

No. 293
November 2023

Send & Ripley History Society



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CROSS-COUNTRY
CHAMPIONSHIPS 1892

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Cover image:

Annabel Strachey and Clough
Williams-Ellis walking down
the hillside after their wedding
in 1915 at St Martha's
Church

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 Seymours Your Property Partner For Life	We are grateful to Seymours Estate Agents in Ripley for their generous contribution towards the production costs of the 2023 Journals
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EDITORIAL

CAMERON BROWN

Over the past year your committee has been working on a number of things that members may not be aware of. Negotiations on the lease for the museum have continued but we do – finally – seem to be very close to signing. We received a grant which enabled us to have 1500 pages of typed and hand-written documents professionally scanned, to preserve them for future researchers. These include indexed Send and Ripley parish records of baptisms, marriages and burials back to 1653 and indexed manorial court records, translated from Latin to English, back to the mid 16th century.

More recently we received another grant to enable our archivist, Phil Davie, to have the services of a conservation specialist for two days to advise us on how we can better protect and conserve our collection of artefacts. She is expected to report soon and give us advice on how to seek further grants for what will probably be an expensive exercise. We will report more fully on these activities at the 2024 AGM but if members would like access to any of the newly-scanned documents please contact Clare McCann or Phil Davie.

Sadly I must report the recent deaths of the following History Society members: Michael Cowan, Doreen Gribble, Jean Pay, John Todd and Joan Vine.

On a happier note I should like to welcome the following twenty-one new members who joined during 2023: Jane Armitage, Elizabeth Berman, Jessaline Caine, Pamela Currie, John Davies, Emma Goodwin, John Hartley, Elizabeth Haworth, Tim Jewers, Martin Keys, John Morris, Sophie Paterson, John Pryce, Priscilla Shaw, Maureen Stanton, Linda & Howard Turner, Anne Turrall-Clarke, Mike Walker, Henry Weston and David Williams.

It is perhaps a little early but all of us on the committee should like to wish all our members a merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2024.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT JOURNAL

Contributors are asked to send articles and letters to Cameron Brown at cmb@aappl.com by 15th December 2023.

Authors of illustrated articles should submit high resolution (300 DPI or higher) jpgs to the editor by email to ensure best reproduction in the journal, but no more than 20 MB in any one email

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ENGLISH NATIONAL CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIP 1892

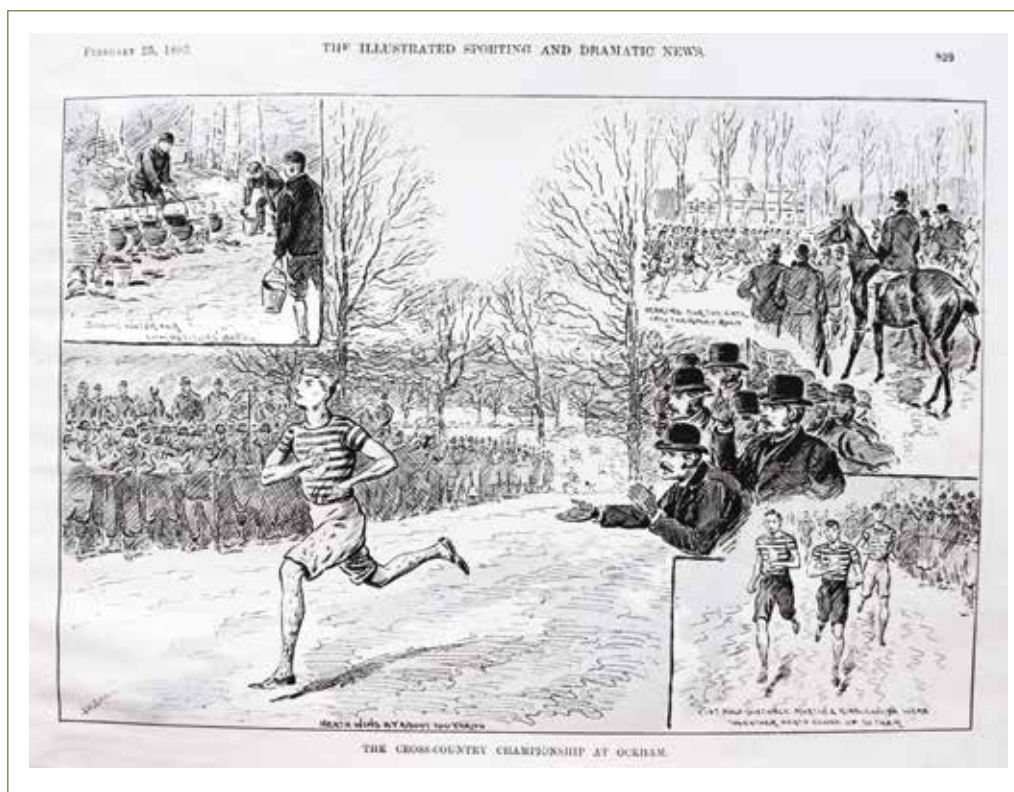
ALAN COOPER

The English National Cross-Country Championship is an annual running event and remains the oldest such competition in the world. The very first championship run in 1876 (known as “The National”) was an unmitigated disaster and declared void since all 32 competitors went off course! That year’s event took place at the Bolesworth Estate in Cheshire on 2nd March but in 1892 it was tiny Ockham in Surrey that hosted the event.

Where did the race start and finish? In the drawing a house stands in the background. In all probability this is a representation of Ockham Park. One image is entitled ‘Making for the gate into the Ripley Road’ and this is probably Buckingham Lodge gate.



Detail from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 25th February 1893: Making for the gate into the Ripley Road

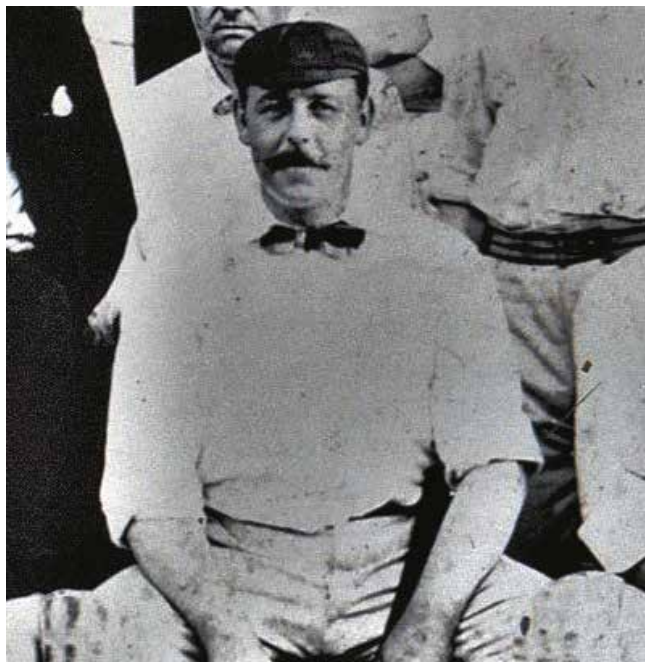


The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News – 25th February 1893

It is also probable that Henry St John Hick Bashall of Elm Grove was instrumental in its organisation. A leading London Solicitor and sportsman of some repute, his influence and involvement in all things Ockham were legendary indeed. ^[1]

At Ockham the men’s senior team competition ended in a tie between Birchfield Harriers and Essex Beagles with Birchfield winning the subsequent run-off by 35 points to 43. The overall winner that day was Herbert A Heath of South London Harriers. ^[2]

Heath was an elite runner and the newspapers of the day featured accounts of his races on a very regular basis, especially his fierce rivalry with James Kibblewhite, whom he generally managed to beat.



Henry St John Hick Bashall, pictured here playing cricket for Ockham



Detail from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 25th February 1893: Heath wins by about 100 yards

The *Evening Press* of Monday, 9th May 1892 ran an article detailing how, at an Essex Beagles meeting, a two-mile race between HA Heath (SLH, Southern and National Cross-Country Champion) and J Kibblewhite (One-Mile Champion) took place with Heath the easy winner. Indeed, it stated ‘...the race aroused a great deal of excitement, and by its result seems to conclusively prove that Heath is Kibblewhite’s superior...’.

‘...Mr Herbert A Heath of the South London Harriers is about as unlike a great long-distance runner as could well be imagined, his massive chest and heavily-topped nether limbs suggesting that he would be more likely

to shine as a ‘sprinter’ and yet, while he may never win a one hundred yards handicap off the limit mark, he has shown wonderful ability at all distances from a mile upwards. His great reputation rests chiefly upon his dual victory in the Southern Counties’ and National Cross-country Championships this year, and upon his successive triumphs at three and two miles over James Kibblewhite. He is about as genial looking a young giant as one could well wish to see, and as he cannot be much more than 22 or 23 years of age, has possibly many more successful seasons in the athletic world before him. Mr Heath is on the Stock Exchange, and is really an amateur...’

Kibblewhite was also an amateur. By trade a machinist at the Great Western Railway depot at Swindon, Wiltshire, he was born and lived four miles from Swindon in the village of Purton. Its village museum has a collection of his trophies, medals and newspaper cuttings and he is also remembered in the village with Kibblewhite Close and the Kibblewhite Room at the Pear Tree Hotel.

Even in those far-off days, there was good money to be made from competitive athletics. It is reliably believed that the leading amateurs of the 1890s were regularly being paid £5 a meeting in appearance money – about £3500 today. [3] Of course where any type of sporting competition occurred betting became an issue but the biggest scandal affecting athletics happened in 1896. The Amateur Athletic Association, formed just 20 years previously, handed out life suspensions to five of the country’s best runners for accepting payments from clubs as inducements to appear at their meetings and thus boost attendances. Neither Heath nor Kibblewhite was implicated. [4]

On a more humorous note, an article appeared some 36 years later in the *Athletic News* of Monday, 2nd January 1928. Writing in his column entitled *Reminiscences* Fred W Parker compared ‘fragile looking athletes of the day’ to those he remembered from nearly 40 years earlier. Remembering Ockham in particular, but for totally different reasons, he added a footnote. The relevant section follows:

‘Ockham in Surrey was a particularly severe and trying course and here the big South London Harrier, Herbert A Heath was invincible. One National and two Southern Championships were staged at Ockham, and Heath – with the Clydesdale heaviness of cross-country runners – won them all. Some runners have strange notions on the subject of race-winning nostrums and one of the



Detail from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 25th February 1893: Boiling water for competitors' baths



Detail from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of 25th February 1893: At the half distance Martin and Kibblewhite were together with Heath close-up to them

Ockham championships introduced me to something quite novel in this line.

The captain of one competing team, a well-known athlete, had great faith in cherry brandy as an unrivalled stimulant for his men. Handing me a large flask of the tasty tonic he begged me to give it to him and his clubmates as they passed the spot where I was acting as pointsman. ^[5]

My 'beat' was a long field containing more molehills to the rod than any meadow I have yet struck and the runners passed through it three times in the course of the race.

Cumbered with a long overcoat my task was not a sinecure, running alongside the runners while they took one, two, or three drinks of the precious nectar, trotting back to meet the next man and repeating the performance again and again. The molehills required a deal of dodging and they were quite an outsize in molehills too.

The cherry brandy team were not among the first three at the finish but one or two of those who declined the proffered flask finished up in good positions. This

may have been merely coincidence, of course, but circumstantial evidence seemed rather to favour the theory that the efficacy of cherry brandy as a means to winning a cross-country championship remained unproved.

When I returned the flask to the owner there still remained one-third of its original contents. It was received with the remark "Didn't you finish it yourself? What a fool you must be!" Rather a quaint vote of thanks, I thought. I rather like cherry brandy, but the idea of helping myself had not occurred to me!

^[1] Today Elm Grove is named Tankards

^[2] www.englishcrosscountry.co.uk

^[3] www.racingpast.ca

^[4] *History of the Amateur Athletic Association* by Peter Lovesey, pub 1980

^[5] Pointsman – an official directing the runners to prevent them from straying off-course

Photo of Henry St John Hick Bashall c/o Tim Hewlett collection

The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News c/o Alan Cooper collection

40 YEARS AGO

CAMERON BROWN

This article, entitled *Afternoon visit to Tudor palace, Old Woking and the Romano-British settlement, Sunday, 11 September 1983* was written by Doris Grogan and appeared in Newsletter 53 of November/December 1983. It seems appropriate to include it in this issue as our talk in October 2023 was on Margaret Beaufort, mother of Henry VII, and one of the best-known former owners of the building we now refer to as Woking Palace. At Lady Margaret's time it was still a manor house, being 'upgraded' to a palace by her son. It is thought that it was further remodelled by Henry VIII and Elizabeth I but by the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) it appears to have been abandoned. The site is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is now owned by Woking Borough Council. It was evident at the talk that some of our members are less familiar than others with these fascinating remains of a once-important building. They are occasionally opened to the public and well worth a visit.

Twenty members plus two offspring met at the crosslanes past the sewage farm down Carters Lane on a blustery, cloudy but dry afternoon. Mrs Nancy Hawkins of the Mayford & Woking District History Society was our guide. She showed us copies of old maps dated 1608 of the Tudor Palace and the extent of its Little Park and Great Park. The boundary ditches of the Great Park can still be discerned on Pyrford Common. She also had part of a Tudor floor tile from the palace and small pieces of pottery, one with a green glaze, and other Roman bits and pieces from a site of the first/fourth century a half a mile down river from the palace, as well as a well-worn piece of Samianware [the most commonly used high quality pottery in Roman Britain].

Woking Park Farm: in passing, we had a quick look at this farmhouse, which has fallen into ruins since a fire five years ago. The original house was a timber-framed building with a very large brick chimney, which had been added outside. There is a cart shed near the entrance, with upright timbers and curved braces, which was also becoming ruinous.



Margaret Beauford

The Tudor Palace: a royal manor on the site was recorded in Domesday Book. The day of our visit happened to be the 493rd anniversary of the signing by Henry VII in the palace of the 'Triple Alliance' between England, Spain and the Holy Roman Empire. Henry's mother, Margaret Beaufort, lived there for some time and had died there in 1509. Henry VIII had visited.

James I gave the property to Edward Zouch, who put a gallery in Old Woking church. Because the palace was in disrepair, he used bricks and other materials from it to build himself a new house at Hoe Place. It was pillaged for other houses in the area, also.

The site was surrounded by a double moat, fed from and back to the River Wey. Our path followed the line of the outer moat and we passed over a bridge over the inner moat and could feel the brickwork beneath our feet. There had been a gatehouse adjacent to this. Stone walls were exposed where the weeds were cut away and dips in the ground indicated rooms.

A building with a barrel-vault roof, mentioned in an inventory of 1327, was entered by a door of the Tudor (sic) period. Originally built of chalk-stone, bricks had had to be inserted from ground level to restore it; also the roof was vaulted with bricks between five longitudinal ribs of clunch. There were about six unexplained square holes left in the walls. (Had this building been a chapel?).

Outside again, we were within three remaining walls of the Tudor brick building (one only about five feet high). The other two were higher than the joist holes for the upper storey, brick built about three feet thick, with small areas of plaster on them. One had a doorway arch, the other archway had collapsed since last year. We went through this gap into the garden where possible descendants of the original apple and pear trees were growing round the edge. The River Wey was flowing by on our left.

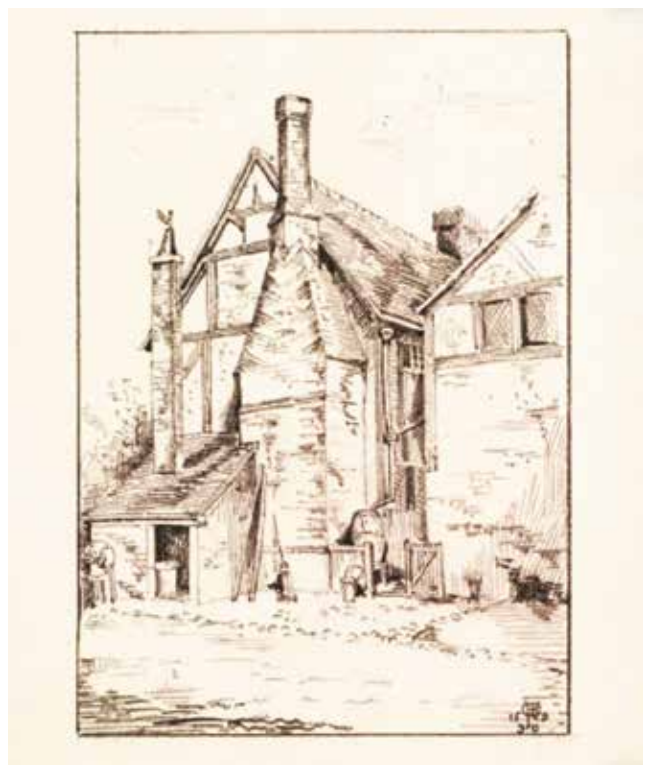
Entering the undergrowth on our right, we found two fish or stew ponds and there was a parallel shallow depression, which had been a breeding pond for fish. There were the outlines of the double moat alongside the wood, one spur to the river up through trees goes into the broader moat.

There is a field with a raised causeway alongside the moat and a circular, raised patch in the centre of the grass, which could have been the site of a pumping station or windmill to supply water to the moat.

We proceeded across a cultivated field towards another stretch of the River Wey. Mayford [as it then was] History Society first discovered the site when two pieces of Roman pottery were found in dredging heaps from the river. Mediaeval sherds had been found at one end, Roman at the other. We looked at a place where an outcrop of clay gravel made the river fordable. Adjacent to this was the 'fuzzies', a local name for a raised area growing furze. Mayford History Society had excavated



Woking Palace in 2023



Woking Park Farm by Frank Cecil Ryde, 1890

here and found evidence of postholes, which formed a rectangular building of 15 x 5 metres – a wooden building with an enclosing ditch. A drainage ditch contained Roman pottery, a Roman key and part of a storage jar – a rubbish dump of the fourth century. The conclusion reached was that it had once been a Romano-British farm of the first to fourth century.

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ENGLISH ELECTRIC CANBERRA CRASH

ALAN COOPER



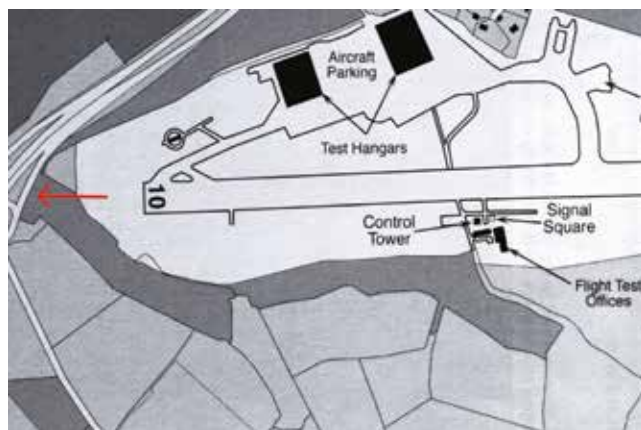
This unique photo shows preparations for the removal of the aircraft from said ditch to be returned to Wisley. Fortunately, the damage to the plane was minimal and before long, following repairs, it would continue in service for many years to come. The photo was taken approximately adjacent to Stratford Bridge



The ditch location today is to the edge of the slip road from the A3 (southbound Ripley bypass) connecting with the Ockham roundabout



A Canberra B2 in flight



Map of the airfield marked to indicate the final resting place of WD935 following its brake failure upon landing on Wednesday, 21st September 1955

On Wednesday, 21st September 1955 Vickers test pilot Peter Marsh prepared to land from what should have been a fairly routine flight from Wisley airfield in an English Electric Canberra B2 (airframe number WD935). In those days, the A3 still ran through the centre of Ripley and anyone from a different county could be excused for having no knowledge of an airfield to the left, as the Ockham Road turning was approached from the direction of Cobham. The end of

the runway was about 50 yards from the road and on that day travellers on this section may have been terrified to witness an aeroplane slithering down the ramped hill at its end and thankfully ending its journey in the ditch at the side of the road without causing any accidents or injuries.

THE AIRFIELD

Wisley was active as an airfield from 1943 - 1972 but in all probability would never have been built at all were it not

for Vickers' chief test pilot Joseph 'Mutt' Summers making a forced landing on the 'Three Farms' site a year earlier. Many test pilots performed often bizarre pre-flight rituals, Summers being no exception.

His nickname 'Mutt' resulted from his habit of urinating on the rear wheel or skid of the aircraft he was testing before take-off. In this way the aircraft was christened, rather like a dog marking its territory. In his defence, he would explain that there was evidence to suggest that a full bladder during some crashes could prove to be fatal! His career as a test pilot began at the tender age of 22 and, ironically, after 28 years of very close calls indeed, he died on 16th March 1954 from complications following a routine operation. He was 50.

Vickers assessed the area and it soon opened as a dispersal airfield for Wellington bombers constructed at the nearby Brooklands, Weybridge, factory. Here initial flight testing took place before pilots from the ATA ^[1] delivered them to the RAF.

From 1944 several prototype aircraft developed at nearby Foxwarren, Cobham, were transported by road direct to Wisley or via Brooklands for final assembly and flight testing. From the end of the war until the airfield was closed in 1972 all the main Vickers types were flown there: the Windsor, Viking, Valetta, Varsity, Viscount, Valiant, Scimitar, Vanguard, VC10, Super VC10 and BAC One-Eleven. The exception was the TSR-2 which was taken to Boscombe Down, Wiltshire, as Wisley's runway was too short ^[2].

In March 1949 an order for 130 B2 Canberra aeroplanes was placed with English Electric, some two months before the first flight of the prototype, of which airframe WD935 was the seventh to be built. A month before it was officially ready for collection WD935 was used by English Electric for what was known as 'canopy off' flying trials. The purpose of these trials was to establish the limitations of flight without a canopy, with only a small glass screen not dissimilar to those fitted to sports cars of that period, for the protection of the pilot.

On 12th April 1951 English Electric's chief test pilot and resident of Send for four and a half years from 1957 – 1961, Roland Beamont, commenced testing and eventually established that he could reach 400 knots IAS ^[3] after which the increase in buffeting started to become a serious issue. Beamont was a highly regarded and experienced pilot, whose World War II service record reads like a *Boys Own* adventure story. ^[4]

Test flying was, without doubt, a very dangerous occupation. During the 1950s test pilots were being killed at a rate of about one a week. Whilst bravery was an important attribute, having a cool, calculated approach was also a necessity to excel in this roll - and to survive.

Computer-aided design had yet to be developed and the use of wind tunnels was rare indeed. To discover how a new plane flew, especially if equipped with such innovative developments as jet engines, swept wings, rocket power and ejector seats and all whilst flying faster than the speed of sound, was fraught with danger. It was therefore not surprising there were so many accidents. The impending Cold War also brought about additional pressures as the race to produce superior aircraft to the Soviet Union weighed heavily upon the test pilot. ^[5]

WD935 was next delivered by the Air Ministry to Vickers Armstrong at Wisley on 8th May 1951 for guided weapons trials of the Vickers Type 888 Red Dean. The plane was first modified at the works at Hurn, Dorset, by fitting underwing carriers and the necessary wing reinforcing on 14th October 1953 with the first flight tests commencing in January 1954.

Red Dean was an air-to-air missile utilising a pulse doppler guidance system. The project began towards the end of 1952 and was cursed with technical issues from the onset, not least being the lack of guidance technology. This latter problem resulted in an equivalent missile not becoming available for commercial sales until the 1970s. By 1957 all Red Dean projects had been cancelled. ^[6]

Weapons testing continued well into the following year but on 21st September 1955 Vickers test pilot, Peter Marsh, had a lucky escape whilst conducting circuit training when a catastrophic brake failure on landing caused WD935 to run off the western end of what became known as 'runway 28', slithering unceremoniously down

the full 50 feet drop at its end into a ditch beside the main A3, with a wing partially blocking the southbound side of the road.

Miraculously, nobody was hurt, the plane only suffering superficial damage and staying safely within the ditch, only causing traffic chaos once recovery was attempted – successfully, as shown in the photo.

The plane then stayed at Wisley before being transferred to the Bomber Command Development Unit at RAF Wittering in 1959. Returning briefly to Vickers in 1960 for further modifications, the next 11 years were spent in RAF service with 151 Sqn, 97 Sqn and 100 Sqn before finally being moved to RAF St Athan for storage in 1971; in 1975 it was allocated to the museum there with a reprieve coming a year later when it was put to use as a ground

instructional airframe for the next 13 years. In September 1989 she was sold at auction to Air Support Services and two months later suffered an undignified end, being broken up for scrap but with the nose section becoming a static display at South Yorkshire Air Museum where it may still be viewed today. ^[7]

^[1] ATA – Air Transport Auxiliary

^[2] *Wisley – the story of Vickers' own airfield* by Steven Skinner

^[3] IAS = Indicated Air Speed

^[4] See Beamont article in Send & Ripley History Society journal 265

^[5] www.rafmuseum.org.uk

^[6] Thunder-and-lightnings.co.uk

^[7] Ukairfieldguide.net

Crash recovery photo c/o John Hutson collection

Other photos – public domain

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NEW PHOTOS OF SEND REC

CLARE McCANN



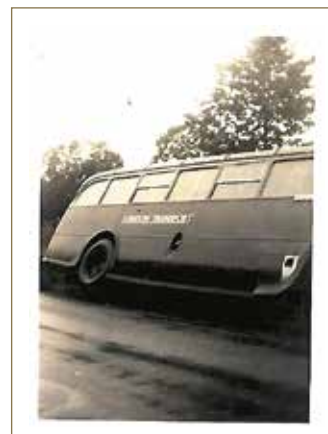
I recently went to see Jean Turner, one of Send's older residents and whose family has lived in the area for a very long time, at least since the late 19th century. She shared various photos with me from a variety of sources, only some of which were used for the current exhibition. The following photos all have connections to Send Recreation ground so are good additions to the archive and also worth sharing here.

The first picture is of Jean as a child on a swing on the Rec with a local boy, Jeff Parsons. Pat Martin is standing on the right and her mother, Edith Smallbone is in the centre. The Rec was not mown regularly in those days and Jean said how much fun they had playing in the newly cut grass when it was.

The second is of a dispatch rider during the war with the Rec behind. We have very few wartime photos and Jean thinks his name was Harold Gibson who was stationed on

the Broadmead and became friendly with her family.

The final one with a connection to the Rec is of a bus. Jean said there used to be a ditch along the side of the road rather than the verge we know today. This obviously proved to be a hazard! Can anyone date the bus?



VILLAGE LIFE

DITZ BROWN



Cover and pages 22-23 of *The Express Saturday* supplement

Amongst several documents which our member Pat Clack kindly donated to the Society was the Saturday supplement of *The Express* dated 11th – 17th April 1998. This contains a complete TV guide (one feels nostalgic looking at that!) and several articles, one of which I transcribe here in full. Entitled 'Village Life' it is about how Ripley's then recently closed branch of the National Westminster Bank became our museum – thanks hugely to the then chairman and now president of our Society, John Slatford.

VILLAGE LIFE

John Slatford, 70, has been with the Send and Ripley Local History Museum in the village of Ripley, Surrey, since it first opened its doors in 1993. As chairman of this tiny museum's committee (it measures a mere 13 feet x 20 feet), he was a key mover in what turned out to be one of the most ambitious projects a small museum has ever undertaken. In a weekend-long operation, the museum's newly donated home - a recently closed branch of the National Westminster Bank - was picked up by a giant crane, loaded on to the back of a lorry

and moved from the High Street to its present site 600 yards away. Now its adventurous past has made this museum the heart of the village.

"The museum idea started churning when we heard that the village bank was under threat from closure. To acquire it on its existing site would have been very expensive, but when National Westminster heard about our museum plans and financial plight, they said, 'You can have that old 1930s building for nothing - but you'll have to move it!'

Most people thought we were daft and would never do it. But I'm an engineer and I could see what the possibilities were. So we did a deal with the village hall which was 600 yards away, raised funds and built the foundations on their land. A contractor was hired with a 70-tonne mobile crane and the old bank building, now the home for our museum, was literally moved over the



Crop of *The Express* supplement page showing Les Bowerman (left) and John Slatford (right) posing on vintage bicycles in front of the museum. Note that the air raid shelter had not yet been installed to the right of the museum nor had the olive tree been planted to its left

weekend. And we even made the local evening news on television in the process!

We're very much a focal point for the village and the museum fulfils an important function in that respect. The other day we had an old lady in her nineties who used to go to school here. She'd come all the way from her home in Peterborough and after she'd visited the

museum, she actually had a surprise reunion when she bumped into an old school friend outside.

Because the museum is so small, we rely on about 30 or so volunteers to work very hard. I'm sure some of the stewards who are all local villagers would joke that they've been pressganged into it, but I know they enjoy supporting the museum really.



The old Nat West Bank building being lifted onto the back of a lorry



The building moving along the High Street



John Slatford commentating on the procedures

Most of us belong to the Send and Ripley History Society, which was originally formed in the 1970s to promote interest in the area and an understanding of its history. The space we have to tell the local story and show our artefacts may be limited, but I think the museum does convey a sense of the area's importance.

Ripley's main claim to fame is its prominence in the cycling era. When bicycle racing was in its heyday, Ripley was one of the places to visit and cyclists came here in their thousands during the Edwardian era.

Visitors of all ages join us to find out about all that and more. There are children doing school projects and older people who have had connections with the village for decades - they're either coming back to research their family history or, like that old lady, simply to reminisce.

I think nearly everyone who visits the building is intrigued by what we've achieved. With this museum, it's not just what we've got on show, it's how we managed to get it there!"

The Society has a great video called 'The Bank Job' documenting the future museum's journey up Ripley's High Street to its new place next the Village Hall. The link to the film, which was re-edited in March 2023 and has a new soundtrack, is <https://sendandripleyhistorysociety.co.uk/the-bank-job-2/>

On the left are some screenshots – not great quality, but hopefully good enough to whet your appetite to watch this fascinating film.

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OBITUARY - JOAN VINE (NÉE PHILIPS), 1941-2023

ALAN COOPER

It is with great sadness that we report the death of our member Joan Vine; she was aged 82.

Born Joan Ellen Philips on 26th January 1941 in Ripley, she was the older of two daughters raised by John and Kitty Philips. Despite being born during World War II, evacuation was considered unnecessary and a happy childhood ensued, greatly enhanced by the arrival some nine years later of sister Ruth. Family holidays to Littlehampton were regularly enjoyed for many years whilst her father worked as an electrician on the neon lights at the nearby Brighton Aquarium.

Educated firstly at Ripley school and then at Send, she was a bright young student enjoying most subjects, cookery, needlework and even woodwork – her family still have a pencil box she so lovingly made as a youngster. She also enjoyed playing cricket with the boys and proudly remembered having Eric Clapton no less in her team.

Joan left school at age 15 and started work at Wisley Garden Centre in the café during the summer months and at Lyons Tea House during the winter. Finally, when having to choose one or the other, she opted for Lyons. She also worked in a tobacconists' and at Woolworths, a much sought after position for young girls of that era.

Younger sister Ruth recalls how she would always be taken to the toy shop when Joan had her afternoon off from work, so that she could buy her an animal to join her beloved toy farm.

It was whilst working at Lyons that Joan met Brian Vine. Brian was serving in the British Army and one day, whilst on leave, came in with his mother to have tea. A romance quickly blossomed and



Joan Ellen Vine

after courting for a couple of years they married in 1961.

Married life began in a rented flat above Miss Dray's sweet shop on the Aldershot Road, Guildford with Brian leaving the army to work as a driver for a nearby builders' merchant.

Moving firstly to Liphook and then briefly to Norfolk, they returned to Liphook where they settled with Joan immersing herself in gardening, notably the annual 'Liphook in bloom' event for which she won many prizes.

Joan died on 8th August 2023 and is survived by husband Brian, daughter Judy and grandchildren Luke and Jack.

Photograph of Joan c/o Audrey Smithers

THE HISTORY OF NEWLANDS CORNER

TREVOR BROOK



Postcard of Newlands Corner, Surrey

Cameron Brown writes: On 13th September Trevor Brook of the Albury History Society entertained and informed a full hall – 76 members and visitors – with an illustrated talk on Newlands Corner. His wide-ranging presentation led us through the changing look of the area, the evolution of its buildings over the past 300 years and some of the characters and historical events associated with it. The following is a précis for those who were unable to attend. All photos also kindly supplied by Trevor.

Newlands Corner is famous for its views and in 1908 Eric Parker wrote in his book *Highways and Byways In Surrey*: ‘The downs by Newlands Corner, above Albury and Chilworth, are the loveliest spot in Surrey.’ Three hundred years ago it was without buildings but was an important trackway

for cattle drovers bringing herds to market in Dorking or Horsham. What is now the North Downs Way was once known as Drove Rd but also as The Tin Way, as it apparently led all the way to the Cornish tin mines. The historic significance of the area can also be gleaned from the remains of an extensive cemetery with Romano-British urns, discovered nearby in 1895. Newlands Corner appears on John Rocque’s map of 1762. The origin of the name is said to be a highwayman Robert Newland. A sign at the Bull’s Head in West Clandon states that Newland slept there – but there is no other evidence of his existence.

By the early 20th century the area had become a popular rural residential location as well as providing second homes for the well-off and a recreational destination for walkers, cyclists and a rifle club. Agricultural work available in the area attracted gypsies and gave

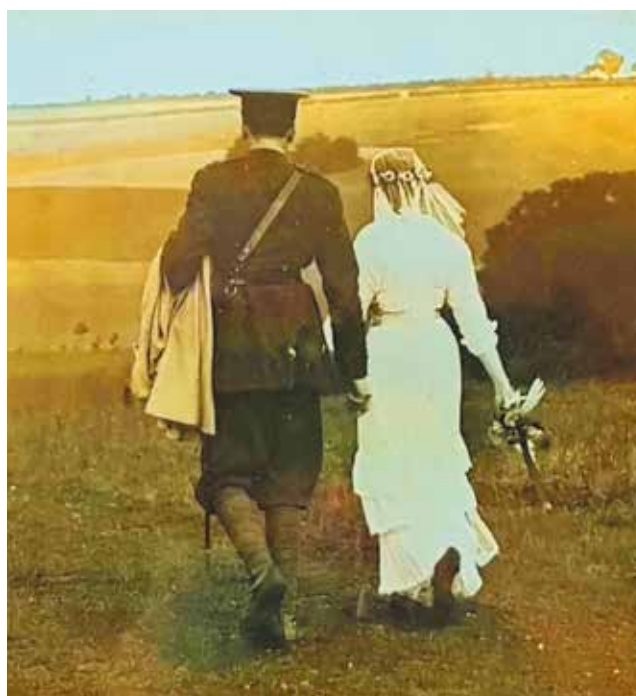


View from Newlands Corner, painted by landscape artist Alfred Robert Quinton ca 1910 and reproduced as a postcard by J Salmon, a publishing company based in Sevenoaks. St Martha's church can be seen on the right

employment to local farm workers. To the north there was Guildford Race Course on Merrow Downs. Racing here eventually lost out to Ascot and Epsom, both of which had closer train stations, but Guildford races ran from 1701 till 1870.

During WWI a military hospital was set up at a large house owned by the Strachey family with an open-air ward for patients suffering from gas poisoning. *The Surrey Advertiser* reported: 'Newlands Corner auxiliary hospital opened with 22 beds. This number rapidly increased... with the aid of outside shelters... From the economical side it was not an ideal place, since it was four miles from most places, and two miles from anywhere. The workers were not within walking distance, in the sense that they were from the towns and could not go home to their meals. Therefore, there was the expense of housing and feeding the staff.' Mrs Strachey commented: "Four and a half years is a long time to be out of one's house. It is a still longer time in which to turn your home into an institution and yourself into a matron." Altogether some eight or nine hundred men passed through the hospital.

By 1921 there were both local buses and coach tours from London to Newlands Corner, excitingly also featuring



In 1915 Annabel Strachey had married Clough Williams-Ellis at St Martha's. This colourised photo shows them walking down the hillside from the church



The former Strachey residence, converted into a hotel in the 1920s

Leatherhead, Dorking and East Clandon! In 1925 the Strachey's built themselves a new house, designed by Clough Williams-Ellis and called Harrowhill Copse. It received a three-page spread in *Country Life*'s feature 'Lesser Country Houses of Today'. They then sold their original home to Roper Spyers, who opened it as Newlands Corner Hotel.

Newland's most enduring story is the disappearance of Agatha Christie in December 1926. Her car was found abandoned 'in a hedge' with the lights left on, at the chalk quarry down Water Lane. A massive public search ensued and divers explored the Silent Pool and over 40 square miles of the downs were examined during the following week. Thousands of people arrived by bus, charabanc and cycle, possibly inspired by the £100 reward from one of the dailies. Eleven days after her disappearance Agatha Christie was discovered staying at the Swan Hydropathic Hotel in Harrogate and even

the *New York Times* carried the story on its front page. Afterwards Surrey Police sent a bill for £25 to her husband, Colonel Christie, as the cost of sandwiches and drinks for police searchers.

What is astonishing, and very noticeable in early photos and paintings, is the lack of trees in the area compared with nowadays. One reason was that there had been huge demand for wood and charcoal by the Chilworth Gunpowder Company along the valley.

In WWII the area attracted its share of evacuees and European refugees, as well as prisoners of war. All the teachers and pupils from St Michael's School in Southfields, south London, were billeted around Albury. Pillboxes and dragons' teeth tank obstacles became familiar objects in the fields and by the roads and an army camp with around 50 Nissen huts, mainly for Canadian soldiers, was set up near Trodds Lane and the Newlands Corner Hotel. Derek Keens, one of the evacuees, said "We spent many an hour at the camp, the real attraction being free chocolate and spearmint gum."

Many of these Canadians perished in Operation Jubilee, the Dieppe raid of August 1942. After D Day, prisoners of war who were Soviet citizens were moved into those now-vacant Nissen huts and most of them were forcibly repatriated under the Yalta Agreement.



These searchers, taking a break, travelled on a charabanc from Reigate



Soldiers at the rather idyllic-looking camp



'There is nothing better than a high, beautiful place with a view, such as Newlands Corner'

After the war, tourists returned, roads were widened and catering and parking facilities gradually improved. The Barn Tea Rooms & Snack Bar was added in the 1950s, the Tasty Burger Bar in 1975 and, in 1986, following the opening of the M25 and the end of the A25 over Newlands Corner as a long distance route, the transport café became Carlo's Trattoria.

In the 1990s Newlands Corner Hotel was called The Manor, later becoming part of the Best Western chain. This century, under different ownership again, it became Guildford Manor, re-styled as a hotel and spa.

The freedom to exploit the countryside was not always welcomed. In philosopher and broadcaster Professor Joad's extraordinarily titled book *The Untutored Townsman's Invasion Of The Country* he wrote: 'Cities

should not be allowed to surround themselves with an uncouth fringe of villas, reinforced by petrol stations, advertisement hoardings, shacks and cafes.'

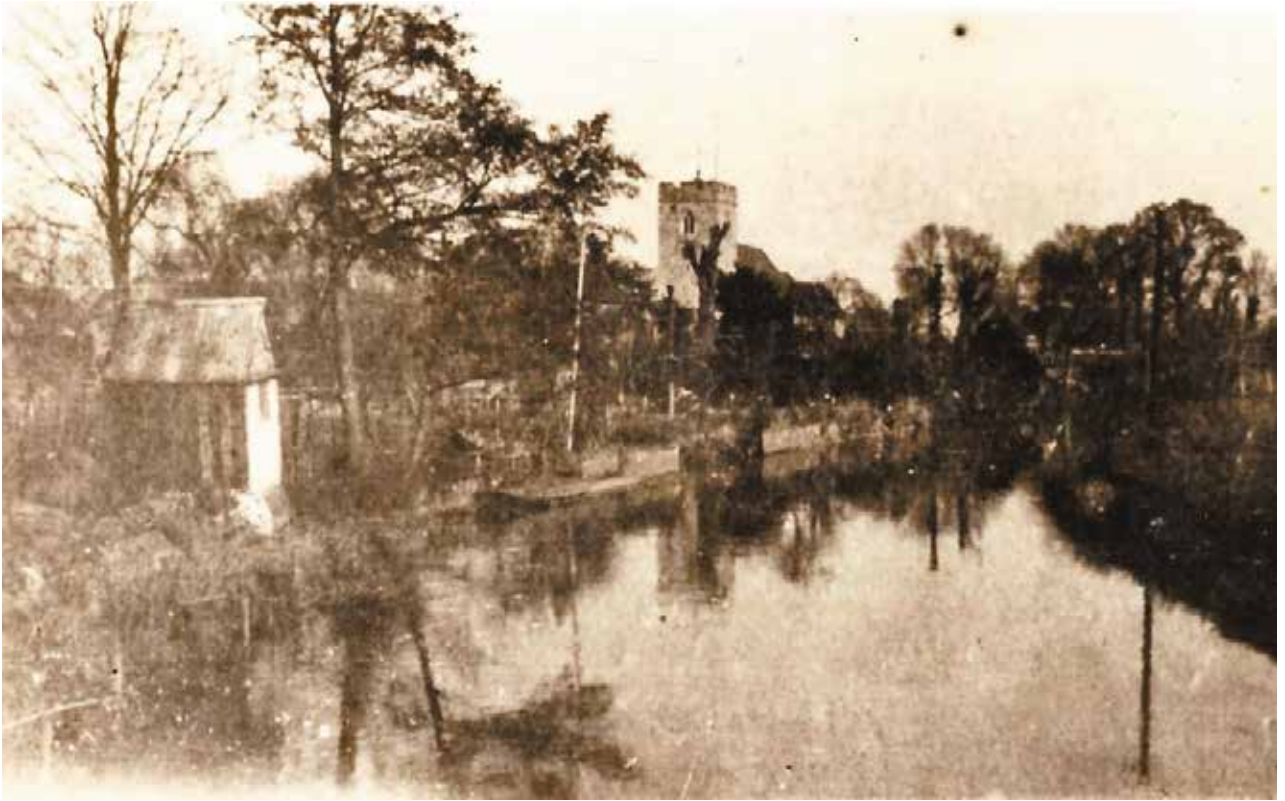
An outcry ensued in 1946 when Guildford Rural District Council planned housing on a cornfield on rising ground in full view of Newlands Corner. This plan was defeated, yet in 2015 Surrey Wildlife Trust, managing the countryside for Surrey County Council, proposed a large visitor centre and a coach park with other attractions on the hilltop. Over 10,000 people signed a petition of objection.

So, let's end by celebrating that, happily, the cornfield remains untouched and to quote Professor Joad: 'There is nothing better than a high, beautiful place with a view, such as Newlands Corner.'

WHERE IS IT?

ALAN COOPER

A RECENTLY DISCOVERED PHOTOGRAPH FOUND AMONGST PAPERS BELONGING TO THE LATE LES BOWERMAN – BUT WHERE WAS IT TAKEN AND WHAT IS THE STRANGE LITTLE BUILDING TO THE LEFT OF THE IMAGE?



WE ASKED IN J292 IF YOU COULD WORK OUT WHERE THIS PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN.

The photograph shows what was once a butcher's shop in Ripley High Street and is now Cedar House, with Tudor House beyond.

Correctly identified by Iain Abbot, John and Fiona Gilbert, Michael Morris, Audrey Smithers and Peter Smithers.

WHAT IS IT?

ALAN COOPER

WHAT IS THIS STRANGE LOOKING OBJECT AND WHAT WAS IT USED FOR?



WE ASKED IN J292 WHAT THIS STRANGE LOOKING OBJECT, GIVEN TO US BY DITZ BROWN WAS AND WHO WOULD HAVE USED IT.

This is a tracing wheel, as used by a seamstress.

Correctly identified by: Carole Morris, Audrey Smithers and Peter Smithers.

Ditz adds: This tracing wheel was in a tool box in one of the drawers of my Viennese grandmother's old treadle sewing machine which I still use to this day!

THE ROTARY CLUB OF RIPLEY AND SEND

CLARE McCANN

“Whatever Rotary may mean to us, to the world it will be known by the results it achieves” – so said the founder of Rotary, Paul Harris. Harris was a Chicago attorney who formed the Rotary Club of Chicago on 23rd February 1905 so that professionals with diverse backgrounds could exchange ideas and forge meaningful, lifelong friendships. Over time Rotary's reach and vision gradually extended to humanitarian service. *Service Above Self* and *One Profits Most Who Serves Best* are Rotary's official mottos and can be traced back to the early days of the organization. That commitment endures today through an organization that remains truly international. Only 16 years after being founded, Rotary had clubs on six continents. In 1914 the British Association of Rotary Clubs was established. In 1924 the association was renamed Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland. Currently there are in the region of 1,750 clubs in the UK, making Friday 23rd June a bittersweet occasion for the Rotary Club of Ripley and Send as it held its final celebration at Clandon Regis Golf Club before closing. Sadly membership had dropped and they decided it was no longer viable to carry on. The District Governor and all past members were invited to remember all the good times. Gill Colbeck, the last President, made a moving speech.

Malcolm Pritchett, a founder member, has written a history of the Club from which the following is taken:

‘The Rotary Club was founded in the early 1970s by Michael Wharton (factory manager at the tannery in Tannery Lane, Send), Peter Conisbee (butcher in Ripley) and Horace Goodrich Meech (estate agent). The first meeting was in February 1973 at the Onslow Arms, West Clandon. A couple of meetings were then held at Boughton Hall Hotel (which has now been demolished). The club's charter was granted in 1975 at the Hut Hotel with about 100 present, including 25 new members. The Hut was on the A3 and was demolished when the road became a dual carriageway.



The programme for the gala dinner held on 23rd June 2023



Michael Wharton

In 1973 the club took part in the District Sailing Competition held at Bembridge, Isle of Wight. There were a few grumbles, as the club had not yet received its charter. We won the competition which meant that we had to organise the races for the next year. One morning Derek Rosling, Michael Wharton and I flew down to Bembridge in the Hanson Trust corporate helicopter based at Brooklands to make arrangements for the next competition with the Bembridge sailing club. We were back by lunchtime!

We met weekly at the Talbot Hotel, Ripley until one day the Health Inspector closed the kitchen so we were forced to try several other locations, including the squash club in West Byfleet, Thatchers Hotel, a pub in Horsley and the Old Hall Hotel, until settling for many years at Clandon Regis Golf Club. We moved back to the Talbot in the 2010s as the golf club was unable to host us on winter evenings.

Membership grew to the mid-30s and we were able to provide a wide range of community support. We did five nights of 'Santa runs' at Christmas time, towing the sleigh in all weathers around Clandon, Burnt Common, Send Marsh and Ripley. On one night it rained so hard that the loudspeakers gurgled in desperation and gave up. Every year successive generations of children put out signs on the pavement exhorting Santa to stop at their houses.

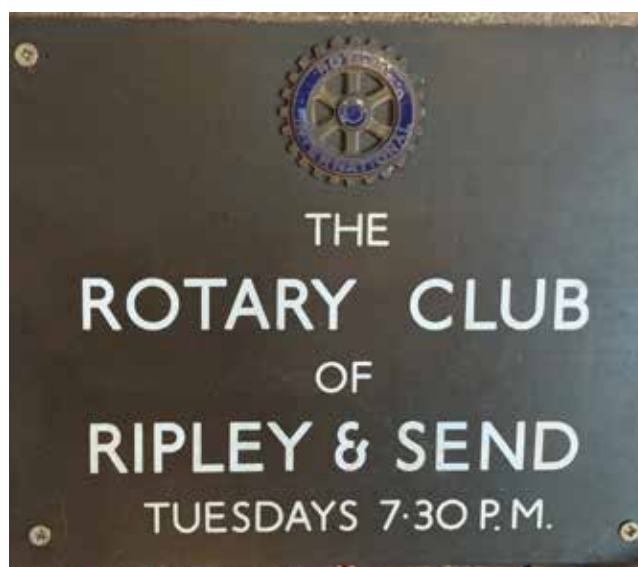
In 1988 we were approached to help with the administration of the annual Ripley Event on Ripley Green. Within a year we were persuaded to take over fully and we ran it very successfully for more than 30 years. It became a large village fair with a jazz band, pony rides, classic cars, old tractors, a dog show, teas, ballet dancing demonstrations and up to 100 stalls. However, by 2019 with increasing marshalling and traffic management problems we could not provide sufficient resources and so reluctantly decided to close it.

Unfortunately, the day before the final Event, as we were marking out the pitches, the field was invaded by travellers' caravans. The police evicted them to the car park, but the risks were too high and we were forced to cancel the Event.

A number of local organisations, including the Parish Council, were then approached to continue the Event, but none was prepared to undertake it.



Peter Conisbee



The Rotary sign at the Talbot

In the summer of 1984 four members of the French Rotary Club of Confolens Charente-Limousine joined us for a barbeque. The following year a big group from Ripley and Send went to France. At a grand dinner Ripley and Send became officially twinned with the Confolens club. The entertainment and gastronomy on the night were phenomenal. We presented a specially-commissioned silver model of the Confolens bridge linking to the Talbot at Ripley and this remains on display in their club. There were a number of subsequent visits to France and the French reciprocated by visiting us. The *bonhomie* and *entente cordiale* continue to this day. In 1990 we twinned with another club, Capelle aan den IJssel in Holland. A memorable visit was when they took us to Arnhem. Our member Peter Gammon had been a glider

pilot during Operation Market Garden and was one of the few to get back safely. The Dutch members and their wives greeted him very warmly and impressed on him how extremely grateful they were for the liberation.

The Confolens club joined us for the opening of the Memorial Avenue of Trees in Send, attended by the Mayor of Guildford and the parish council. In 2023 our club funded a memorial bench in Confolens.

One dinner with the visiting Confolens club was also memorable. The highlight was our member Peter Willison dressed as a French onion-seller, complete with a string of onions and a bicycle. The irony was not seen by our visitors as he proceeded to tell jokes in both languages, which was quite a challenge when the punch lines are not the same. At the farewell gala dinner a rather emotional zoom call was held with the Confolens Rotary Club to say their goodbyes.

In 2022 we sponsored three sets of first aid classes in Send and trained 70 people in resuscitation. We installed public defibrillators at two pubs in Send. We also supported a craft fair and set up two pop-up food banks. Over the years we have provided support to the Send May Fair and did so for the last time in May 2023.

The club has always had a strong ethos for helping youth and local charities. For several years we ran a 'debathethon' for schools in the old Guildford Guildhall, with eminent judges, including the Bishop of Dorking and Michael Burke of the BBC. For three years we sponsored candidates from Trinidad for the Rotary Youth Leadership course.

Since inception considerable funds have been collected to help a wide range of local charities. We have also supported numerous international projects, particularly the global End Polio campaign, Water Aid, Shelter Box and Rotary Foundation.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

John Purser writes:

The article in J292 was another fascinating and well-researched history. Just to add that the hall alongside the building behind the original Ryde House School (demolished in 1938 - photo on page 19 of J292) was a fairly substantial corrugated iron shed used as a gymnasium. It was the site on the lefthand side of what is now the Co-op and was used during the 1940s as the workshop for J Gibbs. However, it was very low and hopeless when combine harvesters were introduced – Gibbs supplied some of the first Massey Harris versions which were part of the Lend-Lease deal with the USA.

When the original workshop in the yard behind the Co-op was built, in the early '50s, the old gym was used for storage. It was replaced by the extension (now forming part of the Co-op) when that was built in the early 1960s. That was actually the first real showroom Gibbs had; the original building had room for a tractor (not that there were any in wartime Britain) and the counter.

Across the road at the Anchor the hall was also used by Gibbs for their Christmas staff party. I can only remember one – maybe it was the only one ! Way before that it was used for an annual slap-up dinner for the road-repairers of the Portsmouth Road who were part sponsored by the

well-to-do cyclists who frequented the Anchor before the Great War. One of those sponsors was Lionel Martin, who became the 'Martin' in Aston Martin. His names lives on at Trinity Engineering, across the road.

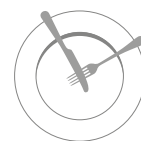


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THE CLOCK HOUSE

NEW ACQUISITION

CLARE McCANN



Send bell-ringers on Mr Goldstone's 65th birthday

Our member Celia Mappes visited the museum in October and brought this photograph. She was born and grew up in Ripley but now lives in Germany and was over visiting.

The photo was probably taken about 1953 or '54 on the occasion of Mr Goldstone's 65th birthday - he was the bell captain for the Send bell-ringers.

STANDING, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT ARE:

Gill Bowers, Joan Mussell, Betty Brown, Celia Baker (now Mappes), Eileen Exall, Angela Clark, Heather Murrell, Kitty Larnecroft and Sheila Burns.



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CHARLES GREGORY RWS

ALAN COOPER



Annie Gregory (left) and Charles Gregory (right)

The *carte de visite* (known to collectors simply as CDVs) was a format of small photographs patented in Paris in 1854 by photographer Andre Disderi. The photos, albumen prints on thin paper glued to a slightly larger and thicker card of 2 ½ x 4 inches, were the size of a visiting card. They were not popular in England until John Mayall of Regent Street, London, was given royal approval to publish a series of portraits of the royal family in 1860.

Advances in photographic technology during the 1870s and 80s sounded the death knell for the CDV and with the introduction of the 'Kodak' in 1888 and the 'Brownie' in 1900 photography became available to the masses and what had been the mainstay of the professional portrait photographer quickly faded into oblivion. ^[1]

I recently discovered an accumulation of CDV photographs for sale and upon closer inspection realised that six of them had a very interesting connection to Ripley – namely Charles Gregory, the artist who lived at Bridgefoot House from 1880-1894, and his wife Annie.

Charles Gregory was born in Paddington, Middlesex in 1849, the second of eleven children of Edmund and Emma Gregory. Following the birth of their third child George in 1851, Edmund and Emma emigrated to Australia where the next eight children were born.

His parents appreciated that he possessed artistic talent from a young age and had the foresight and money to enable him to study at the schools of the Royal Academy, where he particularly excelled in watercolour painting.

He returned to live in England at the age of 23 in 1873 leaving behind a considerable number of watercolours, mainly of merchant ships but also, and most importantly, studies of native birds, many of which were unrecorded at that juncture. These paintings are to be found in the library of the La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. ^[2]

Two years later, in 1875, Charles married Annie Marshall and had four children, Guy; b.1876 in Chelsea, Hugh; b.1879 in Bayswater, Winifred; b.1881 and Jessie; b.1890 both in Ripley. First-born Guy died in 1891 aged fifteen and is buried at St Mary Magdalen, Ripley.

Whilst his interest in both marine and bird studies remained all his working life he is best remembered as a painter of landscapes, predominantly focusing on rural life in the small villages of the southern counties.

His return to England saw him undertake a hugely ambitious project involving regular travel along the length and breadth of the south coast to produce a large series of landscapes spanning Southern England.

After many years' work, he finally exhibited *Summertime on the South Coast from Rye to Penzance* at the Dowdeswells Gallery in New Bond Street in 1887.

This proved to be highly popular and resulted in his works appearing at the Royal Academy and enabling him to become a full member of the Royal Watercolour Society. ^[3]

In 1895 the family relocated to Witley, Surrey and in the days preceding WWI daughter Winifred became a



Clockwise from top left: Guy Gregory. Guy Gregory – aged 4 years, 8 months. Hugh Gregory. Winifred Gregory – aged 2 years, 6 months



Bridgefoot House, the family home from 1880 - 1894



An example of Charles' work from the 'South Coast' period



An example of Charles' work from his days in Australia

school-teacher of domestic science while Jessie studied as an art student albeit with little or no success it would appear. Hugh fared a little better, becoming an undergraduate at Merton College, Oxford after which he worked as a schoolmaster teaching modern languages before finally joining the London Stock Exchange.

Charles and Annie finally moved to Marlow, Buckinghamshire where he died at Marlow Cottage Hospital in 1920. Very few artists achieve fame and fortune during their own lifetime and Charles Gregory was no exception. Today, his paintings change hands for hundreds, sometimes thousands of pounds. Two months after his death probate granted to his widow Annie amounted to £184 17s 1d (around £9000 today) perhaps illustrating the financial realities of the life of the impoverished artist.

^[1] Wikipedia.org

^[2] Design and art Australia online

^[3] Gladwellpatterson.com

Bridgefoot House photo c/o Send Ripley History Society archives

CDV Photos c/o Alan Cooper collection

Paintings c/o public domain

THE MANY HALLS OF RIPLEY – CONTINUED

CLARE McCANN

Journal 291 included an article about Ripley's various village halls and meeting places.

Shortly after publication I was sorting through some items in storage and came across this fundraising flyer for the original Ripley village hall, known as Victory Hall.

As is often the case, the flyer shows the day and month of the fundraiser but not the year. We can, however, date it to 1951 and if anyone has a photograph of the cycle polo match that would be amazing - it certainly sounds fun.

The advertisements round the flyer are also interesting as they give us a snapshot of local businesses. We have photographs of most of them but personally I am unaware of the premises of either SS Smithers or WJ Bassett - can anyone tell us more? Finally, congratulations to Richardsons as the only business still going, albeit no longer selling fruit and veg.

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MUSEUM NEWS

CLARE McCANN

The final exhibition of the year, from November and entitled *A Tale of Two Villages*, is a more general look at the history of Send and Ripley with a chance to show off a few new artefacts and some that rarely see the light of day. One new acquisition is an aerial photo of Send circa 1966, so do come along and see what you can spot.

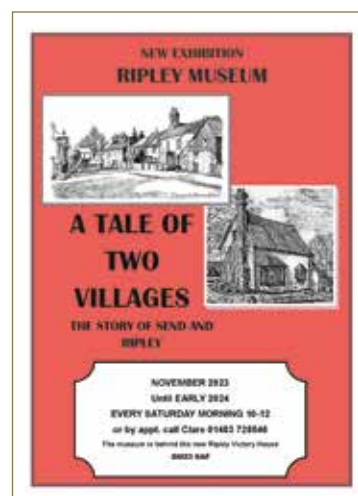


Please don't forget that the plan for early next year is an exhibition of the work of locally-born artist Frank Brown. Many people in Ripley have paintings by him, so please

let me know if you are prepared to loan or let us photograph your picture(s). I am particularly interested in those that feature local scenes or characters.

Thank you for your support and do let me know if you would like to help.

Clare 01483 728546 or cricketshill@hotmail.com



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of the month at the Ripley Bowling Club in Rose Lane, GU23 6NE. Doors open for all evening talks at 7.30pm for an 8.00 start. Tea/coffee and wine available. NB – payment by cash only.

DATES - 2023	EVENTS
Wednesday 13th December 2023	Christmas Social. MEMBERS ONLY: 7.30 START
DATES - 2024	EVENTS
Wednesday 10th January 2024	David Rose talk: <i>Woking and Send Nurserymen</i>
Wednesday 14th February 2024	Valentine Surprise Evening with Quiz
Wednesday 13th March	AGM. Members only. Please Note 7.30 start time. Cheese and wine followed by new videos
Wednesday 10th April	Film by Circle 8: <i>The Pilgrims' Way</i>
Tuesday 21st May	14:00 Outing to Horsley Towers
Tuesday 11th June	Outing to High Clandon Vineyard
July	Members only BBQ TBA
Wednesday 11th September	An illustrated talk: <i>Tillingbourne Tales</i>
Wednesday 9th October	Kathy Atherton talk: <i>Literary Mole Valley</i>
Wednesday 13th November	Talk by Nick Bale: <i>William Harvey – The Ladieswear Specialist</i>
Wednesday 11th December	Christmas Social. MEMBERS ONLY

Further details can be obtained from Helena Finden-Browne helena_findenbrowne@compuserve.com

SEND & RIPLEY LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS



THE MUSEUM IS BEHIND VICTORY HOUSE AND TO THE RIGHT OF THE NEW VILLAGE HALL WHICH IS CURRENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

OPEN: SATURDAY MORNINGS 10.00 – 12.00

We can arrange to open at other times by appointment

Please contact Clare McCann on 01483 728546 or cricketshill@hotmail.com for further information or if you wish to help in the museum

HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

History Colouring Book (price includes felt tips and a carrier bag)		£5.00
Ripley & Send Then and Now; The Changing Scene of Surrey Village Life	Reprinted 1998/2006	£10.00
Guide to The Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin, Send		£1.00
Then and Now, A Victorian Walk Around Ripley	Reprinted 2004/07	£2.50
The Straight Furrow, by Fred Dixon		£1.50
Ripley and Send – Looking Back	Reprinted 2007	£9.00
A Walk About Ripley Village in Surrey	Reprinted 2005	£2.50
Newark Mill Ripley, Surrey	Reprinted 2012	£4.00
The Hamlet of Grove Heath Ripley, Surrey	Reprinted 2005	£4.00
Ripley and Send – An Historical Pub Crawl in Words and Pictures	New Edition 2017	£5.00
Two Surrey Village Schools – The story of Send and Ripley Village Schools		£10.00
The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalen Ripley, Surrey		£2.00
Memories of War		£5.00
Map of WW2 Bomb Sites in Send, Ripley and Pyrford		£2.50
Memories of War and Map of Bomb Sites		£6.50
Send and Ripley Walks (revised edition)		£7.50
Newark Priory: Ripley's Romantic Ruin		£5.00
Special Offer: Purchase Newark Priory and St Mary's Ripley		£5.50
Heroes All		£20.00

All the publications are available from the museum on Saturday mornings, from Pinnock's Coffee House, Ripley, or via the Society's website www.sendandripleyhistorysociety.co.uk or email srhistorysociety@gmail.com



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