

Send & Ripley History Society



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GERALD SANGER'S
DIARIES

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History Society

Cover image:

This 'shoe' was found in the roof of I Sedgleys Cottages, Potters Lane, Send by the late Bob Goddard when carrying out repairs - originally thought to be a shoe last it was later identified as part of an ancient game of Knur and Spell. Donated to the Society by Bob & Betty Goddard
© Cate Davey
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EDITORIAL

JOHN SLATFORD, PRESIDENT

Now we are in our 42nd year, it is interesting to reflect upon all that has changed within our Society and upon all that has been achieved. We have made detailed studies of many, if not most, of our older properties and reported on these in our Newsletters and Journals. We have researched the lives of many local families, often helping descendants from many parts of the world and reported on many of these. We have recorded and continue to record living memories of older residents living all round our area. Our Journals also continue to feature many other topics of local interest.

One might think from all this that there is little or no more historical research into our area to be done. This is just not so. New enquiries, new ideas and new research projects seem to surface with regularity. The problem is that our researchers are getting older and fewer and our thriving membership doesn't produce the younger members needed to replace us. Understandably, everyone is just too busy nowadays.

Enough of my hobby horse! As one of our few remaining founding members, I am forever proud of everything that our Society has achieved and the reputation for excellence that I believe we have earned.

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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT JOURNAL

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EXTRACTS FROM GERALD SANGER'S DIARIES - THE SVENHONGER DIARIES

EDITED BY CLARE MCCANN

Gerald Sanger was born on the 23 May 1898 in Surbiton and by 1938, when the first diary begins, he was living partly in London and weekendng at Willingham Cottage in Sandy Lane, Send. The family hailed from Tisbury in Wiltshire but had come to London in 1803. It seems that one brother, James, had been press-ganged and had seen action at Trafalgar on the Victory. With his demobilisation pay, James founded Sanger's Circus. The other brother, John, had found work in a chemist's shop and had prudently married the boss's daughter. It was through this branch of the family that Gerald Sanger was descended. Gerald's father did not go into the family chemist business but became a civil servant and later Mayor of Surbiton.

The diaries are called the Svenhonger diaries, a joke derived from an ancestor, possibly called Severn-hanger. The three published volumes of Gerald Sanger's diaries have been edited by his son Clyde and they cover the period leading up to the war and run on until 1946. Apparently other diaries exist but these have never been published. A lot of the entries concern British Movietone News, which Gerald was involved in from its inception in 1929 and his friendship with well-known people of the day, including Lord Rothermere, the newspaper magnate and, of course, the momentous events of the war.

From the Society's perspective the main interest must lie in his accounts of village life in the Second World War. How, for example, the forming of the Home Guard in 1940 caused a partial or temporary democratisation in village life – men from all walks of life working together. The diaries also shed light on what he terms his 'often clouded' relationship with his wife Hope, who her son describes as a woman of strong views and character.

It has not been easy to decide how to present this material but I have decided to leave it mainly in chronological order and add little bits of annotation, some of which have come from Clyde, who has been kind enough to read through my notes. This will certainly mean the material will not all appear in one journal.

1938. THE GATHERING STORM

January found the Sangers at Willingham Cottage (and not in North America, as was more usual, as his wife, Hope Sanger, had relatives there). Gerald was anticipating war and coping with a personally uncertain financial situation as a result of which they were having to consider relinquishing their London house in Eaton Terrace. He comments

“Hope has started with great energy to look over houses. Action is a big thing in my wife's life. She doesn't enjoy the pleasures of talk; she is absolutely miserable during the period of rumination which precedes action.”

The diaries frequently feature comments about the flowers and blossom in the garden at Send and, in this case, that of their neighbour, Leo Broadwood, who had told them they were exempt from tithe in perpetuity (he gives no further details). In March, amongst details of tennis and idyllic weather, he comments on local garage owner, Bill Challen, talking about The Fear (ie the fear of impending war). Leo Broadwood was also absorbed with international events, especially after the Anschluss and regaled them, over cocktails, with stories of the first world war, in which he was in the signals and “wandering round the mine galleries...with things like stethoscopes listening for counter-mining by the Germans.” Shades of *Birdsong*.

Other locals that get a mention are a 'sedentary gypsy' called Albert Smith, whose sand extraction Gerald blamed for flooding round Willingham Cottage in the previous year and Farmer Oliver, who sorted out this problem and also rented them a strip of land for a cricket net. There are details about levelling the site and in May 1938 Mella, his daughter Mary Elizabeth, 'hacked down elm-suckers on Oliver's Patch while I continued to dig clay into the cricket pitch' prior to matting being laid and nets erected: 'but the sensation of Send occurred...

on Sunday afternoon. Send, be it known, relies on Guildford for its fire-fighting assistance – Send’s own unit was dismantled and sold to Gordon Stewart some years ago after a terrific controversy in which Pa Cooke was active on one side and Baigent the (chimney) sweep was vehement on the other. Mr Dawson, who lived in a cottage on the lane opposite the recreation ground, was one of the most belligerent of Baigent’s supporters. So what must happen but a fire should break out in his bungalow on Sunday afternoon while he and his wife were sleeping. A woman advancing over Oliver’s field saw the flames and gave the alarm; Dawson and his wife were extricated; Guildford fire brigade arrived in 15 minutes but its hose did not fit the hydrant ... all the village had a free show and can now reopen a very turgid controversy.’

In September 1938 Clyde, the older son, started boarding school at Twyford, being sick twice on the way! This was set against the backdrop of Chamberlain’s visit to Hitler (the Munich crisis). With Gerald Sanger being in the newsreel business, all domestic comment is interspersed both with international comment and the comings and goings of British Movietone News. The comment is of the inevitability of war; his friend Malcolm Campbell felt it was a certainty sooner or later. Gerald however comments that in the newsreel business you must never be too far ahead of your public. However Hope (Sanger) was already helping at the ARP (Air Raid Precaution) depot at the World’s End in Chelsea, distributing gas masks and many of their friends were involved with volunteer military organisations.

‘What had been the reactions of Send to The Great Crisis...the Revd. Mr Legg expounded the attitude of Send Church. He felt we had more in common with the Germans than the French ... he told us of an embryonic plan to billet 900 children in the village. The Cottage (Willingham Cottage) would have been forcibly entered and about 12 children accommodated, with a teacher in charge ... Bill Challen (at the garage) was loud in its denunciation “How would you like your children to be mixed up with children from East End schools? ... You don’t know what diseases they might have”.’

In October Gerald mentions two local talking points, the death of Farmer Oliver and an accident involving Michael May... ‘Mrs May’s son, scorching through the village in his sports car, ran down a child. The young sportsman and his car having been the bane of Send for some time, feeling runs high.’ Clare comments: This account does not say if the boy was injured; but there is no further mention of the matter.

The year ends with a white Christmas at Send. ‘The Chatelaine of Willingham likes having people in and she delights in filling ‘em with lots and lots of gin’ so wrote Gerald Sanger’s friend ‘Buff’. It turns out that ‘Christmas morning is one such occasion when Hope ‘has people in’. Though Hope herself was unable to partake as she was expecting their third child (Jimmy).

1939. A CALL TO ARMS

January: ‘Chief local sensation is the wholesale felling of trees fronting Send Hill House. This has been carried out by Miss Lancaster at the Broadwoods’ request. Félice (Broadwood) now has a grand outlook over Oliver’s Field, but by the same token we get an awful peep of their Victorian mansion. Hope is forcibly indignant.’

War was still in the air. Gerald was attending ARP lectures and in Send they had a visit from the billeting officer Mrs Canning Cooke. The Sangers had relatives living at Send and probably would not be required to accommodate anyone. ‘I suggested that Mrs Cooke put us down to entertain a couple of children and leave it at that. I’m glad to say this coincided with Hope’s own ideas.’

In April 1939 James Gerald Sanger was born. Hope Sanger’s reaction after a difficult birth was to ‘Tell Clare (her sister) to pay the gardener. Then champagne.’

Whitsun of 1939 was spent in Send playing in a village cricket match, which he enjoyed, taking 1 for 15. Mella, his daughter, had tea at Sendholme with Miss Lancaster ‘whose squirearchy is gratefully recognised by the village’. He commented ‘it had been a grand day’.



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In June 1939 Gerald Sanger was beginning to wonder if he should be looking for a commission but was persuaded to wait. His financial situation was still worrying him – they had 2 houses, 3 children (2 in private education) and a car. Clyde, having read my synopsis, commented that “Gerry always worried about his finances – he grew up in the Depression years. I got a £60-a-year scholarship (in memory of Malcolm White, a master killed in WW1) which covered my fees.”

In July he put his papers in as an officer in the Territorials and, whilst having misgivings, went away to camp. He obviously looked upon Send as a refuge – there was lots of tennis, squash etc and bathing in the Wey. He started to consider commuting from Send on a permanent basis, travelling to Denham, to where Movietone had relocated. After a short time in uniform, Gerald returned to civilian life because of his occupation. However relationships with the Ministry of Information at the beginning of the war seem to have been quite problematic because they were over-zealous in censoring films.

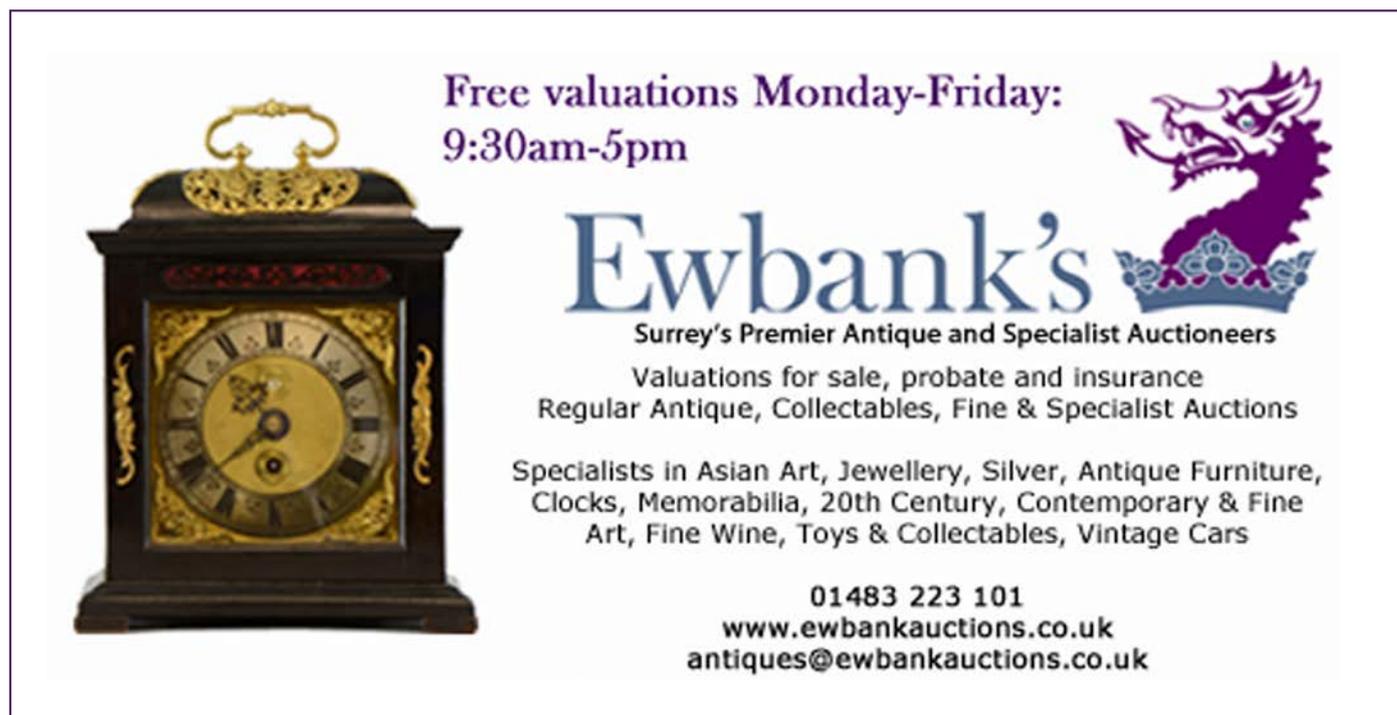
Gerald’s father came out of retirement and he and Gerald’s mother left Surbiton to go to Blackpool to work in the Pensions Department, which had relocated there. Hope’s mother, Gammy, was living with them in Send but obviously relations were not always good. Gerald relates a showdown between Hope and her mother – where she contemplated returning to Canada. Interestingly he mentions their daughter Mella going to

Guildford High School as a weekly boarder. (Ed: I had no idea they had ever taken boarders).

Immediately after the outbreak of war much of the diary is work-related but in October 1939 he writes ‘Gloom descends at half past six. In houses and cottages the first lights are lit. But not in the streets. The black-out is complete. Headlights of cars are reduced to a half-arc an inch and a half across below the centre diameter. You take your life in your hands, not to mention the safety of pedestrians, when you drive at eventide nowadays’. In early 1940 he makes a more positive comment on the blackout, namely ‘the black-out regime has led to a lot of star-gazing.’

Gerald continued to wonder about getting into uniform but he appreciated that propaganda might be important. In November 1939 he met with Lady Reading, the head of WVS, and discussed how Movietone might highlight women’s war work - something dear to his wife’s heart. A film was made and in March of the following year he recounted an anecdote of being cut dead at the opening by the one and only Lord Reith, then Sir John Reith, Minister of Information. “You cut me dead at the WVS film yesterday” I shouted to him. “What were you doing there?” he asked. “We made the film!” Gerald then tried to persuade him to distribute it more widely. The film was called *Britannia is a Woman* and can be seen via the internet.

To be continued.



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LIVING HISTORY

THE LIFE OF WILF MCCOY - BORN 1934

INTERVIEWED BY ALAN COOPER

When I interviewed Tom Wallace before Christmas, little did I realise that the childhood friend he lost contact with at the end of the war, Wilf McCoy, would be one of my next projects. As this article goes to print, after over 70 years, Tom Wallis and Wilf McCoy have finally been reunited and enjoyed a day together shortly before Easter.

Michael McCoy, Wilf's younger brother, is a society member who lives in Cobham and told him about the article. Wilf and his wife Jesse have now joined the Society.



Wilf and Jesse McCoy today

Their story of life in and around 'the alley' (the affectionate name given to Perseverance Cottages in Ripley) is as follows: Wilf McCoy was born in 1934 to parents Wilf (senior) and Vera (née Hampton). Wilf senior was originally from Durham where he worked as a miner. Leaving the life of a pit worker behind him, he relocated to Ripley taking lodgings in Hedgecroft Cottages. His mining background was put to good use and he worked pre-war on a number of building projects one of which was the construction of the weir at Walsham Lock. He met Vera Hampton, a local girl, educated at Ryde House School, and they married and moved to Bridgefoot where Wilf remembers living as a small child. "When I was young, we lived in the furthest of the 2 cottages at Bridgefoot, by the gates to Ockham Park. When I was older we would walk across the pipes over the stream to the back of the farm and get Moorhen eggs to eat".

By 1939 Wilf senior and Vera had moved to 7 Perseverance Cottages. Wilf senior went off to war leaving Vera to look after the family. Wilf recalls: "mum had half a dozen different people stay during the war. One was an evacuee who came from Liverpool, the rest were family. Molly Hughes lived in West End Cottages. Her husband Jim was away in the army so she stayed with mum as well. They were best friends and organised dances at the village hall to which loads and loads of people came, the proceeds being donated to the Red Cross. They would spend all day at the hall scrubbing the floor and putting french chalk down. Ernie and Alfie Hack would get a band up and play swing and other wartime music." Wilf's father was a somewhat reluctant soldier: "Dad joined the Hampshire Regiment and when he came home would take off his uniform and throw everything in the corner of the room. This was the exact opposite to his brother who was very smart, everything neat and tidy, spot on. Uncle Tom had served pre-war in India with the Royal Horse Artillery and loved it all. He served during the war with the Royal Artillery and at some point managed to get dad transferred into his unit. Together, they served in Germany and Holland".



Wilf Senior and his brother Tom in the Royal Artillery -
World War 2

"One day during the war we were at school, when all of a sudden, there was a terrific bang and all the windows and doors blew open. There was no air raid siren or anything. A doodlebug had landed on the bottom of Ripley Green

and the blast had caused all the excitement. We later learnt that a farmworker had been blown off his tractor nearby but was thankfully unharmed". Wilf remembers teachers at Ripley school including Miss Goldsmith, Miss Marsh who looked after the 'baby' class and of course Mr Dixon, the headmaster.

Mr Hatcher was the blackout warden for the alley, he also did Grandis, Toby and West End Cottages. One night he was crossing the road by the school when he was struck and killed by a hit and run driver, who was later apprehended at Esher.

"I remember well the day the injured German airman was brought into Dr Crete's surgery. At the time mum was his cleaner and we were all told about the goings on. Dr Crete had two children who used to play with us, Peter-John and Sonia. They always had an enormous Christmas tree in their house every year. Also, 'the row of pennies' during the war - up and down both sides of the high street past Grandis Cottages - none were ever stolen - fat chance of that ever happening today! During the war we had no bathroom, not even a bath so we went to grandma Hampton's at Grandis Cottages once a week. When the war ended, of the eight Perseverance cottages, only three had baths, the tin variety that hung on the wall outside. Miss Hyde lived at No. 8, Annie Kenniston at No. 5 and Jack Hyde at No. 4. There was a carefully planned rota for bath sharing and this went on for years afterwards".



Wilf senior at the railings by the pond - note the fair in the background

"After the war, I remember one bonfire night a wartime glider being towed onto the green and burnt. In those days the bonfire wasn't in the pond, but further down on the high ground outside Rob Puttock's house.

It was a very tight-knit community in the alley. Miss Hyde at No. 8, who we all called Aunt May, collected the rents from all the rest of us. Tom Wallis's gran was known as Aunt Nell and she always had loads of relatives down to stay at weekends. Mr & Mrs Kenniston lived at No. 1 with their son Bertie. Mrs Kenniston's sister-in-law Annie lived at No. 5 and all were deaf and dumb. Bertie had a fit riding his bicycle up by what was the strawberry farm on the A3 and was run over and killed by a lorry. The Murphy family lived at No. 6 before the Wallis's. Their son was drowned at Wisley Lake. He fell through the ice and was never seen again. Mum lived in the alley till she died, in 1966. Francis Bushnall's family had lived there the longest - for over 100 years.

Next door to us was St. George's Farm, after which Georgelands Estate was named. It covered a large area, from the High Street almost back as far as Newark Lane, then behind the Toby, past the council yard and up as far as Tummond's Store, opposite Barratt's. It was owned by Lady Lovelace until the late 50s. There were also two smaller fields where Georgelands is now in which Conisbee's kept horses. All the way up to Tummond's cornflowers were grown. There was a large barn where the two houses (St. James Place and St. Anne's Cottage) adjacent the farmhouse are now and in here all the vegetables were scrubbed and hosed down before being taken to market in London. They were transported in a lorry with a big tarpaulin over the back. The Hill family



Wilf senior outside Hedgecroft cottages

lived at and worked the farm. Buddy was my friend and whenever I went round there his father, who always sat in a huge chair outside, would always have a go at me. They had a huge dining table (there were 16 children) which completely filled the room and at meal times you could not get past or through. I remember one or other of the children would always be coming round to mum to borrow a cup of sugar. They had a very large chicken-run which backed onto our garden with a massive pear tree in the middle.

There was great rivalry between the Ripley Fire Brigade (part-timers) and those at Guildford. When there was a fire, usually the common at Wisley, it was a race to get there first. I remember the Brewers being in it and George Robbins from the International Stores was the leader. Mr Goodman's bell at Ryde House School would be rung to summon the firemen and we would all go out to watch. They jumped on their bikes, peddling like fury to get to the fire station and aboard the engine, determined to beat 'Guildford' to the fire. I remember one day watching 'Ripley' hurtle down Rose Lane, straight out right onto the main road just as 'Guildford' came along. There was nearly a collision and 'Guildford' ended up facing the trees to the side of the old forge, well and truly carved off the road.

My dad was very friendly with Charlie Cumberland. He was a real character who, like dad, came from up north. He lived in a mobile shepherd's hut near The Jovial Sailor and always walked everywhere leaning against his bicycle - I don't think I ever saw him ride it!



Wilf McCoy senior - Vera - Charlie Cumberland - 'Cissy' at Bognor

"We used to go camping with the scouts. John Hutson was the leader and would borrow the big old handcart from the Rio Café, which used to be Allworks. We would

load it up and go up Rose Lane to the bend where the footpath went to Grove Heath, up there in the field on the left. I took all my things in Dad's old army kitbag".



Ripley scout troop: Photo taken to the rear of the scout hut
Back row l-r: Teddy Mussell, Stewart Holt, Irvin, John Hutson, John Haines, Wilf McCoy. Front row l-r: ?, Freddie Wyatt, Bob Collier, George Haines, Donny Lloyd

"As kids, we always got our hair cut on a Sunday morning by 'Pencil' Brown when he moved to Georgelands. We went swimming in the river up from the weir at a place we christened 'Little Bognor'.



Brother Michael and sister Cissy

“We never had bicycles as children, so, to get around, you had to get a job as a paperboy, as you were then provided with a 'trade bike'. We were always getting punctures - mainly due to visits to Wisley Common on Sundays where we knew of a large slope with a drop at the bottom which we would jump, sometimes 'three on a bike'.

Alf Chandler looked after all the necessary repairs to the paper round bikes and we kept him busy! My paper round started at Wisley, down through the common to Wisley Gardens, through the track to Elm Corner and finally the Effingham Road to The Black Swan and back home through Ockham - all for 1/6d a week!

When the fair came to the village we always managed to raise some money to spend there. Cousin Beryl (Hampton) and I would collect jam-jars and return them to the International Stores and get a farthing each. Bottles would be returned to The Ship by means of the hatch in the side passage. This way we also managed to buy sweets. The Rio transformer works next to the church used to be a sweet shop and gran worked there.”

Charles Hughesdon, who lived at Dunsborough House, was married to the actress/comedienne Florence Desmond and had an adopted son, Michael. Wilf recalls: “Michael Hughesdon would come home from school in a chauffeur-driven limousine. However, 10 minutes later he would be out on the green with me and John Smithers, with whom he was particularly pally. Mum often spoke with Charles in the village. She would be on the green walking the dog and he would be coming to the shops - on his horse!”

There were always pranks aplenty with Wilf and his friends: “Cotton reels would be threaded to a length of string and suspended to all the door knockers at

Hedgcroft Cottages. One door opening would then knock all the others with spectacular results! Me and Buddy Hill and all that lot would cycle to Wisley where, next to the village store was a row of houses. We would then swap all the gates and dustbins around. The owner of the shiny one would be horrified to find that overnight it had become old and rusty! There was a big house just past Rust's the butchers that had been converted into flats - a prime target with lots of dustbins. One evening me and Phillip Jackman had balanced all the dustbins onto the wall outside when the son of one of the occupants spotted us and came flying out. We ran past the little green opposite round the back and onto the cricket pitch. He followed and in the light projecting from The Talbot spotted us silhouetted in the square. In those days there was a low chain link fence around the perimeter and he charged after us unaware of this. There was a terrific 'crump' noise as he went sprawling and hit the deck. We thought he wouldn't get up from that and we were saved - but - up he sprang and chased us all the way past Dunsborough Farm till we finally lost him.”

After Ripley school, Send followed, where Wilf excelled at sports, representing the school at both football and cricket.



Send School Cricket Team 1948. I-r: Graham Field (Ripley), Michael Wright (Ockham), Brian Street (Send), Wilf McCoy (Ripley), Donald Clarey (West Clandon), Sydney Tyrrell (Ockham), Richard Elliott, (Ockham), Dave Berry (Send), Dougie Baigent (West End Cottages, Ripley), Phillip Jackman (Cobham), Roy Harding (Dunsborough Lodge, Ripley)

“When I left school I worked for Ted Surey in the fish shop. I used to chip the potatoes in the shed at the back (now a house) and trolley them up to the shop. I was friendly with Ted's son Robin and would look after him at times as he was a bit hard to handle for his parents. Twice a week I would take him to the pictures at the village hall.

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Next I worked in the paper shop. I remember once when the snow was so deep that some of the paperboys didn't turn up. Me and Billy Jarman, who lived in Newark Mill, had to battle our way up to Grove Heath Cottages - and were told off when we finally managed to get there, for being late! The owner had a wooden trestle upon which books were displayed outside. One day, Tummond's little three-wheeled bread delivery van came down the high street. It got to where Pinnock's was when the back wheel came off. It careered to a halt, the door flew open and out jumped an enormous rat which proceeded to run across the road and into Bassett's cellar. We never did tell anyone about the rat!

Bassett the barber only used hand clippers and dad would go on a Saturday. The queue was so large that he would be gone all morning. I always got my hair cut in Guildford but one day I was desperate and went to Bassett's. I was greeted with "same as usual?" - I had never been there before!

The residents of 'the alley' were very territorial and a typical summer Sunday afternoon would see them all sitting outside in the sun chatting and drinking tea together whilst the children amused themselves by throwing gravel at passing cars!"

After the paper shop. Wilf worked for Barratt's the garden shed makers. Here, he worked alongside Teddy Strange, Ady Hooker, Ken Ivey and Derek Wright.



Barratt's - l-r: Ken Ivey - Wilf McCoy - Ady Hooker



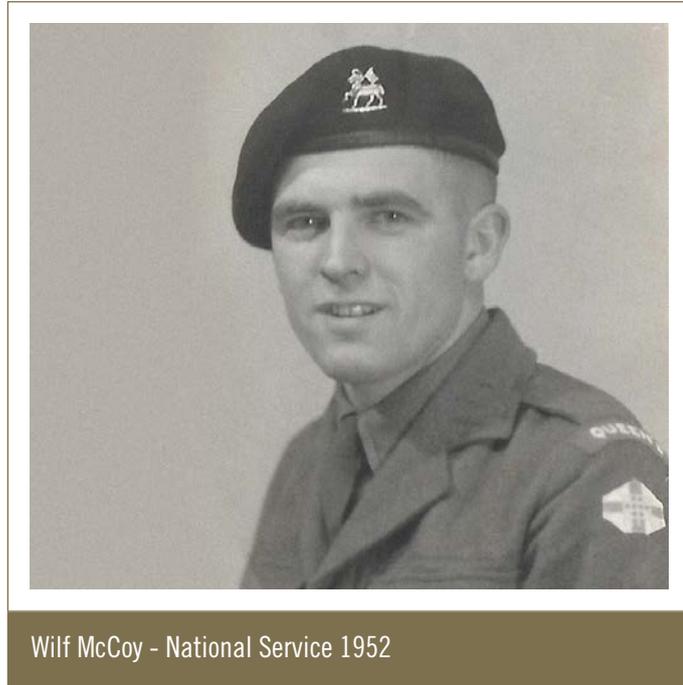
Derek Wright (whose wife Ann is Jesse's sister)

"When we left at the end of the day we would all sprint down the road together. One evening we very nearly collided with old man Barratt who yelled furiously after us 'it's a pity you don't all come to work as quickly as you go home!'"

However, this idyllic life was soon to change - National Service beckoned. "For my National Service I joined the 1st battalion Queens Regiment (West Surrey) and was sent firstly, in 1952, to Germany - North Rhine Westphalia - to a place called Iserlohn, near Cologne. Here we were housed in an ex-SS barracks. A large place with a parade ground where often up to 1,000 men - a battalion - would be inspected. I always remember the surrounding buildings, which were built into the side of a hill and had lofts with windows overlooking this area. They were used as stores and anyone who got out of the parade would go there to watch. These all had camouflaged roofs which had prevented them from being bombed during the war. One parade, the Adjutant, sitting astride his horse, shouted to the RSM (Regimental Sergeant Major) 'Sergeant Major, there's a man in the back row with a teddy boy tie on - march him away to the prison.' The hapless, fashion-conscious individual was duly marched away and later forced to march around the parade ground for a couple of hours - standard punishment for misdemeanors such as this. The German residents hated us and as we drove around would pelt our vehicles with cans and bottles. You never went into town of an evening on your own! After 6 months in Germany, we were sent to Singapore and Malaya, sailing on the troop ship Georgic."

The Malayan Emergency, as it became known was a guerrilla war fought between Commonwealth armed forces and the Malayan National Liberation Army (MNLA), the military arm of the Malayan Communist

Party (MCP), from 1948–60. ‘Malayan Emergency’ was the colonial government's term for the conflict. The MNLA called it the Anti-British National Liberation War. The rubber plantations and tin-mining industries had pushed for the use of the term ‘emergency’ since their losses would not have been covered by Lloyd's insurers if it had been termed a ‘war’.



Wilf McCoy - National Service 1952

Life in Malaya was totally different to that in Germany, with Wilf and his comrades taking part in anything from jungle patrols and mortar attacks on enemy positions to raiding the brothels in the nearby town when on guard duty. “When on jungle patrols, you never, ever stopped for anything - that would be suicide.” Wilf learnt to drive whilst on National Service, something that would be instrumental in providing him with 39 years of work with Ebenezer Mears of Byfleet upon his return. When Mears closed, there was a brief spell spent working for Sainsburys before finally, retirement. “Most of our lorries and scout cars were American - made by Dodge, four-wheel drive and very rugged. These were replaced later with Morris Commercials. We preferred the Dodge, but the Morris proved to have greater protection from the rain, of which there was plenty! For amusement on rest leave in Malacca, we would take rides in the three-wheeled bicycle rickshaws. One each, we would make the drivers race against each other - if they refused to race they wouldn't get paid!

One day we came across a lorry on its side belonging to the Welsh Fusiliers. Obviously worried about staying with it for fear of attack by the enemy they had abandoned it. Upon inspection we found it contained the regiment's entire sports kit. In no time at all, the contents were 'saved', and the 1st batt. Queens found themselves with an entire new wardrobe!”



Overtuned lorry in Malaya belonging to the Welsh Fusiliers. It was full of all their sports gear - quickly liberated by the Queens Regt!!!

On completion of National Service Wilf returned to his old job at Barratt's, first spending time with the TA (Territorial Army) 'up north' and staying with uncle Tom. Returning to Barratt's, he was dismayed to find George Finch had taken over, and was sacked shortly afterwards! “I then did building work with the Hotsons - Lenny and Kenny. They always had fishing rods strapped to their bicycles and if it was raining and we couldn't work I would go home and they would go fishing!” Recreation frequently involved trips to the coast and Wilf and his friends were no exceptions.



Ryde Pier: David Jarman, Graham Field, Wilf McCoy, Bobby Collier, Tony Collier

Wilf remained a keen sportsman, playing football for the regimental team during National Service and cricket for the Ripley British Legion club and recalls: “We played Ockham once. It was a bit like amateurs vs. professionals - they quickly knocked over our top order batsmen but then Dave and Rob Puttock came together and saved the day. This frustrated them so much they never played us again! We played all our home games at Ripley Court School.

I remember Fred Pullen, an older man but very good with the bat. With advancing years, he only believed in fours and sixes. Me and Lenny Hotson would fly up and down the pitch. Fred would strike the ball and we would hurtle to the other end, turn around for the second only to find Fred still only half way down the wicket for his first and frantically waving his spare hand to signal one run - he never did twos!"



Ripley British Legion Cricket Team (late 1950s)
 Back row l-r: Bob Nightingale, Dave Stocker, John Davis, Dave Puttock, Dick Bosley, Wilf McCoy, Dickie Perrin
 Front row l-r: Bill Stocker, Rob Puttock, Frank Brown, Graham 'Flapper' Field, George Best

In 1956 Wilf married Jesse Young. Jesse came from Guildford and her sister Ann was married to his good friend Derek Wright who also lived in Ripley before emigrating to Australia in 1958. Initially, they lived with Wilf's parents but soon moved to Miss Penny's mobile home site adjacent to The Seven Stars in Newark Lane. "When our son Tim was in a pram - we were still living at mum's then - my brother Michael and 'Topper' Hill (Clifford) took him out for a walk. However, wanting to go into Pinnock's, they entrusted him to Eli the road sweeper. When they finally came out he was gone!

They raced down the road frantic with worry only to be met with the sight of Eli, striding down the road with brush and cart in one hand and pram in the other!"

Wilf still maintains his interest in sport, being a keen Portsmouth Football Club supporter. He worked for much of his life at Ebenezer Mears in Byfleet. In 1960 Wilf and Jesse moved to a house in West Clandon albeit with mixed feelings. "After Ripley, it's bandit country up there!" However, that said, they have lived there happily ever since.

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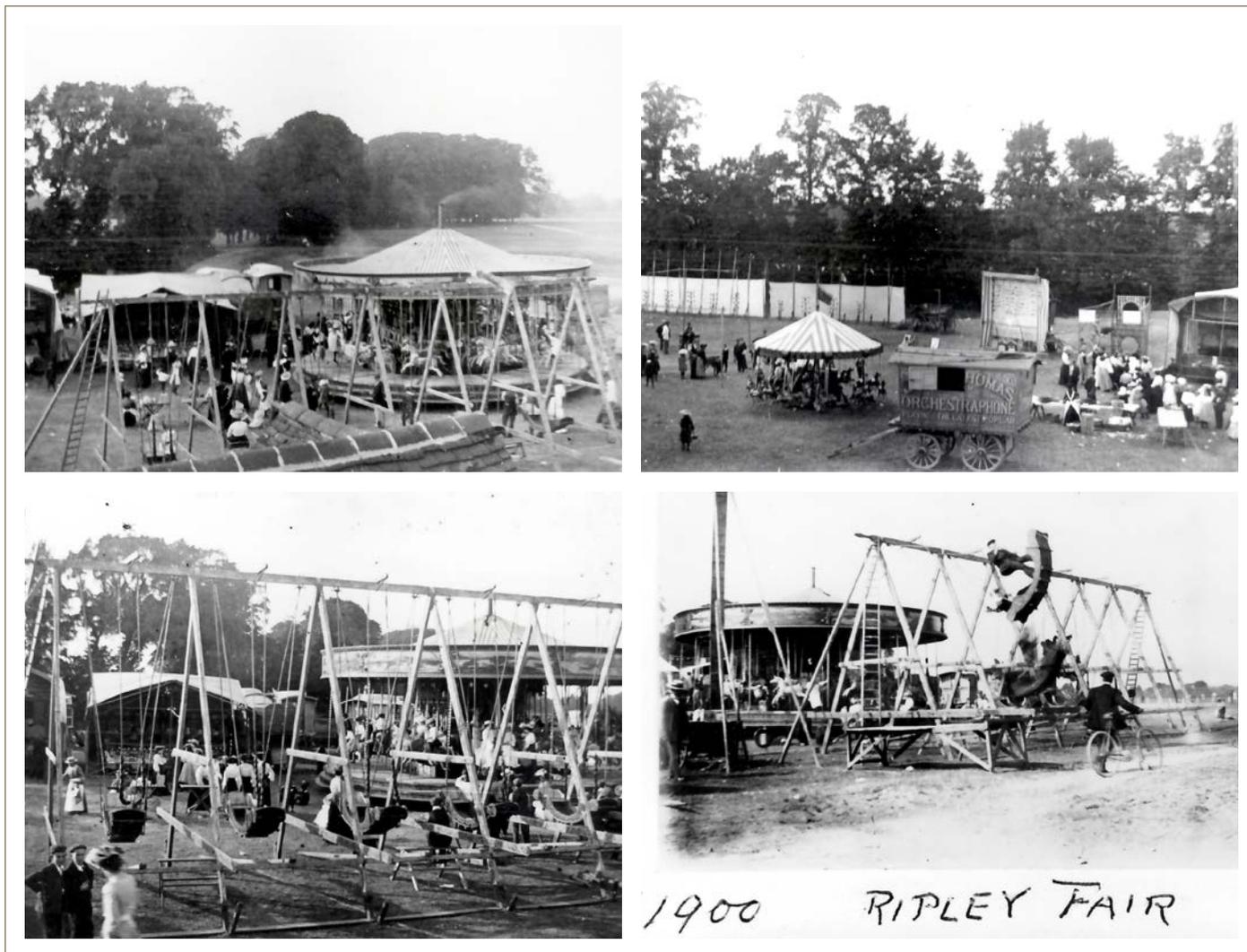


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RIPLEY FAIRGROUND PEOPLE

JOHN SLATFORD



In Journal No 233, Nov/Dec 2013, I gave the story of One Eye Betty or Betsy Smith as she was properly called. It came from Frances Brown, a great granddaughter of Betsy and a historian and writer on fairgrounds and travelling families.

She has approached us again about another family connection with the fairground fraternity. It is about Jack Thomas who was brother-in-law to Betsy and was the owner of fairground rides, notably 'gallopers', what we would call a carousel or roundabout today.

Frances had found some years ago in a fairground magazine a reference to Send & Ripley History Society having several photos of Ripley's fairground dated around

1900 and showing Thomas's roundabout. She said that then it was fairly new and was hoping that we would be able find the photos and provide her with copies.

With the help of our photo-archivist, Janet Tice, these were quickly found and emailed to Frances. Where the photos came from I have no idea but they provide an important insight into Ripley Green fairground history. On the photo top right, the name THOMAS ORCHESTRAPHONE is clearly seen (on the original) on one of the travellers' vans.

Once again, thanks are due to Frances Brown for her latest approach.

All photo's © SRHS Collection

SOLVING A PUZZLE

ALAN COOPER

Philip William Hook was born to parents William James and Florence Kate (née Phillips) in 1920 and lived in Ockham. Philip, as a schoolboy, was already a skilled metal worker. He made, amongst other things, whilst still at school, a pair of ashtrays, cast in brass. One was in the form of a cat face, the other, that of a dog.



The cat ashtray

A couple of years ago I came upon a Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) headstone, in Ockham Churchyard, bearing Philip's name. This in itself is not unusual. Servicemen often contracted diseases or were injured whilst on active service and were sent home where they finally died. Philip however, died 24th December 1946. Curious, I decided to do some research and immediately hit brick walls.



Grave of Philip Hook in Ockham Churchyard

The CWGC records state that Philip served and died as an Able Seaman aboard HMS Erebus. Erebus was a 'monitor', launched 19th June 1916, and served in both world wars. Monitors were designed to be a stable gun platform, having a very shallow draft to allow the ship to come close inshore to support land operations. It was damaged during the allied invasion of Sicily in 1943, the Normandy landings in June 1944 and Le Harve in August 1944. However it was scrapped in July 1946, five months before he died.



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A search of the war death naval ratings indices (1939-48) shows that he died at sea aboard HMS Victory; but the only Victory in 1946 was the naval barracks in Portsmouth (all land bases were given ships names). In those days, deaths at sea were more often than not as a result of respiratory diseases such as tuberculosis, especially amongst stokers.

In conversation with Andy Jones, I mentioned my 'research problem' and (subscribing to a different genealogy website) he kindly conducted a search and came across a relative of the Hook family who was able to confirm that Phillip did not die at sea but from an illness at Royal Navy Barracks, Portsmouth (HMS Victory). Thanks to Andy and Laurence Hennessy for their combined help in putting to bed this mystery.

And for those of you curious about the ashtrays: the cat was given to me by the mother of Denis Foster who was born in 1927 and lived in Ripley. In 1941, aged just 13, he was tragically killed by a motorist during his paper-round. Does anyone know where the dog is?

All photo's © the Alan Cooper Collection



Denis Foster, photographed shortly before his death

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MUSEUM NEWS

CLARE MCCANN – CURATOR

The 'History under your Feet' exhibition has now closed and seems to have been well-received. It was good to work on the exhibition with an outside group, The North West Surrey Searchers and if other groups or individuals are interested in mounting an exhibition please get in touch.

This month is Surrey Museums Month and once again we are participating. The theme this year is TREES and we are showcasing our dendrochronology sample and the 'shoe' – part of an ancient game of 'Knur and Spell'. As well as the original, a modern reproduction is in the museum for you to have a go with. You can also pick up a brochure on the whole museum trail – don't forget to get a sticker as there is a competitive element to the event, which despite its name, runs throughout the summer. See front cover.

In addition there is a new exhibition in the museum entitled FIRE! FIRE! with lots of photographs and artefacts relating to the Send and Ripley Fire Brigades – from the days when fire brigades were local.

Finally I am looking for inspiration for future exhibitions – no idea too outlandish! Also we have had two stewards retire and would welcome some new recruits. You will only be asked to do a stint four times a year and, of course, you will be given support and training.

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MONDAY JULY 4 AND SEPTEMBER 26

Members of the Society have been invited to visit Ripley's new wine shop and deli. Magneval describe the environment as quirky but you will have a chance to judge for yourselves and look around the building. Many of you will remember it as the former pharmacy but this historic building was once one of Ripley's many inns – The White Horse.

They will be open from 10am until noon on each of these days for a tour.

There is no charge but it would be useful if you could let Margaret know if you would like to go so we do not have too many visitors at once. Ring her on 01483 223387 or email - field.margaret@hotmail.com

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SEND & RIPLEY LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM NEWS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All evening talks are at 7.30pm on Tuesdays at Ripley Village Hall, unless otherwise stated.

DATES	EVENTS
17 May	A day visit to Compton - visiting the church and Watts Gallery and chapel.
Friday 24th June	Summer BBQ - Members only - 6.30pm start at Crickets Hill.
Sunday 17 July	Outing to Holmbury Hillfort led by archaeologist, Judie English. Meet at the Hurtwood Control car park number 11 in Radnor Road, Peaslake (map available on the Friends of the Hurtwood website) at 10:00. Judie would then take people up to Holmbury hillfort and show them round till about 11:30. Those who wish could then go back to their cars and she will take others north across the heathland to Felday Hillfort and the WWI Prisoner of War camp. That would take till about 13:00 and we would drop down to Hurtwood Control carpark number 9 - Felday House. It would mean some people who wanted to go on to Felday leaving their cars there and getting a lift round to Radnor Road at the start but we can plan this nearer the time depending on numbers. The local pub is the Royal Oak in Holmbury St Mary and we would book a table for 1.15 or 1.30 for those who would like to have lunch. Members would choose their own lunch and pay individually. If you are interested in coming please let Margaret know G223387 or field.margaret@hotmail.com
20 September	100th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and the part played by the Queens Regiment - an illustrated talk by Ian Chatfield.
18 October	Artists, Antiquaries and Collectors: Illustrations of Surrey collected by Robert Barclay of Bury Hill, Dorking, c.1800 - Illustrated talk by Julian Pooley of SHC.
Saturday 12 November	Researching your House day. From 10 - 4. Speakers and assistance. Light lunch available.
13 December	The Christmas Social. Members only. In Ripley Village Hall.

Further details can be obtained from Margaret Field 01483 223387



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throughout the year (check bank holiday opening times)

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Other times for school groups and small parties by arrangement

Contact Clare McCann on 01483 728546 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 1998/2006	£10.00
Guide to The Parish Church of St Mary The Virgin, Send		£1.25
Then and Now, A Victorian Walk Around Ripley	Reprinted 2004/07	£4.00
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	£2.00
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		£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
Memories of War		£8.00
Map of WW2 Bomb Sites in Send, Ripley and Pyrford		£2.50
Memories of War and Map of Bomb Sites		£10.00
Send and Ripley Walks		£5.00
Newark Priory: Ripley's Romantic Ruin		£8.00
Special Offer: Purchase Newark Priory and St Mary's Ripley		£10.00

All the publications are available from the Museum on Saturday mornings, from Pinnocks Coffee House, Ripley, or via the Society's website www.sendandripleyhistorysociety.co.uk



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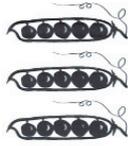
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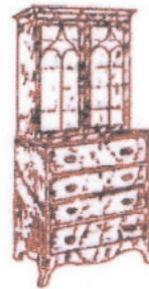
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