

Newdigate Local History Society Magazine

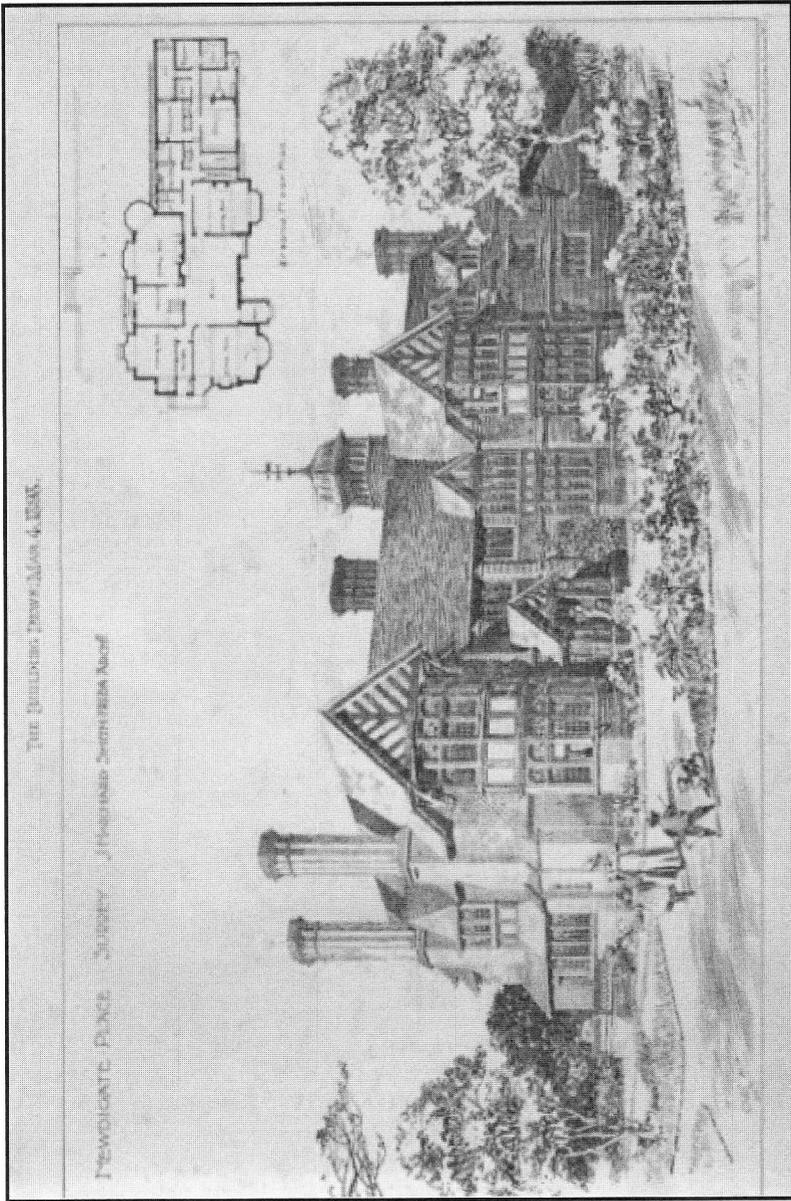
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Newdigate Place

NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY

Our AGM was held on the 26th September at the Village Hall. The Chairman presented a report detailing the year's activities and the treasurer presented the accounts. Hugh Richards decided not to stay on the committee but the rest of the members were voted in en bloc. For those who are not sure, they are John Callcut - Chairman, Penny Tyson-Davies - Secretary, Richard Jones -Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Jane Lilley, Barbara Capel, Maggie Ashworth and Richard Tyson-Davies. If anyone else would like to join the committee they would be most welcome and remember you get to enjoy Barbara's excellent hospitality as meetings are held at Nye's Place.

After the meeting Bob Bartlett gave us a sparkling talk entitled 'Murder most 'Orrible'. He even dug out a nasty rape case that took place at the Rectory during the incumbency of Rev. Henry Sugden in the middle of the nineteenth century. We will probably publish details, for those who are not squeamish, in a later magazine! David Ansell gave us a talk on the 29th November about his family building firm which was founded in 1791. A full report will appear in the next magazine.

Jayne Simms has been compiling a history of the Spencer family and she has presented us with an excellent booklet which details the results of all her research. You may recall that Paul and Bill Brady came to Newdigate to find out about the Sadler family. We visited them in Dublin in September and, although they haven't been in the best of health, they clearly have many happy memories of their visit and Paula really feels that a part of her belongs in Newdigate. (see magazine 81) We are indebted to Richard Ede who has turned up some wonderful pictures of Newdigate Place and we have reproduced one of them on the inside cover.

When we inherited the Joyce Banks archive we found a lot of packets of photographic negatives. Yvonne Durrell, the former archivist with the Dorking Museum, has very kindly scanned them all and made them up into an 'easy to see' album.

This has been a very hectic time for us on the local history front with the result that the project recording the gravestones in the churchyard will have to be delayed until the spring. Jane Lilley's book about the Woodcarvings in St. Peter's Church is now published and is available from me, John Callcut (01306 631148) at a price of £10.00. This fifty page illustrated book has been produced as a result of meticulous research by Jane and tells the story of the carvings and the carvers as well as a number of forgotten stories about the church. This is an extremely important addition to our knowledge of the village and I commend the book to you.

Jane's definitive history of the school, commemorating its 350th anniversary, is nearing completion. It has over a hundred pages of text and is richly illustrated throughout. Once the final touches are complete, order forms will be made available as we have to have a minimum number of orders before printing can take place.

My book, entitled 'A Village at War' is now available from me at £14.95 plus postage and packing where applicable and at Waterstones and W.H. Smiths in Dorking. This is a 280 page illustrated book which tells the story of Newdigate and its people during the tumultuous years of the First World War. When the thirty two names from the Great War are read out on Remembrance Day I realised that with the passing of time all those brave people had been forgotten. I hope that this book puts that right.

Alan Wheeler's memories proved very popular so we are concluding his article in this magazine. He has also written a small piece about the engraving on a George I coffee pot. With the Chairman's report and a little story about how Village at War came to be created the magazine was nearly full,

but it wouldn't be the same without something from Jane Lilley so she has written about the cider press which was mentioned in the last magazine.

Here are a few dates for your diary. On the 24th January 2012, Julian Womersley, writer and archivist for the Surrey Union hunt, will give us a talk entitled 'Tales from the Archives of the Surrey Union Hunt' and on the 13th March 2012 Les Lockett will be talking about the National Parks with special emphasis on the South Downs. All talks start at 8.00 pm at the Village Hall.

We have had a number of requests to have another Schermuly reunion but until the situation at the Six Bells is clearer we cannot make a booking.

MORE MEMORIES

Alan Wheeler

Concluding the article from the previous magazine

Holiday Work

I mentioned the potatoes and rosehips. When I was older I used to do a bread round for the Forest Stores. This consisted of putting people's orders for bread and other groceries in boxes, then going off in the van with Charlie Lucas round Partridge Lane every Saturday morning. When I was much older I had a holiday job in the farm just past the Manor on the right. I remember in particular creosoting a barn with real creosote, but no gloves, mask, or goggles. I also used to clean out the pigsty; letting them out in the morning. What a smell!

We all used to cycle everywhere. Mr Broughton used to mend our bikes if we couldn't do it ourselves. He also carved a beautiful pair of bellows which Dad gave Mum as a birthday present one year. (I still have them) I believe Mr Broughton was in one of the carpentry classes that carved the pew ends in the church.

Pubs

There were of course the two pubs. I didn't go in them until I was much older. We used to use the village club more when we were old enough where we played billiards and drank too much Merrydown cider. I think it was tragic that they cut the old trees down outside the Surrey Oaks. I'm sure they could have been saved. There was a similar tree on the corner where the road goes to Leigh or becomes Partridge Lane. (We used to call this road 'The Back Road'.

Shops

First we had the Forest Stores and Deans Stores. It is amazing that there was trade enough for two. Deans used to sell hardware as well as groceries. There was also a small sweet shop on the right on the road to Parkgate just past Workhouse green.

Then Mr Bettesworth opened his paper shop now Bob's shop where I believe there had been a shop previously. Mr B had delivered his papers from his home on Thurbarns Hill before this. Then eventually a new Butchers opened next to Mr. Bettesworth in previously what had been Peters the butcher. Now of course there is one of the best village shops around. Bobs.

There was the Wheelwrights opposite the entrance to what we called Calvert's Drive on the way to Beare Green. There were two Blacksmiths. One where the garage is now and the other I have already mentioned.

A lady from Beare Green opened a café, The Copper Kettle, opposite the Church in Yew Tree Cottage (ed. actually it was at The Old Post Office) when I was about eighteen I think. Then this became Mrs L. Green's needlework shop for a while.

The Cubs

I joined the cubs led by Mr Higgs. We used to meet firstly in a hut in the field behind the rectory and then in the tin hut attached to the back of the Six Bells. This latter room was previously used by the Home Guard and still had all their pictures, on such as how to take a Bren gun apart, all over the walls. There was a smelly coke stove with a tin chimney in the middle of the room. In the winter we would learn knots and sometimes go to the village hall to play handball with a tennis ball. In the summer we would play cricket or often go tracking. One person would go off into the woods and leave a trail of arrows of twigs for others to follow. Not much real scouting was done but it was fun. I can't remember whether there were scouts and guides but there were brownies of the same age as us.

Transport

There were buses every hour to Dorking. One would go Brockham way and the next Holmwood way. Of course we used our bikes a lot. When we were older we would go to the pictures on Saturday evenings after football. We often had to leave before the end of the film in either The Pavilion or the Embassy to catch the last bus home. Later on we would go to Jazz Concerts and Dances in the Dorking Halls; again by bike. Sometimes a crowd of boys and girls would cycle to a dance at the next village such as Capel or Charlwood. I remember the girls would pop over the hedge to change into their hooped dance gear just before we arrived.

Sometimes the family would go to Dorking on a Saturday by bus for shopping. A treat was fish and chips and a plate of bread and butter in the café over the Embassy.

We would even cycle as youngsters to play a football match in Holmwood, Capel or Ockley.

Youth Club

George Green ran the senior Youth Club. Later, he asked my mum and dad to set up a Youth Club for younger ones, the Junior Youth Club. Both were great fun. Table tennis in the winter; stool ball in the summer, and of course lots of music and dancing in the late 50s. We would sometimes visit other clubs to play table tennis matches and also enter Youth Club tournaments. It was quite educational too as we sometimes had debates such as 'do flying saucers exist'. We even had speakers. Mr Abbot who lived down Rusper Road talked about his time in a Japanese POW camp, another about astronomy, another on does God exist? A highlight was the midsummer midnight-walk at the full moon. We would walk to Holmwood Station; catch the train to Horsham and then the Puffing Billy to Steyning. We then walked overnight to Arundel station. Here we would catch a train to Littlehampton where we would spend the day on the beach maybe sleeping. Then the train back to Holmwood and a walk home.

Earthmoving

Several businesses started-up based, I think, on one set up by Dick Hampton whose equipment in later days could be seen building motorways. Both Bubbles Blanks and Alwyn Holder I think were originally associated with Dick. Bubbles eventually moved into the house next to ours and had his equipment in the old orchard next door. There is a new house there now. Briar Patch.

Sunday School

Lots of the kids went to Sunday School held in the church each Sunday before the main service. I used to enjoy singing the hymns. It seemed to be automatic for most of the young children to be confirmed in their teens even though their parents didn't necessarily go to church. It was part of the village social scene. Sometimes we would stay on to the main service. I remember that there was a very rural gentleman by the name of Mr Voice who would walk to church from Rusper. He kept his money, ciggies and other things in his hat which stayed put in church. Once he dropped the lot in Church whilst trying to get some money out for the collection. I have never heard so much swearing in my life. We had an annual charabanc outing to Bognor or Littlehampton which included the Rev Donald Bruce-Walker.

Cinemas and the Dorking Halls

As I described earlier lots of us would catch the bus to Dorking to go to the pictures in The Pavilion or The Embassy. There were always two films in each cinema and we usually liked to get in there to see the end of the main film first because we had to leave a little early to catch the last bus home and would therefore miss the end of the film. At the end of the performance they played the National Anthem and everyone, including the youngsters, would stand still for this.

When we were in our late teens we would go to dances in the Dorking Halls, particularly when Chris Barber or Humphrey Littleton were playing. That is where we first heard Lonnie Donnegan and skiffle. This prompted us to have our own Youth Cub skiffle group. I played Guitar, Erik Shopland wash board, my dad the banjo, Peter Bettsworth the tea chest bass, Jeff Roth the tube of a vacuum cleaner. At a Youth Club reunion a few years back, someone actually brought along an old tape recording of the group.

Dances / Village Hops

There were often dances in the Village hall. Shilling hops they were called. All ages would go and we danced the waltz, foxtrot, quickstep, Valletta, St Bernard's waltz, palais glide, Gay Gordons etc and eventually of course in the late 50s , rock and roll with both jiving and trad. jiving.

The most memorable of these events was The Blue Bird Dance when the whole village hall was decorated with blue coloured paper birds.

Gatwick Plane Crash

One very foggy night, I think it was one when we had a Youth Club meeting, a Turkish Airliner carrying the prime minister of Turkey, crashed in the woods close to the road between Rusper and Newdigate. Unfortunately many were killed. It was a talking point in the village for many years. You could see from the road on the west side the tops of the trees had been cut off by the plane with the remains of the trees getting shorter and shorter to the east of the road. Pieces from the crash turned up rather naughtily in several local households.

Pantomimes

Mr and Mrs Rickard and a teacher from the school where Mr Rickard taught, produced pantomimes during several years. I remember Cinderella in particular and could even sing you parts of the music if asked. I remember: -

'We're Buttercup and Daisy, the folk think we're lazy, we know a lot more than some people might think,

As we take it easy, we never get greasy by washing up dishes and pots in the sink,
We have a step sister a saucy young blister, her name's Cinderella in case you don't know,

She does all the toiling and that saves us soiling our lily-white hands that are whiter than snow.'

'Gaily over hill and dale, see the huntsman riding merrily, gaily gaily one and all see the huntsman gallop away. Tally-ho, Tally-ho, Tan tivy. Tan tivy. Tan tivy, a-hunting we will go.'

Christmas and New Year Dances

Although lots happened locally at Christmas, I recall more about the New Year's Eve parties in the Village Hall. They were packed with people of all ages. There would always be someone dressed up as old Father Time in old sacking with a proper scythe (covered in guard material) who would enter the hall at midnight. Then we would all sing Auld Lang Syne. There was a gentleman who apparently used to live in Newdigate and always returned for the parties. He would always sing the same two songs.

'Where does the candle light go go go when you blow blow blow it out. Does it make the twinkle of a star or the spark of a motor car. I've asked Lloyd George, Henry Ford, the Water Board, they all seem in doubt. Oh! Where does the candlelight go go go when you blow blow blow it out.'

'Where does Father Christmas go to in the summer time. Goosey goosey gander wherever does he wander. Does he go with the ice and snow to a foreign clime Oh! Where does father Christmas go to in the summer time.'

Sport

I have always loved playing sport other than cricket and so there was much I could do locally. In fact I even played a few games of cricket for the village side. I started playing football for the local side when I was about 16. I do remember once seeing my dad play after he came back from the war but he thought he was too old at 36. How times change. I did see a football match and lots of cricket played in the field opposite the Surrey Oaks until they moved it all to the Brocus. I first used to just support the village football side. We actually had a charabanc for away matches even to villages close by as not many players had cars. I would say we could get as many as 50 supporters to a match. Times have indeed changed. I carried on playing for the side until my 30s but then changed to a works side, Beecham, and actually played against Newdigate. Newdigate was firstly in the Dorking and District League, then the Horsham and District and eventually the Redhill. The highlight of the year was the football club dinner. Jim Munn and his wife were the main organisers for many years.

About 1951 I think they laid the tennis court down. It was a very well supported little club. Sunday afternoon would see a good twenty people waiting for their turns to play. I remember my Dad playing in long white trousers and a very old wooden racquet.

We played table tennis and badminton in the hall for a few years but it wasn't a satisfactory venue for the latter and we played stoolball, the local game, in the youth club. Personally, I preferred stoolball to cricket.

Characters

The village has its share of characters many of whom spoke a dialect which I suppose is typical of the Surrey, Sussex border. I imagine these are all well-documented in the history society's records.

Weather

Well of course the winters were colder. We always had enough cold weeks for sliding and skating on some of the ponds such as Four Wents and Newbarn and snow for sledging as I described earlier. I loved the summers as a child in the school holiday playing with friends in the woods and fields from one end of the day till the other.

Events

The ones that stick in my memory were the fetes on the vicarage lawn. I suppose because I was dancing the maypole and also being a pole bearer. I used to love the atmosphere with Greensleaves playing on the wind up gramophone, the side shows; coconuts, bowling for the pig etc. Also of course there was a series of Gymkhanas that were great fun. The cart horse races were the most exciting. I have never seen such a thing anywhere else.

The Village Band

Mr Rider the policeman led the village brass band. The players used to practise behind the Six Bells. Armistice Sunday was a very important event for the village. All the societies would march behind the band from the barn outside Gaterounds Farm to the church and after the service at the war memorial, back again.

Well I could go on for hours but I'll bring these few pages to an end here and hope that someone might find some of it of interest.

How the book 'A VILLAGE AT WAR' was created

John Callcut

Many of you will already have obtained a copy of the book or seen the play-reading performed by the Dorking Dramatic and Operatic Society in the Green Room on the 11th November but I thought that some of you might be interested to hear how the book was conceived.

It all goes back to July 1984. The late Rev. Dennis Parker gave me his nearly complete set of Parish Magazines for safe-keeping. The Society had just been formed and he felt that they should stay within the village rather than be deposited with the County at what was then the Muniments Room in Guildford. At this time our youngest son was seriously ill in hospital and to while away the interminably long nights I read the magazines which transported me back into another bygone world. I found the years between 1914 and 1918 particularly moving and realised that here was a rich historical source. I then wrote out, by hand, all the pieces relating to the First World War and my wife, Tina, then meticulously typed all the notes up.

I realised that the notes basically fell into four sections relating to the rector, the village, the country in general and the war overseas and that this was the basis of a play reading. I then created a narrative relating to events during the war, interwove this with extracts from the magazine, and created a script. Tony Watts played the Rev. H.G. Bird, Barbara Norman the Home Correspondent, Anne Mitchell the Commentator, the late Charles Thompson the War Correspondent, and Andrew Hales performed some contemporary songs. The players were dressed in appropriate costumes and the first performance played to a full house at the Village Hall on Monday, 18th February 1985. Such was the success that the performance was repeated on Thursday, 14th November 1985. In May 1986 the Surrey Life Magazine published a two page synopsis of the reading and in 1986 the BBC short-listed it to be broadcast on Remembrance Day but settled on a similar project done by a village in Somerset. The Surrey Local History Council held a Symposium at the Surrey University on the 14th November 1987 and we were invited to perform a shorter version of the reading to some two hundred people in the auditorium. This time we had three players who were introduced by Charles Thompson -Tony Watts, Anne Mitchell and the late Hugh Eller. Shirley Seaton was at one of the readings and she was doing research for Lyn MacDonald's book entitled 'Voices and Images of the Great War'. It was published in 1988 and several extracts were used for the book for which we received due acknowledgement. The original cast came back together for a return visit to Newdigate on the 20th November 1989 and Charlwood asked us to perform the shortened version in their village hall, this time Jenny Clark replaced Anne Mitchell. As part of the Mole Valley District Council Arts Festival we were invited to take the reading to the Dorking Halls on the 23rd October 1990. Charles again introduced the event and Hugh Eller played the War Correspondent, Barbara Norman the Village Correspondent, Anne Mitchell the Commentator and Tony Watts the Rector. On Remembrance Day, 1998 we gave another performance in Newdigate at the Village Hall with Donald Thwaites as the War Correspondent, Jenny Clark the Village Correspondent, Anne Mitchell the Commentator and Tony Watts the Rector. We had two singers, the late Bill Mackay and Ian Peterson. All the papers then sat in a draw gathering dust until my retirement when I was determined that the brave men who died should never be forgotten.

When Mabel Whiffen died in 2004 the last direct link with the First World War had been severed. Her brother, Alfred Woollorton, died in 1918 and his name can be seen on the war memorial. As I listened to the names being respectfully read out every Remembrance Day I was determined that these brave men deserved to be remembered and so I extracted all my papers and notes and set out on a fascinating journey of discovery.

It is hard to believe but my first enquiry to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1985 had resulted in a hand written letter listing the thirty two names and possible details of their deaths. I say possible because there were twenty-five A.Tylers! My first job was to get as many details as possible of the people who could be identified with certainty. By this time the CWGC was on line so that enquiries could be more easily made and www.ancestry.co.uk was invaluable for sorting out family trees.

In the early part of the book the Broadwood family is featured heavily. Bob Verner-Jeffreys of Farnham is a trustee of the Broadwood Estate and he generously lent me pictures and letters relating to the Broadwood, Bray and Innes families which really brought to life what it was like to be a fighting man. In one letter, Evelyn Broadwood, who had been badly injured, was visited by his cousin, Barbara Craster who was a Red Cross nurse. Research took me to Craster in Northumberland where the late Mary Craster kindly gave me pictures of Barbara.

The Herron family proved to be very difficult. Many years ago, at a symposium in Regents Park, I met a lady called Caroline Sherlock who, upon my mentioning that I came from Newdigate, told me that she had been researching the Whitby family of Ockley Lodge who were related to the Herrons. She kindly sent me a family tree which precisely sorted out the tree - but where were the

descendants? George O.M. Herron had built Newdigate Place but by the end of the Second World War his wife, Mrs Janson (she remarried after his death) and daughter, Lilian, had died and the place had been left in a derelict state by the Canadian Army and was demolished. Their son, Kenneth Chester Herron had a son called Kenneth Vernon Chester Herron who was born in 1908. Research at the Public Record Office did not reveal a will nor his death, so I assumed that he must still be alive. I consulted the electoral register and discovered that there were hundreds of Kenneth Herrons mostly in Northumberland and Scotland, but four addresses stood out. I reasoned that he would have been a wealthy man so I wrote to these four addresses and received back a letter, written in a shaky hand, saying that he was indeed Kenneth Vernon Chester Herron. I arranged to visit him at his home in Stanford-le-Hope in Oxfordshire. It was a pleasant sheltered accommodation complex, not quite like Newdigate Place, but he did have the luxury of a man-servant. He explained that he had sold the family firm and bought a fruit farm in Spain but moved back when his late wife became ill. Disappointingly nearly all his photographs and archives had been destroyed but there was a superb picture of his father in a frame in his bedroom. How was I going to get a copy of that? This was in the days before digital cameras, but fortunately his servant came to the rescue and scanned it and sent it to me. The joys of having a man-servant! I was just in time as Mr Herron died, without leaving any descendants, in 2003.

The Tyler family also proved to set another lot of challenges. I had already become very attached to the writings of Margaret Lucy Tyler and discovered that she was a doctor at The London Homoeopathic Hospital, author of the book 'Homoeopathic Drug Pictures' and was one of twelve children of Sir Henry Whatley Tyler and Lady Margaret Tyler (née Pasley). The family lived in a big house in Highgate called Linden House (disappointingly demolished and the site now used as a factory estate, courtesy of Camden Council!) but came down to their country estate at High Trees. I built up a family tree and sorted out the three Tylers on the war memorial but again, where were the descendants? I drew a blank going through ancestry.co.uk and googled the name Pasley. There were details of Lady Margaret's father, a distinguished Victorian army officer, and her brother, and suddenly I saw the name Pasley-Tyler. This proved to be a private members club in London for businessmen needing a bolt hole in the capital. The owner had a brother called Ian Pasley Tyler who I discovered living at Coton Manor in Northamptonshire. Our correspondence resulted in my being invited to the family home. What we didn't realise was that we would not be alone as there were hundreds of visitors viewing the gardens, which are beautiful and open to the public, and eating in their restaurant. Naturally, the Pasley-Tylers were extremely busy and kindly left us in the house along with lots of papers and pictures relating particularly to Sir Henry, whose portrait with that of his wife hung on the staircase and landing. A real treasure for me was an album of photographs which had been compiled by the wife of Major Alfred Herbert Tyler – naturally I was very busy with my digital camera. After the war she and her children moved to Westgate-on-Sea. I visited the town and the curator of the museum, Dr. Dawn Crouch, very kindly showed me the house where they lived and artefacts relating to Major Tyler in the church.

Like Margaret Tyler, I was very moved by the writings of the Rev. Henry G. Bird and I concluded that he must have been a very kind and popular pastor, but he had been forgotten and nobody knew what he even looked like. I went to his old church, St. Andrews in Hillingdon, and then to the Uxbridge Local History Centre. The curator showed me a book about Uxbridge people and there, to my joy, was a photograph of the Rev. Bird and a magnificent picture of his old parishioners visiting him at Newdigate in an open top bus. The author of the book kindly sent me copies of the pictures and put me in contact with a descendant, Pat Bird.

Some descendants of other soldiers are members of the Society. Harold Hopkins has given us a lot of excellent pictures of the Hopkins family and James Frederick Elliott is an ancestor of Jim Elliott. Bill Johns gave me some pictures of Purdey Johns and I was really hopeful when Bob and Joan Gadd said that they had a picture of Westley Johns, but unfortunately it had disappeared and couldn't be

found. Westley's gravestone is in the church and I discovered that it was because he had committed suicide at Portsmouth Naval Barracks and had been brought home to be buried. The other CWGC gravestone in the churchyard belonged to George Ackland. He had died at Brooklag Farm from Spanish Influenza exacerbated by having been gassed in 1918. I found a descendant, Jo Winfield, in the New Forest who provided me with some pictures.

Sylvia McPhee was visiting Newdigate. She told me that her grand-father was Percy Weller and I was able to show her the carvings he had done in Newdigate church before the war. Sylvia gave me some excellent pictures and then told me about an amazing piece of luck she had. She was looking on e-bay and saw that the medals awarded to Percy's brother, Ernest, were being auctioned. She managed to secure them, and she sent me a copy of her laying them next to a wreath by his grave at Le Rejet-de-Beaulieu Communal Cemetery in France.

Ancestry.co.uk put me in touch with Neale Box who was researching the Hills family and he sent me the magnificent pictures of Cecil T. Hills. The Goldbergs also proved to be difficult but one of the sisters Ada, known as Flossie, married Francis Shorland Ball. This is a rare name and by luck we spotted a letter in the Telegraph written by Commander Dan Shorland Ball who turned out to be a descendant and sent me some very nice pictures.

Sometimes research revealed some very poignant facts. In 1986 I interviewed an elderly villager who had remembered Aubrey Hudson. He said that he was very tall and joined up at a young age. That was, indeed, an understatement. Aubrey was born on the 30th June 1901. In September 1914 he had been punished at the village school for being 'generally slack, talking and inattention, careless writing and spelling, talking and being idle.' On the 28th July 1916 he was killed at the Battle of the Somme and his body was never found. He was just one month over 15 years of age. 2nd Lieut. Gerard T. Bray arrived at Gallipoli and when he landed on the beach he immediately took some photographs. He was killed on the very day he arrived and his camera, along with his other belongings, were returned to his family. No doubt it was with some trepidation that they had the film developed. His name is mis-spelt as Gerald on the war memorial but is now read out as Gerard on Remembrance Day. Originally all the names, complete with rank, had been carved into the stone and the mistake could not be rectified. When the plates, with the names without rank, were installed after the Second World War the error was repeated as probably those who had known him had died or left the area.

It proved very difficult to find details of two particular soldiers. The CWGC originally said that Pte. William Charles Chatfield was born in 1886 in Uckfield and served with the 13th Btn. Royal Sussex Regiment. I could not find any connection with Newdigate but just by chance when trawling through the back copies of the Dorking Advertiser I saw, right in the fold of the paper, a short piece about Pte. William Charles Chatfield of the 1st Btn. The Queen's who had been working at Oaklands Park in Newdigate. Further investigation showed that he was born in 1896 at Nutley so he was totally different from the first name I had been given. Even harder was finding out about Pte. Bernard Whitehouse. According to the CWGC there was only one Bernard Whitehouse who had died in the war. He enlisted at Bow and was killed on the 6th June 1917 but I could not find any connection with the village. In a piece in the parish magazine it stated that a Mr Whitehouse played the piano at the Newdigate Fête on the 6th June, thus I assumed that as he had been in Newdigate on the day his son had died he had specially requested that his son's name be put on the memorial. Further evidence appears in the 1911 census which shows that a William Edmund Whitehouse, music teacher, was living with his family, including his son Bernard born in 1896, at a house in Bexleyheath. Mr Whitehouse came to live in Newdigate after the war.

Further information was gained by painstakingly searching records. I read the parish magazine for the entire period. I read every Dorking Advertiser in the basement of their offices in Reigate, often

with gloves on as it was pretty cold. This was timely as the offices have now been closed and the archive moved to Chelmsford. I went on numerous occasions to the Newspaper Library at Colindale (which is a long trip virtually to the end of the tube line), the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, the Royal Engineers Museum in Gillingham, the Museum of the Royal West Surrey Regiment at Clandon, the Surrey History Centre at Woking, the Imperial War Museum Annexe in London where they have literally millions of photographs and the National Archives at Kew. I visited churches to see memorials and went to the battlefields where, in 2008, I was honoured to lay a wreath at the Menin Gate, to the sound of the buglers, in memory 'To the brave men of Newdigate in Surrey who left their country homes in order to give us a future'.

I read many books about the First World War and found that generally they fell into four categories. There are books about the history of the war, books about the history of the regiments, the war poets, and reminiscences of individual soldiers. As I felt that my book took a different view I decided to take the plunge and try to find a publisher. Shortly after my book about Newdigate was published in 2002, I was approached at an exhibition by a representative from Phillimore's who asked why I had not approached them with my book, and that if I were to write another, then I should contact them. I went on to their stand at the 2011 'Who Do You Think You Are' exhibition at Olympia and they gave me details of the procedures to get books published. Then I visited the Western Front Association who put me in touch with Ryan Gearing at Reveille Press who, they said, were keen to promote works about the First World War by amateur authors. I showed Ryan the draft of my book and the pictures I had accumulated and he agreed to go ahead and publish it.

First of all I had to knock the book into shape, and I am indebted to Jane Lilley, my wife Tina and Andy Thompson from Eye Witness Tours who proof read the drafts when they came back from the type-setter. This proved to be an onerous task because the book had been drafted in Open Office, and when it was transferred to the format required by the printers, lots of weird things had happened. Full stops turned into commas, bold type turned into light, spaces had been closed, and even some spellings had changed. Also, in an effort to get some consistency, certain formats had to be followed, and once set up they had to be checked throughout the book. Suffice to say that even after four checks over two hundred changes still needed to be made. By this time deadlines were approaching but the index could not be compiled until the draft was complete. At last everything was (hopefully!) in place and the index could be compiled. Forty hours of checking and double checking saw the book complete and with the printers. In order to formally launch the book the Dorking Dramatic and Operatic Society agreed to re-enact the play reading at the Green Room Theatre on the 11th and 12th November 2011 and new readers from the company were cast. Val Collins played the Home Correspondent, Geoff Collins the Rector, Sandra Grant the National Correspondent and Brian Inns the War Correspondent.

The final part of completing the book had been tough, tiring and even boring. But I wasn't shivering in freezing water, I hadn't seen my best friend blown away, I wasn't trembling to hear the sound of the whistle, I wasn't dreading the sound of a whiz-bang and all my limbs are sound and in one piece – in other words a small price to pay in my efforts to ensure that the thirty two names that appear on our war memorial will always be remembered.

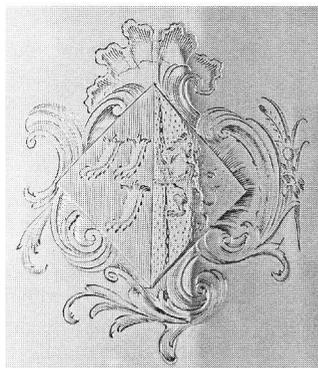
The armorial bearings as engraved upon this George I coffee pot by Gabriel Sleath, hallmarked London 1716 are those of Newdigate impaling at present unknown arms. These armorial bearings denote the marshalling of a marital coat showing on the dexter (the heraldic right on the left as you view the piece) the arms of the husband and on the sinister (the heraldic left on the right as you view it) the arms of the wife. These arms may be blazoned as follows:

Arms:

(on the dexter) **Gules three lion's gambes erased argent** (for Newdigate)

(on the sinister) **Or a lion rampant regardant gules** (for ?)

As these marital arms appear upon a lozenge, I believe that upon the balance of probability they belong to a widow of the Newdigate family at some time after 1716.



The use of a lozenge in heraldry is the only vehicle for a widow to display her arms.

The family of Newdigate stemmed from Newdigate in the County of Surrey . The family was certainly living there during the reign of King John. Descendants of the family during the course of later generations settled at Harefield in the County of Middlesex , Arbury and Astley Castle in the County of Warwick and Kirk Hallam in the County of Derby . A member of the Arbury branch of the family, Richard Newdigate was created a baronet in 1677. This title later fell into extinction on the death of Sir Roger Newdigate in 1808.

There are descendants of the senior line still living.

NEWDIGATE CIDER PRESS**Jane Lilley**

In the last issue, we reported that a cider press which originally came from a farm in Newdigate had been returned by Dorking Museum. It is now in store at Greens Farm, and will eventually be restored by Chris Frost. For those who have never seen one, this is what it was like.

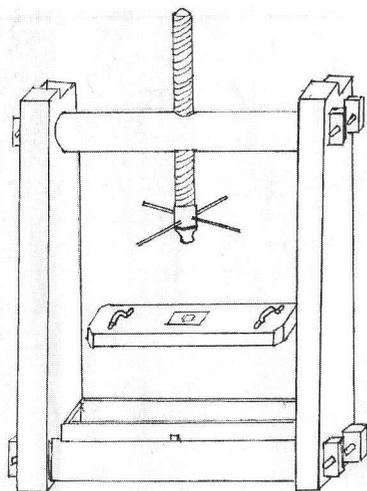
A small cider press was a normal part of farm equipment; for example the auction of 'live and dead stock' at Chaffolds Farm in 1904 included a 'Cider press with iron screw', which sold for £2.10s. (a large sum: the same as a light market cart, and as a sow in pig). Every farm had an orchard, and although the best cider was made from specially grown varieties of apple, any fallen or surplus apples would be pressed, producing a juice which could be drunk fresh or fermented into cider. Alternating layers of clean straw and milled (pulped) apples were formed into a block called a 'cheese' with its base in a wooden trough, which was pressed by turning a huge screw so that the juice flowed into the trough and could be collected.

The press from Dorking Museum was clearly made on the farm. Only the cast iron screw, plate and levers were bought in; the plate bears the name 'Basset, Dorking', for Dorking Foundry. The date is unknown, but around 1900 seems possible.

The frame had to be very strong to withstand the stresses of pressing, so the timbers were solid and heavy. The pieces were probably all cut from a single small oak tree 18 inches in diameter at its base with about 16 feet of straight trunk, grown in one of the farm hedges (imperial measurements are used here, as they were when it was constructed). The uprights are notched at the top so that they could be set against a horizontal beam, perhaps the tie beam of a cart shed, to stop the whole structure moving during pressing. So the cider press was made to fit a particular place. It was constructed with simple joints and pegged together so that it could be dismantled and stored after use, then assembled quickly and easily the next autumn.

The uprights are 6 ft. 6 ins. high, 5 ins. thick and 18 ins. wide at the base, tapering to 14 ins. wide at the top. They have been roughly squared off, but parts retain the curves and badly worm-eaten sapwood of the original tree. A solid crossbeam made from an unshaped section of the trunk 11 ins. in diameter was set between their upper ends. At the bottom, two close-spaced beams 4 ft. 4 ins. long, 8 ins. wide and 5 ins. thick set between the uprights completed a rigid frame.

The iron screw was 3 ins. in diameter and 38 ins. long, of which 30 ins. was threaded. It turned in a threaded iron socket set in a hole through the top beam. The flattened tip rotated in a socket on a small, heavy iron plate, screwed to a heavy wooden slab with handles for lifting it onto the cheese. The screw was turned using two iron levers, thought to have been about 4 ft. long, which were inserted in holes through the screw just above the tip; as the screw turned, the slab was gradually forced down, squeezing the juice out.



The trough rested on the two bottom beams. It was made of boards, with a flat bottom 35 ins. by 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins., to which were pegged sides 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins. high. A slatted insert below the base of the cheese created a space for the juice to collect. The outlet for the juice was a square hole in one long side, 1 in. diameter, which probably had a spout to feed the juice into a wide, shallow tub placed beside the bottom beam.

Although the press is currently in poor condition, it is a nice piece of equipment, locally made, and probably in regular use for many years. Perhaps eventually it may be returned to a useable condition.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2010-2011

Interest in local history and genealogy appears to be growing and our Society maintains a healthy membership level although attendance at our talks is often disappointing. Has anyone got any bright ideas to encourage people to come?

Over the next few months a number of new publications will become available. Jane Lilley's book entitled the 'Woodcarvings of St Peter's Church' was born following a study that she conducted on the carvings on the pew ends. It then became apparent that the church was blessed with many carvings of great beauty and this book is a result of all the new information she has gathered. My book, 'A Village at War', which tells the story of the village and its people during World War One will be published in November. The Dorking Dramatic and Operatic Society will be performing a play reading of the book at the Green Room on the 11th November and this will serve as the official launch. Finally Jane Lilley's book about Newdigate School will be available later this year, subject to pre-orders reaching the required numbers, so please support this important publication.

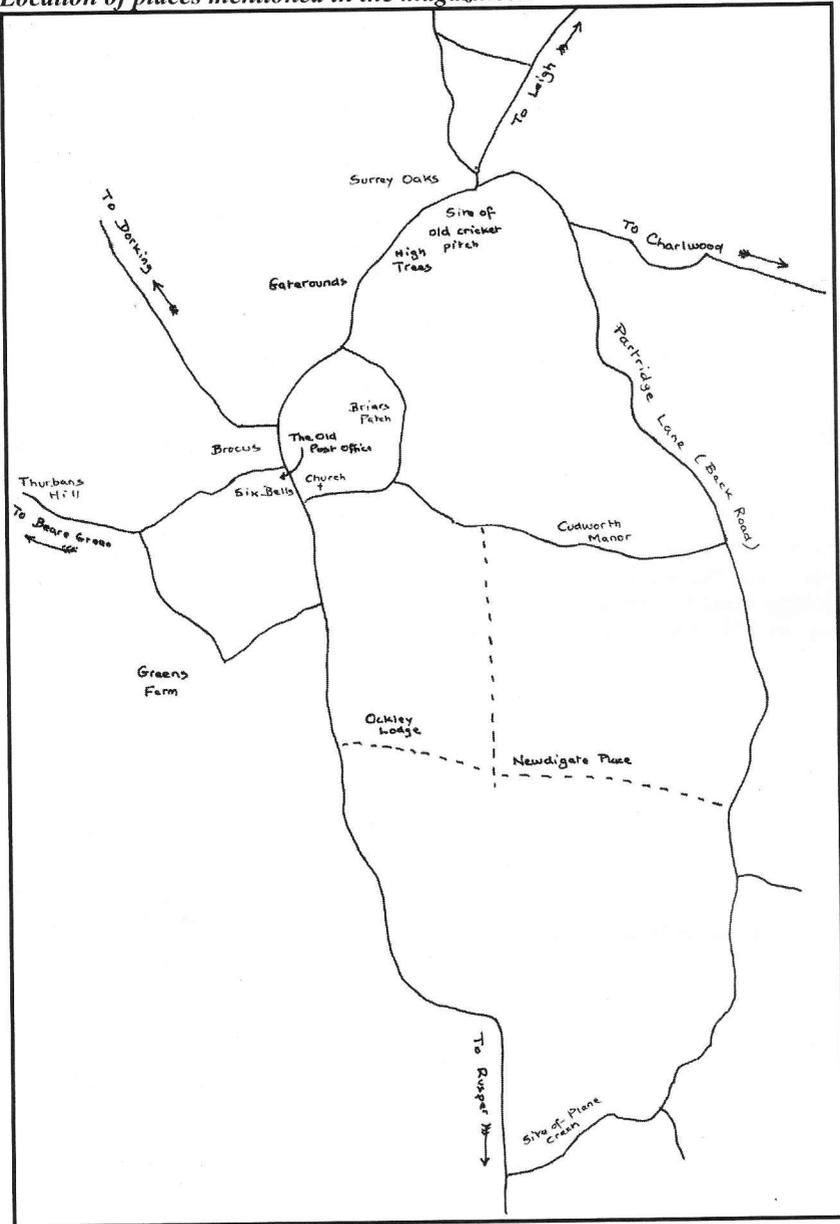
As usual we have had a busy year, the highlight of which was a trip, organised by Maggie Ashworth, on the Wey and Arun Canal on a lovely evening in May. We have had a number of interesting speakers covering a wide variety of subjects. At last year's AGM, Matthew Alexander spoke about May Day, Tom Cole from the Woodland Trust spoke about trees and the species that rely upon them and Jim Phillips spoke expertly about the Wey and Arun Canal. Jane Lilley gave a talk about the woodcarvings to the Dorking Local History Group at the Friends' Meeting House and we were grateful to George Brind for operating his computer to display the pictures. Jane repeated the talk in the church as part of the Mole Valley Heritage Week to a very enthusiastic audience and I headed a walk for the Surrey Hills Society exploring Newdigate's socialist past.

Our gravestone recording projects has stalled mainly due to the work needed to get all these publications completed but hopefully we might be able to find a few kind autumn days and resume the project. The scanning of all our photographs continues but it is a long and boring job.

I would like to thank all the members of the committee for their work throughout the year and Gina Mitchell for doing our posters, Donald Thwaites for proof-reading and Val Greenwell for co-ordinating the distribution of the magazine. Hugh Richards has decided to step down from the committee but has assured us that he and Wendy will continue supporting the Society.

John Callcut

Location of places mentioned in the magazine...



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