

We wish all members a happy and prosperous 1987.

Since our last Newsletter in August the Society has been busy with numerous activities and continuing research. Our A.G.M. on September 25th was well attended and after the formalities were completed Miss Joan Harding, the Chairman of the Domestic Buildings Research Group, gave a fascinating illustrated talk entitled 'The Timber Framed Buildings of Newdigate'.

On October 28th Miss Edith Mercer OBE, PhD, with the assistance of her sister Doris, gave us another illustrated talk, entitled 'A Journey down the Mole.' Everyone present could not fail to be impressed by the marvellous photographs of the many aspects of the Mole and its tributaries and our knowledge, particularly around our own immediate area, has been greatly enhanced.

On November 15th members of the Society took part in two separate events. One group displayed maps now in our collection at a Seminar in Dorking Halls and Diana Salisbury gave a talk about her work on the footpath maps (which are still obtainable at the Village shop, 15p each). Another group attended the annual symposium at Surrey University organised by the Surrey Local History Council, of which we as a Society are now a member. For this occasion we had made, by George Hiscocks, some wooden display screens which were used to good advantage to display our pictures and maps and which will be available for any future exhibitions. The subject of the symposium was "Shops and Shopping" and for this John Callcut compiled a booklet describing the growth and decline of shopping in Newdigate. This booklet is available for sale at £1.

Bob Howard has now virtually finished copying all our present collection of photographs on to slides. Over four hundred have now been reproduced. Although this has been an expensive and time consuming exercise your Committee feel that this was fully justified. Not only can the pictures now be used to illustrate any further presentations, being much easier to show on slides, but by keeping this second collection at a different location we have reduced the potential risk of loss. We are still anxious to include any other photographs or documents - ancient or modern, of people, places, events, etc. - which will add to our record of local history for the future. All photographs or documents lent to us will be copied and returned! Please do not destroy any until you have asked the Committee if they would be appropriate as an addition to our records.

Our day to day projects have continued apace. We are still seeking out records relating to Newdigate in the various local record offices to add to our reference library and Charles Thompson has been using these to research family history and now the history of houses. We hope to turn this newsletter into a magazine for members by publishing from time to time the results of this research. The first article is published with this newsletter.

Groups are still transcribing the parish registers and we have been greatly helped in this by the West Surrey Family History Society, who have made available to us the transcriptions of the earlier registers which they have done. We are grateful to them and in return we let them have a copy of the work we do.

Our programme for 1987 is beginning to take shape. We have arranged for an illustrated talk on "Wealden Iron" to be given by Mr Jeremy Hodgkinson, of the Wealden Iron Research Group, in the Village Hall on Thursday 5th March at 8pm. Tickets, as usual, will be 25p. Four hundred years ago Ewood and Newdigate were important for the production of iron and there was a large industry centred at Ewood Mill. Remains can still be found so we hope this talk will be of particular interest.

At the A.G.M. of the Friends of St. Peter's, Newdigate, we understand that a film of the church shingles project will be shown. This should be of interest to all members and we hope that you will support this event.

It is proposed to take a group to the Pageant of Monarchy which is being held at Guildford in July. The pageant traces the English monarchy from Celtic times to the present day and it features a cast of 1000 with 100 horses and riders. Tickets are priced from £5.50 to £8.00 but if there is sufficient interest we would propose to organise a coach party on July 7th, when tickets will be cheaper. Please let a member of the committee know of your interest as soon as possible - the box office opened on January 2nd.

We hope to give a talk with slides to the cubs and scouts, about the history of the village, and Len Taylor has agreed also to show his slides of the building of the Scout Hut and some of the early groups at camp. We are very aware of the need to educate the youngsters and to give them a feeling for their heritage.

We have been advised that the Surrey Local History Council symposium for 1987 will have as its theme "Surrey at War". We will be suggesting to them that we could stage our own Village at War presentation. More about that later.

Finally, two more appeals. We are endeavouring to complete our collection of parish newsletters and we have the following omissions:

March 1965 - December 1968	January 1974
Sept. 1969 - December 1969	June 1977
May 1973	February - October 1985

If you can locate any of these we would be grateful if you would allow us to copy them. We would also like any newsletters prior to 1965.

The second appeal is to all those who have not yet paid their current subscription. Bob Howard will be pleased to receive this.