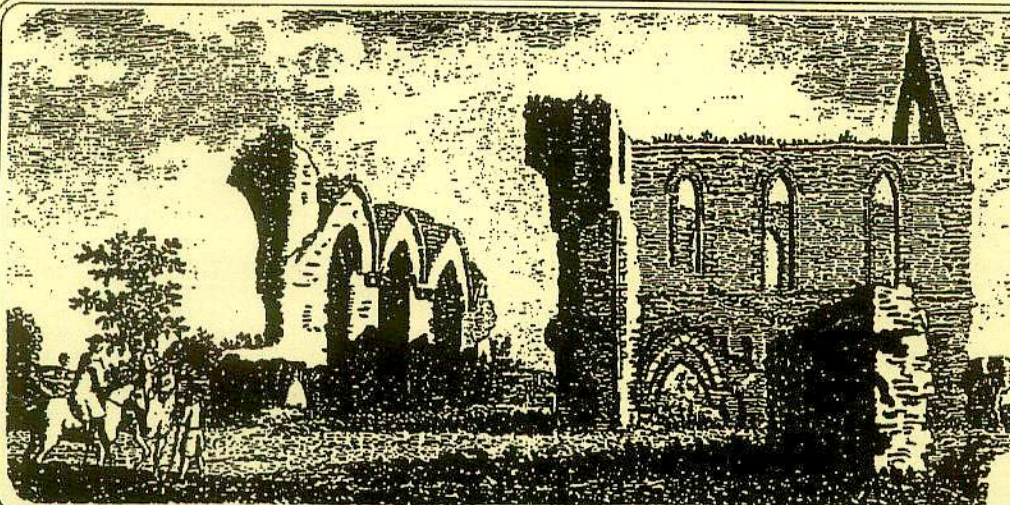


Send & Ripley History Society

FOUNDED 1975 AS SEND HISTORY SOCIETY

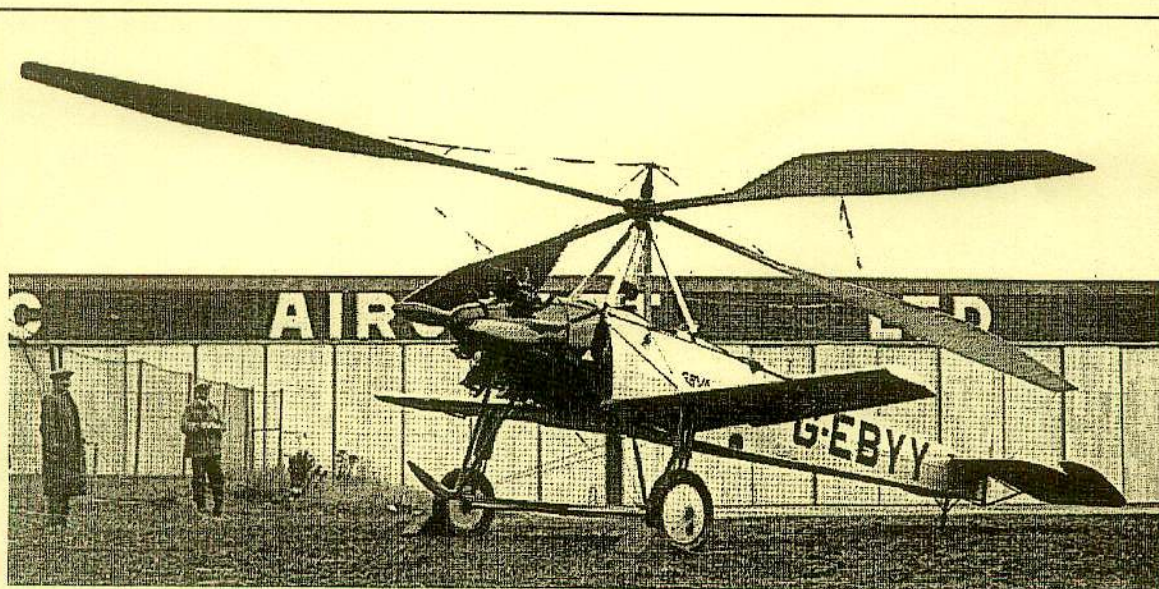
Registered Charity No. 296324



NEWARK PRIORY

Journal Volume 5 No. 177

July/August 2004



The civil Avro 611 (CIERVA C.81. Mk. II.) at Hamble 1928.
(Flying at the Broadmeads by Henry Hooper page 2)

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Send & Ripley History Society

Established 1975 as Send History Society

Registered Charity No 296324

President: K H Bourne MSc

Chairman: Les Bowerman

The Manor House, Send Marsh Green, Ripley, Woking GU23 6JS. Tel: 01483 224876

Email: les@sendmanor.f9.co.uk

Secretary: Marilyn Scrace BA

10 Birnam Close, Ripley, Woking GU23 6JH. Tel: 01483 224025

Email: marilyn@wokinggalleries.co.uk

Treasurer: Christina Sheard

Old Manor Cottage, Send Marsh Green, Ripley, Woking GU23 6JP. Tel: 01483 224600

Journal Editor: Ken Bourne

Brunel House, 30 Brunel Way, Frome, BA11 2XU. Tel: 01373 455641

Email: kenbourne@novoloco.fsnet.co.uk

Journal Distribution: Norman Carpenter

Ufford, 106 Potters Lane, Send, Woking GU23 7AL Tel: 01483 714634

Email: carpenter@uffordsend.fsnet.co.uk

Membership Secretary: Les Bowerman

Address as above.

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Cover illustration – Photo reproduced from, *Avro Aircraft* by A J Jackson, Putnam 1990.

Editor's Comment

As the two vacancies are still open they are re-advertised again below:

There is a vacancy for the position of **membership secretary**, which due to pressure of her work has been relinquished by Cate Davey. For the time being, Les Bowerman has agreed to carry out this important function but any member who wishes to apply for this position will be cordially welcome.

Equally important but perhaps involving less time is the role of **museum steward** and again volunteers to join this happy team for the occasional Saturday morning would be very welcome. For more information on either or both vacancies contact Les Bowerman on 01483 224876.

Reminder!

Sunday, 25th July - All day outing to Tenterden, Kent.

Meet at Send Manor for prompt departure at 8.30 am. Maps of Tenterden will be distributed showing car parks and the places we are visiting. There will be time for coffee before meeting at **St. Mildred's Church in the High Street at 11.00 am** where Mr. David Barrett will take interested members up the tower. We must vacate the church by 11.45 as there will be a baptism service at midday. Afterwards look in the Museum in Station Road car park and have lunch at one of the many cafes, pubs and restaurants available. At 2.00 pm we meet Mr. Alec Laurence, Chairman of the Tenterden & District Local History Society outside the Town Hall for a walk along the High Street. **The cost will be £1 per person.** Tea, scones, etc., will be at Tenterden Vineyard (Spots Farm) at Smallhythe, just outside Tenterden. On the way, we shall take the opportunity to look at the unspoilt Tudor brick-built church of St. John the Baptist. This is very close to Ellen Terry's cottage, which is National Trust, so bring your card in case there is time.

Anyone able to offer a lift or require one please let me know as soon as possible.

Anne Bowerman 01483 224876

Flying at the Broadmeads in the 1930s

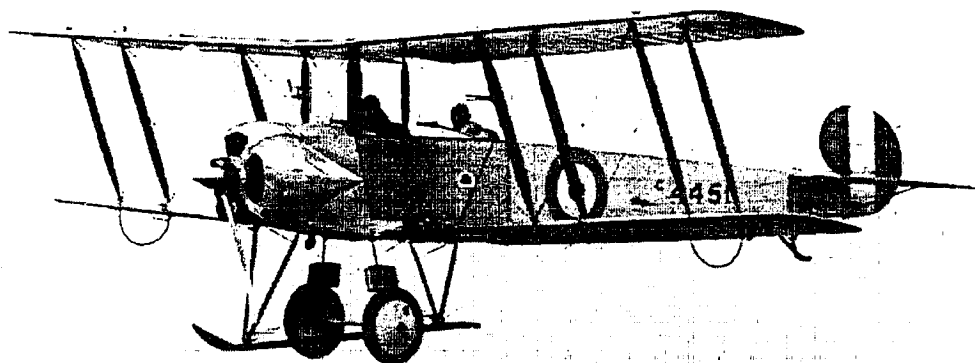
By Henry F Cooper (of Old Woking)

Sometime during the years 1929 to 1931, Alan Cobham's Air Circus paid a visit to Old Woking and set up all the equipment in the western end of the Broadmeads. This caused a great surge of interest in the village especially with the younger members of the community. We all had a more than passing interest in aviation because of the area association with the aircraft industry, Martinsyde's in Woking, Vicker's at Weybridge and, of course, Brooklands. Most of us had friends or relatives who worked, or had been employed in some way, with the industry. Both my parents had spent the First World War years at Martinsyde's, working on the S.E.5a fighter aeroplane, my mother in the fabric section and my father was the Inspection Department manager.

On the day the air display was due to open there was quite a large crowd gathered on the meads in an area roped off for viewers where the New Cut now runs. Whether we were charged admission or not, I do not remember. In the event my mother would have paid, as I was not a wage earner then, being still at school. The aircraft were all lined up so that we could get a good view without actually being able to touch them.

The most modern 'plane was a De Haviland 'Puss Moth' which was a single-engined cabin tourer high-winged monoplane with four seats including the pilot, who was Pauline Gower, who later became the commandant of the Air Transport Auxiliary in the war to come. The other aircraft were a mixed bag of war surplus military types like the Avro 504, and a few D.H.Moths. Also a Cierva autogyro put in an appearance. This was quite a revolutionary machine because it had rotors instead of fixed main planes. The rotors were not connected to the engine as the helicopters are today, and the rotation was dependent on the forward speed. The main advantage of this system was that, in the event of an engine failure, the craft could land fairly safely by 'auto-rotation', that is the rotors continue to rotate whilst descending, supporting the weight of the aircraft, pilot and a passenger.

The display was a mixture of aerobatics, mock dogfights, wing walking and crazy flying, all very thrilling to us village folk. I also recall a parachute descent from a platform mounted on the main-plane of one aircraft where the gallant airman pulled the ripcord and was dragged off the wing by the opening canopy. All very exciting! Then the big event of the day; unbeknown to me, my mother had scraped together four shillings for me to have a 'joy-ride' in one of the aeroplanes. I was to be accompanied by a friend who was staying with us at the time. We were packed into the rear cockpit of a 504 and there was enough room for two smallish boys. There was no strapping in and in fact I do not remember seeing any harness at all. The preparations were begun for the trip, when a member of the staff came to tell the pilot that the aircraft was to be the target for the height-judging competition. To participate, the public had to buy a ticket on which they could write their estimate of the height the aircraft had attained when the pilot waggled the wings. I remember the prize was a free flight for the correct, or nearest, guess. This meant that we lucky trippers in the chosen plane would get a much longer flight because then it had to climb much higher than for a 4 shilling flip! We circled for some time, during which we had a good view of Old Woking and the surroundings. Aircraft rate of climb in those days was painfully slow, lucky for us! When the height was reached and the wings waggled there was a fairly rapid descent for the landing. We came in low over the village and I got a good look into my bedroom window as we passed over Send Corner. The landing was approached over the Send road from the direction of Unwin's printing works, just clearing the telephone lines, I recall!



Avro 504J built in 1916; after the war it was popular with Flying Clubs.

The display continued for a while, and later my mother questioned me on my reaction to flying. She had flown herself some while before at Brooklands in one of the flying school Moths. A friend of hers in Byfleet offered accommodation to the pupil pilots at the school and many of them were from overseas. My mother's pilot was an Indian gentleman who later went on to be a flyer with an airline. I met quite a lot of the pupils and one I remember was a Japanese, Mr. Shiou. I often wonder what part he played in the War looming on the horizon.

I know that there are not many Avro' 504's left and I still hold a great affection for the type. I would dearly like to see one flying once more. There is an example on static display at the Army Air Corps museum at Middle Wallop and I'm almost certain there must one at the R.A.F. museum at Hendon.

The Broadmeads saw at least two emergency landings by aircraft, which I witnessed. One was the Moth that belonged to Edward, the Prince of Wales, later to become the Duke of Windsor after he abdicated the Crown. That aeroplane was towed to the garage in Old Woking by us willing lads, and later taken by road to Brooklands. The other occasion rather scared me. I had just been given a cap pistol and was sitting all alone on a concrete field marker in the meads pretending to be a fearless cowboy. When this small monoplane flew low overhead, I pointed my pistol at it and said 'Bang!' Immediately the engine cut, and it made a landing in the field. At the time I really thought that I had done something to cause it to prang! I recall the pilot getting out and making some adjustment to the motor. He re-started it and off it went. Even the lads of the village didn't have time to get to the field. That was the only aerial activity that I saw on the Broadmeads but there was more to follow in ten years time when war broke out again in 1939.

Editors comment:

The 'Avro' illustration is a copy of (Imperial War Museum photo Q 67100.) reproduced from *Avro Aircraft* by A J Jackson, Putnam 1990. The Avro 504 series was used for training by the RAF for more than 40 years and was fully aerobatic. After WW1 they were widely adopted by Flying Clubs for training and pleasure flying, and in the 1930s the Avro 504J C4451, had a distinguished pupil at the Brooklands School of Flying, none other than HRH Prince Albert (later King George VI)

'All the fun of the Fair'
Switchbacks & Scenic Railways.
By David Porter

On page 57, in the S&RHS publication *Looking Back*, photograph 126 shows a delightful fairground scene with the caption describing Ripley Fair and the names of two fairground families who attended with their steam driven rides, namely, 'Thomas' and 'Smith and Whittle'.

As a member of the 'Fairground Organ Preservation Society' (FOPS) and 'Fairground Association of Great Britain' (FAGB), (the latter replacing the defunct 'Fellowship Circle of Showground Fairs' (FCSF). I am in a prime position to throw further light on the subject, which I trust will be of interest to our readers.

Photograph 126 shows a steam driven switchback with eight gondola 'cars'. The place is Mitcham Fair, Surrey circa 1900, not Ripley. The ride was one of two machines owned at the time by Francis Bailey, Showman of Battersea London, who died in 1902. Details of both machines are listed below, the former being illustrated in *Looking Back*.

RIDE BUILT BY FREDERICK SAVAGE OF KINGS LYNN NORFOLK 1888.
SPINNING TOP MACHINE POWERED BY SAVAGE CENTRE ENGINE (4HP) No 447.
SAVAGE ORGAN ENGINE No 449 DRIVING A BARREL ORGAN.
WAGGONS TO TRANSPORT THE RIDE WERE ALSO BUILT BY SAVAGES.

The ride had had gondola cars added by 1900, however, not of Savage manufacture and a larger organ had been installed. The ride was exported to France in the early 1900s, possibly following the death of Francis Bailey. It was sold to Marcel Frentzel of Paris who named the ride 'Montagnes Russes' (Russian Mountain). It was last seen in 1921, still in France.

Francis Bailey's wife and son Charles, travelled the second switchback, another Savage built machine, until 1907.

RIDE BUILT IN 1897 WITH CHARIOT CARS
SPINNING TOP MACHINE POWERED BY SAVAGE CENTRE ENGINE No 694
SAVAGE ORGAN No 707 DRIVING A 'LUMONAIRE' BARREL ORGAN WITH 'GUARDS BAND FIGURES.

The ride was sold to Harniess Bros of Swinton Yorks in 1907, who converted the switchback into an Electric Scenic Railway. The ride returned to London in 1921 when sold to Swales Bolesworth of Leytonstone. It was scrapped during the 1930s.

The heyday of the steam driven switchback was between (1880-1910), then steam began to give way to electricity to power these heavy machines, of which there were two examples, the Spinning Top and Spinning Frame, (sometimes called the Pulling Frame or Spiders Web). On the former example the top of the machine revolves in the same way as on the 'Gallopers', on the latter the 'Frame' is enclosed within the ride, which is erected with fixed sides and top canvas tilt.

The 'Scenic Railways' were in fact the same as the 'Spinning Frame' switchback, however the centre truck containing the steam engine together with the complete frame and cars was totally discarded. Only the track and the outside of the machine remained. With the 'Spinning Top' machine the top of the ride was also removed.

The 'Chariot' and 'Gondola' cars were out of date. The converted Switchbacks and brand new 'Scenics' (as they were known) had modern electric cars fitted, always eight in total. In fashion now were Dragons, Peacocks, Dolphins, Whales and dummy Motor Cars!

The rides were magnificent machines, always at the heart of the biggest fairs. Often referred to as Golden Dragons, Proud Peacocks, Diving Dolphins, Whale Island and Gordon Bennett Motors!

The heyday of the Scenic Railway was between (1918-1930). By 1920 another prominent fairground ride builder began to manufacture Scenic Railways. This company was George Orton, Sons and Spooner Ltd of Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire. Not only did Orton and Spooner build new machines they also updated, often with new cars, some earlier Savage conversions from steam driven switchbacks.

Fitting the large 'hole' in the centre created by the absence of the centre engine and spinning frame was a large organ, very often from a former 'Bioscope' show from which they had been made redundant due to the building of permanent 'Cinemas' throughout the country, in almost every town and city.

Behind the organ was a waterfall whereupon water cascaded down over a 'tropical' fall lit by many coloured light bulbs. Tropical scenery was also added. Some showmen referred to these magnificent rides as 'Jungle Scenes'.

By 1926 the recession had arrived and of course the 'General Strike'. Times were hard and the large 'Scenics' required many men's hands to build them up, and take them down! They soon became uneconomical to operate and with introduction of lighter switchbacks, about 1930, the railway was replaced by hinged platforms and the old 'Switchbacks and 'Scenics' began to be destroyed by their owners. Being of wooden construction they burnt easily, together with the magnificent organs and the music, which was used to light the fire! A book of fine fair organ music was known simply as fire paper!

By the outbreak of the 2nd World War in 1939 only a handful had survived. When the government eased some restrictions on funfairs during the war the few machines that remained could be seen at 'Holiday-at-Home' fairs usually held on a Bank Holiday.

When hostilities ceased they found their final resting place at Sir Billy Butlin's holiday camps where they had very short lives. By 1950 only two Switchbacks and three Scenic Railways had survived. Although I have no record of Jack Thomas owning a 'Switchback', only a set of galloping horses. Whittles of Woking bought a Savage built steam driven Switchback in 1898. Again, this was a Spinning-Top machine with a fine organ in the centre. The details are as follows:

RIDE BUILT WITH TOASTRACK CHARIOT CARS
POWERED BY CENTRE ENGINE No 711
ORGAN ENGINE No 713.

By the outbreak of World War One, Whittles had sold the ride to William Beach of Southall London, probably when they purchased a set of galloping horses, which they kept until 1950. The Beach family used the Switchback up until 1939. It was still packed up on its original wooden wheeled trucks complete with steam centre engine, as late as 1947, in the yard at Regina Road Southall. It was offered for sale but nobody wanted such an old machine after the war. In spite of its remarkable survival it was scrapped, however some parts were retained. The organ (overhauled in 2003) was placed inside Tom Beach's galloping horses at Kew Bridge London. The carved rounding boards were fitted to Miss Sally Beach's galloping horses, the organ engine No 713 was installed in the same ride attached to the centre engine, No 627, which the family had purchased second-hand from showman Walter Connelly. Although the ride was electrified in 1956, the steam engines, numbers 627 and 713 were retained together with a fine organ. The ride exists today and is believed to be in store.

Following the scrapping of the 'Whittle' Switchback, the two survivors were the machines owned by the Cole's and Wilson's. My father saw the former ride at Stoke Park Guildford in 1946, ten years prior to it being electrified. A fixed top Spinning Frame machine with gondola cars, the ride today forms part of the 'Thursford Collection' near Fakenham Norfolk. It retains its centre engine and organ and has a magnificent front with carved pillars with the wording 'Scenic Railway'. This is misleading as this has been added during its working life. The ride is, without doubt, a steam driven Switchback.

The latter survivor owned by Wilson is a machine very similar to Whittles. A 'Spinning Top' ride with 'Toastrack' Chariot cars, it spent its last years at Clarence Pier Southsea. Purchased for preservation just prior to the 'Blackbush Steam Fair' in 1974 it made an appearance together with the Cole's 'gondolas' - a very rare sight! It was exported to the USA but returned after a very brief stay there. I photographed it during its rebuild, upon its return to England.

Points of interest are; the height of the two hills and the third compensating rail between the running rails. This prevented derailment caused by centrifugal force at high speeds. Also of interest is the height of the gantry on which the centre truck is mounted which used to carry the centre engine. The ride is currently stored, pending re-erection at Dingles Steam Museum in Cornwall in 2004/5. It has no organ, however; by co-incidence during its final years it travelled with the instrument from Whittles Galloping Horses! both coming under preservation in 1980.

Finally, what happened to the three Scenics? The machines were owned by: Gray's, White's, and Collins. Gray's Motors were at Hampstead, London, White's, Welch Dragons at Cardiff and Collins Dragons and Peacocks at Sutton Coldfield. All, were permanent sites, none were travelled after 1950. The end came to Gray's machine in 1953 at 'appy amstead' as the local cockneys called it! The White Bros (Sidney and George) broke up their Dragons in 1954.

Collins dismantled their Dragons and Peacocks in 1962, although their destruction has never been confirmed! Thankfully the three large organs have survived.

On the local scene Dagnells (Cricklewood, London), Dragons, were reported at a fair in the old cattle market at Woodbridge Road Guildford in 1921. Dagnells sold the ride to O'Brian Bros of Aldershot. I am told it was broken up in Chertsey prior to WW2. Possibly the ride presented by Jack Rose of Chertsey at Stoke Park during the 1930s. During Dagnell's ownership a large board reading: 'PATRONISED BY ROYALTY' was put on the front. The Royal Family are no strangers to the British fairground scene, so much a part of our heritage.

The heyday of the Switchbacks and Scenics was the Golden Era of the fairground spanning 50 years, between (1880-1930). Together with the two surviving Switchbacks, much carved work from the ornate 'Scenics' survive today, kept by showmen and enthusiasts who remember the 'Good Old Days'.

West Surrey Family History Open Day Saturday 6th November 2004

This open day for family historians has been an increasingly popular annual event for a number of years. More recently the venue has been at the Woking Leisure Centre. Last year our society decided to take part and this was a very successful. There was a great deal of interest shown from visitors with local connections; our archive files were in constant demand and many of our books were purchased. So we have decided to have a stall again this year.

The success of any such venture depends upon support from our members. Last year we had six members involved at different times during the day and I know that all of us thoroughly enjoyed the event. To ensure even better coverage through the day, it would be very helpful if we could have some more of our members along to assist, even if only for an hour or so. So if there are any of you with interests in family history who are willing and would like to come, I would be pleased to hear from you as soon as possible. Please telephone me, John Slatford, on 01483 222107.

Ripley remembered in the '50s By Bernard Titcombe

Having had a spell in hospital and now well on the way to a full recovery, I have just read journal No. 175, March/April, which has jogged my memory about the early days when I was a young lad in Ripley.

I remember the Town & Country Cars site as Ripley Carriage Co. with a cafe above. R C C was run by a man called Harry (*his surname is not remembered but he is described as a short dapper man and his son worked with him - JS*). Harry raced at Brooklands and was one of the men who went over the banking and lived! At the rear of the premises there was an engineering company called Legg Engineers (*owned by Arthur Legg - JS*). I also remember the old church hall where we went on Saturdays (*held on Tuesdays - JS*) to watch films. A man came to Ripley and brought the projector and the films. He showed films that were not current at the time. I think it was 6d (3p) to go in. The film broke sometimes and all the children started to shout at the man and throw things at the screen; he said 'if you don't behave I will not continue with the film' (*he was known as Jim the Juke Box Man; well known in The Anchor, and, it is said, by the local ladies - JS*). Some years later, my partner and I working for M B Services, demolished this building. I also remember watching the smithy in the High Street shoeing horses and repairing things. There was also the Co-op (*International - JS*) store in the High Street next to Miss Bush the sweet shop. The garage on the London side of Richardson's store as I remember, in the early days was where they rebuilt grey Ferguson tractors for export, (*this was Blands Garage - JS*).

The old Post Office and general store (*now Lloyds Chemist - JS*) faced the High Street on the Rose Lane 'island', also the Barbers shop run by Mr. Basset. The bus terminal then was at the rear of these shops.

As a schoolboy I walked passed the old buildings of J Gibbs Agricultural Engineers every day to the old Ripley Primary School and recall thinking; one day I would like to work there, and sure enough I did! The school had gardens at the rear of the police houses in the High Street, which backed onto the churchyard. The last shop in the High Street at the London end was Mr. Rust the family butcher.

We bought our meat from him and when he retired we bought his shop. After leaving J Gibbs, I started a business in these premises called B H B T (Ripley) Ltd. We sold lawnmowers, chainsaws, and car spares and also carried out repairs to cars and mowers etc (*I remember hiring a Rotavator from Bernard soon after we came to Send in 1968 - JS*). Next to our business was Wellers Family Bakers, where we bought our bread. They delivered the bread, etc. in a 1930s Reliant three-wheeler van known as 'Wellers buzz-bomb'.

When I was at Primary School I remember Ripley Antiques building opposite as a grocery shop, (*this could have been Arthur Reeves - see Journal No 175 - editor*), also a Fish and Chip shop (*Surey's - JS*) next door. The Gables was then a cycle shop and repair business run by Mr Smithers. I recall the coal yard (*remembered as Doug White's yard - JS*) in Rose Lane behind the house where I lived, (*where Alan Baker lives now - editor*). The yard was owned by a man called Jo Dean, (*he would have been the successor to Doug White - JS*). He also made packing cases and had some engineering machines in one building driven by overhead shafting from a diesel engine. There was a large black barn where he built the cases, and where I kept my car in later years. On the site there was another barn with stables. I remember the fire station in Rose Lane; the firemen ran and cycled, to the station to get the engine out and hitch it to the pump, and then off to the fire.

Chapel Farm in Rose Lane was opposite where I lived and in summer time I helped with the harvest in the fields, stacking the sheaves, loading the carts and sometimes driving the tractor round the fields. Then at threshing time the threshing machine arrived with bailer and a large tractor to drive it. All the machines would be towed by the tractor, including, last of all a little Austin 7, for the men to go home in.

Comments in italics by: John Slatford, Jane Bartlett, Gerald and Joan Chandler plus the editor.

Telephone & Letters Boxes in Send

Changes during the past 50 years

By David Porter

Telephone Boxes or Kiosks

1. May's Corner (see photo)

The current K6 box was erected in 1958, replacing an earlier K4 or K5 box, which was situated in line with the current K6, standing on what is now the road kerb in Send Barns Lane. It has never been replaced, but has been refurbished with modern pay-phones in place of the old button A and B system. This box is currently under threat of closure and removal due to lack of use.

2. Send Post Office

There used to be a telephone box, not of GPO construction, inside the shop, directly opposite the entrance door. It was painted cream and had a large handle on the left of the door. It was removed after Dedmans sold the shop around 1960 to, I believe, the Cozens family.



3. Send Parade

This K6 box was erected in the early 1970s

4. Gladdings Stores, Cartbridge, now Hamilton mews, a K6 box stood against the wall dividing the shop from the bakery building in Potters Lane. It was removed around the 1970s following the building of Send Parade some years earlier. K6 telephone kiosk at Mays Corner

5. Send Dip

A K6 box stood on the site of the present BT box.

Letter or Pillar Boxes

1. Mays Corner

This is a VR (Queen Victoria) box, rebuilt in a modern brick pillar after the development of Box and Holly Court. The previous brick pillar stood in the hedge of Holly Cottage, neatly trimmed by the occupant, Mr Burns. Prior to rebuilding the pillar was unsafe and leaning over. It is unusual in being mounted in a pillar, most of the surviving ones being built into walls as is the case with the two nearest ones, in a farm wall near Pyrford church and at the Plough Inn, Plough Lane, Cobham.



Mays Corner

2. Send Post Office

This modern mailbox replaces an earlier round example, which stood on the same site. The latter itself replaced a box in the lower windowpane to the left of the entrance door in Dedmans' time. The position of the shop door was between the two tubular stanchions, which can be seen inside the shop window today.

3. Gladdings Stores, Cartbridge

An ER or GR box stood next to the telephone kiosk mentioned earlier. Built into a brick construction, it was removed when the 'phone box was dismantled, and replaced by a small ER post-mounted box opposite the site of the Cartbridge Laundry.

4. Send Grove

This box has not been changed in my living memory.

5. Woodhill

Today bolted to a telegraph pole at Sendhurst Grange, this ER box replaces an early VR box that was mounted in the wall of the old Woodhill House lodge at the junction of Vicarage Lane. The lodge was derelict after WW 2, and was demolished in the late 1960s.

6. Burnt Common

The current ER box in a brick pillar at the entrance to Boughton Hall Avenue remains unchanged in my living memory.

7. Send Dip

This GR box also in a brick pillar likewise remains unchanged.

8. Send Barns Lane

This modern ER box, mounted on a sawn-off telegraph pole, was erected following the nearby housing development at Amberley Close and The Pathway around the late 1960s.

9. Sussex Farm/Tythebarns Lane

This is an early example of the modern ER box, clamped to the adjacent telegraph pole. In recent years it has acquired a post of its own!

10. Send Marsh Green

A very fascinating little VR box stood at the end of the Green throughout the 1950s and '60s about a foot lower than the May's Corner example. It was updated with a later ER box of taller brick construction and after a very short life; a vehicle demolished it! It has been re-built and was turned 90 degrees to the right when the Green was kerbed in 1996 with granite kerbstones from the Broadmead; it now faces the road that passes Send Manor.

11. Tannery Lane

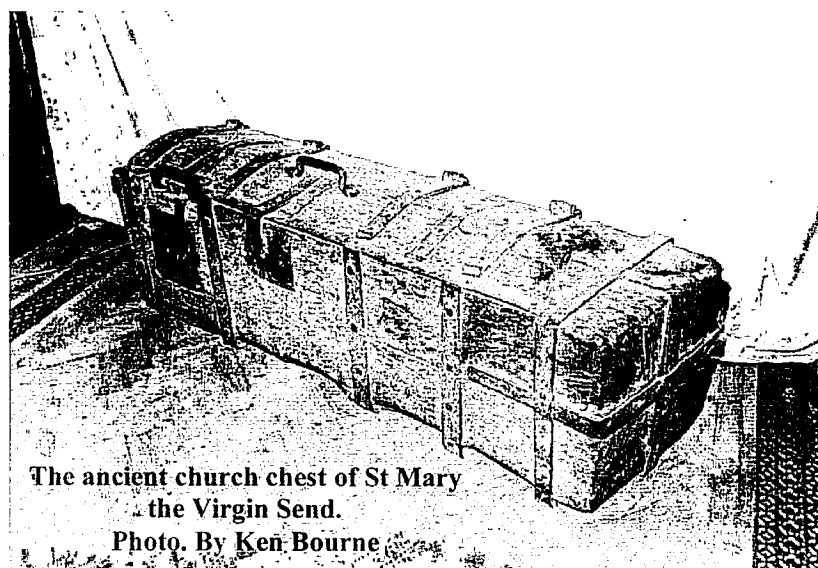
A modern ER box identical to the post-clamped example stands on a metal post opposite Tannery House. This box replaces a much earlier VR box mounted in the wall bordering the original Tannery House. It was lost during re-development in the 1960s/'70s.

I took an early interest in letterboxes as a boy as my mother was a Guildford post-woman during the war. I still have a photograph of her and all the female WW2 staff at the old sorting office in Leapale Road Guildford. Happy memories!

I feel there is a case for trying to list both boxes at May's Corner. Most surviving VR mailboxes are found in walls nowadays, particularly at country railway stations that have escaped the "bus shelter" era

**Dating the Parish Chest
at St Mary The Virgin Send.
By Ken Bourne**

The forthcoming exhibition in the museum, on the topic of 'Religious Organisations', will naturally include the churches of Send and Ripley. A description of the ancient church chest was written in 1979 for the church guide, extracts from which are quoted here; however, because of space limitations and perhaps for brevity, much had to be omitted from the original extensive notes. Since the research took place over 20 years ago, when, as now, it was essential to gain a better



The ancient church chest of St Mary
the Virgin Send.
Photo. By Ken Bourne

understanding of one of the building's most important accoutrements; it may be of interest to our members to learn how the date of the chest was determined.

Church chests and aumbries are the predecessors of the vestry. In a small church, prior to the Reformation, it is believed it would have been convenient for the priest to vest at the altar and the chest containing the vestments would be situated against the north wall of the chancel. It was obviously a matter of some importance since an order was issued by the synod of Exeter in 1287, which, 'ordained that each church should have its chest for books and vestments'.

Early medieval chests were made from dugout logs roughly squared, the top being cut off to act as a lid. The chest was then bound with iron straps, those on the lid being hinged and provided with staple or hasp for a lock. Such chests were usually very plain and heavy.

The chest in Send church is of this type and is certainly ancient, probably 13th century. It measures 65in. long x 19in. square but has been shortened at one end by at least 6 inches (due to a fire in the vestry in the 1960s). It has a convex lid over 3 in. thick recessed into the chest top. The internal dimensions of the chest are 51 in. long x 11 in. wide x 10 in. deep with the lid closed. Originally three locks were fitted but now only two remain. Of these two, the left-hand lock obviously replaces a much earlier lock. The right-hand lock is missing altogether and was of a different type, the main lock-case being situated inside the chest and locked by means of a bolting system through two wrought iron eyes inside the lid. The centre lock was added after the chest was made as the hasp has been placed to one side of a stiffening band underneath the lid handle.

The photograph of the solid end of the oak chest on right clearly shows the tree centre and the growth rings spotted with woodworm flight holes. About 40 tree-ring spaces could be measured on the outside but up to 75 on the inside. Measurements were taken from a cambium edge across the growth space to the next cambium edge

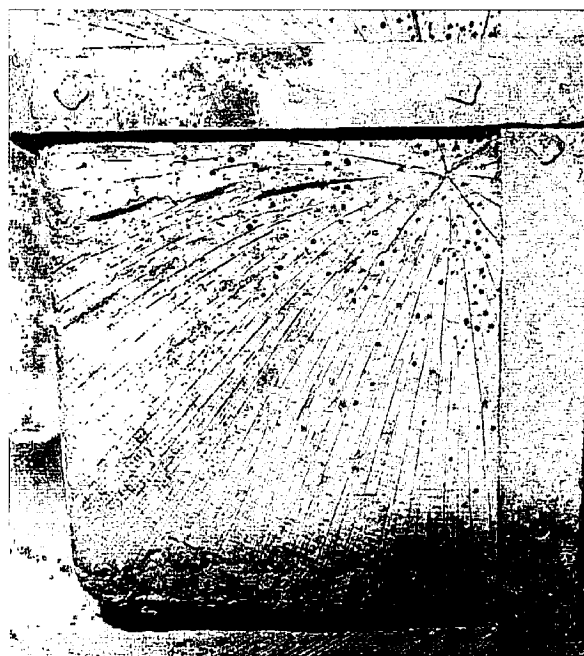
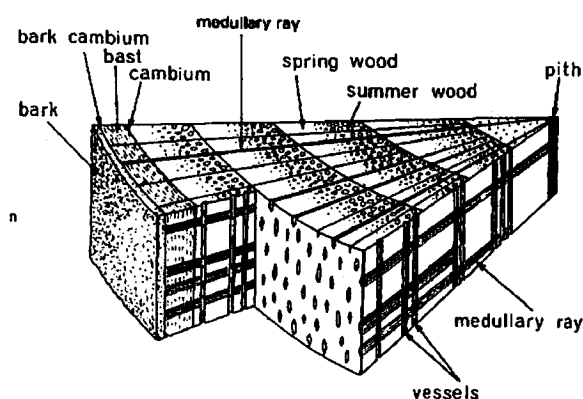


Photo. By Ken Bourne Jan.1979.

Dating the chest at Send.

In 1978, when the Church-guide was being compiled by: Les Bowerman; Jim Oliver, John Slatford and myself; Jim Oliver, (the then President of Send and Ripley History Society), suggested to me that it would be a good idea to try to establish the date of the old oak chest. This was under the gallery, in the choir vestry at the northwest corner of the church.

In Jan. 1979, the late Ken Gravett (an authority on vernacular mediaeval buildings) accompanied by Jim and myself inspected the chest; armed with a torch and a steel rule each of us had a go at measuring the tree growth rings. The rings were clearly visible both inside and outside at one end of the chest, but the metal strap and the small holes on the outside limited the area there for measuring. So the inside end was chosen. This involved working in cramped conditions, and I recall, this initial trial measuring took quite a long time; concluding that a more convenient form of measurement would be needed. Subsequently, armed with a torch, and an indispensable extra item I had obtained, (on Ken's advice), from London, and which I still have; known as a 'Linen Prover', [a magnifying glass on a little stand with a graduated scale 0-10 mm - used for counting fine threads]; I started measuring again and slowly progressed across the diameter (omitting the heart wood). I repeated this measurement and also took more readings over half a diameter at right angles to the first and, in addition over a short span on the outside. As agreed, I reported my findings to Ken Gravett, who, sent a copy of my results to an expert in 'dendrochronology', (tree dating by measurement of annual growth rings).

Over the next week or so, having completed the measurements, graphs were drawn up depicting the growth profile of the tree from which the chest had been made. A copy of the results was sent to Ken Gravett, who forwarded them to an expert in Oxford. Time passed! In the meantime I contacted George E Elphick, whom I had discovered from his excellent book *Sussex Bells and Belfries*, Phillimore, 1970; that, as well as being an expert on bells and bell-ringing, he was a master-carpenter, an excellent draughtsman, and most importantly to me, he had developed a system of dating timbers in churches. His area of study was primarily, although not totally, confined to, the churches in southern England. His book, chapter VII, page 217, contains a sub-section, which describes his method for plotting and analysing data. He measured the width of tree growth rings of structures and artefacts (of known date whenever possible) obtaining at least three plots from each object; the average of these plots became a master plot for that object. From all of these plots, he constructed a 'Master Plot' for identifying undated specimens.

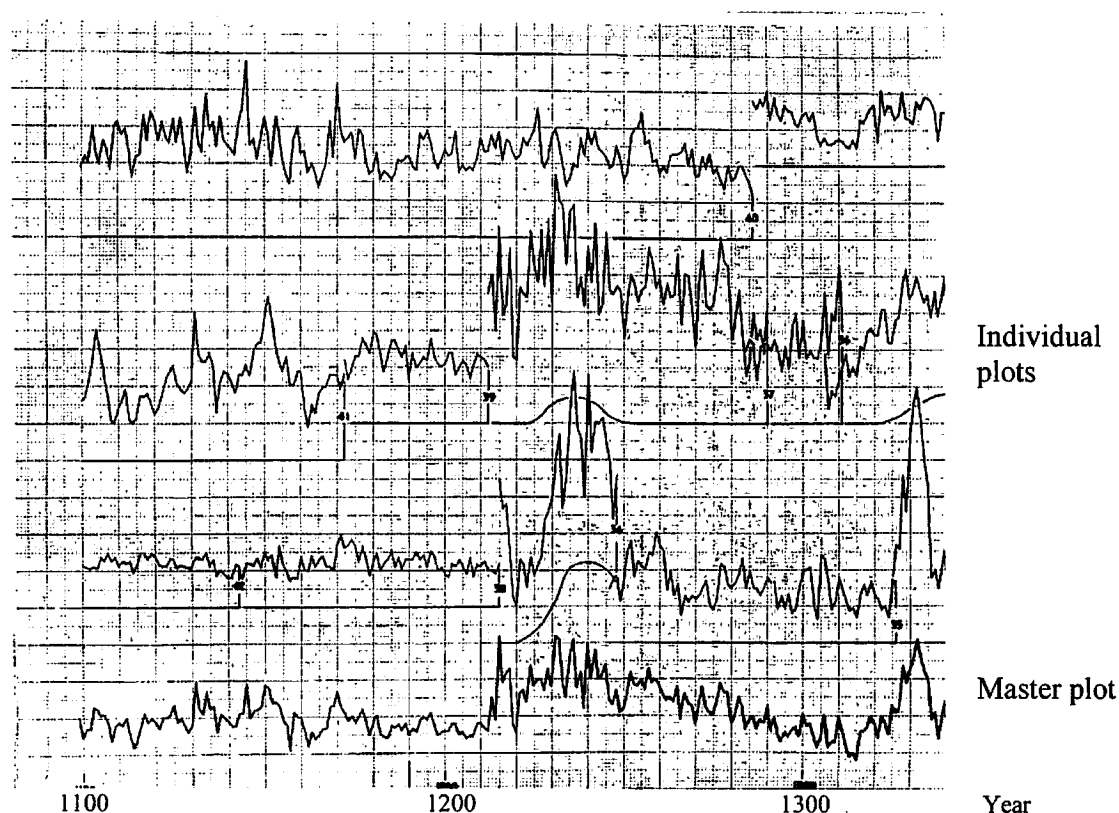
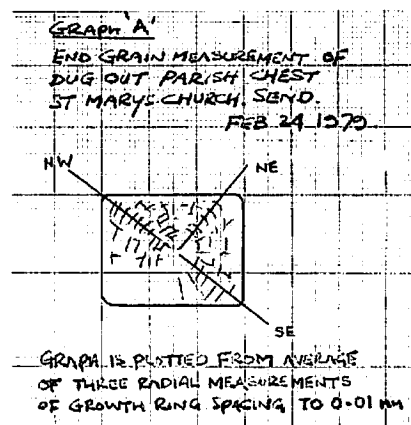


Fig. (1) Part of Elphick's plots

The complete chart is about four times the length of the above part, covering the period (1100 – 1950). As will be shown the years between 1100 and 1200 proved to be the most relevant to my survey.

At Send, a number of measurements were taken, both inside and out, of the growth rings from the end section of the chest. The inside rings, although fewer, were better defined than on the outside and therefore were easier to read; these were used, as it was possible to obtain measurements right across the end section and at a 90° angle.

A tree, during its lifetime will face a variable climate but one side will always be more exposed to the sun or brighter daylight. It grows more on this side, confirmed by the rings being wider apart. Averaging gives an even picture of the tree's growth; it does not affect the growth profile.



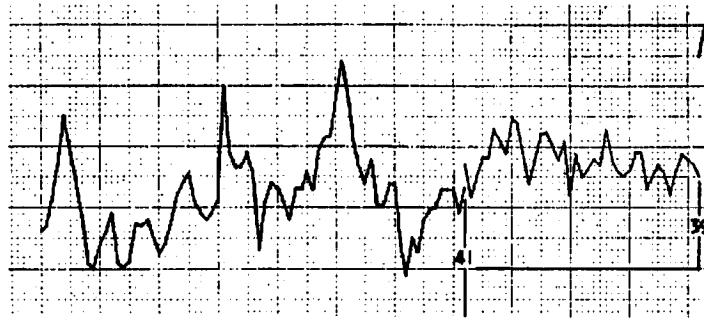


Fig. (3) 'Elphick's plot 41. (1100-1170)

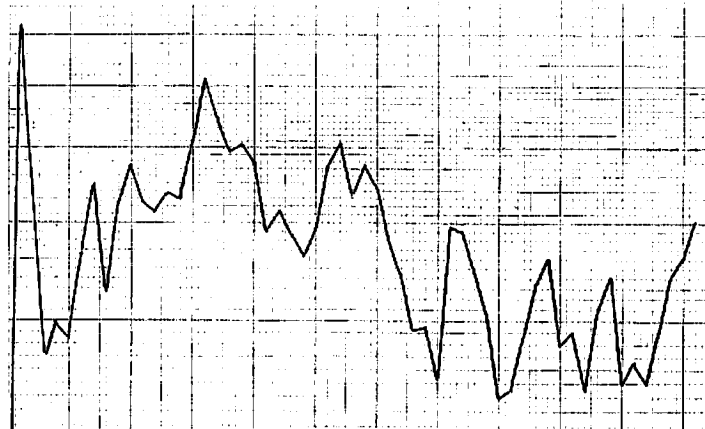


Fig (4) Send chest growth profile.

A good match was found between; the growth profile of the chest at Send (fig.4) and plot 41 in (fig.3) shown on 'Elphick's individual and Master Plot (fig.1). It can be seen in (fig.1) that a number of individual plots are shown above the Master Plot. The former are from, known-date sources. Each have similar profiles and naturally the Master Plot, also exhibits the same (but attenuated) characteristics. Elphick gives the origin of these plots and numbers them. Number 40 was obtained from a chest in the Pyx Chapel of Westminster Abbey. The best match as stated was plot 41. This was taken from the wallplate in St Thomas' Tower, Tower of London. Another good match is plot 42, taken from a 12th century chest in the Muniment Room of Westminster Abbey

What news of Ken Gravett's expert? Well, the expert had retired, but he did reply about a year later in 1980! It appeared that a longer sequence of measurements was required to be compatible with his computer-based system. Elphick had, on the other hand, uniquely produced records for southern England that had not been covered by others in the same depth, and his methods seemed very sound. I was certainly happy to use them. Also by this time, the survey had been completed and a description of the church chest entered in the guide.

Dugout chests are not too numerous but they are to be found; the nearest to Send is in the church of St Michael's, Betchworth. This chest is reputed to be over 700years old and is similar to that at Send. The measured growth rings were plotted covering 45years, (Send varied between 48-75years). The growth profile is similar to Send but is not a perfect match. It was not possible to measure in more than one place on the chest, which could account for the difference. The similarity, however, is unmistakable and it is reasonable to assume that the Betchworth chest belongs to the same period.

In conclusion the visual evidence indicates that the oak tree was planted between (1090-1100) and from this the church chest was made about 120years later in (1210-1220). Coincidentally the chancel of Send church is also circa 1220. The date given in the church guide of 1325 was no doubt allowing for a match with a plot further along the date line but in hindsight the earlier date now seems more likely.

Recent Publications

From time to time a description of a book or books published by the society or member/s, concerning Send and/or Ripley will be featured in the journal:

The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalen, Ripley, Surrey. By Ken Bourne.

A guide to Ripley's ancient church, with its 12th century (1160) chancel constructed to an unusually high standard (for a small chapel). Predating the Augustinian Priory nearby by 35 years; did the Augustinians build it and did they construct a nave at the same time? The author, in this scholarly and well-illustrated guide, attempts to answer these and other questions, and explains in some detail the architectural features of the early nave. He also comments upon the subsequent work of Victorian architect Benjamin Ferrey, who replaced the nave in 1845/6 with a neo-gothic structure.

For the first time a description of the excellent Victorian stained glass windows are included and attributed.

The guide is written to enable the main features of the church to be seen and appreciated readily, and includes references for further study.

THE PARISH CHURCH of



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Two Surrey Village Schools. The story of Send and Ripley Village Schools By Sheila Brown and David Porter.

The story of the first 'National' schools and their subsequent development, in two Surrey villages. Ripley School, built in 1847 and Send School built in 1854, to provide elementary education for all children, especially those from the poorest families. This book is a mine of information, illustrating the enormous social changes that took place in village and school life over a period of a hundred years or more. Well illustrated with many unique drawings and old photographs, it also includes, lists of teachers and pupils at each school.

A valuable social document meticulously researched and attractively presented. A must-have-book especially for anyone who was, or is, connected with either of these schools, or villages.

Published 2002. ISBN 0 9509961 8 1 £10.00*



The above publications are available direct from Send and Ripley History Society at the Ripley Museum on Saturday mornings or from Ripley and Send Post offices during normal business hours.

HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS by post.

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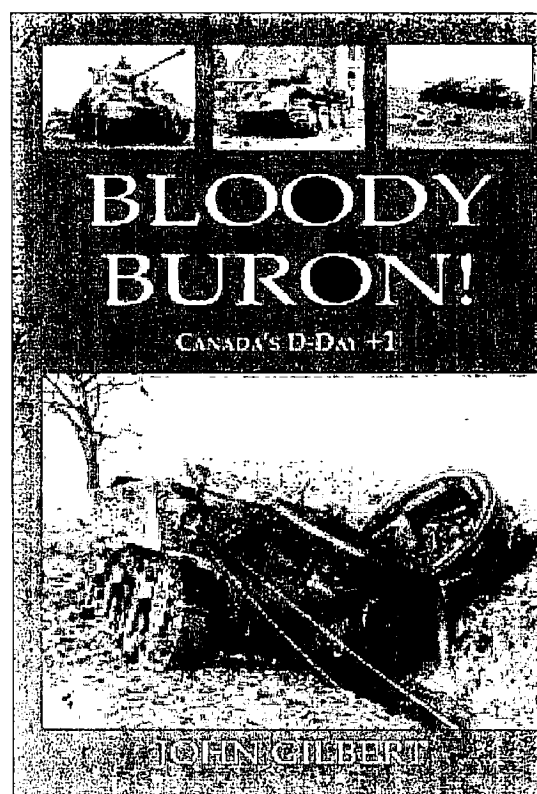
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BLOODY BURON! CANADA'S D-DAY +1

The commemoration this year of the 60th anniversary of D-Day, reminded us, of all of those who lost their lives, not only from this country, but also our allies who took part and paid the ultimate price. This book written by fellow member John Gilbert of Ripley and shortly to be on sale is about the Canadian 9th Brigade who took part in this memorable event on June 6th 1944. It examines particularly the battle on the 7th June at the small French village of Buron, near Caen, when the advancing Canadian tanks manned by The Sherbrooke Fusiliers; supported by infantry of the North Nova Scotia Highlanders, were suddenly ambushed by a colossus of steel hurled at them by the 12 SS Panzer Division, under the command of Standartenfuhrer Kurt Meyer.

This is a gripping, factual account of the battle, from records provided by John's French-Canadian father and the author's painstaking research. The story reveals how Buron, an unassuming and picturesque village, during D-Day +1, witnessed courage, defeat, and fear, and how in the ensuing weeks, the Canadian sacrifice brought victory!

The book is due to be released at the end of the month through W H Smiths Woking at £10.99 or members can purchase direct from the author at £9.99 at Coppelia, 14 Papercourt Lane, Ripley Surrey, GU23 6DS.



Forthcoming Events

Programme Secretary's Report

Unfortunately, our June visit to Compton had to be cancelled as we only had a few applications. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to be included in the outing to Tenterden so that transport can be arranged. Full details follow, including the correct date!

Sunday, 25th July - All day outing to Tenterden, Kent.

Meet at Send Manor for prompt departure at 8.30 am. Maps of Tenterden will be distributed showing car parks and the places we are visiting. There will be time for coffee before meeting at St. Mildred's Church in the High Street at 11.00 am where Mr. David Barrett will take interested members up the tower. We must vacate the church by 11.45 as there will be a baptism service at midday. Afterwards look in the Museum in Station Road car park and have lunch at one of the many cafes, pubs and restaurants available. At 2.00 pm we meet Mr. Alec Laurence, Chairman of the Tenterden & District Local History Society outside the Town Hall for a walk along the High Street. The cost will be £1 per person. Tea, scones, etc., will be at Tenterden Vineyard (Spots Farm) at Smallhythe, just outside Tenterden. On the way, we shall take the opportunity to look at the unspoilt Tudor brick-built church of St. John the Baptist. This is very close to Ellen Terry's cottage which is National Trust, so bring your card in case there is time.

Autumn/Winter Programme

Wednesday, 15th September, at 8 pm, Ripley Village Hall Annexe.

A talk with slides on The History of Addlestone by Mr. David Barker.

Wednesday, 20th October, at 8 pm, Ripley Village Hall Annexe.

A talk with slides on Life in Stuart Surrey by Professor Peter Edwards.

Saturday, 23rd October, 10.30-5.30 pm at Chertsey Hall, Chertsey.

Local History Symposium on "Surrey Newspapers". Tickets will be available in advance.

Wednesday, 17th November, at 8 pm, Ripley Village Hall Annexe.

A talk by Mr David Williams, SCC Finds Liaison Officer, on **The Portable Antiquities Scheme in Surrey.**

Wednesday, 15th December, at 8 pm, Ripley Village Hall Annexe.

The Christmas Social. Entertainment will be by the SADS Barber Shop Quartet. Tickets £3.

If you have any enquiries about the programme, please telephone me on 01483 224876.

Anne Bowerman.

Journal Contributions: Closing date for the next edition is **Friday 27th August 2004**

Notes



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**OPEN: Saturday mornings: 10.0-12.30
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Contact Les Bowerman on 01483-224876 if you
require further information or wish to help in the
museum

HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

'Ripley & Send Then and Now; The Changing Scene of Surrey Village Life' (Reprinted 1998)	£10.00
'Guide to The Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin, Send'	£1.25
'Then and Now, A Victorian Walk Around Ripley' (Reprinted 2004)	£3.50
'The Straight Furrow', by Fred Dixon	£1.50
'Ripley and Send – Looking Back'	£5.00
'A Walk About Ripley Village in Surrey'	£2.00
'Newark Mill Ripley, Surrey'	£3.00
'The Hamlet of Grove Heath Ripley, Surrey'	£4.00
'Ripley and Send – An Historical Pub Crawl in Words and Pictures'	£6.00
'Two Surrey Village Schools - The story of Send and Ripley Village Schools'	£10.00
'The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalen Ripley, Surrey'	£5.00

All the publications are available from the Museum on Saturday mornings, or from Ripley Post Office. The reprinted copy of 'Ripley & Send Then and Now' and 'Two Surrey Village Schools' can also be obtained from Send Post Office.

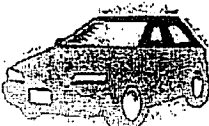
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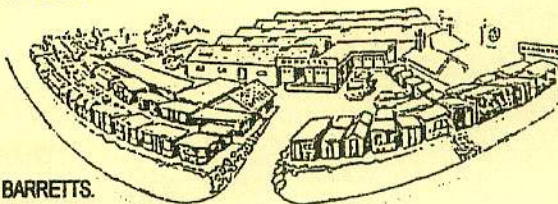
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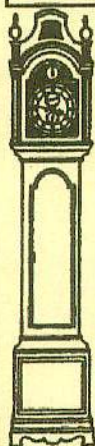


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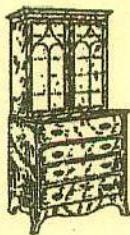
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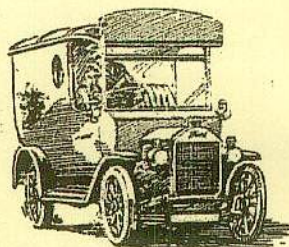
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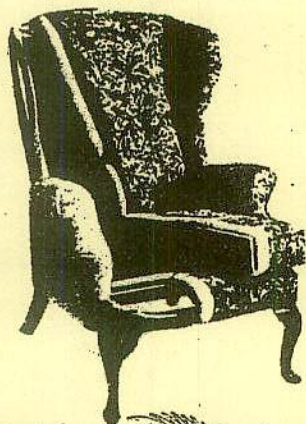
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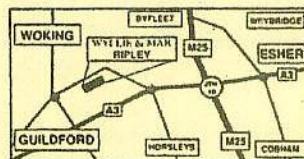
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