post Office and, by methods that were not revealed to the public, committed 45 offences at various post offices to obtain £117.

In 1940 when the threat of German invasion was at its highest, a Home Defence Programme was established. As part of this, a line of concrete pillboxes was constructed across Surrey, many of them built by the Canadians. Six of these can still be seen on the Netley Park Estate, now owned by the National Trust. The house on the estate was occupied by the soldiers.



Headley Court

With the number of Canadian troops increasing, a new Canadian Corps was formed at the end of 1940, with headquarters at Headley Court. Canadian women arrived to take over the office work previously performed by men. Like many other properties requisitioned during the war, Headley Court was not treated well. One eyewitness recalled the Canadians driving their trucks through the yew hedges. Gates were often left open, and animals wandered through at will. Nearby, High Ashurst suffered a worse fate. Once home to the Earl and Countess of Harrowby and later a girls' boarding school, it was requisitioned by the Royal Canadian Engineers and left in such a poor state that Surrey County Council had it demolished in 1949. The Canadians were oblivious to the fact that Bellasis House, just a few hundred metres from High Ashurst, was being used as an Special Operations Executive training centre (spy school). The Engineers used Headley Heath to practise building trenches, roads and even a runway to ensure they would be fully trained by the D-Day landings. They also dumped rubble from the bomb damage in London on the Heath. Closer to Mickleham the Canadians built Young Street, named after their Commanding

As the war progressed, thousands of Canadian troops became medically or

psychologically unfit to serve. In 1941 Tweedsmuir Camp in Thursley was set up in order to repatriate them. It was officially referred to as 'Non-Effective Transit Depot' or NETD. Unsurprisingly, soldiers sent there preferred their own names for it, such as 'Not Enough to Drink', 'No Empties To-Day' and 'Non-Efficient Tourist Depot'. Soldiers who died while on active service in the UK were buried in Brookwood Cemetery.

At the end of the war on VJ Day, an unusual concert took place in Leatherhead, given by the Halifax Herald Concert Party from Nova Scotia. The group normally only entertained Canadian troops but Leatherhead 'held a special place in the hearts of the Canadian forces because of its marked hospitality to Canadian troops'. As a result, they performed for the residents of the town. At least 1,300 people came to see them.



High Ashurst

Lorraine then reminded us about the discovery of the Covenanter tank unearthed at Denbies in 2017 which was used for training purposes by the Canadian army. By 1943 it was too poorly armoured to face the German tanks and subsequently scrapped. Although built in large numbers, the Covenanters were underpowered, the engine did not fit completely inside the tank and the transmission overheated.

After Lorraine's talk several members of the audience shared additional information, including Mick Hallett who remembered cycling to Mickleham as a young boy to see the tanks and military vehicles assembled on the Mickleham bypass in preparation for D-Day. If anyone else has information about the Canadians in Mickleham and Westhumble, please get in touch: judith.long2@btinternet.com

Judith Long

ome historic accounts say that Daniel DeFoe lived for a time at Burford Corner, Westhumble, but there is no documentary evidence to show when or, if ever, he did so. However, DeFoe was an enigmatic figure and even in his day there were inconsistencies in his accounts and dealings. He was a prolific and versatile writer, producing more than three hundred works including books, pamphlets, and journals on diverse topics, including politics, crime, religion, marriage, psychology and the supernatural. He was also a pioneer of business journalism and economic journalism.

He wrote many political tracts, was often in trouble with the authorities, was often in debt and spent a period in prison. He acted as a secret agent for the Tories and later for the Whigs. He claimed that the end justified the means and always professed to be a champion of moderation. Intellectuals and political leaders paid attention to his fresh ideas and sometimes consulted him.

What we do know is that he was born Daniel Foe (the 'De' was added later to sound more aristocratic), son of a prosperous London tallow chandler. Both the Great Plague of London and the Great Fire occurred during his childhood. His parents were dissenters and Daniel was educated at the boarding school of a dissenting minister, the Rev. James Fisher in Pixham Lane, Dorking. The choice of this school may be related to his mother's connection to the Marsh family who owned land between Pixham Lane and the River Mole. Evidence of his connection to Dorking can be found in his A Tour of London and Wales published in 1724, where he appears very knowledgeable

Mickleham's Creative People

Third in a series of occasional articles about the creative people connected to Mickleham included in Sue Tatham's Heritage Open Day talk last September

Daniel DeFoe 1660 – 1731

about the topography of the River Mole. It stands to reason that Pixham schoolboys would have spent much of their leisure time around the river.

In the book he refutes the claim in Camden's *Britannica* 1695 that the River Mole is sometimes 'swallowed up only to bubble up and rise again two miles farther on'. He mentions the Burford Bridge which at that time was only a footbridge, the river crossing was a ford. 'I have known it so deep the wagons and carriages have not dared to go through, but not even dry in time of greatest drought.'

He also mentions the stomacher at the precipice of Box Hill, now 'The Whites', and describes building a fish trap in Burford Meadow during the flood of 1676, and recounts:

Box Hill 'a place of resort for the gentry taking the waters at Epsom'. They came on horseback or coach on Sunday afternoons to 'divert or debauch'.

On the top was a great Beech tree and under it a cave which was fitted out by a Dorking vintner (landlord of the Kings Arms) as a place of refreshment. The place became like a little fair - it was 'very offensive, especially to the best governed people'. It continued for two or three years. Complaints 'alledging

the revelling and indecent mirth, and on the Sabbath failed to secure redress'. A certain 'set of young men' from Darking blew the whole place up with gunpowder one Saturday night.'

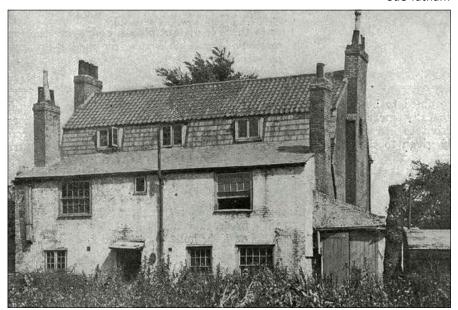
It is likely that the 'best governed people' were the Dorking Dissenters and DeFoe was a member of the 'set of young men' because at the time the whole affair was highly secret.

When his political life began to fade DeFoe, then aged 59, launched a new career as a novelist, publishing *Robinson Crusoe* in 1721, followed by *Moll Flanders* in 1722. The latter was published as an autobiography based on the life of Moll King whom he met while visiting Newgate Prison and only attributed to DeFoe after his death.

Poverty was the theme of many of DeFoe's books. Despite his success as a novelist his last years were plagued by legal controversies and long-standing debts. Accounts say he died in hiding from his creditors.

Did he ever live at Burford Corner? He was familiar with the area having spent his school days nearby, and the cottage at Burford Corner dates from that period. Was it remote enough at that time to provide a safe hiding place? We shall never know.

Sue Tatham



View of Burford Corner showing the original circa 18th century timber-framed cottage at the back. Date unknown.

Task Group Report: Oral Histories

In 2024, we resumed our Oral History Project, focusing on Mickleham School (St. Michael's Infant School). We were fortunate to conduct two interviews. The first was with a former Headteacher, Jenny Hudlass.

Jenny recounted her arrival at the school in 1984, initially as a class teacher, followed by a rapid promotion to Headteacher the following year. Her tenure was marked by significant modernisation efforts, including an energy conservation project and close collaborations with the National Trust and Juniper Hall Field Studies Centre. A notable achievement was securing a minibus through a Surrey County Council competition.

More challenging aspects included the introduction of Local Management of Schools and the looming threat of closure, which was ultimately averted

through the collective efforts of staff and parents.

As we reminisced

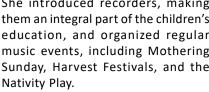
about the past, Jenny shared details of the school's expansion through construction projects, the establishment of St Michael's Community Nursery, and the formation of a consortium with other small local schools.

Our second interviewee, Tracy Kennington, spoke about her dual role as a music teacher and a parent of two daughters at the school. She emphasized the importance of maintaining a clear distinction between her professional and personal responsibilities.

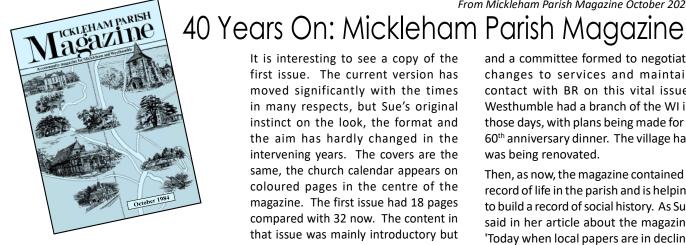
Tracy expressed her consistent support from Jenny and dedicated herself to integrating music into the school's curriculum, encompassing both singing and listening activities.

She introduced recorders, making them an integral part of the children's education, and organized regular music events, including Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festivals, and the

Upon the completion of our School project, the oral histories will be archived at the Surrey History Centre for future generations to access and appreciate. We extend our sincere gratitude to all the local individuals who generously donated their time to participate in our interviews, which now total 26. We continue to seek out local individuals who wish to share their stories and contribute to our oral history collection. Roger Davis



From Mickleham Parish Magazine October 2024



In October 1984 a new-look parish I magazine dropped through letterboxes in Mickleham and Westhumble. Before that, communication from the church to residents consisted of a single sheet of paper giving minimal information about church personnel and services.

Sue Tatham, already a resident of several years, thought there was room for improvement. You can find out all about how she set about the task: the history was covered fully in articles in October 2022 and March 2023 when Sue took retirement* as editor. If you have sent your copies to be recycled you can find them online on the websites for St Michael's Church or the Parish Council.

It is interesting to see a copy of the first issue. The current version has moved significantly with the times in many respects, but Sue's original instinct on the look, the format and the aim has hardly changed in the intervening years. The covers are the same, the church calendar appears on coloured pages in the centre of the magazine. The first issue had 18 pages compared with 32 now. The content in that issue was mainly introductory but there were interesting snippets. New arrivals in the village included: Pauline and Roger Davis with two babies; and Susan and Jeremy Lassen also with two babies. A bridge supper was advertised and a Halloween Disco organised by Mickleham Badminton Club. Commercial advertisers Sherlocks, funeral directors, and the Stepping Stones public house were in the first issue and are still with us in the forty-first. Volunteers were called upon to help build the bonfire for Bonfire Night and entry to the field was set at £1 per head.

The longest article in the first issue is about problems with the rail service: a petition had been sent to British Rail and a committee formed to negotiate changes to services and maintain contact with BR on this vital issue. Westhumble had a branch of the WI in those days, with plans being made for a 60th anniversary dinner. The village hall was being renovated.

Then, as now, the magazine contained a record of life in the parish and is helping to build a record of social history. As Sue said in her article about the magazine 'Today when local papers are in decline and most communication is digital and transient, much of today's social history will be lost unless publications like ours continue.'

The co-editors have received a couple of requests for advice on how the magazine is produced, with a view that the questioners might do the same in their community. Neither has taken up our offer of further information having received an outline of the work involved.

*Sue continues to contribute enormously to the magazine. She does not seem to understand the concept of retirement. Her input of help and advice continues to be most welcome to the co-editors.

Task Group Report: The Village Archives

n 2024, eBay again proved a reliable source of new material for the Archives. Mark Day acquired a postcard of the Old Forge Café on the Mickleham Bypass which neither of us had seen before. He also found an undated photo of a couple posing with their dogs next to a signpost pointing to 'Longbury Wood and Mickleham'. Longbury Wood is in Norbury Park, not far from where the Weir Bridge crosses the River Mole.



Dogwalkers in Norbury Park

At the end of June, a remarkable collection of about 60 letters sent to and from various members of the Evans family of Dalewood House (now Box Hill School) appeared on eBay. They were found in the loft of an old house with no apparent connection to the family and were destined for the bin before someone, thankfully, rescued them. There were many letters of condolence following the death of David Evans, the head of the family, in 1901. Some related to the death of his son Gerald, a student at Oxford University, after a minor scratch on the lip during a game of football quickly led to blood poisoning.

We bought seven of the letters for our Archive collection, several of them written by Marion Tomkin (née Evans) to her older sister Lucie Gwendoline, who later married Charles Widenham Fosbery. There was clearly a strong bond between the two sisters and Marion chats happily to Lucie about christening arrangements, presents for



Old Forge Café



Tomkin – Evans wedding 1897

her parents and other aspects of her daily life. One letter has a drawing of a cat, an attempt by Marion to distract her young daughter Dulcie who was scribbling all over the letter.

Tragically, Marion died in 1902 soon after the birth of her third child. Marion signs her letters 'Betty' or 'Molly' which appears to be how she was known by her family. There is a photograph on Ancestry of Marion's wedding in Mickleham to Lieutenant James Royce Tomkin of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Lucie Evans, one of the bridesmaids, is seated next to the bride and looks rather nervous. The family resemblance between the sisters is striking. According to the

Surrey Advertiser, the bridesmaids' dresses were of eau de nil silk, trimmed with lace and fur. Their hats were made from mauve miroir velvet. If only the photograph were in colour! We also received a diverse set of requests for information about people and places connected with our area. We helped the new owners of Ilex Trees on the A24 discover more about the history of their house and provided information about Juniper Hall to someone whose mother was a parlourmaid there in the 1930s. A former pupil at Box Hill School wanted to find out about the two sisters who ran St Nicolas School at Dalewood House before Box Hill School opened



SCHOOLS—ENGLAND
S. NICOLAS SCHOOL

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St Nichloas School prospectus

there. These were Lucy and Edith Garrard, born in Tasmania. Lucy ran St Nicolas School in Epsom from the late 1930s before moving the school to Mickleham in 1949. Edith was a missionary in Africa in the early 1950s until she joined her sister in Mickleham. In 1959, the school moved again, this time to Holmwood. Lucy died in 1971 and is buried in St Michael's churchyard in Mickleham.

In 2022 we were contacted via our website by Gary Anstis whose great-great-grandparents Thomas and Maria Ball lived at Timberden in Westhumble, now Camilla Lacey Lodge. Gary and his wife live in Australia and their plans to visit England had been put on hold due to Covid. In June, they were thrilled to come to Westhumble where Ben and Sue Tatham and I met them at St Anthony. Judith Long



Chapel of Ease Westhumble and Mrs Ball's cottage

We are always keen to acquire documents and photographs for our archives.

Please let us know if you have any items of local interest
that we could scan/copy for our collection.

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group

Lest We Forget

I hen I was preparing for the local history group's recent exhibition about the A24 for Heritage Open Day I came upon many photographs of Pressforward Lodge. This impressive edifice stood on the right side of London Road south of the Givons Grove roundabout, very nearly opposite the turning into Givons Grove. It marked the entrance into Norbury Park. When the Mickleham Bypass was built in 1936, the route of the new northbound carriageway isolated the lodge from the road into the park so it was demolished. The present day Pressforward Cottages were built further along the park road to replace two cottages which were also in the path of the new carriageway, but the lodge remained a casualty of the construction.

I first became aware of Pressforward Lodge in 2016 when we were researching the men whose names were on the Mickleham War Memorial. One of them, Edward Clarke had lived there with his parents and two sisters. His father, Henry, was a farrier but in the 1911 census he was listed as a nightwatchman, living at Pressforward Lodge. Edward (I shall call him 'Teddy' as that is how he signed his photograph) worked as a groom and gardener, presumably at Norbury Park as well.

In October 1916 Teddy enlisted and



Private Edward Henry Clarke



Entrance to Norbury Park Engraving from Brayerley's History of Surrey c1848



The Clarke family

joined 2/6th (Cyclist) Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment and was later transferred to the 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment. He had been courting a Dorking girl for many years and when they found out that he was to be posted to France he and Lilian were married in St Martin's Church on 30th September

On 23rd October, Teddy's battalion crossed into Belgium and on 26th October, went into the trenches east of Ypres. The battalion remained in the

trenches for three days and was shelled repeatedly. It was during this period, on 28th October, that Teddy was killed, aged 29, just 28 days after he and Lilian were married. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial which bears the names of those who went missing in the Ypres Salient after 16th August 1917. Teddy's name is also on the Dorking War Memorial.

We are grateful to Dorking Museum for their assistance in gathering this information.



PRESSFORWARD was the motto of the Grissell family who lived at Norbury Park from 1850 to 1890. Thomas Grissell (1801-1874) made his fortune as a public works contractor. He was responsible for constructing a number of prestigious buildings in England, including Nelson's Column, Clerkenwell Prison, the Lyceum and St James' theatres, and part of the Houses of Parliament. His firm was also engaged in railway building, including parts of the Great Western Railway and the South Eastern Railway.

Norbury Park was the childhood home of two of Thomas Grissell's great-grandsons, Bernard and Francis who are also named on our war memorial. Bernard was a career soldier, having been commissioned into the Norfolk Regiment in 1899. He served throughout the South African War (1899-1902). He then served in India (1903-1911)

and acted as Adjutant General to His Imperial Majesty The King/Emperor during Delhi Durbar in 1911.

In April 1917 Bernard commanding a Territorial Battalion of his regiment was killed, aged 37, during the second battle of Gaza. He was awarded a posthumous Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and is remembered with honour in Gaza War Cemetery. Bernard left a wife and four daughters.

Bernard's younger brother, Francis was an architect and unmarried. After qualifying in 1913, he left England for a three-year engagement in Hong Kong but returned in 1915 and enlisted in the Coldstream Guards. In September 1916 his battalion was part of the offensive which became known as the Battle of Flers-Courcelette. It was the first time that tanks were used in large numbers in battle, heralding a new era in warfare. The battalion suffered heavy losses and Francis was killed, aged 30, by a German hand-grenade after reaching the second objective in the Guards' advance. The war diary reports that on 15th September 'the Battalion went into attack with 17 officers and 690 other ranks and came out with 3 officers and 221 other ranks'.

Francis Grissell is commemorated on the Thiepval Memorial which bears the names of more than 72,000 officers and men who died in the Somme sector before 20th March 1918 and have no known grave. Over 90% of those commemorated died between July and November 1916.



Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Salwey Grissell DSO



Lieutenant Francis Grissell
We will remember them.
Sue Tatham

From Mickleham Parish Magazine July-August 2024

Memorial for Judy Kinloch

Following the death last year of Judy Kinloch the parish council discussed how to remember her hard work and support as she had been an active member of the MPC until her retirement in summer 2018. The councillors agreed that a living item would be more appropriate given her involvement with the Horticultural Society. A tree was planted in the churchyard in early the spring this year and on Friday 31st May there was a small ceremony to place a plaque by the



tree, both donated by Mickleham Parish Council. The event was attended by the Kinloch family and parish councillors.

Editor's note: Together with the Horticultural Society, we are hoping to plant a row of trees in Norbury Park near Lodge Farm in memory of Judy. These will replace ones that were blown down in the 1987 storm. Judy deeply regretted their loss.



Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group

Social History of Mickleham Village Hall over the Decades

Angela Ireland has researched and written a comprehensive social history of Mickleham Village Hall. In March 2022 we included the section 1901 to the 1920s, ending with the words 'to be continued'. Since then we have not managed to find space to continue, but at last here is the next section.

By 1930 donations were requested for new village hall heating: more jumble sales! Happily in April of that year new heating was installed thanks to generous donations from Mr Cullen of Mickleham Downs House and Mr Whiteley of Glenrose. The cost was given as £169 5s 6d. Over the years the names of various residents who have contributed enormously to our village appear, including that of Captain Widenham Fosbery who was appointed a trustee in 1925, following the death of Mr Grissell, and who continued until his death in 1937. He had been nominated by his wife (the daughter of David Evans) who was one of the original trustees. Another very active member of the community, Mr Gordon Pollock, served as treasurer until his death in 1929 and was succeeded by Captain Widenham Fosbery, his position as trustee being filled by Mr G H Lloyd Jacob. Mrs Helen Gordon Clark resigned as trustee in 1929, as she was no longer resident in the village. Mr and Mrs Pack, the sexton and pew opener from the church acted as caretakers until they resigned in July 1923 after more than three decades.

By 1926 the early form of 'Health and Safety' had reared its ugly head and dramatic productions were forbidden in the hall due to new fire regulations - leading to more jumble sales! Magic Lantern lectures continued into the 1930s and dances are mentioned. Once again in 1933 donations are requested in order to complete works on the hall, needed to obtain a licence from Surrey County Council (SCC). In March 1933 there is a plea from the Rector for £40 needed to fund the renovations necessary to obtain a licence. As a precursor to our current Village Hall Committee the various clubs which used the hall were considering supporting the appeal and the first 10 shillings donation was received from a 'working man'. In April of that year the decision was taken to appoint a committee Part 2 1930s to 1960

representing all the organisations using the hall which would be responsible for the running expenses. A certain Claud Weston had drawn up professional plans for the renovations needed but had refused payment. In May a new system of charges for use of the hall was introduced but more money was still needed so discussions were held as to a new charging structure. A flat fee was suggested but was decreed to be too expensive for some organisations and would not in any event raise enough money. The decision was taken to continue with a system based on an estimate of costs and aiming to 'place the burden on the shoulders which can best bear them'. The new committee was formed, creating the system which endured until 2012 of a management committee in addition to the four trustees, although at that time the rector was also an additional trustee. (Originally the hall trustees held the title deeds to the property, but in 2012 these were transferred to the Charity Commission which became the hall's Custodial Trustees. The rules were changed so that all members of the management became the hall's Managing Trustees.)

To what must have been the great relief of all, the alterations were completed by September 1933 and the licence granted. However, their troubles were not yet over. In October faults were found with the electrical wiring and more work was needed. £70 - £80 was needed for the repairs required in order to gain approval by SCC and it was not felt appropriate to ask the village for contributions once more, so an appeal was made to wealthy donors. Fortunately they 'came up trumps' as they still do from time to time and Mr Leonard Cunliffe gave £25 while an anonymous donor gave £70.

By 1934 all should have been plain sailing but hall users were still complaining that charges were too high. A meeting was called in order to explain the liabilities to representatives of all the societies using the hall so that charges could be fixed to the satisfaction of all concerned. It is not known whether this led to a reduction in complaints or, if so, for how long! However in 1935 it is reported that the first year of the new committee has been successful and there was a small balance in hand.

Members of the committee were Miss Lawrence of Burford Lodge, Mr Piper, Headmaster of the school and Mr Housden, Mr Batchelor and Mr Abbott, from the village. The Silver Jubilee of the reign of George V provided an opportunity to set up an endowment fund in commemoration of the event. In July £50 was duly invested in the fund in the hope of reducing hire costs. In 1936 it was reported that the committee had had a successful year but some users still complained about the hire charges – seemingly an intractable problem.

However, to add to their responsibilities the Village Hall Committee had briefly taken over the running of the Children's Recreation Ground in 1934. Apparently the Village Hall Committee felt it necessary to ask the residents of Dell Close Cottages not to enter or leave their properties via the Recreation Ground. It is not immediately obvious why this was felt to be necessary or how long the 'ban' lasted.

Information is scarce during the war years but we do know that dark brown wooden shutters were installed by Mr Batchelor in 1940 as a black out. These remained until the hall was redecorated in 1970. There is mention of pupils from three schools in outer London having been evacuated to Mickleham and taught in the hall during WW2. These pupils were addressed by RB Bennett, ex-Prime Minister of Canada in 1940. Immediately after the war in 1947 SCC built a new kitchen on the side and hired the hall for school lunches. This continued until the end of 1981, at which time a shortfall in income was created. At that time they identified the need for the pit at the back of the hall to be filled in as the rubbish such as fridges, washing machines, vans etc provided a health hazard so near to the kitchen area. Rather surprisingly this does not appear to have been done until 1976.

During the 1950s the Mickleham and Westhumble Arts Theatre Club, chaired by the Rector's wife, Margaret Cornell was a frequent user of the hall and staged many productions which must have been enjoyed by all residents. The hire charge for the club was the subject of many a committee meeting and was fixed at £25 p.a. in 1959.

To be continued

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group Westhumble Land Development

While looking through an old Box Hill scrapbook I came across the following 1934 letter to the newspaper bemoaning the decision by a Government department to permit the building of houses in the grounds of the Camilla Lacey Estate in Westhumble.

Tuesday, December 18, 1934

RAID ON BOX HILL

That famous historian, Professor G.M.TREVELYAN, has lately said that the traditional attitude of Governments to the English countryside is witless and heartless; and so, he might have added, is the attitude of Government departments. In the unruly building development permitted since the War, there have been many superb examples of want of intelligence and stony indifference; and the Ministry of Health in sanctioning bungalows at the foot of Box Hill now afford one more. The Surrey County Council, the Dorking Urban Council, the National Trust, the Dorking and Leith Hill Preservation Society, the Lord Lieutenant of the County - the whole

neighbourhood has begged that this corner of the North Downs where river, hill and woodlands meet shall not be vulgarised. And the answer of the Ministry which sponsored the Town and Country Planning Act; which is supposed to keep an eye on the amenities (if Whitehall comprehends the word); which sends local authorities exhortatory circulars; which sits as an appeal court hearing complaints about vandalism, is twenty-four bungalows. A better illustration of gamekeeper turned poacher could not be wished.

In Dorking a meeting was held not many days ago to celebrate the rescue from the builders of five thousand acres of the Leith Hill country. Had the assembly known in the midst of its self-congratulations that the Ministry of Health were preparing to betray Box Hill, the jubilations might have been a little qualified. The Hill is already in the care of the National Trust; various landowners have enlarged the holding; and the public subscribed to present a further 248 acres to the nation. Not to be outdone the Ministry of Health

> contributes bungalows. Yet with a little patience and management, the whole of this area, which pleases the mind by its associations no less than the eye by its looks, could have shielded been from offence. The first instalment of red roofs is being set in the park of Camilla Lacey, the home of FANNY BURNEY; and a stonesthrow away Keats finished 'Endymion', MEREDITH laboured and DISRAELI went strolling between chap-'Coningsby'. But it is extravagant to think that old ghosts could prevail against a Government Department. History may be left aside; it is enough that at a stroke of an

official pen the prospect from Box Hill and the valley of the Mole curving below are to be demeaned.

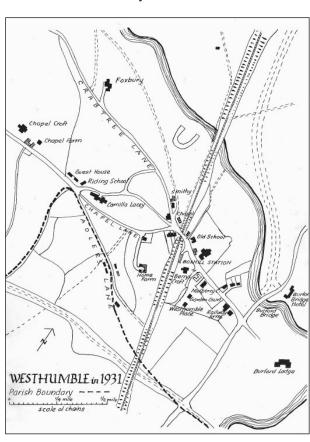
The Chairman of the Town Planning Committee at Dorking points out that the Ministry's decision "may have a very far-reaching effect in determining the course of future local development". That undoubtedly is true. The decision will hearten every speculator who is scheming, in Surrey and elsewhere, to turn the landscape into cash. If it is apparent that the Ministry of Health are on the side of the spoilers, the efforts of the National Trust, of the Preservation Societies, the landowner's generosity and the private subscription list can achieve little. This sacrifice at Box Hill is stated to be all prepared, except for secondary negotiations to keep a few tall trees; but is so much folly irrevocable? Box Hill and its surroundings are beloved by Londoners, who seek refreshment there in thousands on public holidays and during week-ends, and who will shortly perceive one more favourite place of escaper disfigured. Surely Parliament, despite a somewhat languid interest in England's good looks, will intervene to put this lamentable mistake right.



The extent of housing in Westhumble before the 1934 decision is shown on the map on the left (taken from 'The Manor of Wistomble' by Ronald Shepperd). If the decision had gone the other way, almost all the houses west of the railway in Westhumble would now not exist. 'It is strange that such an important decision could be made without any sort of public hearing.

The objectors to building on the Camilla Lacey estate may have been mollified by the way the development turned out, with trees helping the houses blend in with the surrounding countryside. More recent inhabitants of Westhumble were also firmly opposed to changes in the surrounding land: they contributed over £100,000 to help the National Trust buy the land of Chapel Farm in 1998.

Ben Tatham



The Church Clock Winder

Collowing some extremely generous donations from a number of people and organisations, including the Parish Magazine, sufficient funds were raised to commission the work to automate the winding of the church clock and install a pendulum regulator. This means that the clock no longer requires winding by hand every week and changes to and from British Summer Time will happen automatically as will minor corrections to timekeeping.



The old mechanism

Smith of Derby, one of Britain's largest and oldest clock manufacturers undertook the work in September. The new system replaces the old weights with lighter ones which are suspended next to the clock workings in the belfry. The pendulum regulator stops the clock for a few seconds every hour by



The old weights

means of a magnet to allow it to reset ensuring that it keeps the right time. It will also be used to stop the clock for the appropriate number of hours when changes to and from British Summer Time occur. Gone are the old manual winders, to be replaced with small modern automatic winders which are powered by a battery pack mounted on the wall and charged by electricity. Should there be an interruption to supply, the batteries retain enough



The new mechanism

charge to last for 30 hours.

To preserve the integrity of the clock, all original parts will remain in the belfry (except for the weights, which for safety reasons are at floor level) and could be re-instated if wished.



The new weights



The pendulum regulator

Our thanks go to all those who donated to the cost of these works, and especially to John Winn who has faithfully cared for the clock since 2008.



John Winn



The sketch of John

The winding of the clock has taken strength, concentration, reliability, agility and skill, which John has quietly and loyally provided. In recognition of this, he was presented with a bottle of 2008 vintage port and a framed sketch of him with the clock. We are grateful that with his knowledge of the clock he has kindly agreed to stay on as a custodian, regularly checking that all is going well.

Catherine Diffey Churchwarden

Surrey LIDAR Portal

Surrey Archaeological Society have recently launched their LIDAR portal. LIDAR (Light Detection And Ranging) uses a pulsed laser to measure distances and importantly for archaeologists, it can see through buildings, trees and other vegetation, revealing features underneath. The portal is open to everyone and is very easy to use. The LIDAR map now covers the whole county and users can zoom in on any site of interest. A series of maps from tithe map of 1838 to modern OS maps can be superimposed on the Lidar images to show the user what

the features on the LIDAR map might represent.

The LIDAR image shown here is of the field leading down from Westhumble to the River Mole and the same area shown on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of 1871. The 1871 map shows a rectangular feature (174) towards the bottom of the picture, which is clearly man-made and now exists just as a steep slope in the field. In the 1838 tithe map the feature extends south across Westhumble Street and further east, to where '177' is shown as the field number on the 1871

map. The path from Westhumble to the River Mole is clearly shown on the 1871 map and can still be made out on the LIDAR map (nowadays the track past Catbells). In the 1838 map, the path led to Pray Bridge over the Mole, and on to Mickleham by the most direct route.

Archaeologists have already used the LIDAR images to identify potential sites of interest. The portal shows a possible settlement site above Ham Bank and extensive medieval field boundaries south of Chapel Lane.

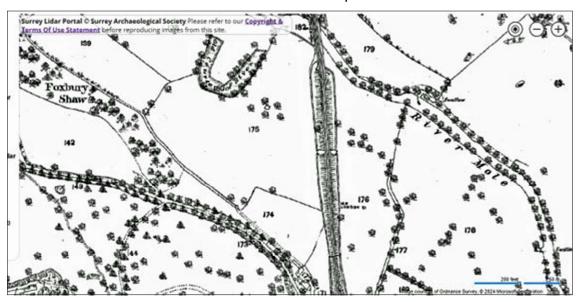
You will find the LIDAR Portal at www. surreylidar.org.uk

Chris Budleigh

The Lidar map



The Field map



Editor's note: to mark the 80^{th} anniversary of D-Day on 6^{th} June, here is a reprint of an interesting article that appeared in the magazine in September 2007.

Wartime Memories of Mickleham By-Pass

uring the war and especially in the Drun up to D-Day, the northbound carriageway of the Mickleham by-pass was used as a vehicle reserve depot. What is now known as Young Street was built by Canadian Engineers as an exercise, and to improve the local roadway. The River Mole at that time was spanned by a Bailey bridge which only took single line traffic and rattled very loudly when any of the army vehicles passed over it. The single lane road under the railway bridge had traffic lights either side to control the traffic. Young Street (A246) in those days was known by the army lads as 'Dead Man's Gulch' and was used as a heavy vehicle park where tank transporters, heavy recovery vehicles and some amphibious craft were parked. Of course it had to be patrolled at night by members of the garrison on bicycles, who made very good use of their knowledge that the traffic lights under the railway bridge gave warning of anybody approaching at night, especially orderly officers or guard commanders, and also gave a warning to the half-dozen tramps who regularly used to sleep in the back of some of the vehicles, believing, quite wrongly, that we didn't know they were there.

The depot stretched south from the Givons Grove roundabout to a point a couple of hundred yards past the turn-off to Westhumble. On the small slipway near the turning where the 50 mph limit is now in force on the northbound side (near Mole Cottage) were the 7th Vehicle Group workshops in a large Romley hut, which is a giant size corrugated iron Nissen hut. Slightly smaller vehicles such as Leylands, Matadors, Scammells etc. were parked as far as the 7th Group workshops. From there on towards Westhumble were the 'light-weight' vehicles, such as 15 cwt Bedfords, Dennis tipper trucks and Ford 15 and 30 cwt vehicles, gradually trailing on, as they got further down the park, to staff cars, small Austin 8s (known as 'ants') and literally hundreds

A Light Aid Detachment (LAD) was located in the light vehicle park. Their duties were to carry out minor repairs to vehicles being issued from the

vehicle reserve, and also inspection of vehicles used by local units including those of the military police (a fact that was very useful sometimes – but let's leave it at that).

I remember one day when one of the lads, who was an excellent pianist, got hold of the music to *American Patrol* and played it one lunchtime in the NAAFI, which made the entire detachment late back on duty. Our Warrant Officer was not very pleased about that, but he couldn't put us all on a charge!

The garrison for this depot was housed in Mickleham Hall and Juniper Hall. Mickleham Hall was used to billet troops and more troops were housed in halfa-dozen Nissen huts in the grounds. Those of us in Mickleham Hall formed a choir, singing many popular tunes of the day, mixed with a few choice army songs (strictly for our own in-house entertainment, not for the ears of the general public). Juniper Hall was used as officers quarters and garrison offices. In the grounds were eight more Nissen huts housing troops and also the cookhouse for the entire male garrison. The ATS were billeted in the old Priory in Leatherhead which was surrounded by a high wall, but not high enough to stop the girls getting back in after midnight (with a little help from their friends). The house known as Boxlands on the west side of the A24 approaching Dorking North Station was the headquarters for the whole 7th Vehicle Group scattered around the south-east area. I once tried to swim in the River Mole, which ran through the grounds of Boxlands, but the water was so cold that I very soon gave up the attempt.

The Running Horses public house was the local for most of the garrison. Another spot favoured by the lads was the White Cottage opposite Box Hill Station, a tea shop which served excellent cakes. This could be reached by the lads going under the hedge at the side of the by-pass, crossing a small wooden footbridge over the River Mole and along an old footpath leading to Box Hill Station. They used this route carrying billycans and bags to bring back refreshments to their comrades



Allied tank and amphibious craft on a Normandy beach. Had they been parked in Young Street?

working on the by-pass, much to the consternation of the NAAFI.

When possible we used to go to the cinema in Leatherhead where we were able to keep the usherettes supplied with American torches and batteries, so we were always sure of a good seat. As you may imagine Leatherhead was crowded with troops, both Canadian and British, all out to have a good time, but I can never remember seeing anyone lying on the pavement too drunk to move, or trying to pick a fight. Maybe it was because there were always patrols of military police in the area (or maybe there were no 'Happy Hours' in those days) and the troops had to be back in their billets by 23.59 hrs and had to be able to walk past the guardroom under their own steam when they returned to camp.

The entire garrison was disbanded in September 1945 and the roadway handed back to the highway authorities. Sometimes when I drive through there I still think of how it was in those days and remember some of the lads I used to work with and the antics we got up to ...

John Stacey, ex REME

Editor's note (2007): John Stacey is a member of the Epsom Male Voice Choir. Its conductor, Neil Mackay, encouraged John to write this article for the magazine — a very welcome addition to our local history archive.

Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group Visit to Slyfield House

Photos by Clive Bull



n April, twenty members of the History Group visited Slyfield House. This is a Grade I listed Jacobean Manor House just inside the parish boundary of Great Bookham, close to the River Mole. On arrival we were greeted by the owners, Paul and Vanessa Richards, who have given tours of their house for forty years. We split into two groups of ten because the first floor could not bear the weight of all of us at once.

Our group began the tour outside where Vanessa gave us a brief history of the house. The Slyfield family owned the original house, which was probably built in the 15th century. Although Edmund Slyfield was the Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex in the late 16th century, the family had run out of money by the early 1600s and sold Slyfield in 1614. It was acquired by George Shiers, the apothecary to James I. His services were expensive. Paul and Vanessa have found bills where he charged £100 for the medicines he dispensed. George completely remodelled the house in the Jacobean style but, regrettably, not all of his house is still standing. The current house and the servants' quarters (now the farmhouse) were originally linked by a Great Hall which was pulled down in 1743. It was difficult to imagine what the Hall looked like as several of us had parked our cars where it once stood. The connection with the Shiers family came to an end in 1700 when Elizabeth, the wife of George's son Robert, died. Five of Robert and Elizabeth's six children had died in infancy and the sixth, also George, died aged twentyfive in 1685.

The south side of the house faces the garden and contains seven bays separated by brick pilasters (flat structures, resembling c o l u m n s a n d protruding from the main wall), decorated with fleur-de-lys and lions' heads. To their left is a large bay with a Dutch gable, very similar to those at Old House in Mickleham which was built in the same style as Slyfield

twenty years later. We timed our visit perfectly as the wisteria was in full bloom along the wall.

On the north side of the house, we



Sun Insurance Company symbol above the door

noticed the fire mark of the Sun Insurance Company above one of the doors. Fire marks are metal plaques bearing the emblems of the different insurance companies. These were used to direct their fire brigades in the event of a fire. Some of us remembered seeing similar plaques during a guided tour of Shere. Another door has a decorative lion's head on it, a design seen throughout the house. Like other houses of this period, Slyfield does not have corridors with doors to individual rooms. Part of the house is quite narrow as the rooms span the width of the house and a door in each room leads to the next one.

At this point it was time to go inside, where Paul was waiting for us in the entrance hall. Facing us was the magnificent oak staircase with a pair of tall wooden gates across the bottom, carved to look like brickwork. It was a surprise to hear they were installed to prevent the dogs going upstairs. Paul also pointed out a picture of a ghostly blue donkey who is supposed to appear on the night of 14th November,

leap over the gates and vanish. The origins of this tale have disappeared, much like the donkey who has not been seen in recent years. There is wood paneling throughout the house and several rooms have fine plaster ceilings, including the Parlour next to the hall. The ceiling here took three people a week to clean and once this was finished, the central figure of Plenty was found to have toes on her feet. The lion's head motif is seen again on the paneling and the Shiers' coat of arms is displayed above the fireplace.

Upstairs, the Solar has an astonishing barrel-vaulted plaster ceiling, decorated

with putti, gryphons and garlands of fruit. Through the large arched window there is a lovely view of the gardens and the fields beyond. Each bedroom has its own unique character. One has a figure of Peace on the ceiling, while another has a wreath of oak

leaves, possibly a nod to Charles II. There is even a haunted bedroom. Guests staying there have heard horses' hooves outside the house, said to be the sound of soldiers in pursuit of Sir John Fenwick, who was hiding at Slyfield after his involvement in a plot to kill William III. The plot failed and Sir John was executed for treason in 1697.

Our visit ended with refreshments outside (including home-made biscuits), giving us time to ask more questions and wander round the garden. We are very grateful to Paul and Vanessa for showing us their truly remarkable house.

Judith Long



Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group

Walk at Langley Vale Centenary Wood



This is great, why didn't I know about this before?' was the comment from one of the group on the recent visit to Centenary Wood, Langley Vale. So, what is it that is so great about this 641-acre woodland planted by the Woodland Trust, starting in 2014, to commemorate the First World War?

As you would expect there are trees, lots of them, over 180,000, but there are also flower-filled meadows, a community orchard and sculptures to discover. The site of the wood, on the edge of Epsom Downs, is no accident. This was part of the site of Tadworth Camp where raw recruits were trained in the basics of war such as digging trenches, learning to shoot, and how to protect themselves from gas attacks. One of the highlights is Regiment of Trees, a series of 12 carved sandstone statues of soldiers, representing some

of the 20,000 volunteers for the 2nd London Division inspected by Lord Kitchener in January 1915 on Epsom Downs. There was a blizzard on the day, with a foot of snow on the ground and at least one soldier died of hypothermia waiting for Lord Kitchener to arrive, who it is reported, stayed for five minutes before returning to London. Adjacent to these statues is the six-metre-tall wooden sculpture, Witness, consisting of 35 huge trunks of oak into which are carved excerpts from seven poems written by First World War poets including Wilfred Owen and Edward Thomas.

A short walk through the community orchard took us to Jutland Wood, where an avenue of 14 port-holed wooden sculptures is a stark reminder of the 14 British ships lost in this decisive battle and of the 6,097 British lives lost.

During our brief visit we only saw a small part of this new woodland but once you know about it, further visits to explore more and to watch the woodland evolve are very likely.

Roger Davis

Photos: Top left members of the group gathered in the carved Witness. Lines from WW1 poems are carved on the inside of the sculpture.

Bottom left: one of the men on parade in his uniform. There is another sculpture of a soldier in civvies as he had not been issued a uniform yet. The sailor, middle, represents the sailors who took part in the battle of Jutland; and the prow-shaped carving one of the ships which also took part. Many sailors were lost.







Deceptive Bends!

onger-standing residents may recall the old Pavilion Cinema on South Street, Dorking: renovated by the band 10CC, to form 'Strawberry Recording Studios' in 1976. The Studios were used by various artists, including Paul McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Cliff Richard and The Moody Blues, until its closure in 1993. A Blue Plaque (commissioned by The Dorking Society and Dorking Museum) was unveiled at the site by current members of 10CC, on 28th October.

One of the band's most successful albums was 'Deceptive Bends': named after a road sign on the A24 southbound at Mickleham, just before the first bend. There were at least two versions of the sign: one black/white with reflector studs and another with white reflective lettering on a red background. The latter was discovered in a former road engineer's shed and is currently in the shop 'Spin Sounds', also on South Street. Other memories/photos of the sign are sought by a group who are looking

From Mickleham Parish Magazine December 2024



to reinstate it. After all, the bends have presumably lost none of their deceptiveness over time.

Sue Carr

Any memories etc to Mark Day, mickleham@hotmail.com

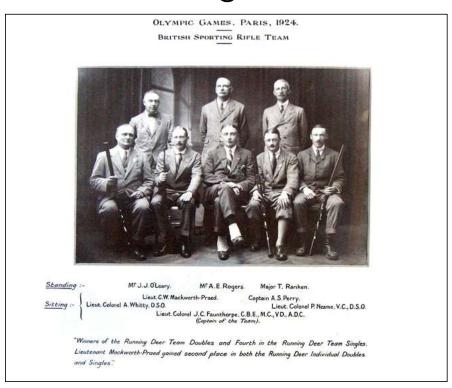
Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group Mickleham's Shooting Stars

Part 1 Olympic Glory



When this month's magazine arrives, the start of the Paris Olympics will be less than a month away. The previous Paris Olympics, held a century earlier in 1924, are probably best known in Britain for the success of the British sprinters Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams, depicted in Chariots of Fire. Rather less famous is Mickleham's own Olympic star, Cyril Mackworth-Praed, who was born here in 1891. His father Robert was Lord of the Manor of Mickleham and during Cyril's early years the family lived at Mickleham Downs House, built by Robert's father Winthrop Mackworth-Praed*.

Cyril's shooting talent was evident at Eton, where he captained the team competing for the prestigious Ashburton Shield, awarded annually at the Public Schools' Meeting (now known as the Schools' Meeting) at Bisley. He was the most successful British marksman at the 1924 Olympics, winning one gold and two silver medals from the six events he entered. All three of his medals came from the Running Deer events, the gold from a team competition and the silvers from



Cyril is seated, second from left. The inscription reads 'Winners of the Running Deer Team Doubles and Fourth in the Running Deer Team Singles. Lieut Mackworth-Praed gained second place in both the Running Deer Individual Doubles and Singles'.

the individual ones. To those of us not familiar with shooting terminology, the name 'Running Deer' can conjure up some alarming images, but no live animals are involved! The target is merely in the shape of a deer with scoring zones marked on it. In 1924 the competitors were positioned 100 metres from the target, which was moved back and forth across an opening to allow about four seconds per shot.

A photograph of the eight members of the 1924 British Sporting Rifle Olympic Team hangs in the clubhouse of the British Sporting Rifle Club (BSRC) at Bisley. Six of the men were army officers and Lieutenant Cyril Mackworth-Praed is second from the left on the front row. He served with the Scots Guards in both World Wars and during WW2 was a weaponry instructor at the Commando Special Training Centre at Inversilort House in the Scottish Highlands, where the speed and accuracy of his shooting astonished the recruits. In 1952, aged

61, Cyril returned to Olympic shooting in Helsinki where he finished 11th in the individual Running Deer event.

In civilian life, his work as a stockbroker in the family firm of Francis & Praed helped fund his passion for ornithology, particularly the birds of Africa. He coauthored the first two volumes of The Handbook of African Birds with Claude Grant and wrote the remaining four himself after Grant's death. He also had a keen interest in wildfowl preservation and used a decoy on his property in Pembrokeshire to ring ducks in order to trace migratory routes. He made a short film of this in 1938, involving a stuffed fox and a well-trained dog, which can be seen on the British Film Institute website. Well ahead of his time, he started a duck adoption scheme where, for five shillings, you could adopt a ringed duck and be informed of its movements - no mean feat with the technology available. For his services to ornithology, Cyril was awarded the OBE in 1964. He died, aged 82, in 1974.

Judith Long

Protected Hedgerows and Dell Close

Some 50% of hedgerows in the UK have been lost in the last 70 years, about 120,000 miles. Lost along with them are the associated mature ground flora, habitat and nesting sites for many small bird species, and the interconnections and shelter which hedgerows provide to mammals and other animals. New 'Management of Hedgerow Regulations' were published in June 2024, with a view to halting further losses of significant hedgerows. These strengthen the definitions as to what constitutes an important or protected hedgerow.

There are all sorts of ways in which a hedge is rated. Here the hedges on either side of Dell Close are used as an example to clarify.

Hedges need to be at least thirty-years old and over twenty metres in length. Both these criteria apply to the Dell Close hedges. Indeed, they are shown as very mature in the 1920s air photographs and it is apparent that, as there was a thoroughfare through what was the Old Rectory land from before the 1830s, they are likely to be 200-years old or more.

The fact that they form a historical boundary of the church 'glebe' land adds more value, as does the fact that they mark the edges of a pathway/ bridleway. That there are two parallel hedges within fifteen metres, and they have connections to other hedgerows, adds further.

There are further qualifications based on species mixes. The number of certain woody species and of particular ground flora associated with 'mature' habitats are also taken into account. A few years ago, ecological consultants surveyed Dell Close hedges. Their findings, in summary, were that:

- The northern hedge contained enough woody species to be considered both ancient and important, and in addition the mix of ground flora was indicative of a 'protected' hedgerow.
- The southern hedgerow had less of a woody variety but qualified by virtue of the combination of woody and ground flora.
- The proximity of the two added further to their

protected status.

The implications are that any removal of all the hedges, or the widening or opening of gaps, would need prior planning approval. Further, there are guidelines on management which aim to stop cutting/trimming between 1st March and 31st August. There are some exceptions, the most notable of which in the case of Dell Close is to allow 'access' (though how free that access needs to be is a moot point). However, ANY disturbance to nesting birds would contravene other legislation, whatever the status of the hedge or other habitat.

The prospect for hedges is improving these days. In our area, the recent planting around the graveyard and by Mark Frost in Norbury Park are examples of hedges comprised of native mixes, which in time will provide both aesthetic and ecological benefits. If anyone in our community needs whips to start a hedge on their land, however limited the number, please let us know as we can apply for free whips shortly.

NB These regulations do not apply to hedges on private residential property.

Mark Day, St Michael's Eco-Group



Norbury Park hedges

Website Report



As well as being a resource for locals, our website remains a useful point of contact for those who live further away but may have links with the area. The advent of internet companies such as Ancestry.com and 23 and me,

combined with the associated DNA tests which are now available, has resulted in a boom in people researching their heritage. Many of the enquiries we receive via the website are from people whose online research has led them to find that their forebears lived in either Mickleham or Westhumble.

We are of course happy to help them with their enquiries and we are fortunate to have Judith Long whose detective work would shame Hercule Poirot. For example, one such enquiry, received in 2022, was from Gary Anstis from Melbourne, Australia. His great great grandparents, Thomas and Maria Ball lived at Timberden (now Camilla Lacey Lodge) in the 1840s. Gary contacted us again in 2024 to let us know that he would be spending three nights in our area on a family heritage-discovery expedition.

Arrangements were made and Judith, together with Ben and Sue, met with Gary during his stay and shared their extensive local knowledge of the area and its inhabitants. I believe that Gary was delighted with his reception and, as a local history group, we are fortunate to have the skilled volunteers that enable us to help people with their enquiries.

Roger Davis

Jean Isabelle Cameron Suckling 1932 – 2024

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Jean Suckling was held at St Michael's on 16th July just three days short of what would have been her 92nd birthday. Many gathered to say farewell to a kind, gentle and unassuming woman who along with her husband Geoff had made a remarkable contribution to our community.

Jean was born in London, but had strong Scottish roots. In fact, she met Geoff at a Burns Night supper in 1960. They fell in love and were married in 1962 at the Crown Court Church of Scotland in London. They moved to Westhumble in 1962. Jean confessed that marrying Geoff had rescued her from her primary teaching career in north London, which she had found very challenging. Thereafter she became a loving and supportive wife to a man who, despite his softly spoken manner, lived life in the fast lane. Geoff acquired businesses as some acquire souvenirs and his entrepreneurial skills never left him.

In his address during the service David Ireland recalled a conversation about when bridge became such an important feature of Jean's life. She replied with her usual honesty 'we were unable to have children, so I became a founder member of the Bookham Bridge club in

order to occupy my time while others were pushing their prams around'. She never mentioned the fact that she was an extraordinarily good bridge player and was still playing within three weeks of her death. She left special instructions that her funeral should not take place on the day her bridge club meets.

Geoff was a highly effective and widely respected international businessman. Everything he did was tackled with energy and commitment – and concern for those involved. His commercial acumen brought him great wealth. However, Jean and Geoff chose to live relatively modestly and devote much of their time, and money, to helping others, quietly and often anonymously. Virtually every community enterprise in the parish has benefited from their amazing generosity. Through their Ranmore Trust they have helped countless others as well. Geoff was only able to do all this because of Jean, who supported him lovingly every step of the way and continued to do so even in his last difficult days. Geoff died in December 2011.

Jean was motivated by a deep compassion for the needs of others and a consciousness of her own good



fortune prompted by a very strong faith stemming from her early days in the church of Scotland. She was always wanting to learn more about the needs of a younger generation and to understand the ways in which those needs could be addressed. She rarely offered criticism of others, unless of course they played a foolish hand of bridge! She continued to listen to our church services on her slightly outmoded mobile phone and drew great strength and inspiration from them particularly in the last period of her life.

At the end of the service Jean's coffin was carried out of the church to strains of the Skye Boat Song. In the chuchyard she was laid to rest beside her beloved Geoff. Their legacy lives on.

Chaos on the A24

Sometime in the early hours of Tuesday 9th July a tanker truck, reportedly after being involved in a collision at Beare Green, leaked 400 litres of diesel along a 10-mile stretch of the northbound A24 from Beare Green to the Cobham Services on the M25. The slippery surface caused several accidents before the entire carriageway was closed.

As contact with diesel degrades the road surface it was necessary to resurface 75,000 m² of road. Needless to say, this caused havoc. People with houses on the northbound A24 were isolated and the bus route closed. Alternative routes to and from Mickleham and Westhumble had to be found. The Chapel Lane/Ranmore Road route was particularly problematic. Many cars now bear the scars from the overgrown

hedges. Horror stories abounded of incidences of meeting commercial vehicles such as removal vans and scaffolding trucks, or being faced down by their drivers who refused to reverse even though a passing place was nearest to them.

It has to be said that the road repair work started almost immediately with large crews working at several places along the route. It was made possible for traffic to exit Westhumble Street and use the inner lane to the Burford Bridge roundabout, giving access to the Old London Road to Mickleham and the southbound A24 to Dorking. Frequent updates on access and progress provided by residents *via* WhatsApp and Westhumble emails were particularly helpful. Thanks are especially due to Will Dennis who

cycled our length of the road to report on progress at various times during the closure. The road reopened on 19th July. Many remarked how well and surprisingly quickly the work had been done.

As the saying goes 'every cloud has a silver lining' and I guess ours is a lovely new road. Also the residents of Mickleham enjoyed 10 peaceful days with relatively little traffic noise.

In addition, this event has highlighted the need for careful preparation of the Chapel Lane/Ranmore Road route before the proposed work on the bridge over the railway in Westhumble begins. The hedgerows must be cut back with more well-defined passing places established. Could some sort of traffic light system be used to facilitate progress along the route? Sue Tatham

A Tree Fit for a King

Mickleham and Westhumble Horticultural Society





Planting the tree

Tree in place

The coronation of King Charles III may have taken place way back in May, but the *Quercus robur* (English Oak), ordered to mark this historic occasion by the Mickleham and Westhumble Horticultural Society, could only be lifted and delivered to the village once the oaks had become dormant after the first frost of the winter.

And so it was that a small but dedicated group of Horticultural Society members gathered in the Westhumble bonfire field on Sunday 10th December, braving the persistent rain, to plant this special oak tree to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III. This year we were lucky with the digging conditions, which were damp and warm, unlike last year when our stalwart digging team had to break

through a four-inch frozen layer with mattocks and pick axes! The tree is positioned just off the footpath across the field, centred between the two oaks that mark the Diamond and Platinum Jubilees of the late Queen Elizabeth II. It is protected from the grazing cattle by a substantial tree guard.

We are proud to have created a royal avenue! The Diamond oak of 2012 is now well established and is developing a handsome crown. The Platinum oak is looking healthy one year after planting and we hope it will continue to thrive. The Coronation oak is a new planting, and we will endeavour to nurture it through the early months and years so that it too can become a magnificent oak in centuries to come. Mature *Quercus roburs* support an amazingly

rich web of biodiversity and crucial habitat for birds, bats, rare lichens, and a wide variety of native species. It is our hope that these three trees will become a majestic and lasting living legacy gifted to future generations of wildlife and the residents of our wonderful villages.

Lucy Adshead



The tree guard in place



Philip Townsend's Archive

One of our lucky discoveries when we were preparing the A24 exhibition was that LHG member Philip Townsend has access to the archive of old 'The Autocar' magazines. He says 'they used to use both Box Hill and Pebble Hill for their road tests up until the Second World War and there are loads of pictures of the area. A favourite location for pictures was Pressforward Lodge – that features in plenty.' Many thanks to Phil for sharing these with us. You can find additional pictures from 'The Autocar' magazine on pages 24 and 25.

Photograph from early 1930s issue of The Autocar'.

'This ornamental entrance to Norbury Park, near Mickleham, Surrey, which has appeared several times in photographs in 'The Autocar' in past years, now seems to be disappearing, in the interests of the badly needed new Mickleham by-pass'

Juniper Hall Portico



On leaving an event at Juniper Hall I happened to look closely at the base of one of the supports of the cast iron portico. I am interested in old iron work (think manhole covers!) and its makers. I took photos of the heavily over-painted lettering at the base of the support.

Looking closely at the photos, the only word I could make out was 'Every'. That rang a bell. Sometime previously I had noticed a drain cover on Chapel Lane, outside the Bat Cave near Ranmore Common Road. It bore the word 'ESE Phoenix Lewes'. It was sinking into the tarmac and sadly it has since been replaced by a nameless modern one.

A little research on the internet

revealed that ESE stood for East Sussex Engineering, in Lewes, which was originally John Every & Co. The firm was in business from 1832 and run by four generations of the Every family. It was sold 1951 when it became ESE and finally closed in 1978.

In 1859 John Every, number two, set up a branch in Brighton with a Mr Newman. Looking again at the Juniper Hall photos it was possible to decipher '& Newman' after Every. Thus the portico must have been built later than 1859.

Shortly after that I was on Westhumble Station and at the base of the canopy supports on the Dorking platform I chanced upon the words 'Every Lewes.'

Later, at the top of Ashcombe Road

in Dorking, I spotted an old lamp post which had the inscription 'John Every (Ironfounders) Ltd. Lewes & London'. The elderly owner told me he had worked for the Electricity Board, had seen it lying in the depot in Bookham, and installed it in his garden.

There is much information about Every & Co on the internet. One of their more ornate productions was a cricket pavilion,



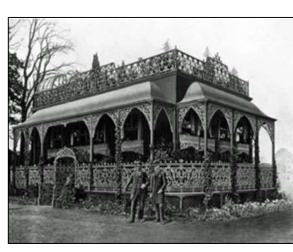


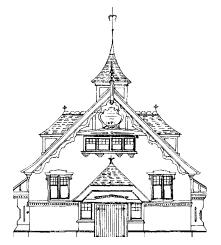
Top left: the Juniper Hall portico; Yop right: one of the canopy supports at Westhumble station; Above: the Ashcombe Road lamp post; Left: Cricket pavilion at Sheffield Park

commissioned in the 1880s by the Earl of Sheffield for the ground at Sheffield Park in Sussex. Much of the ornate ironwork along the sea front in Brighton came from the same foundry.

Juniper Hall's portico is a more modest endeavour. What other Every relics remain to be discovered in the Mickleham and Westhumble area?

Barbara Jones





History of Mickleham Village Hall Building and Grounds

Ben and I have just finished writing a comprehensive history of Mickleham Village Hall, which was built in 1903. The hall is managed by a board of trustees as an independent charitable trust. The aim of writing the history was to provide a record of how it has progressed over the last 120 years. It is also intended to be a working

document as it includes building plans and information about land ownership, property boundaries and dates when new equipment was installed. We hope it will be useful to future custodians of the hall. The history can be accessed via the Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group website: www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk

Sue Tatham





Photographs from the village hall history showing the kitchen before and after the 2005 refurbishment

From Mickleham Parish Magazine May 2024

Life is full of Surprises

ife is full of surprises. Last month's Lparish magazine included my article about the Juniper Hall portico made by Every & Co Iron Founders in Lewes who in the 1950s became the East Sussex Engineering Co. Soon after the magazine came out, Ben Tatham rang to say Jean Suckling had something to tell me and something to show me. I went round to see her in Camilla Drive. She told me that her husband Geoffrey and two partners bought up Every & Co when it was going bankrupt in 1953. They renamed it East Sussex Engineering. Geoffrey was an accountant and while in training had done an audit for a firm that cast door knobs and hinges etc. He had informed the chairman that someone in the business was defrauding the company. The chairman was very sceptical. He knew what was what and after all Geoffrey was only a trainee accountant. He was proved correct and when he qualified the chairman offered Geoffrey a job.

Working for a metal casting company, albeit as an accountant, he kept an eye on other, similar businesses; and over the years took over failing companies and turned them around. So it was that much later he and his colleagues bought up Every & Co.

On the premises they found a mould of a bas-relief of the Last Supper and had three copies cast, one for each of the new directors. Geoffrey's copy is still on display in Jean's sitting room. I thought to lift it down to get a better photo but no way could I move it.

In the study there is a photograph hanging on the wall of two workmen pouring hot metal into moulds, taken at ESE & Co.

How strange that my interest in ironworks should lead to the uncovering of a connection between examples of a firm's work in the parish and one of our parishioners late husband's involvement with that same firm.

Barbara Jones





The bas-relief of the Last Supper, top, and a close up of the centre of the panel.

2024 Heritage Open Day at St Michael's

he theme for this year's Heritage Open Days was 'Routes-Networks-Connections'. St Michael and All Angels Church customarily opens its doors on Heritage Day and this year was no exception. However, in addition to being able to look at the church and churchyard and learn more about its history from knowledgeable guides and leaflets, there was more on offer. Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group presented an exhibition in the church entitled 'The A24: Mickleham's Old London Road & the Mickleham Bypass'.

The exhibition featured photographs and documents relating to the road and its users before, during and after the construction of the bypass, which opened in 1937. It included newspaper articles describing fatalities on the notorious Mickleham 'death bends' and the dangers of speeding motorists, together with a 1991 leaflet presenting options to improve the road's safety. Also displayed were accounts of the

time when the Mickleham Bypass became a huge 'car park' to store military equipment and vehicles in preparation for D-Day.

An informative PowerPoint presentation ran throughout the day which can now be seen on YouTube: https://youtu.be/ iT5BeertZz8

Alternatively, the slides can be viewed on the History Group's website: http://www. micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk/

In addition, the church Eco Group has designed a short trail around the churchyards. This was available to visitors on the day and is also available with the other information, both on the St Michael's Church website and in leaflet form at the back of the church. It is a twenty-minute self-guided trail pointing out the eco gains of the last two years. There is a photograph of the Eco Group wildlife pond on page 28.

Many visitors came throughout the day and enjoyed delicious tea and cakes as a bonus to their trip.

David Kennington



Givons Grove petrol station in late 1930s



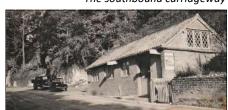
Construction of the Mickleham Bypass



The northbound carriageway



The southbound carriageway



The Old Forge Cafe at Mickleham 1947



The A24 exhibition in situ

Can you help?

We would welcome volunteers to help in the museum and with our archives

> Open: Thursday, Friday and Saturday 1 – 4 pm 62 West Street, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1 BS 01306 876591 museum@dorkingmuseum.org.uk

The Ordnance Survey in Mickleham and Westhumble

Trig Points

ost readers with be familiar with Ordnance Survey maps. Some will not be so familiar with how the surveying was carried out and what signs that the Ordnance Survey have been at work are to be found in our parish.

Between 1936 and 1960 the OS built a series of Triangulation Pillars (Trig Points or even trigs for short), all over the UK. There are three in the parish.

First the distance between two trig points was measured with extreme accuracy to establish a baseline. With a theodolite the angle from the trigs at each end of the baseline was measured to a third trig positioned so as to form something approaching an equilateral triangle. Knowing the length of the base of a triangle and the angles of two base corners it is possible, using trigonometry, to calculate the length of the remaining two sides and the angle of the third corner. Thus the whole country was covered in a network or triangulation from which more detailed surveys could be carried out.

To find trig points on an OS map look for a small blue triangle often, but not always, at a high point. On the ground



Mickleham Downs

Mickleham Downs' trig is easily found at the top. Box Hill's stands just below the Salomons Memorial View Point. For the Crabtree Cottages' trig go up Crabtree Lane to the cottages and take the track to the right heading towards Bookham. The trig is along the track in the trees on the left.

Ordnance Survey Records show that Box Hill and Crabtree Cottages' trigs were built in July 1944 at a cost of just over five pounds each. Mickleham Downs' followed in August that year and cost less than five pounds to build. On the side of





Top: Box Hill above: Crabtree Lane

each trig point there is a bronze plaque called a flush bracket bearing a unique identification number. More about flush brackets and other OS artefacts will follow in part 2 of this article.

Barbara Jones



From Mickleham Parish Magazine October 2024

Plus ça change

'The road belongs to all and all should be tolerant towards other wayfarers.'

Photograph and caption from 'The Autocar', 13 June 1930 — view of Old London Road with Juniper Hall Lodge in the background

The Ordnance Survey in Mickleham and Westhumble

Part 2: Flush Brackets and other Artefacts

Using triangulation points the Ordnance Survey was able to establish the position of features on the ground in horizontal relation to one another. It was also necessary to establish the height of features relative to one another.

All heights in the UK are measured in relation to mean sea level recorded at Newlyn between 1915 and 1921. A network of about 200 fundamental bench marks (FMBs) some 30 miles apart was established on bedrock. Above ground the FMBs consist of a granite or concrete block about 45 cm (18 ins) cubed with a bronze knob on top which is the height marker. They are sometimes surrounded by iron railings. The nearest FMBs to Mickleham and Westhumble are in the grounds of Windsor Castle, and on Riddlesdown near Croydon.

Below ground there is a chamber and another knob installed on the solid rock below. This lower knob is the marker used in the original extremely accurate height surveys. The knob on top of the block is used for subsequent, slightly less accurate surveying.

Lines of levelling were then established along roads and railway lines between the FBMs. Before WW1 metal plaques about 20 by 10 cm (8 by 4 inches) were established every few miles along the lines of levelling on prominent structures such as railway stations and bridges, and churches and schools. They were called projecting brackets because they had a small shelf projecting from them.



The shelf was the height marker. When surveying, the surveyor's assistant would hold a red and white measuring rod on the shelf and the surveyor would look through his theodolite and note how much higher the height of the shelf was compared to where the theodolite stood.

The shelves projecting from the brackets proved vulnerable to damage by passing traffic so flush brackets were introduced. These lacked the projecting shelves but had holes in their place where a removable shelf could be clipped into position.

Projecting and flush brackets were installed along lines of levelling between FMBs every 2 or 3 miles. Between them would be a number of cut bench marks on buildings, and lesser fixed objects such as milestones or solid roadside rock. These take the form of an arrow with a horizontal line, which is the height reference point, above the arrow. There will be more about them in part 3.





Top: the Riddlesdown FBM; middle: the FBM close up; bottom: the flush bracket on St Michael's church

There are no projecting brackets in the parish but there is one flush bracket, on the north side of the church on the buttress just before the lightning conductor.

From its number, 10009, I would think that it is a local height reference point and not actually on a line of levelling between FMBs. It was probably installed post WW11.

Barbara Jones



Westhumble Street with Catbells on left and Cleveland Lodge



Outside Mickleham Church

The New Constituency

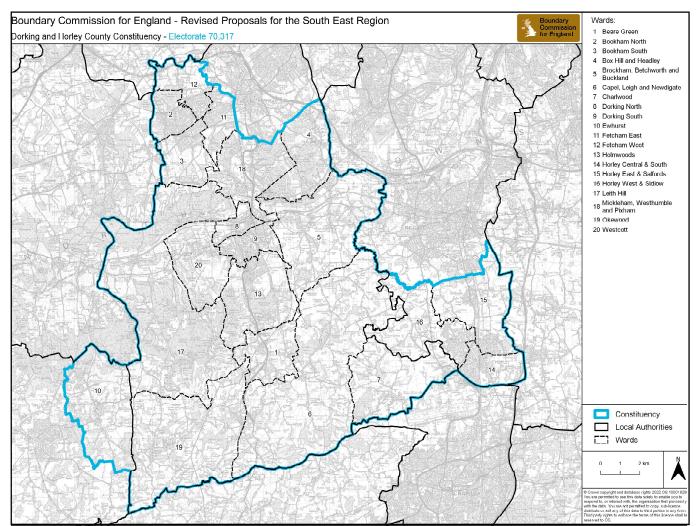
or the General Election on 4th July, Mickleham and Westhumble will be in a new parliamentary constituency: Dorking and Horley. The boundaries of the new constituency are shown on the map. The Electoral Commission reviews the populations of all the constituencies to equalise the number of voters per

constituency across the country. This time the number of constituencies in Surrey will increase from 10 to 11. The number of constituencies in Wales will reduce by eight and in Scotland by two so that the number of MPs remains the same at 650. People who have lived here since the early 1980s will remember

that from 1950 to 1983 we were in a constituency called Dorking and Horley – so we have been there before, but this time the boundaries are different.

This has nothing to do with Mole Valley
District Council which will continue as
before.

Ben Tatham



Every September thousands of volunteers across England organise events to celebrate our fantastic history and culture. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – all of which are FREE to explore.

heritage open days

Friday 12th— Sunday 21st September 2025 This year's theme: 'Architecture'

If you have a particular interest or expertise in this subject and would like to help us prepare our annual exhibition, please get in touch.

A May Day Tradition: The Broadwood Morris Men at Lyne House purchasing land in the surrounding



n May Day last year, Carole Brough Fuller and I were invited to Lyne House, situated between Rusper and Capel, to see the Broadwood Morris Men perform for the residents and their guests. The group's name refers to the Broadwood family who lived at Lyne House for more than 175 years. In 1799, James Shudi Broadwood, one of the two 'Sons' of the renowned piano makers John Broadwood & Sons (the other 'Son' being Thomas Broadwood of Juniper Hall in Mickleham), bought Lyne Farm with a loan of £3,000 from his father. As business prospered, he became a very wealthy man and turned Lyne into a grand country estate by

areas of Rusper, Capel and Newdigate. In the 1860s his son, Henry Fowler Broadwood, moved into Lyne with his wife and nine surviving children. In order to accommodate the family, the house was enlarged, and the result was an imposing Victorian mansion complete with a castellated tower. One of Henry's children was the folk song collector Lucy Ethelred Broadwood, a founder of the English Folk Song Society and an accomplished singer and composer. Lucy's nephew Captain Evelyn Broadwood, the grandson of

In early 1972, a new Morris side formed in Horsham and needed a suitable name. One of the members had seen a letter from Lucy Broadwood in which she recalled seeing a Sussex Morris 'caperer' dancing at Lyne House when she was young. This, together with Lucy's connection to folk traditions, made Broadwood the ideal name

Henry Fowler, was the final family

member to live in Lyne House.

for the group. Captain Broadwood was happy to give his consent to the use of the family name and crest in remembrance of his aunt. On May Day that year, the Broadwood Morris Men were invited to dance for the Captain at Lyne House and thus a tradition was born. After Captain Broadwood died in 1975, the house, which was already in a poor state of repair, became increasingly dilapidated. It remained empty for more than a decade until planning permission was granted to convert the house into flats. Thankfully, once the conversion was complete, the tradition of the Broadwood Morris Men dancing there on May Day was revived. The 'Squire' of the group also places a garland of flowers on the memorial to Lucy Broadwood in Rusper Church where she, and other family members, are buried.

Judith Long

Above left: the Morris Men on May Day 2023; below: left Lyne House in 2023 right Lyne House ca 1817 Brayley





From Mickleham Parish Magazine February 2024

1939 Plans to Expand Dorking

ollowing articles in the magazine last year about council houses in Mickleham and Westhumble, plans for the subsequent expansion of Dorking may be of interest.

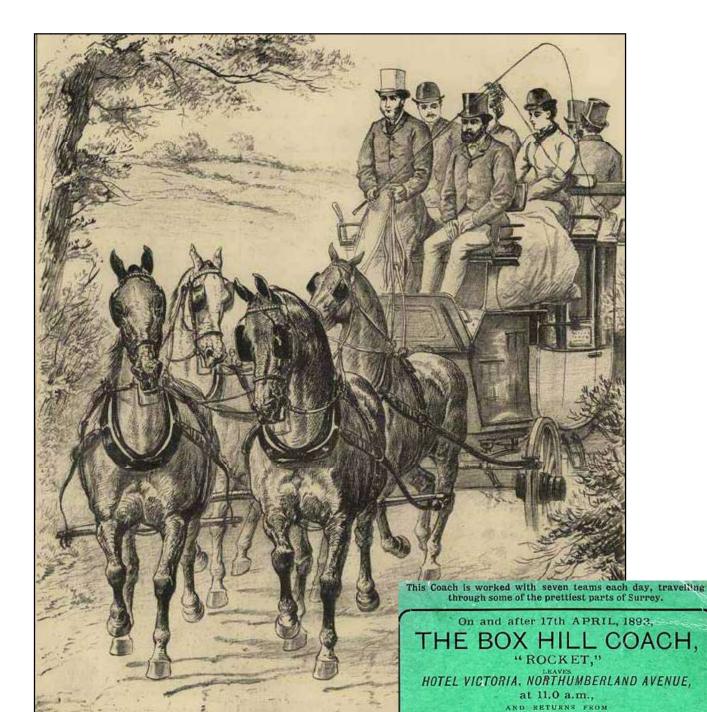
In 1939, Dorking Urban District Council announced their new Planning Scheme. The built-up area of Dorking then extended to some 430 acres with a population of around 17,000 people. The scheme proposed an additional

1,000 acres of development with an eventual population of 80,000. This would have produced an urban/ suburban sprawl, merging Dorking with Westcott, Westhumble, Brockham and North Holmwood. The outbreak of World War Two prevented the implementation of this plan, and the 1947 Town & Country Planning Act, with the introduction of the Green Belt, further restricted growth of the town.

This information comes from Dorking a Surrey Market Town through Twenty Centuries published in 1991 by Dorking Local History Group.

Barbara Jones





THE BOX HILL COACH

The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News July 1879

When preparing for our Heritage Open Day exhibition on the A24 we came upon this coach timetable in our archives. This gives us a glimpse of what travel was like before the railway to Dorking was up and running. The route took advantage of the Mole Gap thus avoiding steep climbs and descents through the North Downs. It is interesting to note that the journey involved changing horses at Roehampton and Epsom.

In the early 19th century, the philosopher John Stuart Mill's father had a house in Swanworth Lane. Documents from that time refer to his three-hour coach ride from London on Fridays to spend the weekend with his family in Mickleham. He continued this journey in all weathers well into his old age.

BURFORD BRIDGE HOTEL, BOX HILL, NEAR DORKING. at 4.0 p.m., EVERY DAY (Supplays excepteds) NORTHUM LAND AVENUE BOXHILL
"Burford Bridge Hotel"
(near Dorking).
MICKLEHAM ROEHAMPTON 4.5 LEATHERHEAD KINGSTON KingsArms 12.30 SURBITON 12.40 EWELL "Spring Hotel" 1 5 "The Swan"
ASHSTEAD
"EPSOM
"Marquis of Granley"
EWELL "Spring Hotel"
SURBITON "Marquis of Gran ASHTEAD LEATHERHEAD *KINGSTON Kings Arms'
*ROEHAMPTON 8 6 "King's Head" 10 0 BARNES BOXHILL
Burford Bridge Hotel " 2 : 0
(near Dorking). NORTHUM LAND AVENUE
"Hotel Victoria," 7. Change Horses. Single Fare, 10s. Return Fare, 15s. Single Fare, 10s.

Box Seat. 2s. 6d. extra each way.

The whole of the Coach to Burford Bridge Hotel & back, £8 8s. Places can be secured at Coach Booking Office, "HOTEL VICTORIA," Northumberland Avenue