

SEND HISTORY SOCIETY

President: Mr. J. Oliver

Chairman

Mr. K. H. Bourne,
Heath Farm, Tannery Lane,
Send, Woking
Phone: Guildford 223028

Secretary & Newsletter Editor

Mr. L. G. Bowerman,
15 Orchard Way,
Send, Woking
Phone: Guildford 223656

Treasurer: Mrs. Sheila Brown, 12 Winds Ridge, Send, Woking - Guildford 223024

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INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY - SEND

1. MAIN INDUSTRIES AND OLD ESTABLISHED FIRMS

- (a) Agriculture. In the 19th Century major farms were Papercourt Farm (280 acres), Send Barns Farm (323 acres), Heath Barns, Hill Lands, Send Court Farm and Church Farm. Of these Papercourt is still farmed, although reduced in size, Send Barns is now the Portland Stud Farm, Heath Barns is reduced and now a market garden, Hill Lands is part of the Portland Stud, and Send Court and Church Farms are farmed by Messrs. M. K. Oliver & Sons (since 1933).
- (b) Market Gardening. Heath Barns Farm has been a market garden since towards the end of the 19th Century, and is still so worked, albeit on a smaller scale, by V.P. Industries Ltd. The farmhouse is now in separate ownership. (N.B. There may be some confusion here between Heath Farm and Heath Barns Farm).
- (c) Wey Navigation. Now owned by the National Trust.
- (d) Sand and Gravel Extraction. Carried on since before 1804 (Enclosure Map). Formerly worked by individuals or local builders. Now Hall Aggregates carries out all extraction in the area.
- (e) Brick Making. This was taking place before 1662, but had apparently ceased by 1845 (Tithe Apportionments), but the time it ceased is not certain.
- (f) Laundries. In the early part of this century there were three local laundries. The only surviving one is the Cartbridge Laundry (formerly Burts). The others were Taylors and Sales (both in Send Road).
- (g) Blacksmithery and Wrought Iron Work. Carried on from 1899-1960 by Messrs. C. H. Sex & Sons. Not now in existence.
- (h) Tanning. There was an old established tannery which operated beside the Wey Navigation until perhaps 15 years ago.
- (i) Milling. Newark Mill on the Wey was a well known and ancient feature until it was burned down about 15 years ago.

2. OBSOLETE OR OBSOLESCENT PROCESSES

- (a) Agriculture. Mr. J. Oliver of Send Court Farm possesses the following old Surrey equipment:-
 - (i) An old Surrey waggon (from Windlesham).
 - (ii) Three Rick-boring augers (from Ewhurst, Windlesham and Elstead).
 - (iii) A bean or mangold drill from Spooners Nursery of Send.
- (b) Market Gardening. Mr. K. Bourne, of Heath Farm, also has a bean drill.
- (c) Wey Navigation. There is an old carpenter's shop at Worsfold Gates. The pound locks on the Navigation were the first of their type in this country. There are also old canal workers' cottages near Cartbridge which are probably worth preserving.

- (d) Sand and Gravel Extraction. No obsolete or obsolescent processes known to be in existence.
- (e) Brick Making. All plant, kilns, etc., believed long since disappeared. The Kiln Lane area might be worth close investigation, however.
- (f) Laundries. It is not known whether there is any old plant at Cartbridge Laundry. This might be worth further inquiry.
- (g) Smithery. Some tools still owned by the surviving retired partner, Mr. R. Sex.
- (h) Tanning. Remaining old buildings demolished June, 1969, and nothing believed to survive.
- (i) Milling. Only the foundations of the mill remain.

3. WORKS ON THE ABOVE TOPICS

The works on agriculture and the Wey Navigation will be well known. Copies of two pamphlets published by C. H. Sex & Sons are held by Send History Society. The writer is hoping to compile some notes on local sand and gravel extraction; there is a book by Hall & Co. Ltd. called "A Century and a Quarter" which has some relevant references.

4. GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE AND EFFORTS TO BE MADE

As far as is known, there are no written records on sand extraction in the area (apart from what may be in the book mentioned above), or on local brick making, tanning or laundering.

If necessary, perhaps representations could be made to the National Trust for preservation of the carpenter's shop and contents, and also for preservation of the locks. Consideration should also be given to listing the cottages and perhaps the foundations of the mill.

5. POLICY FOR INVESTIGATION OF PRIORITIES

In this area it may be worth trying to interest a section of the Send History Society in pursuing information and tracing any obsolete plant, although there is probably little to be found.

L.G.B., Local Secretary
Surrey Archaeological Soc.

REFERENCES TO SEND IN THE G.L.C. RECORD OFFICE

It came as a surprise to me to discover how much there is about the parish of Send in the G.L.C. Record Office, which is in County Hall on the South Bank of the Thames near Westminster Bridge. The material of interest to us consists principally of wills and records concerning the Church and Vicarage. I regret that I am no expert in ecclesiastical history, but it seems that the records found themselves in the care of the G.L.C. archivist in the following way. Send was in the Archdeaconry of Surrey in the diocese of Winchester until the formation of the diocese of Guildford in 1927 (Holy Trinity Parish Church was used as the pre-Cathedral until the Cathedral, begun in 1936 and consecrated in 1961, was opened). The Archdeaconry included both Guildford and Southwark (the administrative county of Surrey

used to extend as far as the Thames), and the records had been kept at Southwark. When the time came to deposit the records, the Registrar of Southwark & Guildford decided that it would be more convenient if they were in County Hall than if they were deposited in the County Record Office at Kingston. A list of all the material relating to Send Church and Vicarage is given below. Anybody wishing to consult the material is asked to notify the archivist beforehand (01 633 6851).

<u>Reference No.</u>	<u>Item</u>
DG/F/1947/80	Faculty for recasting and augmenting bells.
DWOP/S24	Churchyard addition, consecration (Conv. 1874).
DWOP/S29	Churchyard addition, consecration (Conv. 1907).
DWOP/S36	Removal of Remains of G. H. M. Batten 1917.
DG/F/1928/56	Order in Council re transfer of advowson.
DG/F/1936/73	Faculty for electric light.
DG/F/1927/38	Table of Fees.
DWOP/S33	Grant of Money 1913.
DG/F/1933/62	Faculty for reservation of grave space.
DG/F/1933/63	Faculty for reservation of grave space.
DG/F/1947/81	Faculty for reservation of grave space.
DWOP/S30	Memorial (Strachy) 1908.
DWOP/S37	Memorial (Scott) 1924.
DG/F/1939/59	Faculty for memorial tablet.
DG/F/1939/58	Faculty for memorial tablet.
DG/F/1928/59	Minor Faculty authorising erection of a brass tablet.
DG/F/1928/55	Minor Faculty authorising erection of a stone tablet.
DG/F/1945/40	Draft Sequestration (for the Churchwardens to take responsibility in the interval between one Vicar leaving and the next being appointed).
DG/F/1947/1	Table of Fees.
DG/F/1930/64C	Vicarage. Copy Mortgage.
DWOP/S27	Organ 1901.
DWOP/S23	Parsonage. Sale of site (in Church Lane) and rebuilding (not at present site), plans, etc. 1861-66.
DWOP/S25	Parsonage. Dilapidations 1890.
DWOP/1747/6	Parsonage. Repair 1747.
DWOP/1748/4	Parsonage.
DWOP/S34	Patronage 1914.
DG/1928/58	London Gazette containing copy Order in Council transferring patronage.
DWOP/S26	Sequestration 1898.
DWOP/S28	Sequestration 1901.
DWOP/S31	Sequestration 1908.
DWOP/S32	Sequestration 1912.
DG/F/1928/58	Draft Sequestration.
DG/F/1935/63	Draft Sequestration.
DWOP/S35	Window 1915 (drawing).
DW/S73	Terrier 1616.

Les Bowerman

LATE SHIFT PAR EXCELLENCE ...

by Kind Permission of meles.mèles.

Our first outing to watch Badgers was unsuccessful; this was the party laid on by Ted Bartlett. This was not surprising really; there being seven of us, noise, scent, etc., were all multiplied by a factor of seven. This was by no means a deterrent - on the contrary it raised a challenge, so I thought we would try for ourselves, being armed with the useful hints imparted by Ted on that first visit.

My eldest son, Peter, and I put on dark clothes and armed ourselves with torches. I took my camera and flash - ever hopeful!

It was a little late on arrival at the heath, I thought, being dusk already, and to make matters worse we took the wrong path. Fortunately I soon realised it and we had a good laugh on the thoughts of our trying to find our way off the heath in the dead of night, let alone see any badgers! We back tracked and I remembered that the sett must be near the boundary, as we had stepped over a wire fence on that first visit, so we veered to the right over the heath and found the hill. We stopped a short way from the sett, had a last practice of turning the torch switches on silently, fixed flash head on camera, wrapped car keys in handkerchief to prevent jingles, a last whispered recap on procedure, and tiptoed quietly and slowly to the site, remembering that Ted had said the more care you take over that part, then the sooner they would be likely to appear, likely being the operative word; nothing is guaranteed or predictable with badgers!

We positioned ourselves in front of two trees right above the sett and waited quietly. The still night air was full of tiny sounds from far and near, and somehow the time did not drag at all, as we were concentrating on listening for sounds from the entrances in front of us.

Eventually I became aware of an intermittent shuffling sound, but approaching from our left, slowly getting nearer. I realised this must be a badger and we had not heard him come out of the hole because of the sandy path, but as soon as he was in the undergrowth treading on dry holly leaves, we soon heard him. It was dark by now with no moon, so we could not see him.

I had the camera under my coat, so I switched on the flash to charge it up, hoping the high-pitched note would go unheard as it appeared to. I then aimed the torch at what I thought was the right spot and carefully eased the switch on. There he was - our first badger sighting - a youngster, a misty grey-brown in colour - very good camouflage for night work I would say, and his striped black and white snout would blend very well with moonlight and shadows. He was quite unconcernedly foraging around, seemingly unaware of our lights. By this time Peter had switched on his torch as well and we saw a second one playing on the sloping path at the hole entrance. It was a fascinating spectacle which really held us spellbound, and I almost forgot the camera. I carefully held the torch between my knees and took the first flash photo, which they appeared to ignore, so I carefully slid the camera back under my coat to wind on and recharge the flash. I took a second picture after which, although they didn't bolt, they nevertheless ambled back down the hole. I suppose I had got too blasé and made a noise, or they had picked up our scent. We waited quietly for a time, but they stayed below, so we crept off the site and returned home well pleased.

Since that first sighting, we have been back with the family, the boys were thrilled to see them, of course.

A few things learned can be summarised very quickly. Badgers are completely unpredictable, as Ted had warned us, infinite care is needed on approaching the site, footfalls carry easily to the sett below your feet, and they may even be out before dusk - this latter point caught us out on one occasion when we disturbed them playing outside the hole entrance on our arrival on site.

They seem to relax their defences once out of their holes, but they have infinite patience before coming out. It seems they must wait sniffing and listening for an hour or more, depending on whether or not they sense danger, before emerging. On the other hand, the unexpected can happen, as for example, one night we were quietly leaving the site when a young one came out of a hole literally at my wife's feet, and she stood stock still and could have bent down and touched it. This sort of thing makes it all worthwhile, of course.

The chances of a sighting are, I would think, to be in inverse proportion to the number in a party. The ideal is one, for if a noise is made you can't then blame anybody else! The photos - well er well - room for improvement here! It has given me some idea of the problems to be faced, and it all helps to raise one's standards I suppose!

But most delightful creatures they are, to be seen in their natural state. Their very reticence to emerge seems to enhance their innocence and gay abandon when they are out and at play. You really must see them for yourself. Patience will certainly be well rewarded.

Ron Croucher

SECRETARY'S REPORT

New Members

The following have become members of the Society since the last edition of the Newsletter was published:

Mr. & Mrs. K. Murray, 3 Stringhams Copse, Send Marsh.
Mrs. R. M. Ansell, Compton, Send Hill.
Mrs. L. Haynes, Clematis, Send Hill.
Rev. & Mrs. E. A. Garrett, St. Mary's Vicarage, Send.
Mr. & Mrs. D. Lord, 6 Winds Ridge, Send.
Mrs. C. Smith, 78 Send Road, Send.
Mr. & Mrs. W. J. B. Titcombe, Clova Cottage, 23 Rose Lane, Ripley, or
Woodhill Farm Cottage, Send.
Mr. & Mrs. W. Knight, 16 Send Close.
Mr. & Mrs. F. G. Hookins, Stiper Stones, Tuckey Grove, Send Marsh.

We are pleased to welcome them to membership, the total of which (at the time of writing - 9th June) stands at 76 paid-up subscriptions. A further 40 who joined last year, have not yet renewed their membership. We hope that they intend to remain members, but we shall be glad if they will notify Sheila Brown, Les Bowerman, or this Newsletter distributor one way or the other.

Open Meeting - Wednesday, 28th April

Approximately 40 people were present at the Church Room on 28th April to hear members speak on subjects which interest them and to join in discussion on those subjects.

Military Camp. Pat Thurbin, spectacularly dressed in the uniform of an infantryman of the time, gave a unique and absorbing talk about the military camp on "Sand Heath" in 1759-61, and about what the life of a soldier and his family was like at that period. Initial knowledge of the existence of this camp came from the Parish Registers of the time, which show a vast number of marriages and baptisms relating to service personnel. From this beginning Pat has done a great deal of research at the Public Record Office and many other places and come up with very detailed facts and figures. However, no evidence has yet come to light as to the exact situation of the camp. It was certainly of considerable extent, with over 3,000 soldiers, plus numerous camp followers, present each year during the period July to October. He surmises that it would have straddled what we know as Send Road, with its centre most likely at, or near, the very spot where we were sitting to hear the talk. Pat appealed to people living in the area of Send Heath to look very carefully at anything turning up in their gardens which might possibly provide a clue. These notes are not the occasion to go into very much detail, but it is hoped that a fuller account of the camp will appear in our next edition. For the moment it should be said that the Regiments concerned and the places of origin of the soldiers show clearly that it was part of the regular army which encamped here and not the local Militia. Pat feels that it can also be stressed that we should regard the camp as having brought fame and some importance to the village, the father of General Wolfe (of Quebec fame) being Colonel of one of the Regiments here, and General Cornwallis having reviewed the troops here. Maybe it was only chance that dictated that Send retained the status of a sleepy village rather than developing into a permanent military town like Aldershot.

The Parish Registers. John Slatford gave a résumé of progress by the genealogical group on the transcribing of the registers. Their work load has been lightened by the chance discovery that the West Surrey Borders Family History Society has already transcribed the marriage registers, and further light has been thrown on the Chitty family, who were brick makers at Kiln Lane in the 17th Century by the discovery that Eric Chitty, the television actor, has already carried out some research on them as part of his study of his family name. It is hoped that our Society will acquire one or more copies of the transcriptions of the marriage registers, and that further details of the Chittys will appear in a later edition of the Newsletter.

Clay Pipes. Our President, Jim Oliver, displayed an interesting collection of pieces of clay pipe which he has found in Send during the course of his work as a farmer, together with some other pieces found near the Church. The display contained several almost undamaged bowls, representative of much of the period during which clay pipes were made and used (approx. 1600-1900). Generally speaking, the earlier pipes had smaller bowls which sloped forward at more of an angle. We have a chart showing typical shapes and sizes relating to the various periods (in "The Clay Tobacco-Pipe in Britain", by Lawrence S. Harley, F.S.A.), which is available for reference by members. Mrs. Russell was able to provide some vivid additional details, her father having been a clay pipe maker at Kingston. She was able to explain how the clay arrived in large blocks from Devon; and how they were broken up, rolled out, put into moulds, wire put into the stem for the hole, baked, and set out in racks to cool. There were various patterns, of which the more elaborate and expensive ones, including the long-stemmed "Churchwarden", were sold mostly before Christmas, presumably as presents. The Churchwarden pipes, of which the stem could be up to 3' long, were used for smoking while sitting down (by the fireside or presumably at Parish meetings), whereas the short-stemmed "Cutties" would be used while the smoker was working. Mrs. Russell passed around the meeting a photograph of her father giving

instruction in pipe-making while in his eighties. Her father had been sixty when Mrs. Russell was born; when he was a young man he had delivered pipes personally to Charles Dickens.

Tour of the Church, Send Court, etc. - Sunday, 9th May

When the first tour of this, the most interesting and picturesque part of Send, took place last Autumn, many members were unable to be accommodated, and since then others had put their names down in the hope of a further visit. This duly took place on another glorious afternoon with some 40 people in all enjoying Jim Oliver's expert guidance around the old Yeoman's house, the Church and Send Court Farm. The two previous visits to this part of the village have been written up in these pages (N/Ls 3/5 & 5/10), and it is unnecessary to repeat what has already been written. However, it cannot be said too often how unique the old timber-framed hall-house is. Of the 30,000 remaining timber-framed houses of the 16th Century in South East England, there is probably no other remaining so close to its original design as this one. Apart from a small amount of false timbering, the brick in-filling to replace the original wattle and daub, the lean-to addition at the back, the early 19th Century decorative feature above the central doorway in the front, and the early 19th Century laundry equipment inside, the building is exactly as it was when it ceased to be occupied as a dwelling house in about 1600. It is distinctly possible that the owners of the house were named Potter, because one of the early documents relating to Send Grove (present building dating from about 1765 - the lands having been laid out then by Lieut. General William Evelyn, great-grandson of the Diarist, John Evelyn) refers to it as "Send Grove, alias Potters Lands". Hence most probably the name "Potters Lane", i.e. the lane leading to Potters Lands. The document in question is a copy of the will of Thomas Attryde who owned both Send Court and Send Grove in 1708 (Guildford Muniment Room Ref. No. 65/3/33).

The clock made by Richard Fennell of Kensington in about 1700 is the outstanding feature of the stables and it is older than both the house and the stables. After looking at that, and the drilled-out wooden well-shaft used as a rafter in the cowshed at the back, the party moved on to the Church. See N/Ls previously quoted for earlier notes and Surrey Archaeological Collections No. 16 for more details. I had not previously noticed the Masons Crosses by the putlog holes near the porch (putlog holes being the holes where the scaffolding beams were inserted during building); and few people had previously seen the old photographs and drawings of the Church in the vestry to which the Vicar had kindly permitted us to have access. The most interesting picture of the Church is one of about 1840, showing the royal coat of arms in place on the rood beam (see N/L 4/2 for notes of church coats of arms). The coat of arms is now on the wall inside the tower in an advanced state of disrepair and urgently requiring renovation.

At Send Court Farm Jim had put on display outside a large selection of agricultural implements, many of which are not in current use, and most of which represent a by-gone age to the majority of people. There were adzes, ditching tools, sickles, etc., and a wide range of blacksmith's tools. Ron Sex, formerly of Send Forge, demonstrated with the appropriate equipment on two waggon wheels how the wheels used to be dressed with their iron tires (attiring them - hence the word tire or tyre). After tea and biscuits on the lawn, provided by Flossie Oliver, assisted by Marjorie Sex and Anne Bowerman, the fascinating and extensive collection of historic equipment and articles indoors was looked at with Jim's inimitable commentary. Lack of space prevents any attempt to describe here either the house itself or its contents.

The Society, and in particular those who were present on this occasion, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Jim for all the work he put in beforehand to have things ready for us and for his guidance on the day; to Flossie for providing such perfect refreshment for the occasion; and to both of them for throwing their home completely open to nearly 40 visitors.

The Surrey Gravel Beds - an Archaeological Survey - Monday, 24th May

This illustrated talk by Mr. David Longley, a professional archaeologist employed by the Surrey Archaeological Society to undertake the above survey on its behalf, took the form of a joint open meeting by our Society and the Ockham History Society at Ripley Village Hall. Barely a dozen of our members attended, which was disappointing, but the overall attendance was good. At times it was difficult to hear, due partly to the acoustics and partly to the fact that the speaker's voice was not projected as far as some. However, the aerial photographs, and slides of the excavation and finds near Runnymede, were absorbing and the commentary expert. The survey covered the Thames and Mole Valley and the Wey as far as Guildford.

The excavation near Runnymede Bridge produced pottery and burnt flints showing occupation over a period of 100 years in the late bronze age. It is presumed that after that the climate deteriorated, occupation ceased, and there was subsequently a slow build up of silt due to a rise in the water level. Occupation was probably up to the 8th Century B.C. Among the finds were parts of socketed axes, a spear head, implements, worked bone toggles, pins and part of a bridle set. Surprisingly, it was discovered that Continental pottery had been imported. A double horned pottery handle, possibly from Italy, is the only one found in Britain relating to this period. The socketed axe was of the South Wales type.

So far as the survey extended to our part of the County, the aerial photographs show crop marks in the Ripley area which may well indicate ring ditches. So far as Send is concerned, the survey indicates sites, e.g. the Church, which are already known.

Mr. Longley posed the question which frequently arises in archaeology - is archaeological research and excavation more important than development of the land or the extraction of minerals? Sometimes it is not, although there is never enough money or people to carry out all the archaeological work that is important. He stressed that any field walking which we can do in advance of development or sand and gravel extraction will be most welcome.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Edward Partridge of Cobham produced from his bag a collection of neolithic worked flints which he said were representative of the collection of over 1,000 which he had picked up in Send where the car park now is opposite the former tannery from which Tannery Lane takes its name, in the period 1925-1930. He is the son-in-law of the late Mr. S. S. Boorman, J.P., who farmed Heath Farm before Mr. Secrett acquired it in the 1930's, and was working on the land at the time. It is hoped to inspect his collection shortly and to obtain further information.

Visit to Dedswell Manor Farm - Wednesday, 2nd June

This must rank as one of our most successful and enjoyable functions, attended as it was by nearly 50 people and held in an idyllic part of Send, the existence of which most people are probably totally unaware of. Dedswell is one of the three mediaeval manors which comprised the parish of Send (the other two being Send with Ripley, and Papworth, which is now Papercourt),

and lies totally secluded on the southern boundary almost in West Clandon. Parts of the former farmhouse, now cottages, are 15th Century. However the object of the visit was not so much to look at this building as to see the equipment belonging to members of the Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association.

Mr. Bob Claydon, the farmer, had a full set of trace harness laid out which he expertly explained. Then Jim Davis, his foreman, brought out Duke, a magnificent 18.1 hand 17 year old Shire gelding, black with four white socks. The biggest horse in the country, by comparison, is 18.3 hands. While Duke was being admired, Jim Davis demonstrated the art of plaiting a horse's mane. There was not time to put all the harness on before the party moved on to inspect Ted Goldup's collection of horse-drawn ploughs and other apparatus. Among the equipment was a single horse mower used until 10 years ago, a swing plough as used by the Sinclairs, the oldest plough they have, dating from about the turn of the century, and a tub roller of about the same vintage which was used to crush knobs of earth after the sowing of radishes.

With time fast running out, most of the party moved on to examine the vehicles while some of the younger members went for a bare-backed ride on Duke. There was a 2-wheeled Surrey cart, a splendidly painted 4-wheeled market waggon, and a double-horse Surrey waggon made in 1913 by Sturt of Farnham.

In this perfect rural setting with experts such as farmers Bob Claydon and Jim Oliver, retired blacksmith Ron Sex, and agricultural machinery specialist Ted Goldup all on hand to explain the finer points, it is difficult to think of a better way for anybody interested in local history to spend a fine Summer's evening. Some time in the future it is hoped that a further outing to Dedswell can be arranged to look more closely at the Manor house.

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday, 23rd June ... Open meeting at the Church Room. 8 p.m. for 8.15 p.m. An illustrated talk on Industrial Archaeology by Lyn Mileham.

Friday, 25th June ... Natural history group outing cancelled.

Sunday, 27th June ... Natural history ramble at Hankley Common (Dartford Warblers?). Meet 2.30 p.m. at Send Barns.

Sunday, 4th July ... Natural history outing to Witley to look at adders. Meet 2 p.m. at Send Barns. WELLINGTON BOOTS ESSENTIAL.

Wednesday, 7th July.... Ramble along the Wey Navigation towpath with a visit to the carpenter's workshop at Worsfold Gates. Meet at the Boathouse car park at 7.30 p.m.

Saturday, 17th July ... Ripley Fete. Send History Society will have a publicity stall. Also display of historic bicycles by Southern Veteran-Cycle Club.

Sunday, 18th July ... Veteran Cycle Run through the lanes near Ripley.

Monday, 23rd August ... Natural history meeting at 8 p.m. at Stiper Stores, Tuckey Grove.

Sunday, 12th September ... Natural history ramble over the Sheepwalk, Old Woking. Meet 6.00 a.m. at Send Barns.

Sunday, 19th September ... Afternoon visit to Newark Priory. Meet at the car park near the traffic lights at 2.30 p.m.

Wednesday, 22nd September ... Open meeting at the Church Room, Send Road, at 8 p.m. for 8.15 p.m. The Natural History Group will put on a show of slides, films and recordings.

Closing Date for the Next Issue of the Newsletter

Due to the Summer holidays, there will be a gap of almost three months before the next edition of the Newsletter is published. The closing date for the submission of articles will be Monday, 6th September. We would like to receive contributions from as many different members as possible - that way the Newsletter is more varied and more interesting. We hope, by the way, that our various functions and the Newsletter will encourage other members to find out more themselves about aspects of local or natural history which interest them, and in due course to report their findings in these pages.

Les Bowerman

THE SNOWBALL

Forgive the title, but that is exactly what the Natural History Group is doing, snowballing, and at a terrific rate.

Members are very keen and this pleases me very much, especially when one considers that no fewer than 26 people tumbled out of their beds to attend the early morning dawn chorus walk. I know for a fact that certain members have gone out on their own and enjoyed very fruitful evenings badger watching, and even taking photographs - this is most encouraging and I would like to see more members having a go on their own. The hide which the Society has recently purchased has not been very much in demand, this is a pity, because it does open up new avenues of interest to anyone wishing to view wild life at close quarters - members are invited to use the hide at any time, so please do not hesitate in contacting me if you wish to use it.

Ted Bartlett

Once again the Natural History Group has had a very good number of rambles of considerable interest. On Sunday, 9th May, the main attraction was the dawn chorus in the Clandon woods. Members met at the Send Barns lay-by at 0400 hrs., and it was very pleasing to see so many people turn up at this early hour.

The dawn chorus was not a tremendous success owing to the very dry weather, but I believe most of the members present enjoyed it. As an added item we then went to St. Martha's to visit a heronry, and this was enjoyed by all, especially as the young in the nests could be seen very clearly.

Leader ... E.J.B.

On 26th May the Group visited Newlands Corner to hear the nightingale. This year no nightingales seem to have arrived at this renowned breeding ground - and members had to be satisfied with a very pleasant walk.

Leader ... E.J.B.

The 2nd June saw members again trying to locate the elusive nightingale, but still with the same result. However, rabbits entertained us with games on the tarmac and a Pipistrelle Bat weaved above our heads.

Leader ... E.J.B.

A change of subject on 6th June had members strolling across Horsell Common - a last-minute change of plans, but one that paid off. Nightjars were the main objective, and Nightjars we saw.

As we arrived well before the Nightjars were due to perform, we had a very pleasant walk and members saw many things of interest, including many Sundew plants, the insect eating plant. At 21.35 precisely the Nightjars appeared, dancing an aerial ballet not more than thirty feet from the group. The song was also heard as was the clapping of the wings, and one of the members took a very good recording. A most enjoyable evening altogether.
Leader ... E.J.B.

Species Seen or Heard

9th May; Clandon Woods; First bird in dawn chorus - robin. Song of female cuckoo. Cuckoo with changed tune. Two roe-deer.
St. Martha's; Herons (5 young and 1 adult). Yellow Hammer - very close view for long period.

26th May: Song of White Throat. Exceptional quality and quantity of May blossom. Noctule and Pipistrelle Bats. Whitebeam (splendid many-stemmed specimen). Service (tree).

2nd June: Rabbits, Pipistrelle Bat.

6th June: Meadow Pippit. Wood-Ant nests. Tunnel Trap spider. Heath Milk wart. Sundew. Cotton Grass. Nightjars (6). Woodcock.

The Hide

The following have each contributed towards the purchase of the hide: Mary & Ken Dawson, Barbara Meyer, Irene Carter, Mavis Lake, David & Laurence Harris, Jean & Ron Croucher, Ted & John Bartlett, Les Bowerman, Iris Watts, Jane Shaw, Mrs. Mandeville, Stan Mason, Fred & Sheila Hookins, Mr. & Mrs. Cleverley. The total raised is £5.00. If a further ten members interested in natural history would each like to contribute 25p we will have raised the £7.50 which the Group offered to raise towards the cost of the hide.

FURTHER LOCAL HISTORY NOTES

A combination of two things led to my becoming interested in natural history - acquiring a dog from the R.S.P.C.A., which meant taking her for walks round the many footpaths which criss-cross this area, some of which I hadn't realised existed; also our two youngest boys showing a keen interest in birds in particular. I think this started when we noticed a green woodpecker coming to a tree at the bottom of our garden. This was all about five years ago, and now the whole family is interested.

My ears have become more attuned to sounds of the countryside. I can now identify quite a few bird songs. Across the footpath between the two fishing lakes in the village I have heard the willow warbler, chiffchaff, wren, black cap, garden warbler and, possibly, whitethroat, then of course there are blackbirds, thrushes, robins, great tits, blue tits, coal tits and long-tailed tits. One morning about three to four weeks ago, mother & father Canada Goose swam across the lake to present their new brood of six young to me. I'm sorry to say there are now only five babies. These can't really be called "babies" any more, as they are almost as big as their parents.

In our garden we have a blackbird's nest with three young in it. Also in a box round the side of the house is a robin's nest. Yesterday the young came out on the lawn for the first time and the children were able to stroke them.

Along the River Wey there is a wooden bridge. I saw a blue tit disappear between the steps and it didn't come out the other side. On investigation I saw a hole in the wood and a lot of cheeping coming from within. It was too dark to see the babies, but they were obviously a healthy family!

Last night we saw a pair of nightjars on Horsell Common. They fly just as it is getting dusk, making a clapping sound with their wings and a noise like a sewing machine whirring.

Last November I was in our dining room when a strange bird walked up to the French Door. It was something like a moorhen only brown with a long beak. On looking it up in the bird book I found it was a water rail. It lived in the muddy pools in the rubbish tip at the back of us for about five months and then it disappeared, presumably in search of a mate. I hope it was successful!

It isn't only birds I find interesting, animals are also very fascinating, but they are more difficult to see. Except for the grey squirrel and rabbit, most of them are either nocturnal or stay well hidden in the undergrowth, and the only way we know they are there is by a rustle in the dead leaves as they scamper away. I investigated one such rustle and saw what I thought was a rat's tail, but realised there was no body on the other end - it was a snake about a foot long!

As yet, I am a complete novice as regards the countryside, but I am learning and most interesting learning it is proving to be. My thanks to Ted Bartlett for organising the rambles and various trips to places of interest, for instance to see the heronry and to Newlands Corner to hear the nightingale, but he doesn't seem to have turned up this year!

Jean Croucher

18 Grange Farm Rd.

Ash.

VI Severe