

Graffham

Memories Articles Photos



Graffham: Memories, Articles, Photos

Edited by Mary Butterworth & Diana White

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Graffham

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Front Cover Image : Graffham from the Downs ©

Tracey Carr

Back Cover Illustration from the Parish Map Project

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Every effort has been made to obtain permission for reprinting photographs; we apologise where it has not been possible to contact the owner or photographer.

Three people in the village have been constant sources of information: Maureen Boulton, who was first pupil, then parent and finally staff member at Graffham School, has provided a mass of information and photos from the school archives; June Challen and Lilee Puttick have both been on the receiving end of numerous phone calls which invariably started "Do you remember when? or who? or what? or why?" Between them these three have answered many of our questions and been a major source of background information on the village's history.

We should also like to thank Barry Rook, archivist for the Camping and Caravanning Club and John Martin, archivist for the Youth Hostels Association.

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Bibliography

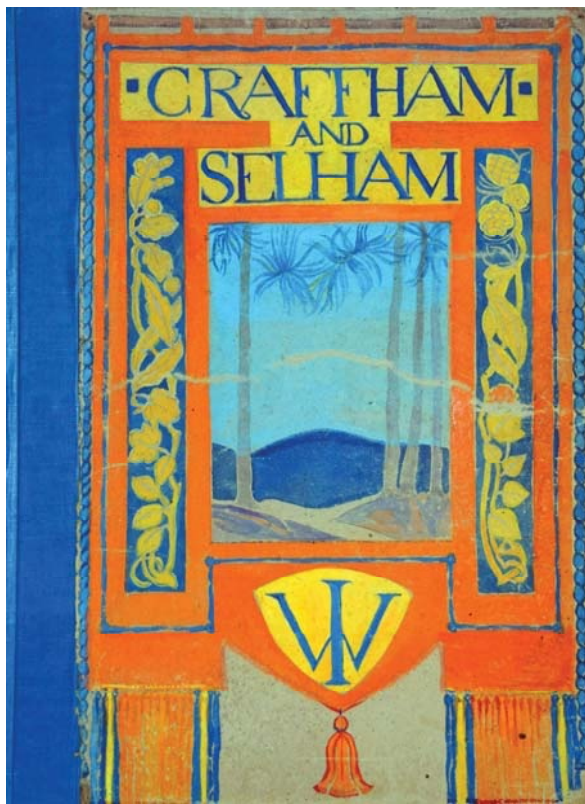
To our knowledge there has been no history of Graffham published since *Graffham Through a Thousand Years* by Frederick T Barrett 1953, reprinted as a Millennium Edition in 2000.

The entire Graffham contribution to the Parish Map Project can be found in *A Sense of Place: West Sussex Parish Maps* by Kim Leslie, published by WSCC. A large copy of the map is on the wall in The Empire Hall.

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The Scrapbook Project

Shortly after the Second World War, ladies from the Graffham Women's Institute joined those from other rural branches in compiling scrapbooks about their villages. The original *Graffham & Selham Scrapbook*, produced in 1947, was filled with village lore and memories stretching back to the 1880s. It comprised 82 pages of handwritten script with photographs and printed ephemera. The WI had held a handwriting competition to select those members who would have the honour of writing the text. The final scrapbook measured 13" x 17½" and had a hand-painted cover displaying the WI symbol. This was designed for the Graffham and Selham branch and includes a view of Gallows Hill

The rediscovery of this document in the village archives prompted Graffham's Thursday Club to consider producing a sequel to the *Scrapbook*, bringing the recorded life of our community into the 21st century. The new scrapbook project was launched in 2012 at the Thursday Club.

The editors began the task of gathering and collating the collective memories, anecdotes and photographs of today's villagers. We had worked together in 2006 on an exhibition to celebrate the Empire Hall Centenary, and this material was reviewed for the new book. 2012 was the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and, as part of the celebrations, an exhibition entitled *Graffham School in the Reign of the Queen* was put on at the school. This event prompted a stream of memories and articles from generations of schoolchildren which form the first chapter of our book. We have sifted through the Graffham Archive, *Graffham Parish News* and local newspaper cuttings for suitable items, but the majority of articles have been recorded or written specially for the book. We have contributions from those who live here now, or have lived here in the past, and from those who love our village and its wildlife. Many have generously supplied photos from their personal photo albums.

The sad death earlier this year of Sylvia Smith, Chairman of the Thursday Club, provided the catalyst to complete the book. Sylvia was a keen supporter of the project and very conscious of the changes she had seen in the way we live since her childhood. She inspired us to take the project beyond a book of memories and make it an up to the minute record for future generations.

Since the *Graffham Scrapbook* was created in 1947 we have been through a period of enormous change: social, political, economic and technological. In many ways, changes in Graffham are typical of changes in all villages during this period, and it would be tempting to use this space to draw wider conclusions. However this book is for the residents and friends of Graffham, and their children, so we hope that it will bring out first and foremost some of what is unique about our own community, our institutions and their history and our natural environment.

Mary Butterworth and Diana White
November 2015

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The Best Time of our Lives

Memories of Graffham School



Barbara Penn (Claydon)

Pupil 1947-1953

I started school at Graffham after Easter in 1947 when I was four years old.

We lived at Lavington Stud and I used to pedal to school on my tricycle, along the coach road that runs along under the Downs, with other children from Lavington.

I went into the Infants, or 'Miss Sabine's', and I can remember my first day very well. It had been bright and sunny but in the afternoon a storm blew up with plenty of thunder and lightning and I recall being surprised that one of the other 'new ones' was so frightened that Miss Sabine took her onto her lap where the little one stayed for the rest of the afternoon. That was typical of Miss Sabine, she was short of stature, grey haired, bespectacled, firm, but very kind and totally unflappable. The Infants classroom of my memory was always full of warmth and sunshine. My memories of actual events in those years are not very sharp, but I know I was very happy and

was enjoying school. One memory is of us sometimes gathering round the piano that was in the classroom, while Miss Sabine played and we sang songs she taught us. Once I was asked to sing alone, not because I had a particularly good voice, Miss Sabine said, but because I pronounced my words clearly.

In due time I went up into the Juniors, Miss Beevor, our headmistress's class. There were only two classes then until Mr Steele joined the school, probably in 1952, but he was just another presence, as he didn't teach me at all.

My memories of my years with Miss Beevor are clearer. The classroom seemed huge in those days, the big high window was very imposing and too high for us to see out of. There was handsome wood block flooring and a great cast iron boiler in the corner of the room that pumped out warmth in the winter. Our bottles of milk (we all had a daily third of a pint then) were sometimes frozen in winter. The bottles would be arranged around the boiler to thaw out for us to drink later in the morning. Mrs Robbins cooked our dinners, which I remember as being really

Graffham School in Barbara Penn's time (Barbara is seated, front row second from left)





good. Occasionally in summer, she made Cornish pasties for us and we took a picnic up into the Downs to collect rose hips. These were sent away to be made into rose hip syrup. Those days were a real treat.

Miss Beevor was a tall woman who always wore her hair pulled back into a small, tight bun. She was somewhat more strict than Miss Sabine, but then we were getting older and no doubt tried her patience at times. I remember falling and cutting myself very badly in the playground once though, and how kind she was to me that day. I've still got the scar.

I was terrible at arithmetic which annoyed Miss Beevor, but she introduced me to the joys of poetry and literature for which I am ever grateful. On Friday afternoons she would read a chapter aloud to the class from whichever book had been chosen for the term; I always looked forward to that. Towards the end of my days at Graffham School I had somehow graduated to the "top table" in Miss Beevor's class and I remember the four of us on that table being given books to read aloud to each other that really opened my eyes to a wonderful world. Thank you Miss Beevor.

Playtimes were great too, hopscotch, tag, hide and seek or just generally roaring around. There was a huge laburnum tree in the playground in those days and I recall the brilliant yellow of the racemes of flowers in the spring.

Canon Bradbrooke was Rector at Graffham in the early years. He would come over to the school once a week to talk to us about the gospel stories. He was a large, jolly man. The Revd Townroe took over from him in time. He was a lovely man too, but very different in appearance, thin, quieter and of a more serious nature. We had our school sports days on the Rectory lawn for a while until we moved down to 'the Rec'.

Oddly enough, I don't remember much about the Queen's coronation and school. As a family we went up to London a few days before to see the decorations in The Mall. But I do recall the death of her father, King George VI. On the day of the funeral the whole school walked in a crocodile to our house to watch it on TV as we had a set, they weren't so common then. Somehow everyone squeezed into our sitting room.

Barbara Penn (née Claydon), 2012

Keith Tupper

Pupil 1955-1961

My Memories - Walking up Calloways in one big gang; teachers - Miss Beevor, Mr Steele, Miss Sabine; being forced to play cricket with dustbin as a wicket, (that ball seemed very hard); having a fresh cooked lunch, after which we had to sit down and *Listen with Mother* on radio.

Mrs Robbins and Mrs Money did the dinners which were great, but I would not eat bread and butter pudding so I was allowed a jam tart, just to keep me quiet I think.

Christmas was great for Graffham School kids. The Maharajah at Selham treated the kids to a party at the Village Hall and every child had a gift from Santa who arrived at the end of the party carrying two large sacks.

I can also remember the Queen used to come down to the Stud for Goodwood, and the kids lined the road and waved; she looked so small.

It sounds bad now, but when there was a funeral we had a day off which was great.

Another memory is the old outdoor loos which froze up, also the coal fires in the classrooms.

One thing I can remember is my mate swearing and having his mouth washed out with soap in front of the class.

Keith Tupper, 2012

Graffham School c. 1960



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Graffham School 1936—2015

1965 - 1980 Headteacher - Mr Ted Fenneymore

- 1966 Midhurst Grammar School merges with Midhurst County Secondary School to become a comprehensive, taking pupils from local primary schools at age 11
- 1970 Midhurst Grammar School becomes an "upper school" accepting pupils at age 13; younger pupils attend either Midhurst Intermediate School or Herbert Shiner from age 10, leading to one less year group at Graffham School
- 1979 Graffham Evacuees Reunion

1980 - 1984 Headteacher - Mr Tony Smith

Graffham school awarded the Thornberry History Award for special achievement

1984 - 2007 Head Teacher - Mrs Angela Connor (Mrs Saffery)

- During this headship, the first OFSTED report rates all subjects "good" and Geography "very good"
- 1986 A Field Centre is opened at Graffham with facilities available to visiting schools
- 1990 Downlands School wins a National Curriculum Award prize - a limited edition picture by Quentin Blake.
- 1992 Downlands County First School renamed Graffham County Primary
- 1993 Graffham Playgroup registered as a Charity
- 1995 Construction of a long, wide corridor, known as "the link" from the north side of the original school building. This major addition houses the new entrance from the playground, toilet and cloakroom facilities and library, and leads into two large new classrooms.
- 1997 Graffham Playgroup moves from Empire Hall to become Graffham Nursery School
- 2002 All Weather Sports Arena built

2005 - 2007 Headteacher - Mr Nick White

- 2005 Graffham and Duncton Schools merge to become the Lavington Park Federation

2007 - present Headteacher - Mrs Helen Martin

- 2007 Further refurbishments to form new porch and provide nursery facilities within the school building. Staffroom and office revert to a classroom. All junior children move to Duncton Junior and every infant child comes to Graffham Infant School
- 2008 Midhurst Grammar School closed and replaced by Midhurst Rother College; Midhurst Intermediate School and Herbert Shiner Schools are closed; Pupils now stay at The Lavington Park Federation until age 11
- 2009 Graffham becomes a Forest School
- 2011 Graffham Infant School is rated "outstanding" by OFSTED
Graffham Nursery joins Graffham School
- 2014 Graffham Infant School reverts to Church of England status after 100 years

Pauline Goodwin (Challen)

Pupil 1956-1963

My name is Pauline Goodwin, née Challen, and I was a pupil at Graffham Primary School 1956 – 1963.

I was a reluctant pupil at first, as I remember having to be prised off the stud fence opposite the school by my cousin, Kate Challen. This reluctance must have continued as I remember my parents, Dick and Joan Challen, resorting to bribery by promising me a box of Newberry Fruits if I went a whole week without crying at school! This involved a bit of guile, on my part, as I remember in later weeks, during silent reading, resorting to a quiet snivel behind my *Janet and John* reading book. To be sure, I have always thought that this was an unlikely start for someone who then went on to become a teacher.

Despite this initial reluctance, I grew to enjoy being a pupil at the school and have very fond

memories of the staff that taught me. The teachers I remember are Miss Beevor, Miss Sabine, Mr Steele and Miss Bethel. The only thing I remember about Miss Bethel is that she wore a spectacular fifties conical bra! I have more scholarly memories of the other teachers.

It was in Miss Beevor's class that Karen Howick and myself were given the task of creating a display of wild flowers in the new porch that had been recently built, facing the road. (Sorry, this was before the days of nature conservation!) We were given textbooks on wild flowers and collected the flowers, wrote labels and displayed them in Shippam paste jars. How Miss Beevor must have loved fishpaste sandwiches! It is amazing how much of that knowledge has stayed with me, especially those flowers that we found a bit tricky like dog's mercury.

Miss Beevor would say, "I'm surprised you can't find dog's mercury. It grows everywhere on the Downs." Sure enough, under the beech trees, we found it growing in vast drifts.

Miss Sabine with Pauline and her father, Dick Challen



During her retirement Miss Beevor lived two houses down from my parents at Hillside and she continued to take a significant interest in my life throughout her time there, happy to provide character references for things like my first flat.

In Mr Steele's class we listened to School Radio programmes. The new polished wooden speaker would be connected up, placed in front of the class and the accompanying booklets were handed out. I loved these broadcasts, especially one that was about sticklebacks. We spent many a happy hour afterwards, dabbling about in streams and brooks hunting for the elusive stickleback but we never had any luck.

I always thought that Miss Sabine was good at everything. She was an excellent stoolball player and knew how to deal with everything from my snapped knicker elastic to my bleeding tongue cut during a fall. While in Miss Sabine's class I

recall a diverse range of things including the PG Tips painting competition and I think I managed a "Highly Commended" in two separate years for paintings of the nursery rhyme *Mary, Mary Quite Contrary* and one of a goalkeeper in the goal. I also remember collecting primroses, packing them in moss and sending them to children in London who, we were told, had never seen wild flowers.

It constantly amazes me just how long Miss Beevor taught at Graffham School. As with many of my classmates, she had also taught my father, Richard Challen, for the whole of his 14-year school life. Now Dad really did have some stories to tell about life at Graffham School!

Pauline Goodwin (nee Challen) , 2012



Presentation to Miss Beevor (left) on leaving Graffham School, 1965

Nobody grows old by living a number of years ... You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence and hope, as old as your despair. So long as your heart receives messages of cheer, grandeur and power from man and from the Infinite, so long are you young.

Averil P. Beevor

Martin Taylor

Pupil 1966 - 1969

I started at Downlands County Primary School (as it was then called) aged eight in 1966. My mother (Daphne Taylor) and I had been away in Australia for nine months, and I had come back with pronounced Aussie drawl and some ripe Aussie expressions (both of which vanished fairly quickly).

I spent my first year in the hut and then a couple of years in what is now the hall. I think my first teacher was Miss Sabine.

Mr Fenneymore (the headmaster) taught me for my last two years. Because of the school's proximity to the Downs, I remember a lot of nature walks up onto the Downs, particularly in summer and often to the tumuli towards Cocking Down, but also to the Iron Age field system on the way to East Dean. Unsurprisingly the children's highlight of this particular walk was to climb the "submarine" tree on the way. Why it was called this I'm not sure, but given the period it was probably to do with the Beatles *Yellow Submarine*, though the logic escapes me.

These were the days of educational TV for schools and while my memory seems unsurprisingly to have blanked out the conventional lessons, I recall what seems like hours spent watching these programmes, all of course in black and white. I also recall the excitement of being allowed to watch the first moon landing, though I think it must have been a repeated recording the day after.

We still had school milk at morning break and school dinners were served through a hatch into the big classroom by Mrs Robbins and Mrs Parry. The classroom doubled as the dining room. Playtime was spent in the playground whether playing football, hopscotch or just running madly around. A big tree at the bottom of the playground had fallen over and this, with the chopped off branches and lots of additional old car tyres, was used as a climbing frame, camp or whatever our imaginations could come up with. Health and Safety was a term that did not exist in the 1960s, and certainly not in that playground.

*Cubs and Brownies, 1960's - "Are you going to Widdecombe Fair"
(Martin is seated first left in front row)*



Sports were played at the Recreation Ground and we would all troop down on foot for rounders, football etc. During the summer we went once a week to the swimming pool at Petworth, which was open air and became the site of the Petworth Youth Club and a car park. On Mondays, after school, some of the boys would go to Cubs in a hut behind the village hall. In those days there was a newsagents shop at the right hand side of the Foresters (later the restaurant area) which we all called into on our way to Cubs for sweets, comics etc.

Another after school activity was Red Cross training which was held at Brookdene.

For two years my Mother was doing a teacher training course at Bishop Otter College (she later ended up teaching at the school, but sensibly not me). This meant she could not pick me up after school. It was arranged that I would stay with the Fenneymore family after school until Mum could pick me up (or in summer I could cycle home when I knew she would be back). Ted and Elaine Fenneymore lived in the school house with their sons, John and William. These were days of childhood innocence and a complete unawareness of the harsh realities of the real world. As a result John, William and I ranged widely and wildly across the area, mainly up on the Downs but also across the Stud's fields to the various copses between them. We made all sorts of hidden

camps and had a thoroughly good time, often vanishing for hours. This was slightly curtailed when I managed to break my right arm falling off a rope swing hanging from a tree on the bank above Long Bostle, to be rapidly followed by William breaking his left arm the following day using the exact same rope. For the next six weeks we were the terrible twins because neither of us could write legibly (him being left handed, me being right). After that we returned to our previous existence, though slightly more cautiously.

I loved my time at the school, probably for the less academic activities, but the rural unworldliness of it didn't prepare me for the immenseness and overcrowded classes that were to be Midhurst Grammar in 1969. At that time education was streamed. Because Mum felt that I should go to boarding school at thirteen, I had to take the eleven plus. This meant that rather than going to Herbert Shiner School, which was the next normal feeder school for Graffham, having passed the exam my destination was Midhurst Grammar. With the exception of one person (Barbara Kingsley) I was separated from all my friends and contemporaries of the last three years and into the mayhem of a school of over 1000 students.

Martin Taylor, 2012

Daphne Taylor - Teacher in the late 1960s

I taught at the school for three years in the late 1960s. This was following the retirement of Amy Sabine. The school was very different, both in buildings and play area. There were two classrooms – the hut for the middle group (seven and eight year olds) whom I taught, the hall for the youngest and oldest children. Mr and Mrs Fenneymore lived in the house. The infant toilets were near the main door and the library and two more classrooms were built later.

The playground had fewer trees and shrubs and there was a woodpile for children to use for their own constructions. This got the school into trouble with the village over the Best Kept Village competition when the “untidy playground” lost marks and thus the competition!

Daphne Taylor, 2012

Joanna White

Pupil 1976-1981

I have a lovely memory of sitting outside under the massive pine trees and learning to play the guitar with a wonderful lady whose name I have forgotten. She must have had the patience of an angel.

I can also remember spending ages using the snail hopscotch just outside the side door. And one of the top memories is going down to the Wilkinson's fantastic stone edged swimming pool and having a wonderful swimming time.

I can remember concentrating like crazy on passing my cycling proficiency, I badly wanted to pass so that I would be 'allowed' to ride my wonderful blue bike.

We used to spend a lot of time outside building wonderful mini houses out of these great big long planks. Sometimes the houses collapsed which meant we learnt the best building techniques the hard way.



Joanna White



Ben White

And finally I really enjoyed playing marbles in the roots of the enormous pine trees. The roots made great passageways and roads to roll the marbles up and down.

Thanks to Graffham School I owe a lot of happy memories. The work (and play) we did put us in good stead for the future. I would not have missed it for the world.

Joanna White, 2012



Ben White

Pupil 1977-1983

Something that I realised soon after leaving Downlands Primary School in Graffham was how small it was. During my time there our entire school must have consisted of no more than thirty pupils, four (or so) teachers and about three classrooms (sometimes the hall was split by a divider to make two rooms). My 'year' numbered six pupils, all of whom fitted easily around a table when Mr Mayo, the Headmaster from the Herbert Shiner (a 300+ pupil school), came to visit prior to us moving on from the primary school.

As small as it was, Downlands was very well resourced and run by a set of enthusiastic teachers and staff. During most of my time at the school it was run by the Headmaster, Mr Smith.

Inevitably, the teachers at Downlands had to cover numerous subjects, and Mr Smith did this with ease: Maths, English (grammar and handwriting skills) and various sports seemed to be his favourites. We had no formal timetables (from what I can remember), but inevitably there was a Maths lesson every morning which was almost always taught by Mr Smith. This meant although we had to endure a daily-dose of Maths, thankfully this was over first thing in the morning and never took place in the afternoon. Mr Smith's approach to teaching was conventional, but he would encourage alternative approaches to learning if they were of benefit. On one occasion I remember hearing how pleased he was that I spent a lot of time at home playing darts, not because he had any particular interest in the game, but because the method of scoring provided a great means of practising subtraction.

The playground at Downlands was big enough to permit a multiplicity of different games which included rounders, cricket and football. There were also many large trees in the grounds with wonderful root complexes amongst which we

played games of marbles for hours on end. The informal (but seemingly inevitable) national ban on the game of 'British-bulldog' (aka: 'Red Rover') stole from us of a lot of excitement at playtimes, but the teachers certainly encouraged us to have fun and exercise. I recall on one occasion the whole school playing a game of rounders in the playground. Mr Smith took the bat whilst pupils attempted to bowl him out. This led to groups of us positioning ourselves all over the school grounds including on the far-side of buildings out of sight of the field of play. Mr Smith would then shout out when one was 'coming over' and we would scurry about trying to catch the tennis ball as it arched over the building and bounced down off the various roofs.

Space was not endless and formal sports days were held off-site down on the recreation ground about half a mile away. In addition, the school was fortunate enough to have permission to use the Wilkinson's swimming pool during the summer months (which came complete with changing rooms).

With the school positioned just under the Downs, we were often taken up to the top to explore the flora and fauna. I do not forget how fortunate we were to have had such a wonderful environment on our door-step.

Although my time at Downlands Primary School is now long ago, I still think back to many wonderful moments. And having read what I've written I realise that this is as much reminiscence about the Headmaster, Mr Smith, as it is about the school, but in my mind a good teacher makes a good school, and Downlands Primary was a great school!

Ben White, 2012

Mark Folkes

Pupil 1977-1983

I don't think anyone thought I was going to enjoy my early years at school. My mum recalls the many times that I used to chase after her car when she dropped me off at the school gate. I think I was bribed by Mrs Caplin to stay at school by giving me stars as a reward. It's a testament to the school that I ended up taking the longest degree (architecture) and didn't leave school until I was 28.

Being asked to write about Graffham School, I realise how lucky we all were back then. The school was small, so small in fact that I don't think there were enough boys for a football team. I might be wrong but it's a good excuse for my lack of football skill anyway.

Partly because of its size, the school had a unique quality. It felt more like a large family and we all stuck together. Some of my best and longstanding friendships were made at Graffham School and a number of us still keep in touch.

Although it's been over thirty years since I was at Graffham School and my own children are at primary school! I have got many vivid memories... from the flip-up timber desks and real ink pens (most of us had inky fingers all the time) to playing hopscotch, playing marbles under the pine trees and kiss chase in the playground.

The surroundings were amazing too. The school building was a large hall with a classroom to one side. The older ones moved up to the school hut where we read to Mrs Earle and were taught by Mr Smith who was an excellent teacher. I can remember him sneezing a lot as well, really loudly. I now know that it must have been hay fever, not surprising being in a country school situated in the middle of the fields at the base of the Downs. It was idyllic really.

I recently watched the final flight of space shuttle Discovery, now decommissioned, and recalled to



my own children that I watched (possibly the first?) space shuttle taking off. I can vividly remember sitting on the classroom floor with the whole school watching this like it was yesterday.

I can remember the school fish tank in the reception, the school cook who taught me guitar. I still play because of her, and love music. I remember sports day at the local recreation ground, camping on the school field, the newts in the fish pond, the scary stories that we made up about the grave yard next door, the boys toilet outside and playing "red rover", banned from schools now I believe, playing catch and cricket with Mr Smith, the wildlife trip to the Downs, lessons with Revd David Grant.. I could go on ...

Mark Folkes, 2012

Joanne Folkes

Pupil 1978 – 1984

I remember my first day at Graffham Primary School.

Mr Smith was Headmaster and Mrs Williams was my first teacher. I adored her, she was really pretty and kind. I was so upset when she left to have her baby.

In her place came Mrs Ottey, who was equally kind and caring. Our classroom was in the main hall. In fact that hall was our dining room, Library and P.E area as well. There was a huge rug at the top end for assemblies and we had sit with our legs and arms crossed while Mr Smith took assembly. Mrs Gadd had just learnt to play the piano which we sang our hymns to.

I remember the small glass bottle of milk we had to drink (with a straw) and there was always a layer of thick cream on the top. On cold mornings the milk would be frozen and they would stand the milk next to the radiator to defrost it. I can remember my friend Michelle Sheppard showing me where the toilets were ... Outside ... and they always had cobwebs and spiders in them!

I remember the lovely nature walks “up the Downs” and bringing bits back to identify them; walking to the stud Farm to look at the pure bred horses; watching a foal being born and sheep being sheared; pond dipping in the little pond by the hut; playing around the bottom of the pine trees and using the fallen pine needles to make a maze.

I remember Mrs Earle on play ground duty and she would sit on the tree stump at the end of the play ground and we all took it in turns to sit on her knee. We played “it” and conkers, hop-scotch and kiss chase. We had a metal climbing frame that was outside for PE only.



We used to walk to a house in the village to use a swimming pool and it was so cold.

When I went up to the hut Mr Smith and Mrs Caplin used to teach us. I had the privilege of bringing the teachers their lunch in the staff room.

I feel so lucky to start my first school at Graffham. What amazing surroundings. I have fantastic memories.

Joanne Folkes, 2012



Tony Smith, standing top left

Tony Smith

Head Teacher at Downlands School 1980 -1984

My five years as headteacher of Downlands First School were such a unique experience. As a family living in the school house, we were very soon welcomed into the community, which in turn gave us a greater understanding of the children and their environment. The children were able to develop as individuals with an empathy for others in an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding with respect for each individual, and the confidence to meet the challenges that lie ahead, first and foremost, the impending move to the Herbert Shiner School.

Whilst the school was situated on the hill at the end of the village, we were not seen as an insular environment; visitors were encouraged to support

a curriculum enabling the children to gain knowledge of the wider world. During this period the children participated in making a video for the World Coffee Organisation in conjunction with two schools from Midhurst and undertook an in-depth study of the village leading to the Thornberry Award. This was awarded on an annual basis to a school in West Sussex for special achievement in history.

School functions were held involving the whole community. Parent Teacher Association events were held in the Empire Hall, school sports days were held at the recreation ground and school concerts performed in the church.

These five years provided so many fond memories and experiences, far too many to mention in this article.

On one occasion we required the school piano to be moved into the church. Four burly workers arrived from the local stud farm and quickly moved the piano with such sensitivity it did not require re-tuning.

There was a time, following a snow storm, when only ten pupils arrived for school (those within walking distance) and the day was spent clearing the snow from the drive, in between very one-sided snowball fights. There was no power so lunch was heated on the oil stoves in the classrooms. Schools didn't close due to a snowfall in those days, and I wonder how Health and Safety would react today to our cooking methods.

We used a local building firm, Bryders from Petworth, for repairs. It was very rare for them to finish a task in one go. They often had to leave the site during a job: one was a retained fireman, so off he would go, and on more than one occasion they would all disappear. I would later discover they had gone off to be pall bearers. Bryders were also the local undertakers.

There was an occasion when I was in theory meeting with the Chair of Governors for two days, when in reality at the request of the Chairman of the Parish Council I spent the two days in the church belfry with the foundry workers, replacing the church bells, as no other help was available from the community. I had very loyal staff.

The camps we held on the school field in the summer proved a great success. We spent time exploring the surrounding Downs and although not part of the curriculum organised water fights took place. This was a period when children could spend time together in a more relaxed atmosphere, but it was also a most valuable part of our school curriculum.

Downlands School, like all schools, depended on the support of many individuals and I would like to mention a few. Those that I have not mentioned, but were connected with the school, I trust will not be offended.

When I first started at the school, I received tremendous support from the Chair of Governors, Mrs Jeanne Wiseman. Her knowledge of the school, community, parents and children was invaluable to my introduction to the school and subsequent headship, as was the support from Diana Caplin, Claire Williams (teachers), Val Watson (school secretary), Val Earle (non-teaching assistant), Mary Tupper (caretaker) and not forgetting Anne and Stella in the kitchen, who provided nutritious, delicious school meals. David Grant (the Rector) was a regular visitor, providing pupils with spiritual guidance and much humour, but who was also very nimble on his feet, if the word "food" was mentioned.

Downlands School, therefore, provided the pupils with an education based on their individual needs using the environment and locality to pursue a broad based curriculum. The children flourished, in part due to the ethos of the school, as well as the tremendous support of their parents, school governors and the wider community. It was a privilege to have been part of Downlands School for five years, working with a wonderful group of children. I believe we proved that educational achievement is not to be purely focused upon meeting targets, but in fact a partnership of individuals striving to provide first and foremost a happy, safe environment with a relevant curriculum for the pupils, not one constructed by the narrow parameters of the National Curriculum. It is hoped that these pupils will look back to their days at Downlands School, as I do, with great fondness and view them as a happy, memorable experience during their early years.

Tony Smith, 2012

Pupils learn about their environment

Taken from an article from the *Midhurst and Petworth Observer*, 1989

STUFFED animals, walks in the woods, and projects on fungi are helping to teach children about their environment at a West Sussex school.

But it is not just children at Downlands County First School, Graffham, who benefit from the field study centre set up there - schools from Bognor Regis and Chichester also visit it.

“We are giving them a day’s experience and something they will never forget,” said headteacher, Mrs Angela Connor.

The centre was set up three years ago, but has only been used by other schools for a year. Children are given projects and go into the woods surrounding the school to research and observe their subject.

Based in the school hall where work by visiting children lines the walls, the centre has a display

of stuffed animals and a group of “green boxes” containing nests, conkers, and wood.

Children aged from five to eleven use the centre when they research projects, and art, science, and English lessons are included. They draw pictures, write poems and study every aspect of their subject.

Mrs Connor believes this is more beneficial than learning information from books as the children are more likely to remember if they have found out the facts themselves.

There is a wild wood area where the natural habitat is left to grow and a pond which is closely monitored and looked after by the school’s children.

Another benefit of having the study centre at the school is the resources it has attracted, including

Bjorn Wood and David Rogers; Image © Michael Chevis, Midhurst



furniture, books, a microscope, and a camera.

The centre has also brought the children of Graffham into contact with other West Sussex pupils, something that is important for a school in a remote area.

Plans for the centre include involving the community through local groups who could hold meetings in the centre and developing the historical and geographical side.

Graffham Children meet the Prime Minister

Extract from an article in the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, 1986

Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher opened ICI's prestigious £3m conference centre in West Sussex ... part of a massive £20m complex at the headquarters of ICI Plant Protection Division at Fernhurst ...

Two young pupils who were thrilled to meet the Prime Minister were Owen Lambert and Tracey Kewell (both eight) from Downlands School at Graffham. ICI has helped the primary school set up an environmental studies centre for West Sussex schools.

"We didn't know we were going to meet the Prime Minister - my mum will probably faint when I get home and tell her!" said Owen, from Graffham. "The Prime Minister was very friendly and was asking me how to operate the computer and if I liked learning with it."

Young Tracey, from Heyshott near Midhurst, was a bit overawed with the special visitor but showed Mrs Thatcher a little goldcrest she was drawing and recording for environmental studies.





Angela Connor, Headteacher 1985-2004

Downlands School wins Schools Curriculum Award - 1990

We consider that learning from the environment forms a solid foundation for our children's learning and a pivot for our cross-curricular work. The skills acquired and the excitement of the discoveries will help us to instil a lifelong appetite to learn and discover. We believe that the development of a sense of culture and heritage arising from this approach will sow the seeds for responsible and caring citizenship of the future.

*Angela Connor
(from submission for 1989/1990
Schools Curriculum Award)*

Pupils win top award

Taken from the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, December 1990

An award for community awareness and good use of the environment was presented to the primary school at Graffham this week. Pupils and staff from Downlands School went to the Barbican Centre, in London, last week to collect a National Curriculum Award.

Downlands is the only primary school in West Sussex to receive such a prestigious recognition of their work within the community. Teachers Mrs Angela Connor and Mrs Pamela Gadd, together with pupils Rosanna Pain (six) and Peter Vincent (seven), went upon to a stage before 2,000 people to collect the prize on behalf of the school.

Oliver Skanberg-Tippen

Pupil 1997-2002

My fondest memories of Graffham Primary are of the warm summer days when we took class trips - walks that seemed more like adventures at the time - into the countryside around the village. One afternoon we trekked the South Downs, and to our minds I'm sure it was a treacherous mountaineering expedition. In another pastoral adventure we undertook the mammoth endurance task of walking across to Mrs Gadd's farm (1.5 miles) where we were witness to how the impressive machines tamed the expansive corn and wheat fields. Those were fond memories too, because on the return journey we stopped by Mrs. White's house (at this point we were all hot and sweaty) where we were each given a choice of ice cream to cool down.

Oliver Skanberg-Tippen, 2012

Sporty pupils are ready for all weathers

Extract from the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, September 2002

Graffham First School pupils proudly christened their new all weather sports arena on Friday. Chairman of the Graffham School Association, Russell Walker, paid tribute to fellow parents, villagers and friends of the school who had helped through donations of time as well as money enabling the association to complete the area. The project has only taken three years since the original conception. The seed challenge funding for Capital Initiatives provided an initial grant of £19,000 and the association raised the remainder of the £40,000.

Pupils celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, 2012 (photo supplied by Graffham School)



Graffham CE Infant School as part of the Lavington Park Federation

Helen Martin, Headteacher from 2007

Being Head at Graffham is never dull - it is a constant busy-ness of the excited learning of children, the support and contact from community, set to the backdrop of one of the most beautiful places in West Sussex.

I came to Graffham at Easter 2007, my first headship, and was immediately thrown into the major refurbishment of the building. Built in 1832, this Grade 2 Listed building needs a lot of money to make it into a place of modern learning. In 2005, to secure a headteacher, the school had federated with Duncton First School. This had led

to many important changes, designed to ensure that a thriving, vibrant school was maintained within the village. The addition of a new porch at Graffham, a new classroom where the staff room and office used to be, and the inclusion of the nursery building for use within the school, were all welcomed to this beautiful old building. Within four months, we completed the project with a final change of age and reorganisation. This meant a move for every Junior child over to Duncton Juniors, and every Infant child to come over to Graffham, where it would become the Infant School in the Federation.

Celebration in the School Grounds on return to Church status, 2014 (photo © Graham Franks)



I will never forget the enormous pile of resources and furniture in the hall, nearly touching the roof and covered with a plastic sheet to keep off the last of the builders dust! On the day we made this momentous move, the heavens opened and we spent a busy July day sampling the best of the weather that living just under the Downs can offer.

We have gone from strength to strength since then. We welcomed Graffham Nursery into the school building in 2011, finally knocking down the hut at the front of the school. It is always important to remember that you are custodian of a place of education that has become such a memorable part of so many families in the past. We have welcomed so many old students, families and teachers back to school in the last few years, each bringing a memory of the school in their own lives. Graffham is a unique place to work; it is a complicated and incredible place to inspire children; and our numbers are stronger than they have ever been, due to a talented staff, and Outstanding OFSTED inspection in 2011.

Following on the tradition of Graffham being a field study centre, our children spend a considerable amount of time outside. We are now a Forest School, providing children with high quality experiences in local woodland and our own grounds, discovering the beauty of the area through their own natural curiosity.



Graffham School 2008

In 2014, 100 years after Graffham lost its Church of England status, we brought Graffham back to its original status of being a Church of England School. Our 99 year lease with West Sussex County Council has run its course; and following a consultation, and a fantastic school reopening ceremony with the Bishop and local MP, we are now proudly Graffham CE Infant School once more.

Graffham is an inspirational place to come to work every day. We are proud to be part of the village and our teachers work hard to provide a love of learning and the outdoors for every child. It definitely keeps us busy!

Helen Martin, 2015



Graffham reverts to Church school status 2014.

*L-R MP Nick Herbert,
Head Teacher Helen Martin,
Rt Revd Martin Warner, Bishop of Chichester,
Revd Michael Barter,
School Governor Marie Bracey
(photo © Graham Franks)*

From Playgroup to Nursery

Early Days in the Empire Hall Notes from the Graffham Archive

The Playgroup was started in September, 1965 with £10 from Elaine Fenney more and £10 from Dorothy Sutherland (a well-wisher).

Elaine had a nursery nurse training from Barnado's and was the wife of the Headmaster of Downlands School, Graffham. She started the group in the Empire Hall with ten children paying 4s.0d. (four shillings -20 pence) a session, the money being spent on equipment which the children enjoyed unpacking.

Eric from Lavington Stud made the Wendy house, the cooker and the dresser, the dressing-up stand and wash stand, and altered the bookcase.

Three mobile cupboards were made by Mr. Booker. The painting easels and the small chairs were on "long loan" from Downlands School. Gifts of small equipment, rugs, books, helped in the early months. There were many helpers, none being paid.

Children came from a wide geographical area which included Woolbeding, Midhurst, Heyshott, Tillington, Petworth, Bury and Duncton. Some were referred by Social Services as being especially in need, and one parent regularly paid 4s.0d. for Tuesday sessions and six eggs for Thursdays.

Playgroup in the Empire Hall



The Hall Committee, and in particular Mrs. Orr, took a great interest in the group and they were only charged £1. 0s.0d. a session at the start.

Visitors who could give a picture of the wider world outside the village were welcomed and some came regularly. A link was formed with "big school" and once a term the children walked up there.

There were outings to watch sheep being shorn at Camerons in Norwood Lane, and to see the foals on the Stud. Eira Ashby did the library most weeks and the Tufty Lady spoke on road safety. Amongst other visitors were a nurse, a fireman, a dentist, a policeman and, of course, grandparents. Sports days were organised, as well as the annual nativity play. There were weeks when pets were the topic.

The Playgroup remained in the Empire Hall until the 1990s when it transferred to Graffham School to be accommodated in the school house, no longer the home of the head teacher. This move cemented a strong link with the school which has been further developed with recent changes. In 2007, following the federation of Graffham and



Crafts at the Playgroup in the Empire Hall

Duncton Schools, Graffham Infant School and Duncton Junior School were established. The building work which accompanied this development included the refurbishment of the hut to provide a new home for the Playgroup from September, 2007.

Playgroup in the early days



Graffham Nursery 2015

by parent, Sonja Smithers

Today Graffham Nursery is a thriving pre-school which draws children from Graffham and Duncton but is also popular with a wider catchment including Midhurst, Petworth, Lodsworth, Tillington, Upperton and beyond. In 2012 the Nursery moved into a newly refurbished classroom at Graffham Infant School, with bespoke facilities, as the 'hut' was no longer fit for purpose. The bond with the school has gone from strength to strength over the years, with the Nursery children taking part in school assemblies, Church Services, trips, Forest School, and - since being in the same building - shared outdoor and indoor teaching facilities and free flow teaching between Nursery and Reception classes.

The Nursery now takes children from 2½ years until school age, and is open for morning and afternoon sessions every day. Most of the Nursery children go on to join the Federation and attend Graffham Infant School. There is a huge emphasis on outdoor learning, and the children love the outdoor classroom areas and garden, complete with 'dragon' play and sensory area, which was built with a huge amount of financial support from the local community. The Nursery is currently still administered as a charity, and has a very active and engaged committee of parents, a lot of whose attention goes into fundraising to maintain and improve the Nursery's facilities.



Sonja Smithers, 2015

Graffham Village Shop



Shopping the old-fashioned way

The 1950s and 60s

Pescods was a general grocery store with everything. In the 60s there was also the shop at the Foresters run by the Alberys. They were both general grocery stores. The only difference was there was a post office at Pescods and a coal merchants at the pub.

The shop at the pub used to be what is now the restaurant room at the end. When Albery got too old he closed his shop and Hilda Holland had her shop there. She sold small hardware and all sorts of things. When she finished it became part of the pub.

Mr Albery's son, Cecil, was the bookie. I used to place bets – sixpence each way. It was popular before people started going to betting shops. Cecil loved you to lose and he hated you to win but he always paid out eventually although he didn't like it. He was a proper bookie, he used to have a little room which was his office and I always remember a round table in there.

We had our bread from Sid Money. Every night father used to go over to the bakehouse and help Sid, or he went for a chat, but you just used to help do things then. I never went with him so exactly what they did I wouldn't know. Sid delivered the bread.

We used to have the International Stores deliver groceries from Midhurst in those days; you wrote your order down and gave it to them. We didn't have phones then.

There was a bus that went to Midhurst a couple of times a week but if we went, we went on our bicycles. Most of the time I was working, so I didn't have a lot of time.

The butcher used to deliver on a Friday.



Lillee - 1960s

The milk was delivered by George Philips from the White Horse, and Hazel Durrell used to come around with George on a milk round. He had a farm up there. He used to come and we had it poured into our jugs from a churn. Most things were delivered in those days because very few people had cars.

Mother used to take in lodgers for bed and breakfast and Friday used to be fish day. She probably ordered the previous week. (I don't think she had a phone then). Farnes in Midhurst had the order and it used to come out on the bus. We waited at the bus stop and it was handed over. The bus used to take parcels but it wasn't a delivery service.

All Saints Chapel was built on what was a field full of cauliflowers. They were grown by Mervyn who lived in what is now Ariel Cottage and he had a vegetable round and supplied to people's doors for several years. I can remember that area of cauliflowers because they looked awful but the cauliflowers were absolutely beautiful.

Lillee Puttick, 2012

The Hollands run the shop at Pescods

by their daughter, Penny Holland

John and Hilda Holland bought Pescods Stores from Mr and Mrs Bennet and Bill and Pam Woods in summer 1963. The Woods took over the White Horse and ran that for several years until Bill's sudden death. The Hollands were returning to their roots, John Holland having been brought up in Midhurst, and apprenticed at Pescod's Stores in Midhurst immediately prior to the Second World War. Hilda Holland, née Cole, had been born in Lickfold and brought up in West Lavington. Her mother had run the village stores in Cocking over the war years.

At that time there were a number of other retail outlets in Graffham. The village still had a garage and petrol station where the village shop is now. Sid Money had a bakery near Pescods where he baked his own delicious bread and from which villagers directly purchased their bread. There

was a small shop in part of the Foresters Arms run by Lottie Challen and her husband, who did the newspaper round. John Pescod (born 17th July 1889), one of the original family that established the shop in the village, still ran the Post Office and lived with his wife Mary in the attached house.

Pescods was a traditional shop – the staff fetched the various items that customers wanted; all the fruit and vegetables were loose and had to be weighed and bagged; the bacon came from the local farm, Godman-Dorington's, having been processed in Horsham, and was delivered as a side of bacon still requiring boning and cutting up, and was then sliced to order. Each Wednesday the family sat down to boiled gammon for lunch – the rest of the large joint providing the shop with cooked ham, also sliced to order.

Graffham Shop 1965 Copyright The Francis Frith Collection



A large number of customers had monthly accounts and their orders, taken over the phone, were “put up” by the shop staff and delivered to them. The shop would be lined with cardboard boxes full of groceries and the deliveries went as far afield as Selham House, Graffham Court at Topleigh and Beechwood Lane in East Lavington. The shop had special permission from Revd Johnson, the headmaster, to drive the van through Seaford College. Some monthly account customers were in the habit of popping into the shop and helping themselves to sweets, fruit etc., expecting the shop staff to note on their accounts what they had taken.

The winter of 1963/4 was particularly severe with heavy snowfall on Boxing Day. The village was cut off – except for a single snowplough track from Petworth. A tractor from Lavington Stud made the deliveries from the shop to Norwood Lane. Among those deliveries was the order made up each week by Hilda Holland for an illiterate stud groom to ensure he had food each week. Every now and then the stud foreman, Dick Challen, would let her know whether more or less of particular items such as baked beans or tinned soup were needed.

Within a year Mr Challen died and his wife felt unable to keep the shop at the Foresters going, and the Hollands agreed to take it and the paper-round on. This became Hilda Holland’s project, and she spend each afternoon at the “bottom shop”, whilst Joan Challen, the Stud foreman’s wife, ran it in the mornings. Jack Pescod and Sid Money also came up to retirement over the next few years. John Holland applied to take over the Post Office, and was confirmed as Postmaster. The door to Jack Pescod’s from the Post Office was locked shut and the door between Pescods Stores and the Post Office was reopened.

In those days the Post Office was vital to the ordinary people in the village, most of whom did not have bank accounts. They got their old age pensions and family allowances paid out from the Post Office, and bought postal orders when they wanted to send money to buy items from catalogues or to give as a gift.

Sid Money became ill and had to give up the bakery – the building was in some disrepair. The shop started to buy in bread for the village – which now had to make do with mass-produced loaves. Some of the villagers took to the novelty of ready cut bread with enthusiasm. The knocking down of the bakery after decades of service led to a plague of rats and cockroaches looking for a new home. By then Jack Pescod had died and his wife remarried. The house was now owned by Ronnie Burroughs, a former ambassador, and his wife, Audrey. Unfortunately one of the places occupied by the rats was his official hat kept in his fitted wardrobe – in which the rats built a nest. The change of ownership was indicative of how the village overall was changing.

When Hilda Holland reached her 60th birthday, the Hollands decided to retire and sold the shop to Roger Mozley. The village threw a leaving party for them, organised by Mrs Robbins, in the Empire Hall. The Foresters took back the “bottom” shop and it became part of the pub.

Penny Holland, 2014

Hilda Holland (below left) was a keen tennis player. John Holland is in the centre.



*Pescods c. 1985*

From Farming in Kenya to Graffham

The Mozleys take over Pescods

We bought Pescods from Mr John Holland in 1980. Neither I nor my wife, Janet, knew anything about shop-keeping so Mr Holland had grounds to be pretty sceptical about us and he certainly let us know! However the Hollands saved us for a bit when we took over, and Kathleen Rough, who had worked with him, stayed on to help.

Our family had been in Kenya. Janet was born in Kenya and I'd gone out in 1952 to work for Creameries, making butter and cheese. I started farming there in 1957 with a friend. We were producing dairy and sheep and corn at an altitude of 6-8000ft. Once independence came along we had to get out. Very luckily I found a job managing a farm down in Cornwall where we spent five years. Janet had always enjoyed coming to Sussex to visit my mother when we came on holidays from Kenya so when we saw Pescods advertised, we thought it was a place

we would like to be. What really sold it to us was the fact it had two acres of orchard out the back. The children had always had plenty of space and thought that was tremendous - we have never regretted coming here.

We came to Graffham in April 1980 – I had two legs in plaster at the time so Janet bore the brunt of the move. When we started, we took all the stock over. In those days they had quite a bit of haberdashery. The Hollands had had a second shop in part of the Foresters. It was run originally as a separate enterprise but Mr Holland took it over and when it packed up, he brought the haberdashery back to Pescods.

We had a terribly steep learning curve, and I think we tried to do too many lines at the start – for example gloves, knitting wool and cottons. People did do a tremendous lot of sewing and knitting in those days which they don't do now.

The Hollands had had about fifteen or twenty people who had accounts and kept a book upstairs up in the office. We inherited this system and when an account customer such as Mrs Loring came in, we rushed up the stairs and fished frantically for the book then just wrote down the total in the book without itemising. In retrospect I think we could have been more successful with a better book-keeping system.

When we took the shop customers didn't really expect to serve themselves. We had shelves all around the shop with counters in front of them so that if they wanted a pound of sugar we measured it out in front of them. Customers expected you to scurry about and get things off the shelf for them which was the norm in those days. However times were changing. We had an adviser from one of our suppliers in who advised us to stack food in a gondola in the middle rather than keeping it all on shelves so we started by getting a gondola which ran the length of the shop.

We stocked quite a variety of frozen foods. Birds Eye and Findus used to come and stock us up and we got vegetables regularly from Langmead Robinson of Bognor. They used to deliver twice a week. We used to keep a few chickens in the freezer. Keeping vegetables fresh

was difficult as we had no refrigeration for them. We had a cellar where we could keep potatoes and carrots and fruit. We also ordered a cooler for milk and soft drinks but that was the sum total of cooling.

There were two cash-and-carries. One at Barnham which is no more, and Booker in Chichester. We used to go down there about once a week and pick up stuff that we wanted. Also Booker used to deliver once a week. We tried never to run out of anything.

We did about twelve deliveries including Mrs Loring, Maggie Paterson, the Bertrams, Mrs Agar at Beechwood House (who employed one of the Claytons as a butler) and Peggy Sutherland at Church Farm.

We tried to stock a big range at the higher end of the market and we used to sell quite a lot of writing material. One thing we did very well on was birthday cards. Customers enjoyed Janet's selection of cards.

We used to get bread delivered. As people got rather tired of the sliced and wrapped loaves we got a man to deliver baked bread from Milton. In those days part-baked frozen bread wasn't available. You could get a small bakery but that of course meant you became a baker, basically,

Pescods, 1980s



doing all the work of mixing and baking which we didn't want.

We never opened on Sundays or Bank Holidays. I don't think people expected it. We used to open from 8am until 5pm with an hour off for lunch, normally. On Saturdays we opened half an hour later and closed half an hour earlier. That seemed to work very well. Children from Graffham School would drop in on the way home - they'd buy a bag of crisps or something like that. Soft drinks weren't so prevalent then.



Roger and Janet at Pescods 1980s

We used to sell a lot of lard which you would hardly sell nowadays. We also used to cook our own ham. We got bacon from Jim Godman-Dorington. He had to take his pigs up to Horsham every week and he used to come back with the cured bacon. We had smoked and green. They used to come on a side so we had to bone the side and bone the gammons. That wasn't a problem as, having lived on a farm, I did know how to cut things up. Bacon was very popular. The smoked bacon seemed to go better than the green but some people really loved green so we stocked them both. We used to get a big Cheddar which we'd cut up and put in a display cabinet across one end of the shop. We also had a certain amount of sliced cheese and always had a Stilton on the go, as well as Cambozola (a very reliable cheese) and Brie. Pâté was also quite popular. We usually had two or three pâtés, again unwrapped. You just cut a piece off when required. There was some wastage so that was probably something that should have been looked at a bit more closely. The bacon was all right as it was salted, also the Cheddar which was kept in the cellar (where fortunately there were no "livestock" running around!).

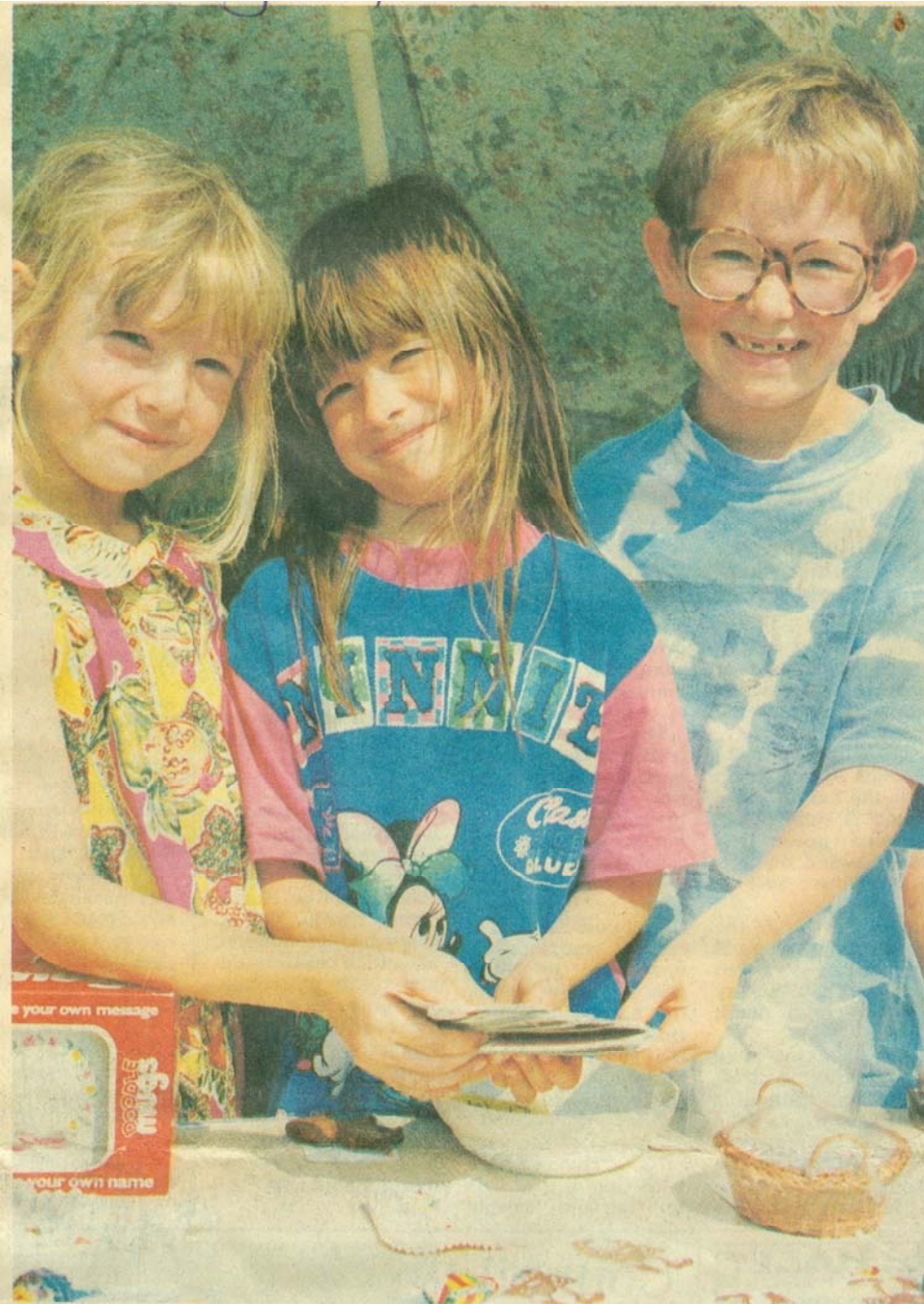
I don't know where the nearest supermarket was when we first came to Graffham but after about three years Sainsbury's opened in Chichester. That was really the beginning of the end of this type of shop. People were fascinated by going down to see what they could find and enjoyed the

excitement of going down to Chichester. We did quite well for the first four or five years but the business didn't increase as much as we had hoped.

I can't remember exactly when Janet said she'd had enough shop-keeping. Very luckily for her there was a thing called WOW (Wider Opportunities for Women) in Chichester and she joined that. I'm very glad she did because she had always been rather reticent about what she could do and she suddenly realised that she could do quite a lot really so she became a bookkeeper. However that left just me and Kathleen in the shop. Kathleen had worked in Sainsbury's at one time when it was in North Street as a grocer, not a supermarket. I think she'd been a head cashier and she was very, very competent. We also had various helpers at different times Gina Tupper, Trish Petter, Vanessa Hill, and Claudia Dimmer.

The shop wasn't easy to run because the premises was in two halves. At one time the Post Office and the shop had been separate businesses. The Post Office, toiletries and stationery were in a different section from the groceries. We had a little television camera - largely to see people who were waiting for the Post Office as we were a bit paranoid about not keeping people waiting!

Roger Mozley, 2015



WORKING HARD: (Left to right) Emma Boulton, Abigallo and Alex Todd running a tombola stall.
Picture by MALCOLM McCLUSKEY. - Photo sales no. 8527-1.

Party fun helps shop project

Reminiscent of VE Day and Jubilee parties, residents of Guillods Estate in Graffham held a fun bring and buy morning on Saturday.

Organised by Maureen and Bob Boulton, the aim of the

party was to raise funds for the new village shop and post office that is in the process of development.

The principle attraction for children was a bouncy castle and there were a number of other stalls including

a raffle, tombola and produce bring and buy.

Altogether £150 was raised. Peter Parish, chairman of the Graffham Village Shop Association, said he appreciated this splendid community effort.

The Shop relocates - to the consternation of the Village!

by ex-Shop Committee Member, Marion Wilder

When Roger Mozley announced his intended retirement, there was shock and horror!

Peter Parish, Chairman of Graffham Parish Council, called a meeting at the Empire Hall, and the crowded hall indicated the concern at the possible loss of the shop and Post Office. Peter asked for volunteers to form a committee to seek alternative options. Dick Challen, Stuart Le Fevre, Don Allen, Louis Lambert, Hilary Major, Colin Clayton, Mike Paterson and Marion Wilder took on the task and two years later eleven sites were considered and, for many different reasons, rejected.

The garage site had been sold to developers. Their planning application for two houses was refused and the site came back on the market for £120,000. This occurred on Friday afternoon and by Monday morning the money had been pledged. A wonderful response.

Plans were drawn, estimates obtained and the Bank consulted, and we were up and away. There was much debate about decor and furniture and what went where. The children came down from Graffham School and drew their plans for the shop and what to stock, sweets and ice cream the most favourite.

The Post Office was secured, thanks to Roger, who generously postponed his retirement so the Post Office could be swapped to the new site and the service continued.

Then came the important question - who to run the new shop and Post Office? Advertisements brought in many applications which were reduced to a final ten. The committee interviewed all of Saturday and Sunday and independently made their choice. The result was unanimous and in 1994 Malcolm and Mavis King became tenants with a two year lease.

A large crowd attended the opening of the new shop.

A tenant was found for the other part of the shop and Stephanie Marx, a picture framer, moved into the village. There had been much concern about this site as it was felt that some trades would be intrusive but we had found a perfect solution.

The large car park was deemed a great asset both for the shop and the village hall. Money was donated by the Rustics and others to help pay for resurfacing the new car park. An external power point was added and used by the Podiatry Mobile Unit and the Purple Bus (another story).

An excellent start to a new venture, very well supported by the villagers and people from the surrounding areas.

Marion Wilder, 2012



Malcolm and Mavis

by Michael Morton, regular customer and helper

When Malcolm and Mavis King ran the shop I used to go to the cash-and-carry and the greengrocers when they were on holiday. When Caroline Speake had it I used to go to cash and carry and the greengrocers every day. I've always had something to do with Graffham. I didn't actually work for the shop, I just did it for nothing.

When Malcolm and Mavis ran the shop it was very good. Malcolm always used to get deals. Then he passed them on to the customer. I know it's a bit more difficult these days because you don't get deals. Malcolm and Mavis knew exactly what they were doing. They had so many customers in the Post Office it was unbelievable. Malcolm was always really busy. What they sold was different from now. Malcolm sold more everyday stuff - like biscuits. He had a rack full of biscuits and the amount he sold was unbelievable.

If somebody wanted something it would be here the next day. Malcolm could get whatever you wanted and that's what people liked. The shop is good now but it's very different. There aren't enough of the run-of-the-mill items. When Jeeva first moved here he used to ask me what things I thought he should sell and he did get some of the stuff in but now there's more cheese than Malcolm ever had. Malcolm used to have big blocks of cheese and ham and cut it in the shop. Everybody used to come here for the ham because he used to cut it on the machine. They said it was the best tasting ham that they've ever had. Then the law changed and he wasn't allowed to. One day a man came in and asked for some ham. Malcolm told him he wasn't allowed to sell it loose-wrapped because a new law had come in. He told him it was still the same ham



Above: Malcolm & Mavis with Picture Framer, Stephanie Marx

but it had to be cut up at the butcher's and pre-sealed. This customer said he was sorry but he disliked pre-packed ham so he wasn't going to buy it. After that happened Malcolm didn't sell a great deal of ham or bacon and the actual butcher stopped supplying it. When Malcolm was on holiday I used to sharpen the machine. I'm one of these people who don't mind putting their hand to anything! Providing I can I'll do it.

Michael Morton, 2013

Graffham loses its Post Office

by Jackie Woods, Chair GVSA 2006-2012

I took over as Chair of the GVSA (Graffham Village Shop Association) in 2006. Caroline Speake was running the shop and Post Office and a number of villagers were assisting on a voluntary basis in the shop. In 2007 The Post Office announced that it would be reducing the number of small post offices and that Graffham was at risk. This uncertainty made the situation unsustainable and Caroline Speake decided to retire. The shop closed in November 2007 but Caroline continued to run the post office until the outcome of The Post Office's decision was known. Unfortunately, despite vigorous lobbying by Graffham Parish Council, supported by CDC Councillor, Susan Wade Weeks, as well as the Graffham Village Shop Association itself as landlord of the shop and post office premises, Graffham post office closed in August 2008.

The GVSA then had the job of advertising for a new tenant at the shop site and had a number of interested parties, one of which was Jeeva and Vasu. We went through an evaluation process to decide which of the applicants would be the best fit for the village. Jeeva and Vasu were chosen and offered the lease, to which they agreed. During the summer of 2008 the GVSA

and Jeeva and Vasu set about knocking down the old post office counter, rewiring the premises, decorating and installing new shelving. This was all done on a grant of £5000 provided by Chichester District Council for those villages which had lost their post offices.

On 18th August 2008 Jeeva and Vasu opened the newly refurbished shop to the relief of all the villagers who had been without a shop for nearly twelve months. Jeeva quickly increased the shop products to offer everything from baked beans to caviar. The villagers had a great selection of products together with the staple products of fresh bread, local milk and cheeses and fresh meat. Jeeva's business went from strength to strength and it became apparent that the premises were too small for his requirements. The GVSA then looked at options to provide accommodation for any future shop proprietor and a way of extending the shop. Planning permission and fundraising would be needed to move this project forward and I therefore passed on the baton to my husband, James Woods, who took over as Chair of the GVSA, as he was much better able to push this project forward.

Jacqueline Woods, 2012



*A bouquet for Kath on her retirement
L-R Roger Mozley, Kathleen Rough and Caroline Speake with GVSA members Marion Wilder, Graham Pooley and Diana White.*

Graffham Shop goes “local and organic” when Jeeva and Vasu move to Sussex

I was born in Sri Lanka but I left in 1994 – I lived in Switzerland until 1998 when I came to the United Kingdom. I decided to study so I came over to go to Merton College to study IT but it didn't work for me so I stopped and started working. I've worked for Royal Mail and ran a shop for my Uncle. In 2002 I met Vasu and we fell in love.

Vasu is also from Sri Lanka but previously lived in France, near Toulouse. She came to England with her family, also to study at Merton College. She worked in Waitrose part time while studying computer management and hadn't thought of keeping a shop.

We decided we wanted to live in the country and enjoy village life. We wanted to keep a post office and convenience store, and we thought it would be very good for our son Arya to grow up in the country.

New Fridge 2015



We found the Graffham village shop through Google – then we spoke to Ian Thornley on the phone and emailed Jackie and James Woods. We first saw the shop on 28th April 2008 when we came down to see the Woods. I told James and Jackie we'd drive to the end of the village to think about it – I turned round at the church and we came back to say we'd take it on. James and Jackie agreed but after that it took four months until 18th August before we could take over the shop.

We had several interviews with the GVSA so that all the members could meet us. They did a lot of checks and were very thorough in checking us out. Meanwhile the Woods tried to sort out the Post Office but sadly we were unable to keep it although it had been part of our original plan.

James and Jackie helped us enormously when we moved in. The inside of the shop was a mess and they helped re-fit the shop – they worked with us like friends, not at all like a “committee” and we will always be grateful to them. They also helped us get a grant from the Council which involved loads of paperwork.

When we first started we stocked up the shop “London-style”, like a normal convenience store but some of the products weren't really moving so we did a survey. Kathie Gyles helped us do that. After the survey we moved to more local produce and organic foods. Also we started sourcing vegetables from the market to keep them fresher and getting some of our meat and dairy produce from Goodwood. Interestingly the first few months that we stocked organic we had to throw some away as people didn't realise it was there but after a while they started buying it.

Not everything was a success - we introduced the DVD rental which was a failure – the company we rented from charged a lot, but also people are watching films on the internet nowadays.



Building work in progress, 2015

I put the National Lottery in for the campers, not for the villagers but village people buy tickets too. The campers are very lovely people. They support us. They google us and find our website so they know the shop is there, then they come in empty handed and buy everything from us. Campers are usually surprised about all the stuff we have in the village shop – meat, vegetables and groceries all in one place, so they don't need to go to the town centre.

Some people have said the prices at the shop are high. In some cases that's true, for example loads of people like the Swedish Glace ice cream because it's dairy-free. In TESCO they're selling it £2.79 but we can only find one company who will deliver to us, and with 25% profit margin we can't sell at less than £3.79. However look at alcohol prices – we're cheaper than TESCO! That's because we go to a London cash and carry for our wines.

When the planned building work is finished and the shop is enlarged, we are going to start selling

fresh sandwiches and make a proper coffee shop inside; maybe we will sell home-cooked curries as well. Also, more stationery, dog-food and cat-food, and whatever people want to buy. We still hope to re-open a full-time post office in Graffham.

We really love Graffham – it's quiet and all the people are friendly. Arya really enjoyed the last five years in Graffham School and our daughter Ardra is going into the Nursery this September.

It is a very good place for children - behaviour and everything is completely different when you're in the countryside in a beautiful village. When we lived in Cheam we knew our neighbour on one side but not on the other. Here people invite us to their parties, I've even learned to play tennis and joined the tennis club. Now we have our own house next to the shop and look forward to staying here many years.

Jeeva, November 2013

Graffham Village Square - with shop, flat and workshop

by Martin Buckley, GVSA Secretary

Over a period of around two years the shop committee commissioned a number of different architectural plans for developing the site to incorporate tenants' accommodation and an expanded shop. Eventually it was decided to follow the plans that included a separate unit for the picture-framer at the eastern edge of the car-park as well as doubling the shop floor area. In addition there was to be a 2-storey town-house at the eastern end of the existing structure.

James Woods wanted the finished development to have the feel of a village square and a row of whitebeam trees were planted along the southern

edge; sadly the waterlogged situation presented to the trees resulted in some casualties, to be replaced.

James entered the bidding for grant funds from WSCC and CDC resulting in two grants from WSCC worth £50,000; in addition a fresh appeal in the village for loans raised another £12,000. James, using his connections with Barclays to excellent effect, also secured a loan of £150,000. All this enabled the work on Phase 1 – the picture-framer's new workshop – to start in early summer 2013 completing in September. The unit is oak-framed and pleasing to the eye; Stephanie's

Stephanie Marx and James Woods at the opening of the picture framer's unit, 2013 by County Councillor Michael Brown (waving, with pink tie).



joy at working in a watertight and well insulated new workshop was unconfined!

The new unit cost around £50,000 – a figure that would have been at least 10% higher if James hadn't been the unpaid and very streetwise project manager.

In October 2013 James and Jackie made the decision to move from Graffham to somewhere smaller and put their house on the market. James also stepped down from the GVSA committee. Both James and Jackie had put an enormous amount of energy and time (all unpaid) into the shop over seven years.

We started 2014 with a new chairman, Ian Thornley, and several new committee members. Ian had bravely stepped in to the Chairman's role for a maximum of six months giving the committee time to find and appoint a replacement. The immediate challenge was to appoint a contractor for Phase 2 and to raise any shortfall in funding.

Six months later the situation had changed; the Woods' house had not sold so they decided to take it off the market and remain for the immediate future. Jackie offered to return to the Committee as Chairman. Quotations for Phase 2 were received and the decision to start was made. For Phase 2 it was Jackie who took on the project management role thus saving more than 10% of the project costs. Work started in late summer of 2014 and was effectively completed by mid summer 2015.

The village now has a shop doubled in size with the old part refurbished, a three bedroom townhouse to be let but always to be available for a future shopkeeper's family. Phase 2 was completed with the help of some generous gifts of money, in part from those new to the village.

Martin Buckley, 2015

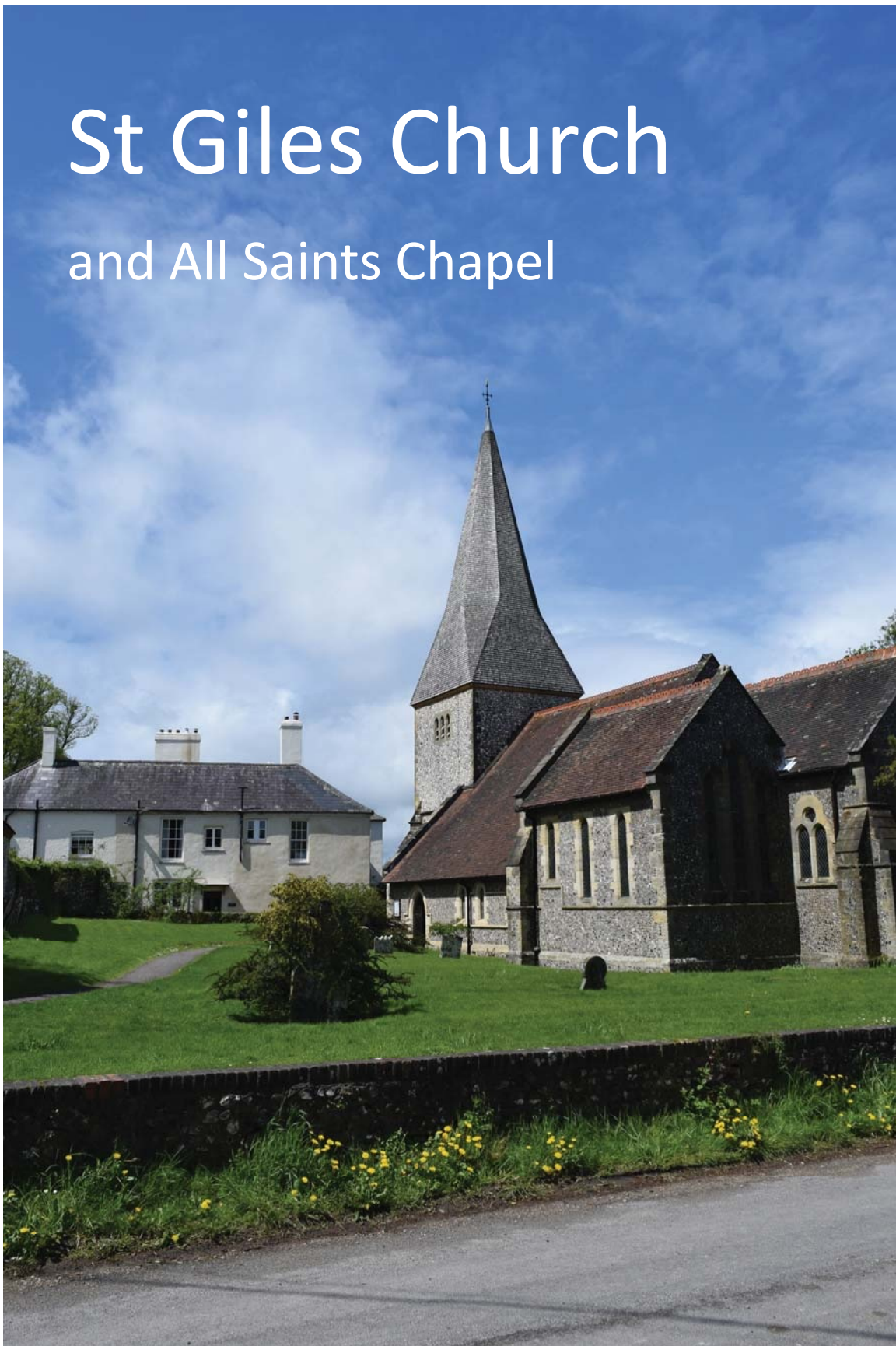
Shopping 2015

This section would not be complete without a brief mention of many delivery vans driving round the village every day. We have come full circle from the days described by Lillee Puttick when The International Stores in Midhurst delivered the weekly shop and the butcher delivered on Fridays. Now Sainsburys, TESCO, Waitrose and Ocado all deliver groceries ordered on the internet seven days a week in their brightly coloured vans. There is also a constant flow of

courier vans delivering internet orders of just about anything you can imagine. According to the Office of National Statistics in January 2015, the amount spent online accounted for 11.6% of all retail spending excluding automotive fuel - we have no separate statistics for Graffham but no reason to suppose it is any lower than the national figure. We also still have daily deliveries from the milkman in pint bottles and newspapers from the newsagent in Midhurst.



St Giles Church and All Saints Chapel



St Giles Church, Graffham 1947-1967

by Godfrey Loring

(written 1975, reprinted in *Graffham Parish News* 2000)

This period of twenty years, during most of which I was closely associated with the Church as Warden, was a time of great change.

It marked the Rectorship of two men, Michael Townroe and Richard Nash, both of whom made a great impression on the Parish by hard work and wide interests; as a result of which the Church was all round the Parish. The Church was well filled every Sunday and latterly quite literally packed out at Festivals. We even had to buy chairs which are put in the bell-tower and up the aisle to accommodate all. I well remember, by contrast, a hot summer Sunday Matins in our early days here, when I was able to take off my coat to keep cool, because all three members of the congregation were in front of me!

The time about which I write was a time of emergence from pre-war Squirearchy to a time of do-it-yourself and stand on your own feet. Which was healthy for the Church under two good leaders, who for most of the period had the invaluable help and very hard work of Percy Parry, a great Christian gentleman and literally irreplaceable.

Considerable changes were made inside the building at this period. Heating had been by coke stove, which Parry lit on Saturday afternoon, walked up to stoke that evening, and again first thing on Sunday morning. The old hot pipe went up the side of the altar and across just below the sill which we thought very ugly and altered. We soon found our mistake when the altar candles nearly blew out in the down draught and we had to put an electric heater along the window sill.

There were some tatty old curtains as reredos and



The side chapel, previously containing Wilberforce pew

along the wall on each side. The present reredos was made from fine old panels which we found fixed on the inside of the pulpit. The floor was tiled until we got the new carpet, chosen by Mr and Mrs Thomas and the Rector.

Only one bell was rung by Parry - the five minute bell, unless Midhurst ringers were imported, so we changed to the present system. (Chiming)

The white festival altar frontal and dorsal were

given in memory of Mrs Jan Harben-Grice, the first to occupy The Woodman as a private house. The blue dorsal with birds and flowers was worked by me, but I left the choice of the frontal to Richard and Joan Nash.

As the congregation kept increasing we decided to convert the Sergeant/Wilberforce pew into a side chapel. The private door in had been blocked before this time. The pews faced North, in three lines, so we altered them to fit and face East. We also put in the new altar, for use at early Holy Communion. A drawing of what we wanted was done by Harold Dexter (My co-warden after Henry Longbridge died) who was a draughtsman. This was sent to the Archdeacon (Mason) for faculty who decided that our model was all right, but must be extended to cover the full width of the window above it, and heightened in proportion. That is why we have such a very unbalanced result and is clear proof of the wisdom of acting first and asking afterwards.

Having made the side chapel we decided to put the rather heavy brass altar cross and candlesticks in there, so Michael Townroe and Mrs Hine were deputed to go to Whippel in London and buy new, lighter and easier to clean ones. Parry made the wooden vase stools so that we could have larger arrangements at the side of the altar instead of on it. He also made the new altar-rail, to replace the brass and iron one which was there. A number of us worked sections of the new altar kneeler, which was made up by Mr Lucas of Midhurst.

The last member of that family, to live in the Parish was Susan Wilberforce, who lived at Keeper's Cottage, Norwood Lane, and was one of the wardens for St. Peter's. She is buried in St. Giles cemetery, not with her family at St. Peter's, by the quirk of her sister Dr Octavia.

The Churchyard had headstones dotted about and also small mounds which were used earlier to mark graves that had no headstones, but fortunately there was no Burial Plan, as there should have been, so we felt free to take action. Hitherto Parry had to cut most of the churchyard,

and all the mounds, by hand as one could not use a machine. So we moved all the headstones on which the writing had become obliterated and Parry and I levelled off the mounds. We have had a tidy churchyard ever since. Mrs Agar gave some shrub roses to help. Soon after this I was in the cemetery, mowing the grass paths which were cut to give access to the then comparatively few graves, when a visitor stopped me and said " I do envy you your mown churchyard - we long to do the same as you but cannot get a faculty". I enjoyed recommending him to do the job first and not worry!

The shingles on St. Giles roof had to be replaced and renewed, as the old ones had partly rotted and partly been destroyed by woodpeckers. Fortunately for us Wisborough Green Church had recently had its spire re- shingled by steeplejacks, saving scaffolding costs, and we were able to get

Replacing the Shingles, 1954
by George Garland (© WSRO 3128A)



the same firm to come and do ours. Towards the end of this period the Diocese made the decision to sell the old rectory and to build a new. Seeing the accessibility of the small paddock belonging to Lady Madonald-Buchanan the Churchwardens approached her. She presented the paddock, so that one of the part-tenants of the old rectory could be re-housed as well as the Rector. Mrs. Campion had the first offer but died before anything was done, so Miss Sabine took up the offer. It had been the Churchwarden's plan to site the new rectory more or less where the bungalow is now, only facing more South, and to put the bungalow higher up. It was the Diocesan Secretary (Commander Green) who insisted upon

the final plan, which to my mind put the new rectory badly exposed, overlooking too many other houses, and too much at the top of the steep bank. The cutting of the present approach would not have been necessary as there was an old wagon-way leading into that paddock with a far more gradual gradient - but the Diocese had its way!

Godfrey Loring, 1975

Old Friends from the Church Choir

by Revd Townroe's daughter, Janet

I was given a copy of the Graffham Parish News, October 2013, and was intrigued to find a photo 'from the Scrapbook' that is also in my own personal album.

My father, Michael Townroe, was the Rector of Graffham from 1948 – 1959 and so I was in the St. Giles church choir. For me this is a photo of familiar faces, even though it was taken in 1956 or 57.

The front row of seated girls were all my friends at Graffham School.

From left to right:- Jane Robbins, Vera Whittington, Janet Townroe, Rosemary Dexter, Maureen Money, Marion Robbins.

Canon Campion is standing at the back, John Dexter is holding the cross and it is my father on

the right. On the left is John Willis, our choirmaster and organist. He had a shop in Petworth (a newsagents, I believe) and he came to Graffham for the weekly choir practice and on Sundays to play the organ.

One summer (probably 1958) a group of us piled into his delivery van after church and he took us down to Littlehampton for a picnic on the beach and to go on the rides at the Fun Fair. I cannot remember how many times we enjoyed this expedition but it remains vivid in my memory.

And where were the "Health and Safety" concerns? A young man with a group of 11 - 13 year-olds? Most in the back of a van without seats or seat-belts? Let loose on a beach and in a Fun Fair?



*Evangelist Week 1950 by George Garland, Revd Townroe top right;
© WSRO, N33117*



Graffham Choir by George Garland, © WSRO, N46062



What glorious freedom to just enjoy the adventure !

And if you go into the vestry of St. Giles Church and open a cupboard door, you can still see, above the hooks, the names of choir members written on brown sticky tape in my father's handwriting - a lasting memory of a very happy community of the youth of Graffham.

Janet Wyatt (née Townroe), 2014

Graffham Sunday School and Choir

By Choir Member Pauline Goodwin (née Challen) 1957 - 1963

Rummaging around in my memories, I find the prominence that Graffham Church had in my young life, and in that of my peers, is striking. It would be true to say that church activities played a pivotal role our lives with activities like weekly church services, weekly school visits by the Rector, choir practice, church parade and Sunday afternoon family services. There were also seasonal performances, with many rehearsals, like Harvest Festival pageants, Christmas carol singing around the village. In addition the choir was often drafted into Rustics' productions to be daisies, ducks or alpine children.

I started off at Sunday School which was held in the Rectory next to the school. To be honest, it is the house and its gardens that I remember most. The dark, stone-flagged entrance-hall led to a maze of rooms with huge windows overlooking a magnificent lawn edged with cedar trees, complete with hammock. My life-long aversion to hammocks stemmed from here as on one occasion I was catapulted out of the hammock severely winding myself. As to the content of Sunday school I can only remember sitting in a circle on chairs, being told stories in which fishing boats seemed to be very prominent but my strongest memory is saying prayers for my cousin Nigel Challen who was in hospital.

There seemed to be a natural graduation from Sunday School to the choir but I do not recall any sort of audition. The choir, of about a dozen or so, sang every Sunday morning at either Matins or Holy Communion. Other people I remember in the choir were Jennifer Symonds, the Cobbold boys, my cousins Kate and Ann Challen and my great friend Karen Howick. As choir members, Karen and I were enrolled members of the choir association and wore bronze medallions on blue

ribbons. We had other church service duties as well and often rang the bells on the static, wall-mounted rope system. It felt more like being members of a club and was hugely enjoyable because singing is such great fun. I did not fully appreciate this until many years later when I was teaching in a school with a majority of disadvantaged, sad children. Sometimes after morning assembly, all of the school would sing as they filed back along corridors to their classrooms. A little bit of that Graffham spirit lit up their faces and they too knew, for a fleeting moment, what it was like to be happy.

Actually our fun started before we got to choir, during the unsupervised walk to the church. Although we entered the church as a harmony of choristers, we would walk there as a rumpus of children. The boys, knowing exactly where to look, would hunt for slow worms and chase the girls with them. For some unvoiced reason, walking to church and choir practice was always up Church Hill but to school the route was via Calloways. The grassy steep banks along these routes were cut with tracks, like those made by mountain sheep on hillsides. They are long gone now, as the days of freedom when children roamed unfettered have passed.

There were no adults in the choir, apart from very special occasions when baritones and tenors were press-ganged. When Rector Nash was the incumbent, choir practice was on Thursday nights. This I remember because when we got the Rectory *Top of the Pops* was always on for his children. Rector Nash's choir outings to West Wittering were great fun and were very *Swallows and Amazons*. We would arrive at the beach with the Rector's boat strapped to the car roof and spend the rest of the day failing miserably to

launch it. How many choristers can you fit in a boat?

Some time later John Smith took over as organist and choirmaster and we practised at St Giles in the choir stalls, using the old organ. We practised the hymns and psalms for the following Sunday. I love those traditional hymns with their “proper” tunes. My favourite hymns still to this day are *St Patrick’s Breastplate* and *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*. The latter is such a beautiful piece, full of restorative images (gracious calling, tender whisper, deep hush, silence of eternity). It is so evocative, ending up with my favourite line in any hymn “O still, small voice of calm.” We would also practise the

psalms if the service was Matins. The psalm I most remember is the *Te Deum*. Also, the traditional wording of the services, which we used with the lovely cadence of the old words, is still my favourite form of service. Furthermore, I think that my love of language hails back to the immersion in church liturgy, hymns, psalms and the beautiful literature of the King James.

The only downside to being a chorister was that Karen and I were not permitted to wear our op-art, dangly, sixties earrings with our cassocks and surplices!

Pauline Goodwin (née Challen) 2012

Top: The Old Rectory by George Garland, 1965 (courtesy of WSRO N68265A); Bottom: The Rectory today, 2015



Rectors of Graffham (Woolavington was a separate parish prior to 1846)			
1278	William de Wilmyngton	1566	Robert Williams
1294	Robert de Petteworth	1577	John Lancaster
	Henry Hikke	1607	Christopher Foster
1398	John Sheppard	1608	William Stepneth
1409	Ludowic John de Portugalia	1634	Oliver Pennicodd
1416	Richard Bagot	1654	Thomas Burges
1417	John Heerde	1673	John Layfield
1421	Nicholas Baldewyn	1678	Isaac Woodruffe
1430	William Appelby	1698	George Goodwin
1448	Walter Trefatheles	1709	Edward West
1469	John Wode	1742	Thomas Michel
1478	John Hiksome	1750	George Booth
	Elisha Delarewe	1754	Charles Rose
1524	William Roll	1764	Thomas Collins
1538	John Lucas	1804	Samuel Clarke
1562	Thomas Smyth	1805	John Sargent
1564	John Stephynson	1833	Henry Edward Manning
Rectors of Graffham with Woolavington			
1851	Richard William Randall	1959	Richard Edward Nash
1868	Walter Hook	1966	Edward Braybrooke
1873	Rowley Lascelles	1975	David Francis Grant
1913	Charles Alfred Knibbs Hockey	1987	Keith Hyde-Dunn
1933	Frederick Hubert Augustus Williams	2001	Mark Gilbert
1939	Arnold Cecil Powell	2010	Stephen Gray
1947	Michael Dakeyne Townroe	2013	Michael Barter

St Giles Kneelers Project, 1984

In the early 1980s it was decided to create a set of new kneelers for St. Giles Church. The numbers who arrived at the Rectory, in response to the invitation to tea and a discussion meeting, surprised and delighted the then Rector, David Grant, and Elizabeth Miles, one of the founder members.

The group started work in October, 1984 and was extraordinarily fortunate to enjoy the talent and enthusiasm of Miranda Covington, highly skilled and trained by the Royal School of Needlework. Miranda produced four basic designs and chose a limited range of colours as well as selecting the size of canvas to be used. The materials were purchased from specialist shops in Haslemere and Chichester and instruction books were available covering the wide range of stitches to be worked. The group was encouraged first to experiment on small samples, trying out different stitches and various combinations of coloured wools.

The chosen design was drawn out on the canvas and a choice of colours made, very often with the help of Miranda's unerring eye. To complete the sewing, the date and initials – either of the kneeler maker, or sometimes the kneeler was dedicated to another – were added on the end panels.

In the weeks and sometimes months taken to work the stitching, the occasional kneeler took on a life of its own. All canvasses were pinned out to shape on a board, carefully wetted and allowed to dry naturally.

The canvas was wrapped round a foam kneeler-shape block, and a piece of lining material put in place underneath. An oblong of black plastic was neatly stitched in position to form the base.

In January 1985 the Guides became involved in the project, hence the trefoil pattern on some kneelers in the Church.



The group met weekly at the Rectory and enjoyed a convivial and productive afternoon or kneeler makers simply called in for more materials and advice.

With a change of incumbent in August 1986, the meetings continued at the Old Rectory under the leadership of Paula Burke until a final total of 110 kneelers was reached.

Between January 1985 and June 1987, two concerts were held in the church, a coffee morning was organised and two lunches were arranged - all well supported and producing more than enough funds to finance the project.

The kneelers were dedicated at church services in June 1986, June 1987 and May 1988, and a book now kept in the church was beautifully handwritten by Paula listing the details of all the kneelers.

The group was featured in the Midhurst and Petworth Observer in May 1986 and the PCC was invited to participate in an exhibition of kneelers in May 2003. The event was planned as part of the Needlework Festival held in Lewes in support of the work of St. John Ambulance Sussex.

Diana White, 2007

The Millennium Lychgate

by Retired Architect, John Covington

In January 1999 it was decided that a project should be agreed to celebrate the coming of the year 2000.

Don Allen called a meeting of local people to discuss proposals for this celebration. A number of ideas were put forward including one from Brigadier Allan Findlay which was the erection of a lych gate for St. Giles Churchyard.

A lychgate (or lich gate) is by definition a roofed churchyard gate to rest the coffin under before being taken into the church. The lych way is a path by which coffins are carried to the burial ground. There had never been one before at St Giles Church and this seemed a very appropriate time to add one to the entrance of the churchyard.

I was asked if I would be prepared to produce some designs for the Committee and for some ideas of the likely cost.

As a retired architect I had in the past worked for several churches in Sussex but had never designed a Lych Gate. I toured the area and looked at about a dozen churches and their lych gates in Hampshire and Sussex, and came to the conclusion that, to prevent it looking like a bus shelter, it should be either a two poster or a four poster and should be built of traditional materials i.e. oak and clay tiles.

By the end of January I had produced two designs for the next meeting after which Brigadier Findlay rang me to say the committee had decided on the two poster design as their choice.

The original coloured sketch of the two poster hangs up in the church to this day on the South wall.

Blessing the Lychgate by Rt Revd Lindsay Urwin, Bishop of Horsham on Saturday 24th June, 2000



By August 1999 detailed working drawings were produced, sufficient to make a planning application to the local authorities, and to obtain a Faculty (a church planning application) from the Dean and Chapter of Chichester. Building applications were also required from the District Council which involved further drawings of plans and timber calculations as well as details of foundations and the material to be used in construction.

Derek Stewart Smith (a retired engineer in Graffham) was of considerable help in advising me on the construction and size of timbers to be used to make the small structure stable and to resist any fierce winds and storms.

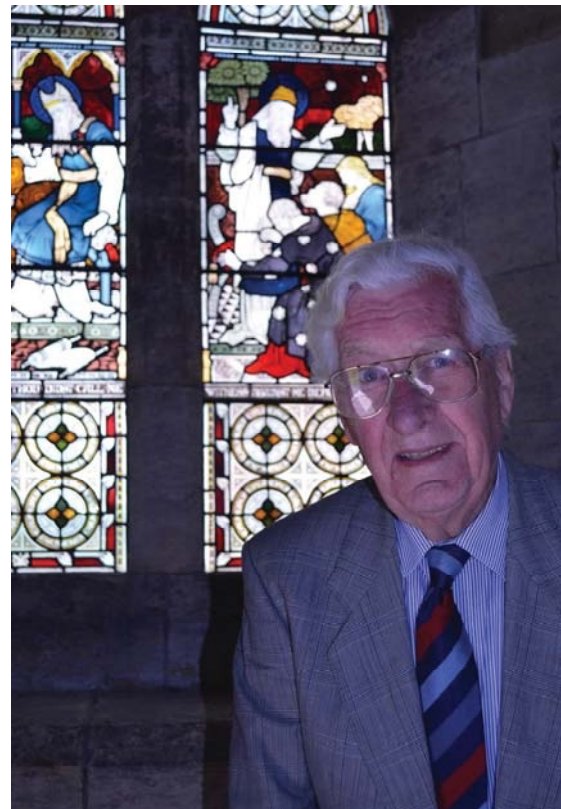
Planning approval from the Dean and Chapter and the Council were obtained as well as building regulations from the District Council. This meant we could obtain tenders from builders.

All this took longer than expected, but by February 2000 tenders had been received. Couzens of West Marden were selected to be the builders. The money then had to be raised from local donations and this was organised by Brigadier Findlay.

Meetings were held with the builders to discuss materials to be used - green oak for the columns and old clay tiles for the roof. Couzens started work in May 2000 and Louis Lambert very generously said he would like to provide and lay the roof tiles to the Lych Gate. Martin Taylor, an excellent joiner in Graffham, offered to make the gates.

It was then decided that the opening ceremony and blessing by the Bishop of Horsham should take place on June 24th.

On May 19, 2000 the Lych Gate was up and Mr Lambert was able to tile the roof over that weekend. Martin Taylor had finished the gates and they were hung in time for the photo shoot on June 15.



John Covington at St Giles, 2013

All looked splendid and all credit was given to Couzens the builders, to Louis Lambert for the tiling and to Martin Taylor for the fine craftsmanship.

The service and ceremony was really very moving, and many people who had contributed to this event, both from their purse and their skill, as well as the Millennium team who had thought of the idea and worked so hard were to be congratulated.

Now twelve years later it has weathered many months of rain, snow and storms and has taken on a more antique look as I had intended. Perhaps people may think it has been there as long as the Victorian restoration of St Giles Church itself and is happily married to the church yard too and still stands!

John Covington , 2012

The Bells of St Giles

1066 and All That ...

There are signs of a Norman church thought to have been built on the site of the earlier Saxon construction, probably built of wood, and recorded in the Domesday Book.

From the Normans to 1480

By the 1400s a tower must have been constructed as at about this time the first record of a bell at Graffham appears.

J. Daniels, bell founder and vintner, enjoyed royal patronage, and his successor used the Royal coat of arms as well as most of Daniels' inscription moulds. This unnamed founder made about ten bells for Sussex, one of which came to Graffham. It has been marked in the records as our treble, the highest pitched bell in the ring.

1480 to 1875

By 1874 the church would appear to be not dissimilar to today's construction probably with a sizeable entrance porch.

Three Bells at St Giles

As for the bells, things had moved on and we were now the proud possessors of three bells:

- THE TREBLE BELL by J Daniels' successor.
- THE SECOND BELL by Roger Tapsil and Thomas Wakefield, 1621.
- THE THIRD BELL by Bryan Eldridge.

1875 to 1900

St Giles gains a sturdy tower but a bell disappears!

The Victorians arrived on the scene and promptly knocked down much of the old church and re-built it in 1875. The tower itself was rebuilt in

1885. During the demolition and re-build, the three bells that had graced the old tower were left lying in the church yard and the Eldridge bell was stolen.

We now get FOUR bells

The J Daniels with its inscription "Sancta Katerina Ora Pro Nobis" ("Saint Katherine Pray For Us") was melted down and re-cast, the stolen Eldridge replaced, a further bell added which became and still is our tenor, and the Tapsil-Wakefield re-incorporated. Mears & Stainbank, bell founders from Whitechapel, London, carried out the work of casting and hanging the bells. The main benefactors were Frederick Lowten Spinks, who funded the treble and second, and Edith Lascelles who provided for the tenor.

Bellringers at St Giles © Colin Barker



1900 to 1979

A Dark Age for the bellringers?

Unfortunately, Graffham has no record of ringing during this period. No names have come down to us. What we do have is evidence of some ringing activity down the years, the evidence comprising one tablet of wood on which has been pasted a simple ringing method and a small oak block used by shorter ringers, possibly children, to enable them to reach the bell rope.

Janie Taylor and the Ellacombe chiming mechanism

A further indication that bell ringing had not really flowered since 1900 was the installation of the “Ellacombe chiming mechanism”, which device comprises fixed ropes attached to pivoted clock hammers that are secured close to the mouth of each bell. Pull the rope and the bell chimes. Some of our more mature residents may well remember Janie Taylor diligently applying herself to this machine prior to Sunday service for many years.

1979 to 1986

A fresh start for Graffham bellringing

Following Janie’s death in 1979 the Rector, David Grant asked two able-bodied men to climb the vertical ladder to check on the state of the bells and their fittings. One of those inspectors was Trevor Finch, already a capable ringer, who reported that the bells, etc. were in excellent condition.

1979 - A band is formed

Trevor, encouraged by David, gathered a group keen to learn the art. His enthusiasm was contagious and by 1981 there were no fewer than twelve budding campanologists. No mean feat!

Four bells good, six bells better?

Amongst this number was Kate Bertram, who (though in her 70s) soon became absorbed with

bell ringing. It wasn’t long before Kate and others were visiting local six bell towers and, of course, it became obvious that whilst four bells made a pleasing sound six bells would be far more melodic. The PCC was approached and to their great credit agreed to the proposal to augment the ring to six bells, subject as always to available funds. The weight of the extra bells presented no structural problems, although in order to accommodate them two of the existing bells would be re-hung at higher level in a new cast iron frame. This would be achieved by the installation of two large steel beams for the frame to sit on. Kate became involved with fund-raising and the band offered to carry out all the work ourselves. Our first task was to provide working drawings to prove the scheme’s viability. We contacted Whitechapel and Loughborough foundries for estimates and the PCC chose Loughborough.

1982 - Refurbishment begins

The first phase of our project was the refurbishment and tuning of the existing bells, the supply of new wheels, cast iron headstocks, etc., and the supply of a cast iron frame. The bells were dismantled, removed from the tower and delivered to the foundry at Loughborough. Meanwhile in Graffham, two steel beams were installed above the existing ring.

Taking Down the Bells, 1982

Loading the Old Tenor: L-R Gareth Watson, Bill Robinson, Trevor Finch and Peter Parish





Waiting to load the old Fourth, 1982: L-R Trevor Finch, George White, Kate Bertram, Gareth Watson, Christian Budd, David Mozley, Harriet Mozley and Margaret Mozley

Peter Parish joins the team ...

Peter Parish (Church Warden) was parachuted in by the PCC to keep a beady eye on what we were doing to the church and he rapidly became our enthusiastic and useful “clerk of works”.

Sanctus

The foundry discovered the Wakefield bell to be distinctly out of tune and its tonal quality was delicately described as “sounding like an old bucket being hit with a hammer”. It is possible to re-tune a bell by removing metal from its inner face but you are not allowed to do that to an ancient bell. The Wakefield was retired, brought home, hung stationary in the tower, to be chimed as a sanctus bell. The remaining three Victorian bells were deemed acceptable and a new bell was ordered to replace the Wakefield. Though the ringers were providing all the labour, thus making a substantial saving on the overall costs, replacing the Wakefield knocked a big hole in the PCC’s budget.

Four bells and a new frame

The return trip to Loughborough was made to collect our bells and the fittings. Everything was raised into the bell chamber and we assisted the foundry’s bell hanger with the installation. We fixed a new rope guide in the tower ready to accommodate two extra ropes. This first phase was completed in June 1982, giving us four ringing bells with room to increase the ring to six.

1984 - Two New Bells for St Giles

The second phase of the project was always to install two new bells “when funds were available”.

With Graffham’s support, we achieve our goal ...

Fund raising began in earnest. Concerts were held in the church, coffee mornings proliferated, donations poured in, and the village showed great generosity, however we still had not reached our

target. Then out of the blue it was announced that sufficient funds were available for an order to be placed. The source of this funding has only very recently come to light in an intriguing way.

“A gift from a friend”

In the Graffham Archives a sealed envelope had been deposited carrying the legend “to be opened only after the death of Mrs Loring”. Following Eddy Loring’s death in August, 2008 this envelope was found to contain correspondence from Mrs Loring to Kate and Colin Bertram. During her lifetime Eddy wished to remain the anonymous donor of one of the bells and, with the Bertrams’ help, donated her money in their name. In 1993, Colin added a note to the effect that Kate made a handsome donation towards the cast iron headstocks. The contents of the envelope explain

the ambiguous engraving on the Second bell.

In due course back we went to Loughborough to pick up our two new bells and in 1984, phase two was complete. The band had done it!

Our new peal is too loud!

Ironically following the completion of this major undertaking, an unforeseen problem emerged. Our new peal of six sounded wonderful outside but was too loud in the church. The conductor of the ring literally had to shout to be heard. The answer was the construction of a false ceiling. The ceiling you now see was constructed in 1985 and is all our own work! The centre panel in the ceiling is designed to be removable and it is through there that the bells come and go when necessary.

Return of the Bells, June 1982: L-R Bill Robinson, Peter Parish, Christian Budd, Revd David Grant, Ben White, Trevor Finch, Antony Elstone and George White and the BELLS: left, the new bell replacing the Wakefield; centre, the Wakefield (now Sanctus) and right, the refurbished Fourth bell.



1986 - Present

Apart from maintenance, Graffham bellringers have had little structural work to do over the last two decades and have been able to concentrate on perfecting their art, although one piece of work which the current team deemed necessary was a wooden platform spanning the tower at the level of the two higher bells, to allow easier and safer access for maintenance. It was made by Mike Etherington with the help of Eric Rimmer and Alison Davidson, the bell maintenance team. Following an appeal in 2013 the bell ropes were replaced in 2014.

Over the years since the completion of this major project there have been inevitable changes to the bell ringing team. When Trevor Finch, the founder of the initial band, left Tim Johnson was

briefly Tower Captain, followed by myself. Hilary Major joined the team in 1986 and became first the Secretary, then the Tower Captain after me. Hilary has been a major force in raising awareness of bell-ringing in the village and recruiting new ringers. This role was taken over by Carole Kirke in 2013 who is proving in turn to be equally effective.

George White

Original article by printed in *Graffham Parish News*, December 2011, updated 2015

References & Acknowledgements

Sussex Bells and Belfries by George P Elphick
A Church Near You website
www.achurchnearyou.com

Below left: The Bellringers prepare to join the Jubilee Parade, 2012.

Below right: Bellringers at St Giles, 2015 (George is second from left)



St Giles in the 21st Century

St Giles shares three Rectors with Seaford College

The Twenty First Century in St Giles was marked by the retirement of Fr Keith Hyde - Dunn after many years service, an interregnum and the appointment of Fr Mark Gilbert as Priest in Charge in 2001. St Giles escaped the fate of many parishes which have to share clergy by cooperating with Seaford College in combining the roles of parish priest and college chaplain. This practical solution spawned others; Adrian Carlton - Oatley continued to assist Mark at both school and church, Richard Bailey served as organist to both and the college's musical links to the church were strengthened. The new digital organ in the church was a major development. The old instrument had seriously deteriorated over time and could not be restored without major financial outlay. The new organ, generously donated in memoriam by several parishioners, has a comprehensive specification that allows a full range of music to be played. Tracey Carr, a resident since 2008, was encouraged to learn to play and succeeded Richard in 2015 on his departure for Cornwall.

Fr Mark was 'poached' by the Bishop of Chichester into moving to St Wilfrid's in 2010. His generous, warm and spiritual ministry was greatly missed by the community. A long interregnum followed. Sadly, the church warden, Peter Pine-Coffin, died during the interregnum, as did Brigadier Allan Findlay - both great servants of the church. Adrian Carlton - Oatley, after seeing both church and college through this uncertain time as Reader and PCC chair, retired to Brighton and we welcomed Fr Stephen Gray as the new priest and chaplain. Fr Stephen led the church with great energy for two years assisted by the church wardens John Bellis and Alan Sargent. John's wife, Diane, amongst her many contributions served as PCC secretary

and Brigadier Alan Gordon was treasurer. The Parish Magazine went from strength to strength developing into a comprehensive mouthpiece for all in the community, edited by Mary Butterworth. Fr Stephen introduced a Saturday breakfast talk once a month, the church choir and bell ringing team both flourished and he also made a name for himself in local sport, especially cricket. After far too brief a time, he and his young family moved to Bradfield School where Stephen became senior chaplain.

The next interregnum was mercifully brief and the link between parish and college was preserved in the appointment of Fr Michael Barter in 2013. Fr Michael had a background in social work and joined St Giles from Hove. Fr Michael has been especially keen to involve the many young families in the life of the church along with the faithful older generation who regularly attend, and has thus far met with considerable success.

Richard Bailey 2014

Adrian Carlton-Oatley and Fr Mark Gilbert



The Bishop's Chair

In the early 1990s, Churchwarden Peter Parish was walking at the top of the village towards the Downs when passing St Giles Church he noticed that unusually both of the entrance doors on the south side were open. The church remained open during the day with one door bolted and the other on the latch to admit visitors. On investigation Peter discovered the Bishop's Chair was missing. A valuable antique, it was felt the chair had been "stolen to order" and could be well on its way across the Channel.

The replacement chair was made in oak and carved by Midhurst craftsman Len Howard.

In July 1994 it was blessed by Bishop Lindsay of Horsham who conducted the Sunday communion service.

After the service the congregation joined the Bishop in a buffet lunch at the Old Rectory.



The Bishops's Chair, 2015

Diana White, 2015



Some Services in the 21st Century

Left: Pets in Church! St Francis Day 2015

Opposite from top:

Christingle for Graffham Infant School with Fr Mark Gilbert

Traditional Palm Sunday procession from the Lych Gate

Mothering Sunday - posies for children to give their mothers in the service



In Memoriam - The Altar Kneeler

From the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, February 2006

A new altar kneeler has been commissioned for St Giles Church at Graffham by Jean and Stan Page, who lost their son David in the tsunami disaster of 2004.

The kneeler will be made in three sections. The tapestry is being created by Graffham weaver Barbara Mullins, in an abstract design depicting the giant waves and the debris left in their wake.

David Page was 44 when he died on Boxing Day while on holiday in Thailand.

His mother said: "We, as a family, wanted some kind of memorial which would remember David and all the other victims of this awful catastrophe.

"We approached Fr Mark Gilbert, the vicar of Graffham, who told us that the altar kneelers need to be replaced and so we approached Miss Mullins to discuss the project.

"We are delighted that she has accepted a commission to weave them. We hope the kneeler

will be completed by June 30, which would have been David's birthday."

Miss Mullins said she was really a rug weaver and was initially apprehensive about taking on such a big and emotive project which she knew would be slow to weave.

"I am not very experienced at tapestry weaving," she admitted. "However, after several trial samples I felt confident enough to accept the commission. I knew some help would be needed to ensure I met the deadline, so I approached Ros Hitchens, also an experienced tapestry weaver, and she agreed to complete one of the three sections."

Note: The new kneelers were dedicated by the Bishop of Horsham, the Rt Rev Lindsay Urwin in June 2007 when he visited Graffham to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Graffham School.



Graffham Parish News - Paula's farewell

An article by Paula Burke, editor of *Graffham Parish News* for 17 years, in her last issue, 2007

This is the last original hand-coloured cover of the magazine that you will be receiving from me.

The first issue I edited came out in November 1990. Now seventeen years and 199 issues later it is time I handed over our magazine to someone else.

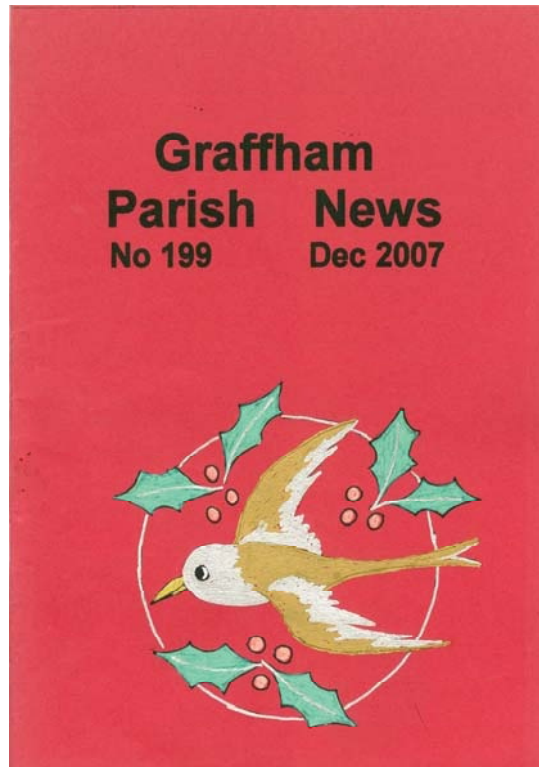
To edit this parish magazine has been great fun and very rewarding and I shall miss it, but I am running out of steam.

When the Revd David Grant was Rector of St. Giles he wrote and typed a smaller version of the magazine and Graffham School printed it. This came to an end in 1986. During the interregnum the Church Wardens produced a newsletter.

When the Revd Keith Hyde-Dunn became Rector he issued a letter which was typed by various helpers until Diana White took it over in November 1988. In 1990 a committee headed by Church Warden Peter Parish discussed starting a parish magazine and Peter suggested I might edit it. After a pause for horrified contemplation I decided that it might be not only a challenge but possibly rather fun.

The first issue was printed by Graffham School as had been customary but this was now a rather larger undertaking, and to their dismay it took a considerable time longer. Tim Abbott of Trendell's (Print) Ltd. came to the rescue and thereafter for fourteen years just the cover and the first four pages of the magazine were printed by the school. They felt they could manage that much and the Rector wished them to be involved, the rest of the booklet being printed by Trendell's at no cost to the parish.

If you have seen all the covers you know that I have tried to make them all different with a new



Paula's last Christmas cover

theme for every year. For many years Stuart Le Fevre undertook the provision of the monthly pictures, and when he moved from Graffham I took over with the help of various artists, including children from the school.

December 1993 saw our first hand-coloured Christmas cover, executed by several volunteer colourists. 1994 and 1995 were black on a red ground and thereafter I coloured the Christmas issue - all 240 copies!

The first issues were the work of a team:

Diana White typed the copy, the school and Trendell's delivered the pages to me and several of us met to collate the pages, staple and fold the magazines. This became too complicated.

Jan Buckley undertook all the collation and I took on the stapling and folding. This went on satisfactorily until 2004 when Tim Abbott took part-time retirement from Trendell's and the firm took over the entire printing, collating, stapling and folding for a very reasonable remuneration.

Getting out the magazine has always been a team effort. Diana White has been a tower of strength to me for most of the seventeen years with only a few brief absences. Jan Buckley faithfully did all the collating until Trendell's took over. Peter Parish, Jean Bridger, Jane Carter, Jean Page and others took all the magazines round to our loyal local deliverers who walked from door to door through rain, snow and heat to put magazines through letter boxes and collect the subscriptions.

In the magazine, as well as the monthly letter from the Rector, are details of all church services and what is going on in our church. There are the cleaning and flower rotas and our monthly diary



Miss Paula Burke, 2008

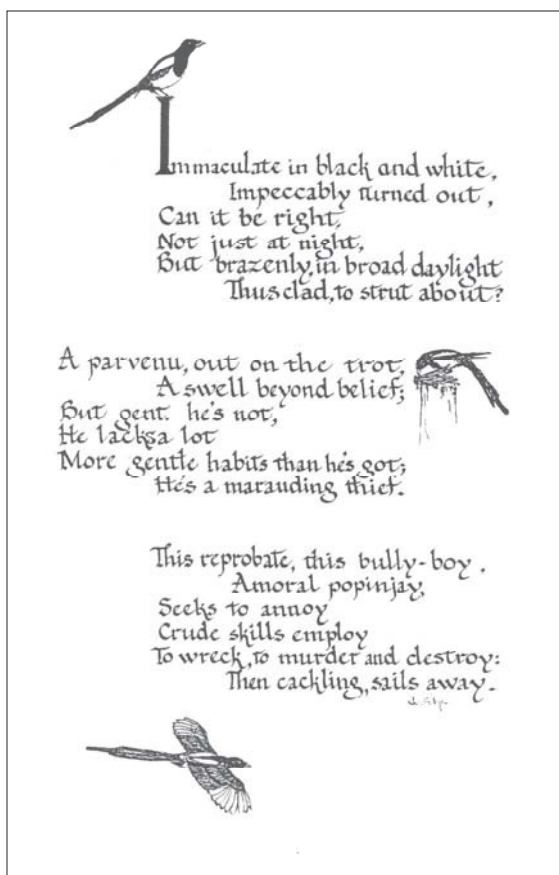
page. We hear from many organisations: the Tennis Club (fully from Mike Dimmer), the Bowls Club, District Nursing Association, Graffham Down Trust, the Thursday Club, the Garden Group, Guides and Brownies, Graffham School.

In the past we had a monthly Gardening Column from AFFLE (Alan Longworth), Weather Reports regularly from Derek Wiseman, and many other contributors gave us interesting articles.

We have been able to remember our friends who are no longer with us with many heart-warming obituaries.

Thank you for your interest in our Parish News and please go on supporting the new Editor to whom I am very grateful.

**Paula Burke,
December 2007**



Paula was well-known for her immaculate handwriting and occasionally included samples such as this poem in the parish magazine.

The Parish Mag and other Media 2008 - 2015

When Fr Mark and Church Warden Peter Pine-Coffin asked me to edit the Graffham Parish News I was delighted - I had always enjoyed reading it - and of all the volunteer jobs in the community this has to be my favourite as I am still doing it eight years on!

When news got out that I was taking over, people immediately asked me “What are you going to DO with it?” which I actually hadn’t thought about, beyond transferring the whole process to my computer. (My predecessor had assembled each issue on pieces of paper on her dining room table.)

Aside from the technology, or perhaps facilitated by technology, I have introduced a colour cover and between four and 16 full colour pages each month, subsidised by increased advertising. I also chase contributors regularly to make the content as representative as I can of all interests in the community. One thing I have specifically tried to do is ensure the magazine represents East Lavington as well as Graffham. The “parish” covered by the church and therefore by the parish magazine is the ecclesiastical parish which includes the two separate civil parishes.

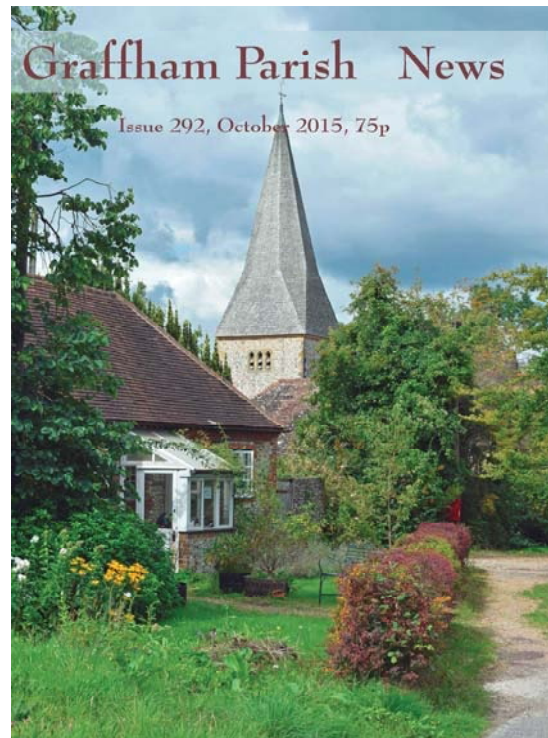
“Are you going to put it online?” was another question I was asked when I started. I have set up a simple website where people can view back copies of the magazine but at the moment this is not a substitute for a printed magazine. The parish magazine continues to serve its purpose on the kitchen shelf even in highly computer-literate households around the village. I’m sure the situation will change here as elsewhere. Currently 80% of adults in the UK have broadband and 61% use their mobiles to access the internet (source OFCOM), so there may well come a day when Graffham will want its magazine as a smartphone app rather than a booklet through the letterbox.

Aside from the parish magazine website, there are several other websites providing information about Graffham including:

- ⇒ graffhamonline.co.uk - a parish magazine spinoff providing a village calendar, and hosting the minutes of Graffham and East Lavington parish councils;
- ⇒ graffhamtennis.co.uk - the Tennis Club website
- ⇒ empirehall.org.uk - news of what’s on at the Empire Hall and how to book it
- ⇒ graffhamdowntrust.org.uk

Something with more immediacy is the Graffham Noticeboard Facebook group. It has gained 150 members in thirteen months and provides a quick and easy method for people to promote events they are putting on in the village.

Mary Butterworth, 2015



The “Old” Organ



The old pipe organ was replaced in February 2008 by a new electronic organ.

The original organ was sold to a man from Liverpool who came to take it away. Church Warden Peter Pine-Coffin asked me if I would come up and photograph the occasion and the organ before it was dismantled as a record, but I was asked not to publicise the event as it might be a controversial issue.

I have been wondering ever since what to do with the photographs. The Graffham Scrapbook Project seems to be the obvious place to put them, so here they are!

Mary Butterworth, 2015

“The Three Organists” - Derek Williams 2000-2009; Richard Bailey 2009-2014; Tracey Carr from 2015



Derek Williams – Retiring Organist

From the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, March 2009

When St Giles Church organist, Derek Williams, retired after eight years' service at Graffham, there was a special thank-you to Derek from Fr Mark and the congregation at church.

As a retired solicitor and amateur pianist, Derek only took up the organ about eleven years ago and is entirely self-taught. This came about when he heard a programme on Radio 4 about a shortage of church organists. A vicar being interviewed said he had a "complete answer" to the problem – two hundred recordings of hymns from St Paul's Cathedral! Derek thought this solution so unsatisfactory that he was inspired to take up the organ himself.

Over the next year or two, Derek gained experience standing in on occasion for the previous Graffham organist, and had the opportunity to play at various organs in the county, including St Peter and St Paul in Chichester. He was officially appointed organist to St Giles in 2000 by the Rector, Fr Keith Hyde-Dunn, and has steadfastly played at Sunday services since that date. In his own words, Derek is "the sort of chap who is inspired when he is really needed".



He recalls one of his earliest and biggest challenges was playing at Fr Mark's induction when he says the whole church seemed to be "crammed with priests" and was a tremendous experience for him. A new challenge presented itself last year when the original pipe organ was replaced with a digital one. Notwithstanding his preference for the original organ, he is pleased to have mastered the complexities of the new one.

Derek is now happy to pass on his responsibilities at St Giles to Richard Bailey, whom he describes as "brilliant".

A New Hymn for St Giles

From the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, August 2009

A new hymn was sung for the very first time at the St Giles Patronal Festival in Graffham. The congregation of St Giles Church was surprised and delighted to discover that organist Richard Bailey had written a hymn specially for St Giles Day. The three-verse hymn, *On this our Festal Day*, is sung to the tune of *Love Unknown*. Richard generously postponed the opportunity to accompany the hymn himself on this occasion, as retired organist, Derek Williams, was invited to play at the festival. A larger than average congregation assembled for the service, which was taken by the Ven. Roger Combes, Archdeacon of Horsham, and was followed by wine and snacks.

Harvest Supper

From the *Observer*, 1973

The Empire Hall, Graffham, gaily decorated with flowers by Mrs D Field and Miss D Reeve-Flaxman was the scene of a happy gathering of 100 people at the harvest supper.

This was organised by Miss A Bowley and Mrs D Gwillim who collected the food from donors and arranged the helpers. With the exception of the beef and pork and the cider and beer all the food was given, and many people had made apple pies...

A group of morris dancers, the Martlets, from Chichester, joined in the supper with some of their wives and afterwards gave a display of sword and morris dancing.

They then encouraged the guests to join in with some English country dancing.



The proceedings ended with the singing of *We plough the fields and scatter*.

A collection was taken from this completely undenominational gathering and over £15 was raised for Christian Aid.

Below: A new tradition emerges - the children's table on the stage, 2012



Celebrating Harvest in the Hall

An interview with Derek and Sonia Williams

Derek: In the early days shortly after we came to Graffham there were fewer and fewer people coming to church and fewer and fewer people coming to the Harvest Supper – just the vicar and a few friends – and in the end the harvest supper would be attended by the Mozleys, the Rector and his wife and two or three other people. They were very happy – it was like a family party! It wasn't bring-and-share, Maggie Paterson would do the food very nicely. We had ham and salad and always mandarins. So one day I decided that this wasn't good and I said I would phone up everybody who I could think would like to come to the Harvest Supper. Some of them did and some of them didn't. The event got more and more support after we took over.

Sonia: We said it would be a bring-and-share supper and I used to ring them up and say "What do you think you can bring?" which made them think and of course in the end the ladies in the village vied with each other and the food got better and better every year until finally we had about 90-100 people coming, and it's still like that today. It's a wonderful idea because it brought in people who don't come to church. The Rustics used to do a "turn" in the middle which brought in more people. Somebody would sing and Derek and I would probably do a little duologue of some sort, just a little entertainment for a few minutes.

Derek & Sonia Williams, August 2013

Harvest Supper, 2014 - Derek & Sonia are at the far end of the table



The Church Sale

Held annually about four weeks before Christmas, St Giles Church Sale was the main fund-raising event in the church's year. During the 1970s-1980s the organiser was Lady Bateman and all stall-holders were invited to her home for a pre-sale planning meeting. Thin-cut cucumber sandwiches and delicious cakes and pastries were provided and the stallholders checked their notes and confirmed their roles. The starting gun for this well-oiled machine had gone off.

The Church Sale ran from 10am until 12 noon, then 2pm to 4pm. During the break the ladies went home for lunch, perhaps a restorative glass of sherry and a well-earned rest. Summoning up their energies for the afternoon session, stallholders returned at 2 o'clock and by slashing all the prices managed to get rid of everything.

During the 1970s, Colonel and Mrs. Loring contributed pieces of silver and other valuable items to what became known as their Antiques Stall. Word spread of their donations and it was not long before dealers from Petworth were to be found heading the queue that formed each year outside the locked door of the Empire Hall. In a wise move to protect the interests of both the church and the Lorings, the items they so generously continued to give were taken for valuation prior to the sale to Sothebys, the auction house at that time at Billingshurst. When Eddy Loring finally gave up driving, one of her last gifts was her much prized brown Rover car which was parked outside the hall and sold to the highest bidder, proceeds as ever to St Giles Church.

It was during the 1980s the decision was taken to offer lunch for sale, in addition to the welcome teas and coffees which were available all day, and as a result the hours were changed and the hall stayed open from 10 am to 2 pm. A ploughman's meal was served – pate or cheese with fresh bread, or home-made vegetable soup. As the

years went by, the cooks became more adventurous with dishes such as fish pie, cottage pie, curry on offer and a selection of delicious sweets and puddings to follow.

Lunch was cooked by various ladies of the village who survived the rigours of the cookers in the Empire Hall breaking down, when hot trolleys were hurriedly brought in, and power cuts. For a few years the food was cooked in the kitchens at Seaford College. This meant the meals had to be transported from the College down through the village to the Empire Hall. On one famous occasion a lot of the lunch was dropped in transit; nevertheless it was retrieved, packed back into the containers and nobody was any the wiser.

There was usually a Master of Ceremonies. David Grant, Rector in the 1970s and 1980s, had a large school bell which he used to ring to preface his announcements. He would encourage the purchase of raffle tickets or indicate a particular stall that wasn't doing very well. Prices would be cut and everyone urged to go and buy. An outgoing personality, he was in his element.

After Lady Bateman, other organisers included Rosemary Godman Dorington whose forte was the produce stall. With a group of skilled helpers, mouth-watering pies, flans, pastries, cakes, biscuits, breads and rolls as well as preserves - pickles, jams, and so on - were produced and displayed on banks of shelves erected behind the stall itself, though they were not there for long. Rosemary always found time to make a tin of shortbread biscuits to give to the "teas and coffees".

The Church Sale also came under the command of Paula Burke. At the pre-sale planning meeting Paula produced a plan of the Empire Hall cut out of a cereal packet and individual squares



Produce Stall with Rosemary Godman-Dorington and Bumble Findlay at the 2004 Fair

representing the various stalls were moved into different positions until all stallholders were satisfied. In addition to running a well-organised and successful fund-raising event, Paula spent many hours during the preceding year making for sale beautiful, minute felt creatures, all hand-stitched. During Paula's reign the hall was decorated with Christmas trees. Originally made for Father Christmas's grotto in the committee room, this copse grew into a seasonal forest of cut-out firs, 8ft high, painted and decorated and stood up round the walls of the hall.

Janet Mozley was another successful organiser who introduced the "beauty boutique". Collecting from generous donors unwanted gifts of cosmetics and toiletries, it was a little unnerving to receive a lipstick with the words "I don't like

Paula's Elephants - found on every Christmas tree in Graffham!



the colour much, I've used it only once"!

Bric-a-brac was another highly successful stall run by Trish Brown, who every year started afresh and found sufficient items to fill the hall balcony. More unwieldy goods, such as a lawn mower or the odd piece of garden or indoor furniture, were offered for sale prior to the event. There were often great bargains displayed on the lawn in front of her home.

There was an element of competition about the whole thing. Attendance at church the following day was often higher than usual as stallholders wanted to hear

the financial result, even if the detail of their own particular stall was not available. The treasurer was hounded for answers and whole thing was printed in the parish magazine rather like a league table. Competition for the top spot was between produce and bric-a-brac with the grand raffle in strong contention. Paula's felt creatures were another reliable contributor.

Not just a fund-raiser for the church, the sale was hard work for the stallholders and their helpers – some of whom worked for weeks if not months in advance of The Day - but great fun with a strong community feel for all buyers and sellers alike.

Diana White, July 2015

St Giles Christmas Fair in the 21st century

The St Giles Christmas Fair is my favourite event of the Graffham Year! I have worked my way round a variety of stalls over the years, including Raffle, bric-a-brac, cards and calendars, a French Produce stall, (dependent on a favourable exchange rate and a quick run to Carrefour in Calais!), mulled wine and minced pies, and finally, last year I ending up organising the lunches.

Some of the Fairs have been quite magical, particularly those with themes. In 2004 we had the Victorian Fair - the hall was decorated to look like a Victorian market and stallholders were expected to dress in costume. Paula made mob caps for those who hadn't a costume.

In 2005 we had a French Fair, a spin-off from the French Produce stall. In 2007 there was the Italian Fair - with spectacular decorations by Olivia Norton involving red and green streamers forming a canopy from the centre of the Hall, Venetian mask making for children, and of course, lasagne on the lunch menu. The meat had been donated by a local butcher and there was so much left over, the stall holders had a lasagne-lunch the following year at Duncton Fisheries.

By far the most successful stall in recent years has been the Silent Auction which Lawrence Paine has run for for ten years with only one break. It accounts for nearly 30% of the total revenue!

Fr Mark Gilbert always refused a stall, he was known for sitting by the front door collecting cash for the Christmas candles. Female members of the Gray family ran calendar and card stalls. Fr Michael Barter and his children have been found on bric-a-brac!

Mary Butterworth, 2015

Photos from top: Victorian Fair 2004, Italian Fair 2007; Fr Mark's Candle Stall 2005, Christmas Fair 2012





All Saints, 2012

All Saints Chapel and Cottages

New Homes are Gift of Well-Known Local Family

From the *Midhurst Petworth & District Times*, November 1953

Cottages "A Dream Come True"

The first tenants of the three cottages attached to the new Communion Chapel at Graffham will be among the congregation when the buildings are dedicated by the Bishop of Winchester, Dr ATP Williams.

The tenants moved into their new homes several days ago and work in the chapel was completed this week.

The Bishop of Chichester, Dr G K A Bell, will be unable to take the service but it is fitting that the Bishop of Winchester, has been asked to take his place as Graffham has many links with one of his famous predecessors, Samuel Wilberforce.

Memorial Tablets

The buildings are the gift of Col. and Mrs G Loring of Norwood Farm, Graffham and have

been erected in memory of Col. Loring's mother, aunt and mother-in-law. In each cottage a memorial tablet has been fitted.

A feature of the chapel is an ancient apse construction for the sanctuary. It is combined with modern building technique which allows light to be thrown on to the altar from panels of glass bricks which are invisible to the congregation.

The roof slopes down towards the apse to form a dome effect above the altar. There is some beautiful wood carving.

The body of the chapel contains fine oak pews which will seat a congregation of about 40. The floor is constructed in wooden blocks.

At the entrance to the chapel, which will be dedicated in the name of St Giles and All Saints, is a small priest's vestry and a compartment for a piano.

The attached cottages will be known as All Saints Cottages. They contain a lounge-dining room, a kitchen, bathroom, airing cupboard, and two bedrooms. Electricity and all main services are connected.

Appreciation

“It is a dream come true,” commented Miss F Blakesley, Secretary of Graffham Parish Council, who lives with her brother, Mr S Blakesey, at No.3. “We previously lived in an isolated cottage with no electricity and no proper sanitation or water. We certainly do appreciate it.”

At No. 1 live Mr and Mrs George Howick who have already settled in comfortably. “We like it very much indeed,” said Mrs Howick, surveying her neatly furnished lounge-dining room.

Mrs Walter Nudd is a well satisfied tenant at No. 2. She misses the cupboard space she had in her previous home, however.

The chapel is not an alternative place of worship to the parish church of St Giles, but will be used

mainly for celebrations of Holy Communion on alternate Fridays, for one Sunday celebration on the second Sunday in the month at 9 am, for Evensong (possibly during bad mid-winter weather), and gatherings of different groups for prayer, study and instruction.

The whole building will be administered by trustees.

Famous Singer

Mr Leslie Rands, former principal in the D’Oyley Carte Opera Company, will sing *He Shall Feed His Flock* at the service to dedicate the new chapel. Mr Rands, who once lived in Graffham, started his singing career in the Chichester Cathedral Choir.

The service will start when the Bishop is met by the Rector of Graffham (the Revd M Townroe) church wardens and trustees outside the chapel. Then the Bishop will knock three times on the door with his pastoral staff before entering.

After the dedication the Bishop will bless each cottage.

Dedication of the Chapel, by George Garland © WSRO N49075





*Revd Townroe with Bishop of Winchester (© WSRO N49078)
Bishop of Winchester with Mrs Eddy Loring (© WSRO 49078)*



Lillee Puttick remembers All Saints Chapel and Cottages

It was quite a talking point when the Lorings put the Chapel there and when the All Saints Cottages were built that was quite something. We had an old friend who lived at Norwood, Mabel Nudd. She got the middle one and Miss Blakesley and Sid Blakesley were at the end. George and Mrs Howick were in the one next to the Chapel.

The stipulation was that they were Church-goers and from Graffham, but of course over the years that has changed quite a bit. I used to go down there quite often and during 1963 when we had all that ice and snow for so long. I went twice a day to see if Mrs Nudd was warm, get her fuel and

make sure she had something to eat. She was getting on a bit. I used to do her garden down there.

People were pleased when the cottages were built. They were very, very modern in those days. There was water in the kitchens but they had these chemical loos (not a lot of people know that!). Father used to go down every weekend to empty them. It wasn't an Elsan which was the usual type.

Lillee Puttick, 2012

Notes on All Saints

(A notice displayed in the Chapel by Colonel Godfrey Loring, March 1960)

This Chapel was consecrated, and dedicated to St Giles and All Saints on October 31st 1953 by the Rt Revd ATP Williams, Bishop and former headmaster of Winchester. The first service of Holy Communion was celebrated by the Rector, Revd M D Townroe, the following morning, All Saints Day.

The architect was Mr Robert Bostock, the builders, Messrs Chapman, Lowry & Puttick of Haslemere.

The altar, the panel which is now the reredos, the outer doors of the chapel & cottages, some of the woodwork in the pews, and the alms dish, came from the chapel of St Richard at Wych Cross Forest Row, which was about to be demolished.

The altar candlesticks were made by Mr George Howick, who with his wife was the first occupant of No. 1 Cottage.

The vase stools were made by Mr Percy Parry, the Verger.

The vases were made by Mr Raymond Marshall of Stedham Pottery, and presented (in 1958) by Mrs E K Loring in memory of her father, Mr CH Pattison.

The service books were bound by the Graffham Craft Centre and presented by Mrs Spicer of Withy Cottage in memory of her husband, Dr Spicer.

The altar-rail kneelers were designed by the Ladies Work Society, Brompton Rd London and were worked by the architect (3 ft) Mrs Loring (4ft) Mrs Gray (4 ft).

The altar-cross was made by Messrs J Whippel, Tufton Street, Westminster to my design.

The Priest's chair was presented by the architect.

The vestry rug was woven by Mrs B Champion.

The chancel light formerly belonged to Mrs O M Loring (No.3 Cottage) and hung at Court House, Rusper.

The pew end in memory of Canon F Champion was carved by small donations from many parishioners.

The first Trustees are Miss A Beevor, Mr A B Todd, Mr C Cook, appointed by the Parish Council in accordance with the Trust Deed.



All Saints' Congregation and Friends, 2013

60th Anniversary of All Saints Chapel - 2013

From *Graffham Parish News*, 2013

At the 60th Anniversary Service in June, Revd Stephen Gray quoted from the sermon preached by the Bishop of Winchester at the Chapel's dedication in 1953, and Seaford College student, Sara Carr (right) was invited to sing *He Shall Feed His Flock* from Handel's *Messiah*. This Anthem had been sung at the dedication by Mr Leslie Rands, a former principal of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company who lived in the village.

After the service the congregation was invited to lunch at the Rectory where All Saints resident Sylvia Smith had put on a small exhibition about the Chapel and cottages, including photos taken in 1953 by Petworth photographer George Garland.



Notes on All Saints Chapel and Cottages 2013

by Resident, Sylvia Smith

In June 2006 a group of five parishioners formed a fund-raising group for the purpose of replacing the kneelers in All Saints Chapel. They also organised the purchase, preparation and design of the new kneelers and recruited volunteers to undertake the stitching.

The five parishioners were:-

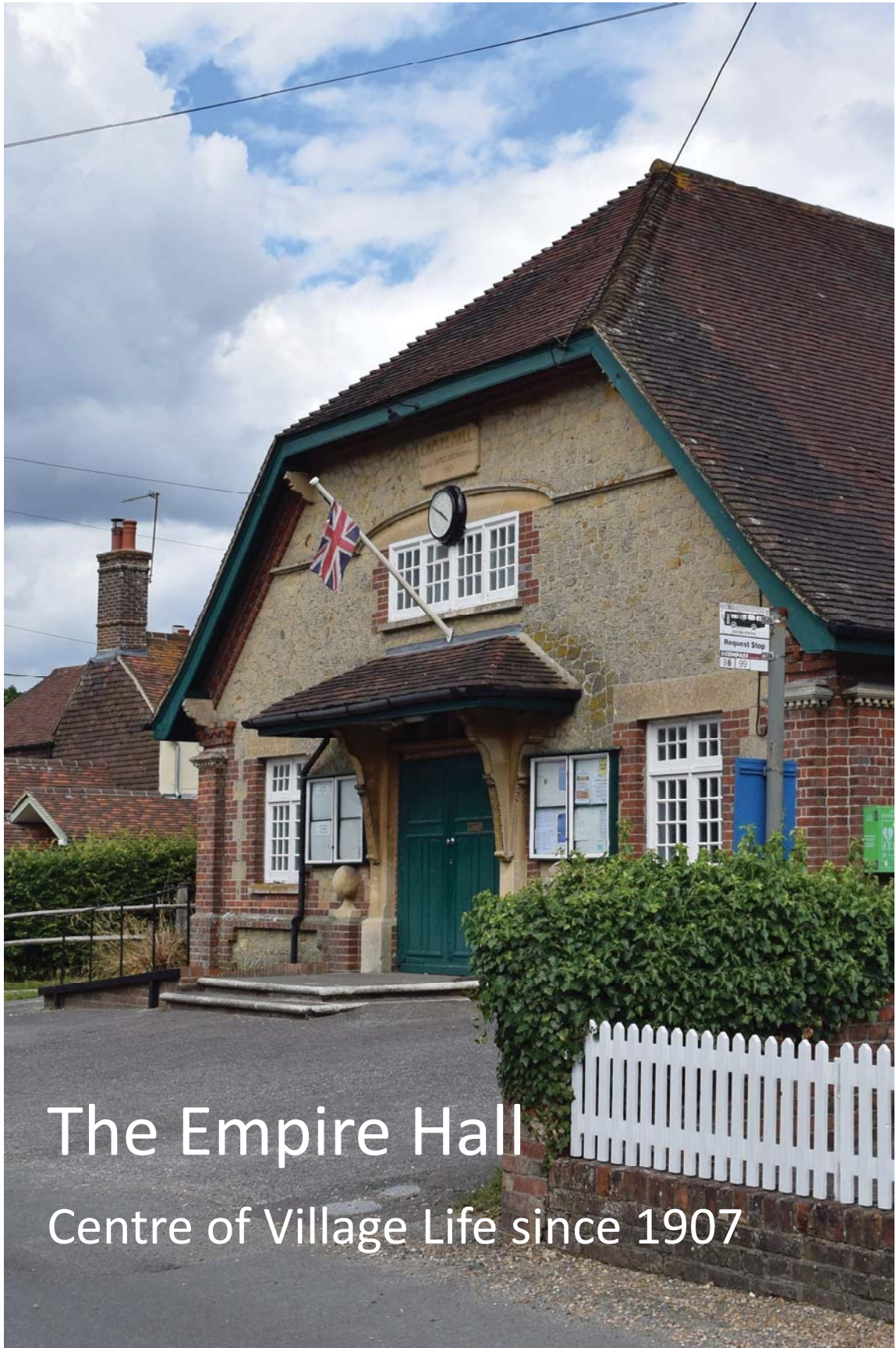
Mrs Sylvia Smith (project leader)
Mrs Diana White
Mrs Sue Windsor
Mrs Jane Pine-Coffin
Miss Paula Burke

The project was successfully completed and on 2nd November 2008 the first thirty kneelers were dedicated by Revd Mark Gilbert. The final six were completed by early January 2009.

Other changes which have taken place since the Chapel was originally fitted include:

- ⇒ The lectern was donated by Mr Peter Pine-Coffin
- ⇒ The hanging in front of the lectern was donated by Miss Carolyn Davies
- ⇒ The red curtains next to the piano were donated by Miss Carolyn Davies
- ⇒ The book containing details of all the kneelers was beautifully hand-written by Miss Paula Burke
- ⇒ The wooden box containing the book was designed and made by Mr John Howlett





The Empire Hall
Centre of Village Life since 1907

A History of the Hall, 1907 - 2015

The Empire Hall was built in 1907 for the village by James Buchanan (later Lord Woolavington) of Lavington Park. It was originally built to accommodate 400 (including 75 in the gallery) and was constructed entirely by men working on the Lavington Estate and in the village under direction of Mr Buchanan's agent. A room at the new hall was reserved as a Reading Room and Library, another for the local Conservative Unionist Association. James Buchanan is commemorated in the plaque above the front door of the hall.

The hall was opened on 19th October 1907 by Andrew Bonar Law, a Conservative MP who subsequently became Prime Minister, and whose speech was largely concerned with political issues of the day rather than the affairs of Graffham.

Mr Buchanan also had strong political opinions; however his stated aim was to provide a hall for the use of all, independent of views or party. In keeping with the ideals of the Edwardian era he named it "Empire Hall" to suggest imperialism, patriotism and nationalism.

In his own words at the opening ceremony:

"This hall is built ... to be the means of giving amusement, pleasure and improvement to the people living in this neighbourhood. I am sure that with the co-operation of those who, with myself, are anxious for the good of the people of Graffham and East Lavington and the district, we shall be able to do some practical good."

He also promised to arrange a series of interesting lecture and concerts, and by many other ways "to give pleasure and add to the improvement morally and physically of the people who surround us here."

The programme at the Empire Hall in its first year included a lecture with lantern slides by one Mr.

Frederic Villiers, a famous war correspondent of the day, who gave a talk on his adventures and experiences, entitled *Armies I have marched with*. A second lecture was provided on *Women's Work in China*. A children's Christmas Entertainment was put on that year, with songs, dances, games and recitations. In keeping with the name of the hall and the spirit of the age, the programme ended with the cantata *Britannia's Songs* and songs were sung and flags displayed from England, India, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

The Lavington Estate substantially reduced its ownership of property within the village and surrounding farms with a major sale in 1937, but the Macdonald-Buchanan family still continued to own and support the hall. A new 99 year lease with a peppercorn rent was granted to the new Trustees in 1962.

In 1982 the Lavington Estate proposed to the Hall Committee that the time had come for the Committee to take over the freehold. The lease ground rent was nominal, but the Estate had continued to provide various support for repair works to the hall. The Committee commissioned a survey and ultimately agreed to the proposal in 1983. It should be recorded that the Estate was asked for a modest capital endowment on transfer, given evident liabilities, and agreed to this. In fact, the final process of transferring the freehold title of the hall to the Charity Commissioners took far longer, and was only completed in 2012. This has now taken place and the hall in effect belongs to the village, run by its Committee. There have been various phases of works and appeals since 1983 and this will inevitably continue in the future. Halls always need works and funding and a massive amount of volunteer help. The Empire Hall is no exception but is clearly a valued village asset. It has had a further major phase of attention

since 2006 and is the subject of more plans which it is hoped will extend its life and significance well into the 21st Century.

Over the years, the hall has accommodated a wide variety of village activities as well as private parties and concerts. In days gone by it provided a library and reading room, which doubled up as doctor's surgery and waiting room for many years. From 1919 to 1977 it was the base of a local branch of the WI, and for many years it hosted a playgroup, toddler group and Youth Club. Until very recently we have had Brownies and Guides meeting weekly.

Graffham Rustics have been a major feature in the life of the hall for over sixty years, first appearing in 1951 when they were founded by Eddy Loring, and the original platform for speakers was adapted into a stage with a proscenium arch. At the time of writing their future is in the balance – with several other local amateur dramatic societies in the area, a Graffham based group may no longer be viable.

Regular users of the hall today include Thursday Club, Ladies Circle, the Garden Group, Badminton Club, Parish Council, the Empire Lunch Club and a range of exercise and keep fit classes.

Memorable and well attended annual events in the hall include Burns Night, the Flower Show, the Parish Harvest Supper, the St Giles Christmas Fair and the CLIC Sargent Cancer Fund Christmas Concert. The hall is also the venue for occasional public meetings put on by the Parish Council and the Graffham Down Trust and it is the village's Polling Station for local and national elections.

While the job of the Hall Committee is basically to provide an appropriate venue to hire for public and private functions, in recent years they have started to play a more proactive role in organising events. In 2006 "Graffham Empire Movies" (GEM) was established to show films – although a separate organisation it was set up to

support the hall and donates any profits to the hall. In 2013 a new annual fund-raising event, the Graffham Easter Market, was established to provide a regular source of income specifically for the hall which has now run successfully for three years. Jazz and world music concerts have been put on and a music season is planned for Autumn 2015.

In the century since James Buchanan built the Empire Hall for the village we have moved from lantern slides to DVD technology and beyond, and from "Rule Britannia" to "Roots Around the World". Nonetheless we hope that he would still recognise that the hall continues to give amusement, pleasure, and even improvement to the people of the neighbourhood and that he would be happy that his generosity has made a long term contribution to village life in Graffham!

Article written by Philip Trower and Mary Butterworth, for the Hall Centenary in 2007, updated 2015





Photo: Football Club Dinner in the Empire Hall, 1950s

Lillee Puttick remembers the Hall in the 1950s

My mother took over as caretaker about 1950 – in those days a caretaker was a caretaker and the caretaker was the only one who had a key. (The other one was held by General Turner of Lavington Stud).

The heating was done by a coke boiler so when heating was needed you had to go down in the morning to light the boiler, then you had to go back at lunchtime to bank it up, and again in the evening.

Caretakers did EVERYTHING!

When something was on, whether it was a dance or a meeting or a party, or if it was a dinner, all the chairs had to be put out and if it was a whist drive we had to put the tables up. When they had finished they got up and walked out and we

had to clear it all up.

The stage was really a speaker's platform which was on trestles. It used to go up and down and felt very unsafe with a lot of people. All the card tables had to be folded up and put back under the stage.

If it was a committee meeting in the Committee Room, a fire had to be lit. The Kennedy Room was the Library. It wasn't like the Library today. You didn't get lots of new books. When it was "Library Day" the fire had to be lit.

Doctor's Surgery used to be twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays, and that meant going down and lighting a fire in the Library and the Committee Room.

In 1952 we couldn't do a Rustics play because the terrible old floor was replaced. When you swept the old floor you could go back again and still get a pile of dirt. We had to spread water on it to dampen the dust down – it was terribly hard work.

We used to have quite a lot of dances – once a month. We used to do refreshments, but if it wasn't somebody we were connected with, like the Hunt hiring the hall, then we still had to go back and make sure everything was alright. When we did refreshments our hot water had to come from the copper which was in the corner of the kitchen and which had to be lit and kept going. It had a brass tap over it.

There was a band who came from Liphook, and Bert Speed from Petworth had to be the MC. People came from all around. They used to have a bar up in the balcony. Cecil Albery (from the Foresters) used to do the bar. It used to annoy me because some of them came in and wouldn't dance – they just wanted to go to the bar!

They had big dances during the War – there were soldiers billeted about – at Lavington and Quiet Court.



Lillee c. 1946

At the children's parties in the 1950s given by the Ameer of Bhawalpur, the Ameer's staff did it all. The kids all got a lovely present. It was a grand affair. There wasn't much about after the War.

When the new stage was built it was thought to be extremely modern to have well steps. The first proscenium arch that went up was done at the time that the stage was done. We had to collect newspaper and it was turned into papier mache and covered with Hessian. It was a very grand occasion to have a proscenium arch in the 1950s.

Lillee Puttick, 2007

Lillee in a performance of Agatha Christie's "The Hollow" in the Empire Hall



The Prince's Party

A highlight of Christmastime at Graffham in the 1950s was the "Prince's Party".

Every child who attended Graffham Primary School was invited by the Ameer and Begum of Bahawalpur to a Children's Party at the Empire Hall.

The "Indian Prince" - as he was known in the village - owned a large and very private house in Selham and to the children he was just a mystery figure.

The party was organised and run by his employees, who liaised with Miss Beevor, the Headteacher, for the names and ages of the children.

The tea was set out on long trestle tables and it really did seem a feast to our post-war children's eyes. When we had eaten all we could, the tables were magically put away and chairs lined up for the entertainment by a magician and a clown.

Then came the spine-tingling moment when sleigh bells were heard outside the front door and an expectant hush fell. Father Christmas had arrived, complete with cotton-wool snow on his boots!

As each child's name was called out we had to mount the stage and go to Father Christmas to receive our individually wrapped present. These presents were usually a boxed game appropriate to our age and were like gold to us compared to the more usual, somewhat cheaper, gifts that our family could afford.

I remember clearly the time when a whisper went down the row, as we waited for our turn, that "The Prince" was in the balcony watching. I saw a shadowy figure of a man in a dark suit and was disappointed that it was not a sparkling and exotic Indian costume!

Janet Wyatt (née Townroe), 2015



Dances

At one point we had a dance every month. We had what were called “nostalgic evenings”. Someone would turn up with old-fashioned records. We couldn’t do the dances but we just joined in as best we could. After about six or seven months they brought some records along for what they called “the younger contingent”. They turned out to be the Charleston so we were none the wiser. But we gave it a go. Don Allen was a real organiser – we had a Valentine’s dance every year.

Jo Morgan, 2015

Party Time

1980s and 1990s

At one time I did all the discos in the village. We’ve had some brilliant ones in the Empire Hall. The hall has fantastic acoustics. I grew up with the hall and I’ve always supported it as much as I can. In the earlier days when there were a lot of events and parties I joined quite a few of the groups and things.

Don Allen always did an absolutely brilliant Valentine’s party. The parties were as close to Valentine’s Day as he could get and the hall was always decorated fabulously. It was always a very good evening. There were bands in those days. There were also dinner dances which all the Clubs used to put on. There were more than now – there used to be some sort of party once a month in the hall. (But I’m going back 30 to 35 years).

Bob Crosdil, 2015

Valentines Day photos courtesy of Ruby Allen



Putting the Clock Back!

An article from *Graffham Parish News*,
December 2012

Observant villagers will have noticed the “new” clock on the front of the Empire Hall. In fact it’s not new at all - it’s the original clock.

In 1907, the hall was built without a clock. The first clock was installed later and required the stone façade to be cut to fit. It was then, as now, the only public clock in the village. The clock has always been difficult to maintain as when it needs adjustment or repair, scaffolding is required. When it broke down in the 1980s it was taken down and replaced with a new clock. The original clock was given to local builder, Dave Ashby.

Since the “new” clock broke down irretrievably, Dave kindly agreed to return our original to see if it could be repaired. When several clock repairers deemed this not possible, West Dean College offered to take it on as a student project,



The Empire Hall, 2015

with great success. Co-incidentally, ex Graffham resident and West Dean student, Tim Hughes, was on the team.

Our clock is probably an early Smith’s clock, painted on copper. The original hands and face have now been restored; however the original electric motor has been replaced with state-of-the-art technology and satellite regulation!

Whist Drives & Table Tennis

In the fifties we used to have table tennis in the Hall on Monday nights. It was for all ages. The Headmaster Mr Steele and Miss Sabine from the school came to join in, as well as Revd Nash, the Rector.

In the sixties we had whist drives in the village hall. There used to be a Christmas whist drive

and Lillee Puttick’s parents, Mr and Mrs Mackenzie, used to organise it. We had people coming from Midhurst and Petworth and the event took up the entire hall. People used to sit upstairs and on the stage. It was a very big thing.

Janet Wakeford, 2015

Burns Night in the Hall

The annual celebration of Burns Night (or the nearest Saturday to it!) has become an institution over the past 25 years since the first “gathering”.

Parishioners of all ages have perfected their footwork to the music of Mac Turner and “Galleons Leap” who have arrived at the Empire Hall through snow, flood and blackout to lead the dancing. Grannies too arthritic to dance and babes too young to walk have all come just to enjoy the strains of the pipes and the music of the ceileih band, not to mention the ceremonial parade of the Haggis, the “address” to the Haggis – usually spoken by Mac and finally the Haggis supper. Early requests of “just a very little please – just to try ...” have been replaced by requests for second helpings.

The confused expressions of those faced with *Mairi’s Wedding* for the first time turn to beaming



smiles of satisfaction when the “map reading” is successfully mastered and display a real sense of achievement.

Maggie Paterson, 2007

Ceremonial Parade of the Haggis, 2009



Display of hall's history proves a hit with visitors

Article from the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, 2007

More than 200 people passed through the Empire Hall in Graffham last Wednesday and Thursday when a two-day exhibition of local photos and archives was held to celebrate its centenary.

Opened in October 1907, the hall has been a focus of village life for 100 years and the exhibition included photos from every decade.

A large portrait of James Buchanan, first Baron Woolavington, who built the hall for the village, was lent for the exhibition by his great-grandson, Alistair Buchanan of Lavington Stud.

Visitors were not restricted to those from Graffham and the surrounding areas and they came from as far afield as Southampton and Hemel Hempstead.

Several visitors were ex-residents, some had spent childhood holidays in the village, and one or two were researching their genealogy.

One man from East Bersted had been an evacuee in Graffham during World War II and shared



many memories with the locals over a cup of coffee in the Hall.

Pictures from the Garland collection at the West Sussex Record Office were particularly admired - mainly from the 1930s to 1950s.

Many of them are not in the Graffham archive and had not been seen at previous exhibitions, but long-term residents were able to identify several faces from the past.

Vicky Crosdil and Mary Butterworth, organisers of the exhibition, were delighted with the reactions from members of the public.

“Our intention had been to provide a week of events to celebrate the centenary, and the exhibition was intended to present the history of the hall in an interesting format and to use the hall itself for an unusual event,” said the organisers.

“We were very pleased that so many people had not just visited but lingered over the displays, with one or two even coming back for another viewing on the second day.”



Other events forming part of the centenary celebrations included a children's shadow puppet workshop organised by Olivia Norton and Harriet Rowntree.

The exciting half-term activity for younger children took place on the first day of the exhibition, giving the children an opportunity to use the stage in the Empire Hall.

Visitors watched the children's puppetry show while enjoying the refreshments provided.



Tea and Shadow Puppets at the Exhibition

Centenary Dinner Dance

When Vicky Crosdil asked me to help her put on an exhibition for the Empire Hall Centenary I had no idea how much work would be involved! In addition to locating all the photographs from Graftham and West Sussex Archives, reprinting them on an A3 printer and mounting and displaying them, we organised a barn dance and an Edwardian dinner complete with Edwardian Menu for 100 people.

The Centenary events were all put on at a low point in the hall's popularity when some were in

favour of demolishing it and rebuilding a new village hall up at the Rec. It was intended to rekindle enthusiasm for our heritage. Fortunately (in my view) the danger is now past and the Empire Hall appears to be thriving once more.

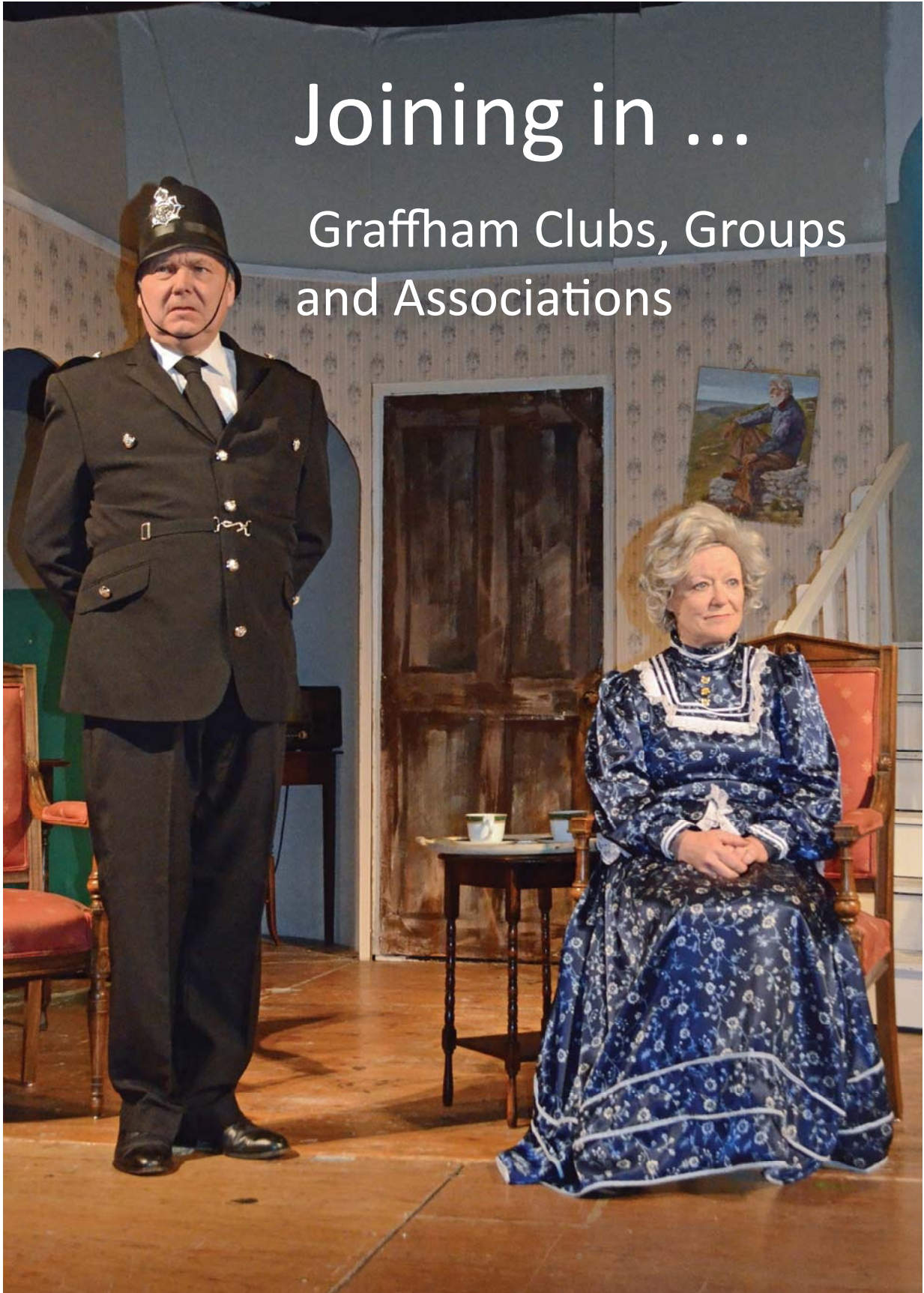
The dinner/dance provided a great village photo-opportunity - see below.

Mary Butterworth, 2015



Joining in ...

Graffham Clubs, Groups and Associations



Graffham Rustics perform The Ladykillers

The Graffham Rustics

by Vic Constable

The Early Years

In 1950 there was a drama group run by a young man, Noel Dicker. He was asked if he thought a musical show would go down well in Graffham. After reading *Back to the Land* (or *The Pitchfork's Progress*) - written ten years before by Edith (Eddy) Loring and Pru Adkins, two members of the Women's Land Army - he agreed to give it a try, and so the Graffham Rustics was born. The Empire Hall had no curtains, no proscenium arch and no pass door between the two rooms backstage, which meant that actors had to go outdoors, whatever the weather, to enter the other side of the stage. *Nancy Gay* - the production staged in Coronation Year - was also written by Eddy Loring, and major changes were made in the hall, including the re-building of the stage, construction of a proscenium arch, and the provision of stage curtains, to enhance the theatrical experience.

The frequency of productions began to accelerate with the first Rustics non-musical play (*Great Day*) in 1954, and in 1955 the society staged its first Gilbert and Sullivan show (*The Gondoliers*) as well as a straight play. From that time on two productions a year became the norm. Mrs Loring took on the mantle of director of the G&S musicals, often taking a major contralto role as well. She was a talented composer and singer, also a notable actor and director. Her production of *Ruddigore* in 1961 was the fifteenth show in eleven years, and the fifth G&S. An additional night of this show was staged at Midhurst Secondary School, the proceeds being donated in aid of the new Chichester Festival Theatre. In the twelve years to mid 1963 the society staged nineteen productions, eleven of them musicals.

When Eddy retired from active participation in the Society she was made Honorary Life



Graffham Rustics Founder, Eddy Loring, in the title role of Nancy Gay

President. She was still keenly interested in the Rustics and gave much advice when *Back to the Land* was reprised in 1995. She died in 2008 at the age of 101, leaving a legacy of four full length musical shows, a number of individual songs – and the Graffham Rustics!

1963 - 2013

Jean and I moved to Graffham when we married in 1963. I was working for Mr Kendrick at Upper Norwood Farm, and we lived in Jays Cottage on the bridle way running down to the recreation ground. Colonel and Mrs Loring walked the footpaths of the area, and very soon Mrs Loring called to persuade us to join 'her' amateur dramatic group as she had heard that Jean was an artist, and I was a choral singer. Meanwhile we had seen that the Rustics were putting on a play – *Breath of Spring* – and we were able to get tickets

at short notice for the front row of the balcony to see this hilarious production which we thought was superbly executed.

Eddy Loring was planning to produce a home grown musical which she and John Steele, a teacher at the primary school, had co-written, and we went to the Rectory (behind the church) for presentation evenings of *Alpenrosa*. To cut a long story short both of us found ourselves with principal parts – Jean in a comedy role opposite Don Skinner, and I was given the romantic lead!!

In those days the membership of the society was composed of many villagers, and a large group of staff from Seaford College. Mrs Loring was surrounded by an inner core of people who were very important to the running of the society – Dennis and Catharine Mattingly; Ian and Katie Callan; John and Betty Steele, but there was a group who regularly took part in productions – Anne Pescod (now Anne Larkin) was regularly the soprano lead; Don Skinner and John Ellerton often took the comedy roles; Joan Ellerton, Peggy



Alpenrosa Programme, 1964

Weller, Delphine Standing, Lillee Davies, Edward Bradbrooke (the Rector); and the Parishes took minor parts or chorus work. Edward Bradbrooke was, for some years, our set painter, while his wife Anne was our musical director.

We found that often when members moved away they did not cut themselves off from the society – notably Anne Larkin in recent years has travelled up from Dorset to sing with us – and we began to get people from outside our immediate area joining us.

The Gondoliers, 1962





Dad's Army, 2009

The Society's repertoire has been very varied, with a constitution which called on the society staging – as far as possible – an equal balance between musical and non musical productions. From the mid 1950s until the early 2000s the musicals we concentrated on were Gilbert and Sullivan operettas – for which we earned a good reputation, but in the last decade of the 20th century it was getting more difficult to stage musicals demanding large choruses and so we branched out into the more recent type such as *Oliver!*, *My Fair Lady* and *Bugsy Malone*. Non-

Vic on the set of The Ladykillers, 2014



musical plays ranged from pure farces (*See How They Run*) to lightweight comedies (*Dad's Army*) to serious dramas (*The Heiress* and *A Man for All Seasons*). Over 130 productions have been performed to date.

In between the main productions the society has staged concerts and other forms of entertainment. A number of events produced funds that were given as donations for various things local (the Church, the Village Shop Fund and the Empire Hall) and further afield (Petworth Cottage Nursing Home, Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Oxfam). We have also travelled to other venues to reach different audiences.

Our presentation of *One Season's King* was judged best production at the West Chiltington Drama Festival in 2004, and we have received accolades of excellence from the National Dramatic and Operatic Association (NODA) on several occasions.

What now? We are a small society, and to be able to produce major shows through the next sixty years we need to increase our membership. We want to stay truly Graffham based, but to do this we need more members from the village.

Vic Constable, November 2013

Susie Pulls It Off!

A personal account of 15 years in the Graffham Rustics by Susie Tink

My husband and I were 'persuaded' by John Willis to join the Rustics in 1998. My husband being an electrical engineer believed that he could help in that capacity. However when we entered the Empire Hall we were both given the librettos and vocal scores of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, sat down and expected to sing. We were put in the chorus. Ken being sailor 5, and I was lady 8. Neither of us had done anything like this before, but soon settled in with this friendly society and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. For me that was the beginning of a long and fun-filled relationship with the Rustics.

Our millennium production at the end of 1999 was *Follow the Star*. I was an Angel (type casting) as indeed were Veronica Crickmay, Sue Cooper, and Derek Williams, he being Angel Lofty. This was our one and only Christmas

production, and introduced many children to the fun of acting on a stage, and several of them returned to us for future productions.

So it continued with a musical and a play each year until Pat Trower directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for us in the summer of 2002 instead of a musical. This was our first Shakespeare, and our last to date. We had the most wonderful elderly fairies; Jean Constable, Gillian Wilkinson, Annette Lovell and Lena Saunders, the last being Titania's personal fairy, who was new to the job and wore an 'L' plate on her back.

What can I say about *Daisy Pulls It Off*, summer 2006? The casting by Pat Trower, director, was inspirational. Miss Gibson, Head mistress, Sandy Tyndale-Biscoe. Clare Beaumont, Head Girl,

HMS Pinafore, 1980





Susie, fifth from left in Daisy Pulls It Off

Philip Trower. Monica Smithers, one of the nasty girls in the school, Matt Mattingly, Trixie Martin, Daisy's best friend, Peter Pine-Coffin. Miss Granville, a teacher, Neil Castle. They gave it their all, and were brilliant. The train driver was Oliver Boulton who had been a little angel in *Follow the Star*. He also helped back stage.

The summer production in 2008 was *Noises Off*. This was a hilarious production. Every rehearsal had us collapsing in fits of laughter. Unfortunately it proved very difficult to cast, as by now our membership was shrinking fast, so Sandy Tyndale-Biscoe not only directed it, but also took a major role. He also had a big part to play in the building of the most difficult set we have ever had. The set gradually disintegrated as the rehearsals and performances went on, however it remained upright - just - until the end!

We only managed to put on one show in 2012, and 2013 and I think that it will remain thus unless we manage to rekindle some enthusiasm for acting amongst the young in the local

community. The remaining Rustics are becoming a little long in the tooth, and learning words is getting more and more difficult. It would be wonderful if The Graffham Rustics could continue to bring light entertainment to the village.

Susie Tink, 2013

Learning lines, 2014



Young Rustics

I was very lucky in that the Rustics put on several plays with parts for children when I was a teenager. I joined the Rustics for *Oliver* in 2006, then I got to be the gaoler's daughter in *Wind in the Willows* in 2007 when Jo Oomen was Toad. I was also in *The King and I*, 2008 with Ruth Till as Anna, and Jo, head completely shaved, as the King.

Young Rustics was a spin-off drama club of the Rustics. It involved the young members of the Rustics getting together to put on their own kids productions. It ran for several productions and was generally very popular.

I was in two of their shows, the first was a compilation of various West End shows and the

second was a rather dodgy combination of three children's plays, which I'm sure our parents suffered through rather wearily. I had a fantastic time and thoroughly enjoyed all the singing, dancing and acting. Especially the singing, I was given a solo and had never before sung in front of people. Chris Mountford and Ruth Till encouraged me to overcome my stage fright and conquer my fears of singing in front of people. I feel I owe a lot to Young Rustics and them because of this, as I have since gone on to sing in several choirs, a band and other things, which I don't think I would have been able to do if not for their reassurance.

Clara Butterworth, 2015

Young Rustics, "Show of Shows", August 2008





Women's Institute 1949 by George Garland courtesy WSRO N31292

Lillee Puttick remembers the Graffham W.I.

I started in the Women's Institute when I was at school because Mother was a member of Headley WI and they used to do "am dram", so if they were short of anybody I was always roped in.

At Graffham we started off our meetings singing *Jerusalem*. You'd have the minutes and matters arising, then you'd have all the other business. Then you'd have a cup of tea and a cake and then the social half hour. I suppose they were a couple of hours.

There weren't many of us that had transport in those days. You'd have to hire a coach if you went to a group meeting or anything like that.

It wasn't only local affairs that were discussed. You'd have to discuss things to take your vote to the AGM at the Albert Hall every year.

When I went to the Albert Hall there was a lot of discussion going on about cervical testing, also the plan to build the Kielder Reservoir up North – they were going to demolish a lot of houses.

One year Graffham went and the next year Heyshott went. Each reported back to the other.

We always had a speaker at our meetings. Miss Maxie, who was related to the Leconfields, used to go abroad birdwatching a lot – seeing her slides was always interesting.

If there was a big competition coming up we'd have a speaker in that subject.

We used to have a lot of classes in different things – for example cooking, slipper making, glove making – I've still got the gloves and the pattern.

We used to have a lot of competitions and we used to enter the Gilchrist Cup for produce and cooking, etc. We also had a choir. Phyllis Sabine was conductor (she was followed by Miss Inman).

The WI had a percussion band. Once we did *The Teddy Bears' Picnic* with percussion instruments. When the Rustics did the first *Back to the Land* the overture was played by the WI Percussion Band. I wasn't in that because I was dressed up for the play and wasn't allowed to go out the front in costume.

The social half hour was always at the end of the meeting. Sometimes we used to play a game, sometimes we'd do a mime, sometimes we'd have a quiz.

One act plays were performed in the social half hour to finish off the monthly meetings. We had rehearsals. They were **very** well done plays. You could call it the fashion at the time.

I went to Denman College through the Graffham WI not very long after it opened. It was a WI College, still going I think. I went for a week to do domestic science on a bursary.

It was most unfortunate when the WI closed down – I happened to be the President at that time but it had been on its last legs for some time. Like most clubs there was a hard core of people who kept it going.

At the AGM we used to have a VCO (Voluntary County Organiser) come to take us through the meeting and she told me "There's no point in going on the way you're going, you must be closed." That was about 1967. I was president from 1965 to 1967. You did about three years – the first year you're learning how to do it, the second year you're enjoying it and the third year you've had enough!

People didn't want to take jobs, especially the secretary and treasurer jobs, so unfortunately it was closed.

But in the early seventies, Katie Callan (who lived at Thereaways) restarted it. It didn't go on very long. A few of us went to Heyshott WI for a short time.

Lillee Puttick, 2008

Women's Institute Percussion Band in the Empire Hall, 1950s



The Thursday Club

Research for the Archives Exhibition has revealed an unheralded anniversary. The Thursday Club is around thirty years old.

Records vary, but the club was formed between 1975 and 1977. Following the demise of the Women's Institute in Graffham, members arranged to meet monthly and to invite speakers to talk on a range of subjects.

The club received an initial donation of £23.50 from the Maud Guillod Trust Fund.

During the first year, membership fees of 50 pence per head raised a total of £29.50 and, with additional proceeds mainly from Bring-and-Buy sales and raffles, the fund after one year stood at £76.35 .

Mrs Lillee Puttick and Mrs Jan Barton were joint leaders, other original committee members being Mrs Brown, Mrs Morton, Mrs Robertson, and Mrs Ryan. Mrs Doreen Field subsequently ran the club for more than ten years, to be followed by Mrs Jeanne Wiseman, Mrs Barbara Kemp, Mrs Ina Bridger and Mrs Sonia Williams. In 1998 the committee comprised Mrs Betty Bradley, Miss Amber Bryant, Mrs Ellen Goemans, Mrs Rita Stickley, Miss Margaret Towler, Mrs Priscilla Thomas, Mrs Stella Webster and Mrs Sonia Williams; reducing in 2002 to a committee of four - Mrs Bradley, Mrs Goemans and Mrs Stickley and Mrs Sylvia Smith.

Under the current chairmanship of Mrs. Sylvia Smith the format continues to include a variety of

The Thursday Club visit Duncton Fish Farm, 2007



speakers and some outings. Recently, excursions have been made to National Trust properties, including Ightham Mote and Knoles, and members enjoyed a most successful behind-the-scenes visit to Glyndbourne as well as more locally, a delightful afternoon at Duncton Mill. Guest speakers from in and out of the village covered a wide range of subjects from Waste Recycling, Bee Keeping, New Zealand, South Africa and Antarctica, to Bed-and-Breakfast and Conservation and much more. With a Christmas celebration in December and the Strawberry Tea in summer to complete the annual



Strawberry Tea in the Bows Pavilion, 2015

programme the Thursday Club continues to thrive.

Diana White, Secretary, 2007

The Graffham Health Support Association

previously the Graffham & District Nursing Association

by Alison Davidson

No records have been found to show the exact date of the founding of the Graffham, Lavington, South Ambersham and Selham District Nursing Association. All we know is that it was established by Mrs Katherine Guillod, to support the local district nurse, and was in existence at the time of her husband's death in 1921 long before the beginning of the National Health Service.

Under the terms of the will of her husband, David Guillod, a trust was set up to be administered by the Graffham Parish Council. The Katherine Maud Guillod Trust continues to this day. One half of the income goes to the DNA, whilst the other half is divided equally between Graffham Women's Institute (now the Thursday Club) and

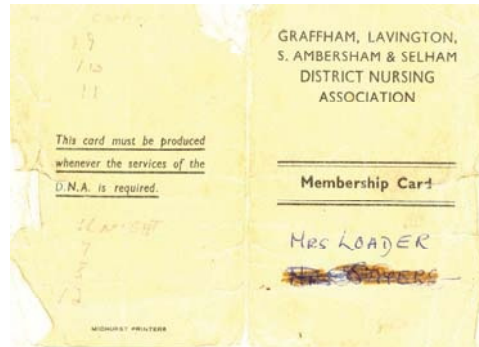
such charitable purposes as the Parish might see fit, although Mr Guillod expressed a wish that the funds be used for the benefit of pupils who attended Graffham School.

The annual subscription in the 1950s was the princely sum of 1/- per adult, so it seems most likely that the trust money was the mainstay of the benefits provided by the Association. Membership has remained fairly constant over the years at over 200.

It has always been understood that the KMG Trust money given to the DNA was to be used to provide services, not available under the NHS, to better the health and wellbeing of its members.

Initially providing financial support for the nurse, it also took on:

- ⇒ subsidising and running a chiropody service in the village. This took place every other week in the Kennedy room at the Empire Hall for many years, and in the 50s cost the member 2/6 per appointment. A committee member would run the clinic and even produce lunch for the chiropodist. By 1971 it was reduced to once a month and by the early 1990s was deemed not to be viable any more. In 2011, however, a foot health clinic was re-established in the Empire Hall for which the Association pays the hall rent. This is proving very successful.
- ⇒ paying for special invalid foods and drinks recommended by the doctor or nurse. Records show that this extended to three regular bottles of Guinness a week to one lady, although it is reported that the recipient preferred milk instead! There is also a record of the whiskey supplied to a gentleman and how the committee member in charge of purchasing it asked if he could buy the whiskey in whole bottles and decant it into the required half bottle to reduce the price. This benefit seemed to die out in the 80s
- ⇒ paying for part of the cost of medical or remedial treatments not available on the NHS. This is still in effect today and is generally requested for spectacles and dentistry.
- ⇒ paying part of the cost of convalescence. There is no record of significant sums being used for convalescence.
- ⇒ organising transport for members to and from the hospital and other health related appointments. In the early days each patient would pay half the cost of the trip. The use of this service has increased gradually over the decades and it has become the Association's most important service. It is supported by a wonderful collection of volunteer drivers (47



Date	Amount paid	Received by	Date	Amount paid	Received by
1968	1/-	J. P. Robinson	1980	1/0p	A. Simmons
1969	6	J. P. R.	1981	20p	A. Simmons
1970	6	J. P. R.	1982	20p	A. Simmons
1971	6	R. P. Smith	1983	20p	A. Simmons
1972	5p	Alban	1984	20p	A. Simmons
1973	5	Hoelder	1985	20p	A. Simmons
1974	5p	J. P. R.	1986	20p	A. Simmons
1975	5p	J. P. R.	1987	20p	A. Simmons
1976	5p	P. S. Woodbridge	1988	50p	A. Simmons
1977	10	A. Simmons	1989	50p	A. Simmons
1978	10p	J. P. Robinson	1990	50p	A. Simmons
1979	10p	A. Simmons	1991	50p	A. Simmons

Name: M Loader

at present) who give large tranches of their time to take people to their appointments and also, at times, to visit their relatives who are in hospital. This service has been free to members since 1996. The drivers are reimbursed for the fuel they use.

- ⇒ lending medical equipment. The DNA has always had a pool of equipment to lend to members. The items have not varied significantly over the years. The main things being offered are wheel chairs, bathing aids and commodes. There is now a shed behind the Empire Hall which houses all the equipment.
- ⇒ delivering medicines to the village. For many years the local family doctor from Petworth did two surgeries a week in the Empire Hall. This was combined with delivery by the DNA of medication to the village. Although these outlying surgeries have long ceased to exist, medicines are still delivered to the village shop weekly from both Midhurst and Petworth surgeries. Those coming from Petworth are collected by a band of volunteer drivers.

In the early days the DNA gave Christmas gifts of logs to the more needy and elderly members. These were much appreciated. This custom continued up to the early 80s when, one year, it is recorded that instead of logs a parcel of Complan, chocolate and talc was distributed. More recently plants, biscuits and chocolate have been preferred. Cards are sent wherever possible to members who are ill and those who are in hospital.

In the early years members of the committee set up a 'Good Companions' group which would meet regularly in one of a number of 'hostess homes'. Knitting, sewing and tapestry work are some of the many activities that took place.

The tradition of a coach outing started in 1973. The first was to Worthing and cost the members 25pence. It was heavily subsidised! Two trips each year, one summer trip to the seaside and a winter shopping trip to Portsmouth continued to be enjoyed until 2004.

In 2013 a 'keep fit class' for senior citizens was started with the Association paying the hall fees. This has proved very successful.

In 2010 a defibrillator (AED) was installed at the Empire Hall. It was paid for by donations from individuals and from the many clubs and associations in the village.

In 2004 due to the cumbersome nature of the Association's name, it was renamed the Graffham District Nursing Association. However this did not solve the problem of members expecting to have access to a district nurse through the Association. It was renamed the Graffham Health Support Association in 2011.

Each year a group of members generously tackle the time-consuming job of collecting the subscriptions. It is interesting to note that, since the inception of the HSA, the annual subscription has only increased to the current £2.50. Pretty good value!

Over the years many villagers have given their time generously whether as committee members or volunteers for the Association. However, as one of the volunteer drivers said the other day. "I'm happy to do it, it will be my turn one day!"

Alison Davidson, 2015

Installing a defibrillator at the Empire Hall - Alison Davidson with a trainer from South East Coast Ambulance Services and Roger Coakes



Graffham Garden Group

by Martin Buckley, GGG Chairman

In 1966 Dorothy Reeve-Flaxman of Thraves, now Church Farm, wrote a letter to all residents of Graffham. In the letter she wrote that she and others thought it a good idea if Graffham had a Garden Group and started up the yearly Flower Show again. This letter led to a public meeting to collect thoughts; for the first year, not wishing to be too ambitious, the show would be for flowers only. The letter was signed by Dorothy on behalf of the following:

Mr and Mrs Dick Challen, Mr and Mrs Douglas Culver, Lilliee Davis (Puttick), Miss May Diggins, Mr and Mrs J Godman-Dorington, Mr and Mrs Mackenzie, Mr Jack Pescod, Mr and Mrs Denis Phillips, Sir Harry and Lady Ricardo, Miss DM Sutherland, Mr and Mrs Harry Thompson and Mr and Mrs Francis Wayne.

Thus began the GGG which runs a Flower Show every summer (apart from 1976 when the drought caused it to be cancelled). At a forgotten date the GGG became affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society. Cups awarded every year reflect the list above with the Denis Phillips Cup and the Ricardo Cup.

The first Chairman of GGG was Mrs Agar; she was the elder daughter of Sir Edwin Lutyens and first married to Capt Euan Wallace living in Lavington House, now Seaford College. The Agar Challenge Cup's (best rose in show) first winner was Mrs Mackenzie, Lilliee Puttick's mother. Lilliee won it herself in 1985.

Peggy Sutherland was a formidable presence in the village. She had a scintillating career in

Flower Show 2015





Spring Plant Sale 2014, Martin Buckley 3rd from left

journalism, becoming editor of Woman's Journal at the age of 30, and a director of Amalgamated Press. She founded the Good Companions and the now forgotten Poetry Group and became the first Hon Sec of the GGG. Her contacts are reflected in the GGG files with letters from Lady Egremont, Godfrey Winn and the celebrated gardener Margery Fish all of whom were enticed to GGG events.

Another great supporter of the GGG was Walter Parsons (his cup is for the best dish of soft fruit). He gardened for Thraves and others and lived in Ivy Cottage, now Walter's Cottage, opposite Chelsea Cottage.

Chairmen and presidents over the next 46 years have included Dorothy Reeve-Flaxman, Sir Geoffrey Bateman, Gladys and, later, Carolyn Davies, Kate Bertram, Col Peter Wilkinson, Alan Longworth, Betty Bradley and current chairman, Martin Buckley.

GGG today has around 100 members and continues to run a very well attended flower show in the Empire Hall, two plant sales and a number of coach trips to gardens in the south, including a sea voyage to the Isle of Wight to Osborne House. The AGM in March usually includes a guest speaker. In recent years the GGG has tried each year to provide some 'village enhancement' which have included planting shrubs at the front of the sports pavilion, a number of trees, daffodils at strategic points in the village, a contribution to the defibrillator project and in the 2012 Jubilee three trees at the Recreation Ground.

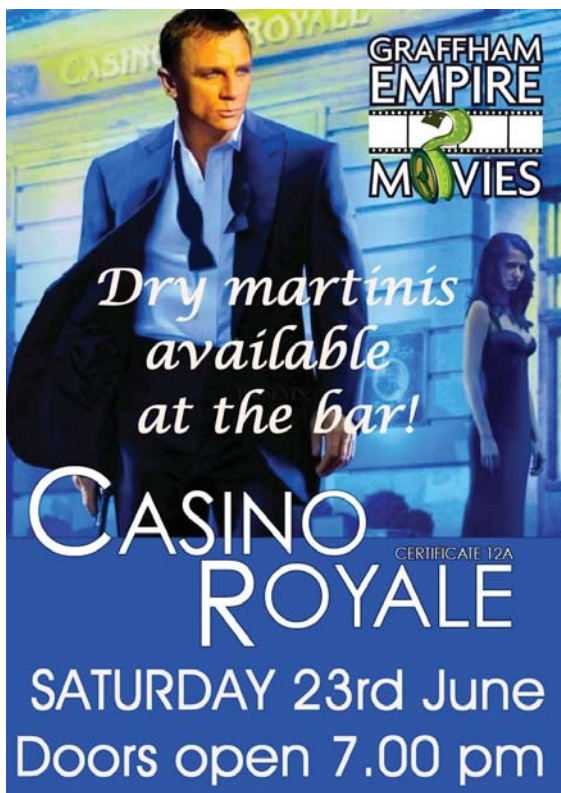
Martin Buckley, 2012

Graffham Empire Movies

We set up Graffham Empire Movies (GEM) in 2006 to show films in the Empire Hall through an organisation called *Movies on the Move*. I was secretary until about 2013. Some of us did it to raise funds for the Empire Hall, some of us just wanted to show films.

The film nights have proved a great social event enjoyed by many regulars from the village. There's always an interval for catching up with the neighbours and a bar and snacks. In the early years home made chocolate brownies were always popular.

In the early stages we were subsidised by grants (first from WSCC then from the Sussex Community Foundation) and we did make quite a lot of money for the hall. We also persuaded the Hall Committee to get a permanent licence to serve alcohol in the hall, and paid many of the initial costs involved.



Our best film choice? This was undoubtedly *The Queen*, starring Helen Mirren which we showed the week after she won an Oscar, and 117 people turned up. And our worst choice? *No Country for Old Men* and *Shooting Dogs* vie for this position, with an audience of about 18 each, indicating Graffham film-goers really don't go in for violence.

Highlights of GEM's brief history include a one-off appearance in drag by Philip Trower and Colin Barker as ice-cream-sellers, a cookery demonstration by local cooking school, *Sujoco* preceding *Julie and Julia*, and Martinis at the Bar at *Casino Royale*. Christmas family matinees such as *Kung Fu Panda* were a feature in the early years.

GEM continues to provide popular, friendly and convivial film nights during the winter months. With increasing costs and without the grants we had in the early years, it is now more about providing a social event for the community than raising funds for the hall.

Mary Butterworth, 2015

1st Graffham and Heyshott Guides

1970 – 2012

by Guide Guider, Carol Tickner

In September 1970 Kit Smith, who was then Graffham Brown Owl, asked me to start Guides in Graffham as there was nowhere for the Brownies to move on to. I was then assistant guider in Midhurst.

In October of that year we invited girls to meet in the scout hut behind the Empire Hall. We expected six to eight girls and sixteen turned up all eager to find out about guiding. We went from strength to strength and decided we should have a sale to raise money for camp equipment. We made £100 and bought three patrol tents and a few pots and pans plus two loos. In those days a patrol tent cost £30, multiply it by ten at least

now!! Someone from Seaford College made us a metal flag pole, which we still have to this day, and the village rallied round and donated lots of bits and pieces. In 1971 we had our first camp at Linch Old Rectory to gain my campers licence. Sixteen girls who hadn't camped before came along and with the help from two Young Leaders and a Brownie Guider I achieved my licence. It was a bit of a nightmare but we got through it and had fun.

In the years that followed we camped in Dorset, the New Forest, Wales, Essex, the Lake District, and of course Sussex. We had two camps in the Lake District, travelling by coach. Mr Anstey our

Sheila Stickley becomes a Queen's Guide - 1981





Switzerland 1983

driver stayed with us, sleeping in his coach. We had a wonderful time, climbing mountains and sight seeing. Have coach will travel!!

In Wales we had a huge storm one night. Our tent blew down and the metal tent pole broke. We took it to a blacksmith who mended it for us. It is still going strong and quite unique.

We have rented cottages in Dorset, Devon, the Lake District and Northumberland. Again lots of walking and sight seeing, and ventured into Scotland whilst in Northumberland. We walked the South Downs Way from Beachy Head to Harting, staying in village halls along the way.

We had three holidays on narrow boats (with a skipper I might add!). One was in the year of the drought in 1976, when we were trying to turn the boat around and got stuck across the canal - all part of the fun and nobody fell in.

Since 1971 I have taken guides to Switzerland every other year, some years two trips to accommodate everyone, twenty four trips in total. We stay in chalets, hike in the mountains, visit

places like the Schilthorn, where *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* was filmed, eating ice creams in the revolving restaurant. We went to the highest railway station in Europe, at over 11,000 feet, through the Eiger to the Jungfrauoch. We travelled on trains, boats, funiculars, cable cars, chairlifts and buses to visit waterfalls, caves, castles and 'Our Chalet' one of the Guide World Centres at Adelboden. We joined in Swiss National Day on 1st August each year and one year were asked to lead the parade in Grindelwald with torches. They were all very memorable trips.

Apart from holidays and camps we have had plenty of day activities and outings. Christmas craft days, outdoor activity days, building shelters, lighting fires and having fun. We often visit the beach in winter for a walk along the sands, and in the sea in wellies and end with cooking our lunch on gaz stoves. Despite all the modern technology girls still enjoy lighting fires, cooking, following trails and all the things we did when we first started.

As part of Service to the Community we look after the War Memorial Garden. We first took it over in the 1980s when guides enjoyed weeding and tidying up, but unfortunately in latter years it doesn't appeal quite so much. We meet there sometimes in the summer on a guide night, and the girls help weed and tidy. In between, needless to say, I am left with the task of keeping it tidy, with the help of my mother and my father before he died three years ago.

Numbers have fluctuated throughout the forty two years. Sometimes up to thirty and recently down to four. We have now built up to ten again and hope we find someone to take it on next January when I have to retire.

A lot of the first guides are now married with children of their own and even grandchildren. When I meet ex-guides many say they remember their guiding days and how useful the skills they learnt have been through their life, whether its household skills, cooking or finding their way with a map and compass.



Guides promise ceremony, 1986

Graffham Guides celebrate their 30th Anniversary in the Empire Hall - 2000





Switzerland 2005

It's always rewarding to see ex- guides coming back into the movement as guiders. We have had a few over the years including Harriet Rowntree (Brown Owl). Some have just carried on from being a guide to Young Leader to Guider without leaving like Sheila Stickley. She achieved her Queen's Guide award as many others did over the years. Now the highest award has changed to the Baden Powell Trefoil. We had many of those too.

Diane Bellis joined us in the early 80s from Surrey and we now have Catherine Harper as a unit helper. Other helpers over the years have been Wendy Challen, one of our original guides, who still helps out occasionally, Joyce Flexman and Ellen Sturges, not forgetting the two young leaders who helped me at the beginning, Liz Anstey and Liz Mackay.

I just hope Graffham Guides will continue so that many more children can have fun and share the experience for another forty two years.

**Carol Tickner
Graffham and Heyshott Guide Guider
1970 - 2012**

2012 was Carol's final year as Guide Guider in Graffham as she was forced to retire on grounds of age. Sadly nobody came forward to run the Guides and it has now closed. The photo on the left shows Carol's farewell presentation in the Empire Hall by Deputy Chairman of the Parish Council, Nick Lobley and Brownie Guide Leader, Harriet Rowntree



Brownies

I have very fond memories of my time at Graffham Brownies. I remember that we got up to all sorts of fun stuff like craft, cooking, and trips to the wood and Roger Mozley's orchard. I was quite young, so my memory is quite hazy on what else, but I do believe we learnt all about wildlife and plants too and I'm sure at least a bit of that sunk in.

I joined in the early 2000s and kept going for several years before joining the Guides just before going to secondary school and then went back to volunteer when I was 15.

It was a great way to meet other children. I feel that clubs like Brownies and Guides really brought together the kids of the village, as many of them, like me, didn't go to Graffham School. Sadly Brownies has stopped running now since Harriet Rowntree stepped down as Brown Owl in 2013 after 20 years hard work. However it was very popular right until the end so hopefully someone will start it up again in the future.



Clara returns as a Brownie Helper, 2008

Clara Butterworth, 2015



Brownies last session, Christmas Crafts, 2013 - Adults L-R: Diane Bellis, Diana White, Brown Owl Harriet Rowntree and Tamsin Jenkins

Graffham Cubs

I was in the Cubs here because my mother (Pat Morton) was the cub mistress. We had the hut at the back of the Hall as our “Cub Hut”. First of all I was a cub at Heyshott but then Graffham lost their cub mistress and as Heyshott was small they decided to combine them. The Heyshott flag is still in the church at Heyshott. We used to do badges like cooking and nature. We used to go up the Downs and pick wildflowers then bring them back and identify them, which of course you’re not allowed to do now. We were always in the hut. When my mother was 65 she was supposed to retire but because there was nobody else who wanted to take it on she kept going and she got an award. Mrs Joan Skinner helped my mother and Mrs Sonia Williams also helped. When my mother packed up nobody really wanted to carry on so the Cubs packed up – and so did the Scouts. You could join Cubs when you were five but you packed up when you went to secondary school. When the school holidays were on then the cubs didn’t meet. I still meet people now that I knew when they were cubs. Steven Stickley was a cub



Mrs Pat Morton

and Don Skinner’s son, Andrew, who now works in Budgens in Midhurst, but the others all moved away.

Michael Morton

Cubs, 1980s



Graffham Youth Club - 1970s and 80s

I ran the Youth Club in Graffham for years. I started it when I was 18 and I gave it up when Emily was born, about 1990. We were one of the few private youth clubs to own our own mini-bus. We went to Alton Towers and Thorpe Park in it. The bus held twelve plus the driver so it would take thirteen people. I used to set off on my own with six boys and six girls and drive all the way up to Alton Towers.

The Club met every Wednesday night in the Empire Hall. It was before the age of mobile phones and computers and we used to play badminton, snooker, swingball and board games. We used to have barbecues on the Rec and go for walks, including night-time walks. We'd meet at the Foresters Arms at half past ten on a Friday evening then walk all the way over the Downs into Cocking and all the way back.

Why is there no Youth Club today? There are too many rules and regulations which kill things like that. Nowadays you need a much higher ratio of adults to children. In those days I'd take forty children to the cinema. I'd drive the bus and I'd arrange for others to take cars, then we'd go to places like Chichester, Haslemere, Petersfield and descend on a cinema. We used to take them skating in Southampton and bowling in Worthing. We also went out for weekends to places like Amberley and the Weald and Downland. But of course times have changed now.

Bob Crosdil, 2015

Badminton in the Empire Hall

Graffham Badminton Club was formed in 1981 when David Rowlands marked out a court in the Empire Hall. Although the width of the court easily fits into the main hall, the length is shorter than a normal sized court and is without back tram lines. The club has been running every year since - opening the season in September and closing at the end of April, averaging 12-14 members plus visitors. Don Allen took over from David in 1990/91 season and Penny Jennings took over from Don in 2000/2001.

Penny Jennings, 2007



The Badminton Club join the Jubilee Parade

Passing on love of dance

Abridged from an article in the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, 1983

When Bridget “Biddy” Dimmer moved to Graffham four years ago, she had no intention at all of running her own dancing school. But she had reckoned without parents in the area who, recognising her love of children, and of dance, managed to persuade her to change her mind.

Born in South Africa, Biddy studied ballet from an early age with Eileen Kegan, a celebrated teacher. Following years of training Biddy was one of four girls selected for the main company of the Royal Ballet Company, Covent Garden. Biddy describes her five years there as “thrilling”, working with Margot Fonteyn, Nadia Nerina, Merle Parke, Nureyev, and the “absolutely brilliant” Frederick Ashton.

With her husband, Paul, and their children, Claudia and Anthony, Biddy moved to Graffham in 1979. Wanting to pass on her love of dance, Biddy went to Barbara Geoghegan in London for advice on teaching. She started a pre-school class of music and movement in the village, which had instant appeal and grew through popular demand, with child pupils taking the ISTD Cecchetti Class Examinations in Ballet and members of the senior group taking ISTD National Dance Examinations.

In Biddy’s own words, “I just hope that through what I am doing I give something of what I have received, and some of my enjoyment of the art of dance.”

Below: Biddy Dimmer’s dance class in the Empire Hall, 1980s



The Graffham Poetry Reading Group

Archive notes by Agatha Bowley

The Graffham Poetry Reading Group was founded late in the nineteen fifties. Our plan was to come together on a Saturday once a month during the winter and read poems on a subject chosen by one of the members, more especially by the householder who was offering hospitality. We met by invitation of one of the members who supplied light refreshments and then read in turn round the circle a poem on the subject chosen, which could either be one written by a famous poet or by a humble resident of Sussex who belonged to the group!

There were some twenty or thirty members, but attendance varied from time to time. On one occasion Robert Gittings was invited to read his own poems to the group, and we were greatly honoured when he agreed to do so.

People

by Harold Dexter (1966)

In Graffham village there dwell the people,
From White Horse Inn to Church's steeple,
Renowned for beauty, brawn and brain,
Since Angle, Saxon, Jute and Dane
First colonised this lovely spot
And in the meadows cast their lot.

Dorothy and Tom Swards, Sylvia Bradbrooke, Phyllis Inman, Dorothy Reeve Flaxman, Joyce Townend and Grace Dexter were original members who have since died. Other enthusiastic members were Averil Beevor, Kathleen Burfield from Midhurst, Harold Dexter, Hilda and John Holland, Hilda Robbins, Peggy Sutherland, Billy Rough, Francis and Joan Wayne, and Agatha and Marian Bowley. Later some more recent arrivals in Graffham came to join us.

Dawn over Graffham

by John Holland

The village nestles 'neath the blanket of the Down
And darkness shrouds the land with satin gown,
Old Reynard nods acquaintance passing by
Stillness broken by the nightjar's cry.

Each house looms as a silhouette – then lost to sight
The trees and gardens bathed in ethereal light.
Here sleep the rich and here the poor
All equal now behind the sheltered door.

Subjects chosen included Sussex, Country and Town Life, Places, People, Dress, Food, Children, Spring, Gardens, Birds and Beasts, Water, The Sea, Joy and Sorrow, Love and Hate, Ghosts and Fairies.

After several seasons of reading verse written by famous poets, some members of the group started to write their own verse!

In the mid-seventies, after many merry sessions and when many of the original members had left Graffham, we decided to bring the meetings to a close.

Agatha Bowley

Dawn over Company and Solitude

by Agatha Bowley (1966)

I like
The company of stars that prick the midnight blue,
The company of trees on Autumn days,
The huddled sheep on downland ways,
The cattle crunching as they graze,
The Winter sunset and the cry of jays -
All such companionship I would with joy renew.

Down at the Rec

Graffham's Recreation Ground,
Pavilion and Sports Clubs



All about the Rec

by Simon Mitchell, Chairman of the Recreation Ground Committee

Governance

The recreation ground is owned by Fields in Trust (custodial trustee), leased to Graffham Parish Council (management trustee) and managed by committee (managing body). It is protected as a playing field in perpetuity.

A playing field for over one hundred years, on 3rd June 1948, the Honourable Mrs Catherine Baird Macdonald-Buchanan, granted unto the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust) the 6.91 acres of land to hold in trust for ever as a public playing field and recreation ground. Two years later the National Playing Fields Association granted a ninety-nine year lease to Graffham Parish Council to maintain the recreation ground and its pavilion under the management of a committee, of which I am the current chairman.

Under the terms of the lease, the recreation ground committee is appointed by the parish council from its own members, with the addition of not less than three other people. These

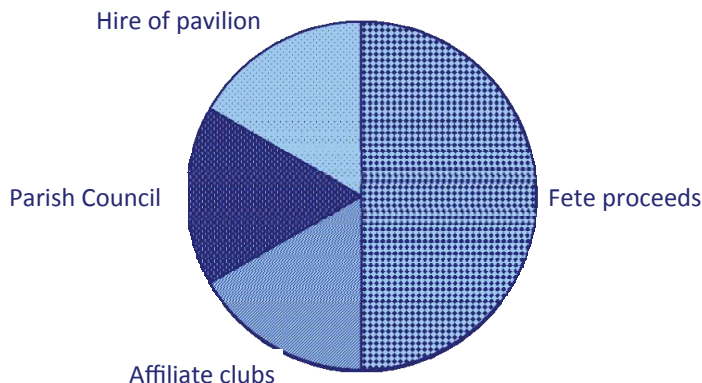
additional people must not be members of the council, and are nominated by the clubs which use the land for organised sport. Additional members are currently nominated by the tennis, cricket, bowls and stoolball clubs.

On the 15th January 1965 the Playing Field Graffham was registered with the Charity Commissioners for England. Its charity number is 305375.

In February 2012 the Playing Field Graffham was awarded Queen Elizabeth II Field Status, confirming in perpetuity its purpose: to be maintained as a recreation ground for the parishioners of Graffham and for the children at school in Graffham.

Funding

Volunteer effort and support from grant awarding bodies has, over the years, kept the cost of maintaining the playing field, playground and pavilion well below its full cost, currently around £15,000 per annum. The individual sports clubs, through subscription and fund-raising events,



maintain their own facilities: the tennis club its courts; the cricket club its square; the football club its posts and nets; the bowls club their pavilion, hedge and lawn; the stoolball club its equipment. All else falls to the recreation ground committee to maintain.

Since 2010 around £9,000 per annum has been raised through a mechanism which seeks half from all those who use the recreation ground and half from the fête, held each August Bank Holiday Monday. The parish council contributes, from precept funding, on behalf all who use the ground as a general amenity.

Pavilion

A pavilion has stood on the ground for at least 80 years, originally smaller and somewhat more basic, it has iterated every twenty-odd years into its current form. The last three renovations were in 1969, 1992, and 2013. Today the pavilion has integrated changing rooms and showers;

accessible lavatory and shower room; insulation in the floor, roof, all internal and external walls; solar panels on the roof; a stainless steel kitchen with range cooker, American fridge-freezer, and commercial dishwasher; and a separate bottle bar to refresh players after their sport.

The 2013 refurbishment cost £160,000 and was funded equally from within the village and by external grant giving bodies, principally £50,000 Lottery Funding from Sport England.

The reopening ceremony

The pavilion reopening ceremony, held on 26th July 2014, was a celebration of sport at Graffham. It was attended by over one hundred people who had each contributed: by donation to the appeal; as representatives of grant-giving bodies; villagers who had welded sledge hammers to gut the building in December 2012; and the skilled craftsmen who rebuilt and extended the facility.

Reopening the Pavilion, 2014



A video played on a large screen: children enjoying each of the five organised sports played on the ground: tennis, cricket, football, bowls and stoolball. In his speech, the committee chairman thanked the Macdonald-Buchanan family for their generosity, without which the playing field would not have come into existence, and which continues to the present day.

For many years until his death in 1999, Dick Challen was Chairman of the Recreation Ground Committee. Without doubt the person most associated with Graffham Recreation Ground, Dick was by no means the only Challen. A cherished photograph hangs on the pavilion wall. Look closely and you will see a football team fielded entirely by two local families: Tupper and Challen. Look to the right and you will see many of the same faces, certainly Dick's, in cricket whites, and to the left, perhaps not Dick, but his sister-in-law, June Challen in her stoolball kit. June Challen, guest of honour, cut the ribbon to reopen the pavilion.



Top: Dick Challen presents a cup; Above: June Challen at the re-opening ceremony

Schoolboy misdemeanours

I moved to Graffham in 2001, but I do remember meeting Dick a few years before. One warm, languid evening in July 1982 a very good school friend persuaded me to walk to the recreation ground from Seaford College, incognito, to enjoy a couple of pints of beer at the pavilion bar.

Explaining the licencing law and that on no account must he sell alcohol to pupils from the college, the barman, Dick, insisted that we sign in as his guest. We chatted awhile before returning to college.

The next evening I was summoned to the house master's study. "Had I been out-of-bounds the

day before?" I had, I admitted, to Duncton. "No, not to St Michaels, but to a cottage that sold afternoon tea in its garden."

After admitting to a second excursion north, I remembered our visit to Graffham and admitted to this misdemeanour too. Perhaps overwhelmed by the number of offences to be taken into account, I escaped punishment free, and with a warm memory of the man in whose huge footsteps I would, twenty-five years later, attempt to tread.

Simon Mitchell, 2015
Chairman, Recreation Ground Committee



Recreation Ground Chairman, Simon Mitchell receives the big cheque. 2012

The Big Cheque

from the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, July 2012

GRAFFHAM has secured Olympic legacy funding from Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund.

The village will receive £50,000 of National Lottery funding towards the £107,000 cost of refurbishing the pavilion on its recreation ground; a ground that has witnessed villagers and their children play football, tennis, cricket, bowls and stoolball for over 100 years.

The project will improve access for the disabled; re-site lavatories enabling access from outside when the main part of pavilion is closed; refit the showers, changing rooms and kitchen; and fit new windows, doors and insulation.

Graffham Recreation Ground Chairman, Simon Mitchell, said: "We are delighted to have secured this investment, which means we can now provide a pavilion fit for all.

This new facility is integral to our strategy of providing more coaching opportunities for children, and supporting a wider array of sports for men and women at Graffham."

The Inspired Facilities Fund is part of the £135 million Places People Play legacy programme that is bringing the magic of a home Olympic and Paralympic Games into communities across the country.

Every sports facility that receives funding will carry the London 2012 Inspire mark – celebrating the link to the Games.

Sport England's chair, Richard Lewis, said: "This National Lottery investment will create a lasting sporting legacy for Graffham. This fund has really hit the mark with sports clubs in the South East. It shows we're offering the legacy that people want for their local community."

Royal Seal of Approval

In 1997 the Graffham Recreation Ground received one of the Prince Philip Playing Fields Awards which were presented for “exemplary practice in local recreation provision”. The award was presented by the National Playing Fields Association to commemorate Prince Philip’s 50th anniversary as president.

Dick Challen, Graham Kingsmill and I went to Buckingham Palace to get this and it was presented by the Duke of Edinburgh. Dick was the Chairman and I was the Treasurer of the Recreation Ground Committee at that time. Graham wasn’t on the committee but he had been Captain of the Bowling Club for years.

There were only four trophies in total. One of the others was for Bridgnorth, another for somewhere in East Anglia.

The recreation ground was inspected by the Playing Fields Association at some time – it included the tennis courts and the bowling green. We didn’t enter it ourselves; the whole thing was under the auspices of the Playing Fields Association. They obviously went round to all the places that they were interested in and picked us out.

We had to leave quite early in the morning. We went up to Graham’s son or daughter’s, left the car there and got on the train. Graham led the way. We went up to London and then we got on the underground. We walked across Green Park to Buckingham Palace.

We didn’t stop there very long. It took place in what’s called the Chinese Ballroom with a lot of ornate furniture. One of the equerries said “I don’t know what sort of mood he’s going to be in. Some days he’s good and some days he’s bad. You’ll just have to take him as you find him.” Prince Philip was ushered in and walked around then ushered out again. He didn’t ask us many questions but he wanted to know where Graffham was. We told him we were very near to where he used to play polo. “Really” he said, “Oh I know now”. He had thought it was Grafham Water and hadn’t realised it was near Cowdray.

We went from there back to the Playing Fields Association headquarters. We had thought they would give us something to eat but they didn’t, so on the way home we had a meal in the pub in Northchapel. It wasn’t a day out really but it was quite an experience and one which I’ll never have again.

Den Petter, 2013



*L-R: Graham Kingsmill,
Den Petter, Dick Challen and HRH
Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh*

Talking about the Fête

Daphne: I've always enjoyed the fête. I think it used to be more rural and unsophisticated. The fact that people came back so often was significant. It was always nice to catch up with former residents and it was a date you kept.

Janet: The fête has always been a good fun day with people coming from all over the place. We used to have a "spin-la" with prizes on each number - when the arrow stopped the person with that number won the prize. We also used to have races and fancy dress for the children. There was a live pig which Jim Godman-Dorington used to give. The winner would take the pig if they wanted it, but if not he'd take it back and give them the value of the pig.

There were also a tug-of-war, smash-the-crockery, a coconut shy and the dog show, all of which we still have today.

Daphne: The teas at the fête have always been very good.

Janet: Years ago, on the morning of the fête a band of women headed by Brenda Petter would go up to the Rec to make all the sandwiches and get all the teas ready. We also made teas for the men who were around putting up the stalls and the bunting.

Daphne Taylor and Janet Wakeford, 2015

Below: The Fête, 1968 - with Jim Godman-Dorington





46 Fêtes and counting?

I think I've only missed one fête in 47 years.

The early fêtes were fantastic – I think there was more to do, especially for children. For example the Butcher family had their own “corner”. At Butchers’ corner there were all sorts of small competitions for children; everyone got a sweet or a penny lolly even if they didn’t win. The Broadbridge family used to do their own corner as well. That had horsey competitions such as “guess the weight of a bale of hay” and “where would this item go on a horse”. There were all sort of little things that children could do which weren’t too difficult and even if you popped in just to say hello to them they’d give you a sweet or a free something.

For years I did the barbecue at the Fête because I ran the Graffham Youth Club and the barbecue was the Youth Club’s job. After I gave up the Youth Club I then got on to the Tannoy which I’ve done for about ten or twelve years.

I think there’s definitely less at the fête now because of the problem of getting people to help. It always seems to be same old, same old ... People won’t put their names forward. One thing that probably upsets them is that you are never asked. It is just assumed that you will come back!

Bob Crosdil, 2015



Clockwise from top left: Bob’s daughter Emily on the Tannoy, 2008; Coconut Shy; Tea Team; and “Best in Show”, 2014

The Colonel’s Sand Tray

When I first came to Graffham the Fête was run by the British Legion. Colonel Loring was always in charge. He always did the “sand tray” with markers. There was a buried treasure and the person who put their marker nearest won the prize, probably £5.

June Challen, 2015

“Round the Rec”

My family did pony rides at the fête for several years. After we gave up the riding school we didn't have suitable ponies so we switched to “Toss the Bale”. The “Toss The Bale” concept depended on the customers challenging my father. When he got older and was struggling to beat them, we changed to the “frog race” - involving wooden templates in a long string which made the frogs walk down a line.



“Toss the Bale” with Peter Broadbridge

There used to be a “Round the Rec” race at the fête. The 16 and unders went round twice and the over 16s went round four times. Everyone had a bash. It was a big thing and everything stopped while it was on. When the warning sounded everyone stopped and cheered.

The Wisemans used to run children's races which were so popular – we should have those again.

Jo Morgan, 2015

Spacehopper Races, 2009



Social life at the Sports Club

1950s

We used to have really good Bingo evenings in the pavilion. It was packed. Harry Tupper used to run it. There were all sorts of prizes including things like joints of meat.

The bar was open and there used to be a rota of people to run it voluntarily, usually two people. It ran very smoothly.

The pavilion was much more of a social club then. On New Year's Eve there were parties, and Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights were good nights to go. If the Stoolball Team won a cup we'd bring it back and celebrate.

You had to be a member. I think there were nearly 200 members, at one point. Some were from outside the village. To become a member you had to apply and then the committee had to decide whether they would accept you as a member, although not many were turned down.

Only club members could use the bar. All the individual clubs (Football, Bowls, Tennis, Stoolball) were members, so you could either be a member of one of those, or an independent member of the Sports Club.

Graffham has changed so much since I came to live here in 1957. When I first came after a while I knew nearly everybody that lived here but now I don't. Young people today learn to drive and then the world's their oyster. When my children were young I played stoolball, my daughter Lynda played stoolball and my husband Gordon used to umpire so it was a family thing. Gordon played cricket too, and in winter he played football. At one point Gordon ran a boys football team, so my son Mark played for a while. Now there are so many more things for young people to do.

Janet Wakeford, 2015

1970s

I used to do quite a bit at the Sports Ground because I was a member of the Bowls Club. I used to be a keyholder to the Bar. In the 70s each club had their own keyholder who opened the bar up. At that time there was bowls, tennis, stoolball, football and cricket. The playground just had a slide and some swings until they got too rough to keep repairing. Dick Challen was the chairman. The field was looked after by the Stud. They cut the grass and did any repairs that were needed. The Sports Club was always busy then. The bar was open every night of the week at one point, then it was cut down to Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Michael Morton, 2013

The playground - before "Health & Safety"

We used to have a slide and see-saw and swings. There was no fence round the side. The slide was very high—as we got older and they brought in all these rules, we wondered how our children had survived!

June Challen, 2015

Graffham FC in Black and White

by Keith Tupper

Graffham FC was as far as is known formed in the early 1900s. The club's colours are black and white due to the fact the pitch was given by Macdonald Buchanan, who owned Black & White Whisky.

Lord Scott who enjoyed his days with Graffham took soccer to Burma in the 1920s.

I can first remember Graffham Football Club in the 1950s, in fact I was the mascot when they won the Midhurst Cup in 1951. In the middle fifties I can remember Mr Eaststoat who was Chairman, a man I later found out played for Great Britain football team in the 1908 Olympics.

Another thing that sticks in my mind was the club were hard up for money to buy kit. They put on a GANG SHOW which filled the Empire Hall. The "star turn" was a young blond haired lad singing *A Four Legged Friend*, a Roy Rogers hit at the time. Dick Challen ran the show telling a few blue jokes, before noticing the vicar in the front row.

Dick Challen was "Mr Graffham Football" to all the boys, with brother John they played well into their 50s. Graffham were mentioned in the Pompey Football Mail as they once fielded 11 Challens in a game.

I started playing in 1965; we then had a Reserve side who played in Heyshott's old blue shirts.

In the late 60s and early 70s another good side emerged, winning the Midhurst INV Cup Final 4-2. This side included some younger Challens and Tupper, plus the Preston brothers whose adopted mother was a Challen. Steve Preston and brother Bill were both asked to play for Littlehampton County but Graffham was in their blood.



Photos: Three generations of Graffham Footballers - the hairstyles changed but the black and white strip remained

A little later Eddie Challen moved down from Scotland and has been with the club ever since.

The present team has risen from DIV 5 to DIV 2 in three seasons.

The present manager is Gary Harwood who has been at the club fifteen years. The team is captained by Graham Preston, son of Steve. He has been with the club for seventeen seasons. The oldest member still playing is Dave Wilmott who is forty and has been at the club since he was fifteen years old.

Keith Tupper 2012

Sadly since Keith wrote this article, Graffham FC has had to close due to lack of funds



Keith and Yvonne Tupper, 2012

Hillbillies

We started the Hillbillies after being approached by Don Allen to help on the Recreation Ground Committee. We played a number of times over the next year or so, mostly against Chichester Vets.

We even got our own strip thanks to Roy Barden's employers!

Hillbillies 2001



It was great fun and thanks to the odd kiwi student import, we had a few good fixtures but it ran its course due to age and crumbling bones!

This picture was taken on Boxing Day 2001 at Seaford against a Chichester Invitation XV, great fun, freezing cold and back to the Foresters to warm up.

The village players that I recognise are:

John Green, John Head, Russell Walker, Roy Barden, Mark Stafford, Andy Jones, Mikey Norris, Rupert Goodhew (Capt), Phil Jones, Peter Jennings, Andrew Wilson Smith.

This picture brings back fond memories of time on the rugby pitch and in the pub!

Rupert Goodhew, 2015

The Ancient Sussex Sport of Stoolball

Stoolball is a sport that dates back to at least the 15th century, originating in Sussex. It may be an ancestor of cricket (a game it resembles), baseball, and rounders, in fact Stoolball is sometimes called "Cricket in the air". Traditionally it was played by milkmaids who used their milking stools as a "wicket". (*Wikipedia*)

When I came to Graffham from Heyshott, I was thirteen years old. I was introduced to stoolball. There was a very strong ladies' team who played against all the villages in the locality, even as far as Felpham and Bosham. We travelled by Williams bus as there weren't so many private cars. I had never played before but took to it straight away. We had to wait until the team names were put up on the notice board at the "old" shop – Pescods - to see if we were picked to play or were on the reserve list. I was completely addicted to it, missed it very much when I went away to do my Barnardo's Nursery Training, but took it up again when I got married

and played until I was 65 years old. The team moved into a West Sussex League and did very well. Gradually as life in the village changed so did membership of local females and the Stoolball Club disbanded in 2008/9.

Some interest has been shown by a few enthusiasts as we seem to have more girls appearing rather than a population of mainly boys. I'm ever hopeful that the Stoolball Team will emerge again.

June Challen, 2015

Graffham Stoolball Team, 1980s





Bowls Club, 2013

The Graffham Bowls Club

by Den Petter

The Bowls Club was originally started in 1926. I started playing when Stuart Le Fevre was in the village. Stuart introduced me to the Bowls Club and then he persuaded me to be secretary and I've still got the job. I took over from Joan Challen and I've been doing it since 1995. I had nothing to do with bowls up until that time when I joined the Graffham club. Brenda wasn't interested at first because at that time there was still a good stoolball team. I introduced her to the game and now she beats me!

The Pavilion

The original bowls pavilion was an old tin chapel which was given to the Bowls Club and moved there for the sum of £5. When they first started they had played on a gentleman's lawn at Woodside (Ricardos).

The current pavilion was put up in 2002. The tin pavilion was there up until that time. It cost us £25,000 to put up. We got grants, raised some money ourselves, and there were various donations from people round the village. They should be nameless really, but Mrs Loring gave a lot of money as both she and her husband played, and she was the president for quite some time. How much she gave we never knew – where the money came from was never made public and I think that was probably right.

We asked Roger Lucking to assess the original building and he said the framework was rotten and there was woodworm in it. There was no point giving a quote to repair it, so the decision was made that we should get a new one. This was mostly down to Graham Kingsmill, who did all the work to get grants from the Council, but Don

Allen was also involved as he was a member of the Recreation Ground Committee and in the Bowls Club. The building is by Ascot of Fernhurst. They design and build stables mainly but they designed that for us.

The new pavilion was opened by Janet Duncton, the district councillor who had helped us get the grants.

Disconnected!

In the original pavilion, all we had for a light was a gas mantle in the middle of the room. We never had electricity over there. It was put in when the new pavilion was built but we've just had to renew it. The cable that was put in there only eleven years ago doesn't comply with regulations so when they rewired the Sports Club pavilion in 2013, the electricians wouldn't reconnect the bowls pavilion. We had to have the whole cable renewed. Once you've got electricity you can't do without it!

The Green

The green was completely dug up and replaced in 2007. It had got bad, really dry and the grass was dead.

One of the reasons we had all this drying out was because roots from the trees were like wire netting underneath the surface. We didn't know they were there until we started digging. We dug a trench lined with a special membrane to stop the roots coming through. We had also had a lot of trouble with drainage so we put drains across the bottom end. The grass had virtually gone.

We had a disaster because we seeded it all and then we had a terrific thunderstorm which washed all the seed off into the ditches. We had to sweep it up with a dustpan and brush and seed it again. We opened it in April 2008.

Two Presidents

I learned a lot from Lillie Puttick when I first started playing bowls. She was very strict about the game. If you get close wood you have a measurer and she always said "measurers were made to be used; don't keep walking round, get the measurer out and use it". She was very, very good. She's still the president. Mrs Loring was president when I first came to the club but Lil's been president ever since she gave up and Graham's been captain ever since I've been playing.

Below: Replacing the Green, 2007



The Shelter

The shelter at the other end of the green was put up by Ruby Allen in memory of Don. There used to be a little thatched roof shelter there which blew down in the 1987 storm. Ruby still brings people who knew Don up there now. Don was chairman of the Bowls Club and the Recreation Ground for a while but he went to Petworth to play League Bowls.

Friendlies

The fixtures are nearly set in stone because you can't alter them because the other clubs can't alter theirs – so next year's fixtures are already made. There might be a few alterations but the same team will play at the same time each year. This year I think we've probably won three or four matches more than we've lost which is quite good for us. We have a tea after every match – our ladies take it in turns to make the tea.

Our fixtures are all friendlies, not League Bowls. Friendly games are what keeps our club going. It's sad that so many clubs are playing League. They're not only crippling themselves but they're going to cripple the smaller clubs in the process. A lot of clubs have a smaller membership now and it's overloading them with fixtures. We wouldn't be able to play League bowls as we haven't enough players. Our membership would have to double to even think about playing League bowls so we can't do it.

There's no difference in the game - it's a bit more competitive, but then we're competitive – we set off to win every game we play!

The Future

The club is smaller now because a lot of members have died or gone away. A lot of the new ones in the village are not really interested. I put the Opening Day in the parish magazine but we don't get anybody looking over the gate to try it. When I first started the team came from the village or from people who had been associated with the village like John Holland who had the shop and Percy Elliot who had been in the village. We've got people from the other side of Petworth and people from Cocking now, and we couldn't survive without people from outside the village.

Den Petter, 2013

Bowls at Graffham, 2013



Cricket at Graffham (1970 – 2015)

A personal memory by Club President, Sam Ward

I first knew of Graffham as a visiting player with West Sussex Wanderers in my first season (1970). That year WSW played the village twice winning easily both times. For the next 15 years WSW were invariably winners, although, as the wicket was prone to severe damp patches after rain, the May match was often cancelled. During this time the Challens supplied about half the team and other regulars included Mick Barrett, Peter Baigent and Mark Dally. Mick's son Piers is a current member of the side and Mark still turns out - maybe a shade more creakily!

Having been retired by WSW in 1985, I bumped into Peter Baigent one spring day in Chichester. On learning that Graffham were struggling for a team, I got in touch with Graffham's captain, Cliff Cobbold, offering to play if ever the club were unable to raise an eleven. This offer was taken up immediately and I continued to play regularly until 2012 - as player, vice-captain, then captain and chairman and now president - the last resting place for all old players. My final role since 2012 is to captain once a year in the Memorial match between Graffham and WSW.

So having known the recreation ground for 45 years I should be able to say something about the cricket, the characters, who played during that time and the opposition teams.

In 1987, my first season, Graffham possessed batsmen, who could score quickly, especially Mark Dally and Cliff but also Mick Barrett. As Cliff pointed out, my role was to

make a "brick wall" at the other end. This sometimes worked well, but was often disastrous. In some matches all I could do was to watch in dismay and marvel at the variety of ways our batsmen found of getting out! The lowest score I can remember was 16 and being left stranded on 6 not out, having gone in at number 3. Mark Dally can go back earlier, as well as lower than me, remembering one match where Graffham laboured to reach 8! Therefore, when facing a strong team, a frequent experience earlier on, and if winning the toss Graffham would automatically put the opposition in. This would make it last longer - they would bat until tea and Graffham, on a good day, would last 45 minutes or even an hour before capitulating.

However, during the last couple of years of Cliff Cobbold's captaincy Graffham attracted a number of young players, disaffected from Petworth cricket club and these, together with Piers, Martyn Payne and Mark enabled Graffham to become more successful. I was lucky enough to become

Cricket 1960's



captain in 1994, as Cliff had to give up on health grounds, and therefore enjoyed the reflected glory from the more powerful team that Graffham was now able to field.

One of these players, Matt Roberts, was keen to widen Graffham's horizons. He initiated the cricket tour, and, over five years we went to Swansea (twice), Western-Super-Mare, Banbury and Torquay. Through Matt, Graffham played in an evening cricket league based at the Grange, Midhurst one winter; also competing in the Fernhurst Challenge Cup-an evening knock-out tournament. Graffham also played at Ford Open Prison three times. Difficult to judge how good their crime records were, but they could certainly field a strong team, although we did once win there. The first time we played there, I was somewhat daunted to learn that the opposing skipper was a convicted murderer, gentle though his manner and only felt great relief when the prisoners won the game handsomely!

When I first played, Graffham used to entertain a number of visiting London sides -Tankards, Packer's Rejects, Andrew Hawkins XI. Later on, my son-in-law raised a team - The King's Men, adding to these kind of fixtures.

More locally, and over many years we pitted our skills and wits against other village sides both near and farther away - Heyshott, Kirdford, Aldingbourne, Loxwood, Lodsworth, Tillington, Easebourne, Midhurst, Petworth, Amberley, Wisborough Green, Bosham, Climping. Graffham also had a couple of fixtures with Sussex Maniacs, a pick up side selected by Bash Medhurst, father to two of our players. Members of this



Cricket Teams from Top - 1996, 2000, 2005



team had been at their best in the 1980s but still good enough to give Graffham close run games.

One sad event happened in 1995. Nick Hedger who had started playing in 1990, was killed in a car crash at Halfway Bridge. For a number of years the Hedger family instituted a memorial game for their son and also supplied financial support to the club. Nick's younger brother Johnny began playing regularly. Trevor and Scott Lillywhite, Nick's stepfather and step brother also turned out from time to time.

Further, in one game, at about this time as well as the opposition we had to contend with an enormous swarm of bees while fielding-not everyone made it to the pavilion unscathed!

Looking at the 2015 fixtures I see that Graffham still plays Lodsworth. These games as I remember could get out of hand, both on and off the pitch. There were on occasion, fights in the carpark after the game, usually between the Lodsworth players themselves, but also verbal rows and threats of violence during the game. On one occasion when one of the player's fathers was umpire he gave his son out lbw (leg before wicket). This was unheard of, but despite appealing to filial and family loyalty, father would not be moved and was almost gleeful; the air got bluer and bluer as the son reluctantly returned to the pavilion amid much fist-waving and threats!

After the year 2000, Graffham's most successful year, the club struggled to raise any team, let alone a strong one. Matters did improve in 2003



Leon Fourie, Captain, 2015

Cricket at Graffham, 2010



season, when Quinn Murray joined the club, along with Simon Mitchell and Peter O'Sullivan. Also, from 2005, having cultivated several South Africans and Zimbabweans in the Petworth pubs, aided by Johnny Hedger, they also began to play, substantially strengthening the team. The current captain, Leon Fourie, was one of the South Africans and he has now settled here.

The cub, as it always has, continues to play in a happy family spirit - village cricket at its best.

Sam Ward, 2015

Graffham Tennis Club 1961-2015

by Mike Dimmer and Chris Major

A golden beginning

In 1961, Sir Harry and Lady Ricardo presented a tennis court to the village to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. The court was constructed at the southern end of the recreation ground together with a small pavilion.

The Ricardo court was completed in 1962, and the Graffham Tennis Club was established. It quickly became a popular sporting and social organisation. There are reports of over 100 spectators turning up to watch the finals of the various tournament events, which began in 1963 and continued until 1967. The records of the trophy winners at that time reveal names which may be familiar to some of our residents. We still compete for the same five trophies today, with five additional ones as our tournament has grown.

Vandalism was a recurring problem in the 1960s. Committee members were required to undertake a series of repairs to the nets, the wire surrounds, and to the windows of the small tennis pavilion. The pavilion was eventually demolished in 1984.

Refurbishment

No provision was made in those early years for the refurbishment of the court, which inevitably deteriorated and eventually became unplayable. Membership dwindled in 1971, and a meeting was held to discuss the future of the Tennis Club, specifically the resurfacing of the tennis court.

The court was resurfaced in 1972 by Doug Tupper and friends, and in 1981, by a team led by David Ashby. The work was funded by many social events, including a masked ball held in the Empire Hall, which was attended by over 120 people.

Lady Ricardo presents a cup to early tournament winners, Angela Hall and Bill Wood





Tennis 1960s style



Clockwise from Top Left: Brian Challen and Stan Standing Mark Dally, Stan Standing and John Holland Jo Standing and June Challen winners of the Ladies' Doubles 1965 Angela Hall, Eileen Tupper (née Challen) . Photos courtesy of June Challen

Trophy Winners 1963-1967					
	Ladies' Singles	Men's Singles	Ladies' Doubles	Men's Doubles	Mixed Doubles
1963	Jo Standing	Ian Callan	-	-	-
1964	Angela Hall	Hugh Thomas	Peggy Sutherland / Angela Hall	Hugh Thomas / Harry Tupper	Bill Wood / Angela Hall
1965	Jo Standing	Stan Standing	June Challen / Jo Standing	Cecil Challen / Dick Challen	Peter Challen / Jo Standing
1966	Eileen Tupper	John Challen	Eileen Tupper / Angela Hall	Dick Challen / John Challen	Eileen Tupper / Dick Challen
1967	Angela Hall	John Challen	Angela Hall / Hilda Holland	Bill Wood / George Moss	George Moss / June Challen

Sunday Morning Coaching

In 1986, Peter Parish, who had been Chairman of the Tennis Club during the 1970s and 80s stepped down, although he stayed on as President for several years afterwards. Chris Major had moved into the village in 1985, with his wife Hilary and their young family. Chris was elected Chairman in 1986, a position he was to hold for 25 years. With three enthusiastic young boys, Chris introduced Sunday morning coaching sessions, which were attended by ten to twelve children.

Graffham Tennis Club Revival

Mike Dimmer, a keen tennis player, came to Graffham in 1992 with his wife, Brenda. In 1993 he came along to the Tennis Club AGM, and met club Chairman, Chris Major, Treasurer,

Pat Watson, and his wife Val who was the Secretary. This meeting saw the revival of the Graffham Tennis Club.

The tennis court was again in need of repair. This resurfacing was paid for by increased subscriptions, interest free loans from members and fund raising events such as cheese and wine parties hosted by David and Lorraine Shiner.

Funds were raised, loans from the members were solicited, and the professional resurfacing took place which revitalised the Graffham Tennis Club.

By the spring of 1995 the court was ready for play and Mike reintroduced the annual tournament. Mike also started writing his regular tennis reports for the *Graffham Parish News* which continue to the present day.



*Men's Doubles, 1999
Anthony Dimmer, Mike Dimmer,
William Godman-Dorington and
Andrew Wilson-Smith*



*John Sutton, Anna and Emily Dally, and
Chris Major, 2002*

The first prize-giving evening and dinner following the revival of the tournament was held in the White Horse and sixteen people came. (In recent years Empire Hall attendances have reached eighty plus). Dick Challen retrieved the five trophies from his loft displaying the 60s winners, and they are still being used two decades later.

The tournament gradually grew and by 1999 around forty players were taking part.

The second court was laid in 2001, thanks to another combined funding effort by the members. It first came into use in 2002.

The Boys' Singles was introduced in 2003 (the Sutton Cup) and the Girls' Singles followed in 2007.

Junior Tournament 2003 - 2014		
	Boys	Girls
2003	Angus Pettifer	
2004	Toby Crow	
2005	Tom Dally	
2006	Hamish Godman Dorington	
2007	Tom Dally	Olivia Lamming
2008	Archie Challen	Polly Lamming
2009	Charlie Braham	Polly Lamming
2010	Finn Cowcher	Sara Carr
2011	Guy Brown	Molly Clay
2012	A Finn Cowcher B Olly Sanders	Ailsa Green
2013	Olly Sanders	Ailsa Green
2014	George Pettifer	Nicole Sanders

Three innovations define the future of the club

In the first decade of this century, three innovations were introduced to the club: a new tennis coaching programme; Graffham Tennis Week; and joining the East Hants League.

These three developments have provided a focus for the future, coaching and motivating both

young and older members of our club.

Coaching with Stuart Scott

Denise Clay started the coaching at Graffham after a chance meeting with Stuart Scott at Easebourne Primary School.



Stuart Scott's Teen Academy, 2011

Stuart Scott was a very experienced hands-on coach. His many coaching positions included Director of Tennis at Queens Club, and his experience included work with Tim Henman. Stuart coached at Graffham for nine years, and members have fond memories of his achievements with a great number of young people. The club welcomed his coaching successor Richard Hopp in the spring of 2015.

The first coaching session in 2006 attracted six children including the Clay twins. We now have 125 juniors signed up, with around 112 having coaching.



Ladies League 2011. L-R: Rebecca Barrie, Olivia Lamming, Dinah Lamming, Kate Hogan

Tennis Week - an inspiration

Tennis Week, the brainchild of Chris Major, was introduced in 2007. Since then it has continued to expand. Its current blend of coaching, league and friendly matches with other villages, makeshift grass courts, novelty events such as Parent and Child and Over 90s Mixed Doubles, and various other events for our young people including rounders and cricket, has made it one of the most popular events in the Graffham calendar.

Joining the East Hants League

It was Dinah Lamming's idea in 2009 that we should field a ladies' team in the East Hants league, and we had little difficulty in forming a squad. League matches became popular, and in 2011 we introduced a Ladies B team, then in 2013 a Mixed Doubles team.

The Future of the club - junior members at Tennis Week, 2015





Rainbow at the Courts 2013 © Graffham Tennis Club

Technology and change

In 2010 Kathie Gyles introduced the Graffham Tennis Club website and Mike Dimmer purchased a computer to type his own tennis reports.

John Sutton retired as Treasurer after twelve years having efficiently controlled the club's finances through a busy decade, in which all the loans for the second court were repaid to the members.

In 2011 when Chris Major stepped down as Chairman after 25 years of serving Graffham tennis, Beetle Clay was elected Chairman and Chris stayed on as President.

Self-sufficiency at last

By 2011 the increased membership and subscription levels, driven primarily by high quality coaching for juniors, was providing the club with sufficient financial resources to undertake the refurbishment of the courts without donations or loans from members. Helped by a grant from Chichester District Council they did this without recourse to patronage or loans from members.



Beetle and Denise Clay, 2015

John and Rosemary Sutton, 2015



Anniversary

The 50th Anniversary of the club was formally celebrated on 11th October, 2014 at Seaford College, with a black-tie dinner and dance, at the invitation of the Headmaster John Green.

As the 100 or so guests filtered into the dining area, their attention was drawn to an inspirational display of the club tournament winners from 1995 to 2014, which was compiled by Chairman, Beetle Clay.

50 Years On

Today, the Graffham Tennis Club continues to thrive, and is a tribute to all those committee members who have given their time, energy and money over the years.

Since 1995 when the court was professionally resurfaced and the tennis tournament was re-established the club has gone from strength to strength. Entries in the tournament have gone up from around forty in 2000 to 120 this year, with 140 matches. The club now has over 150 adult members and 125 junior members.

The minutes of the club from 1963 up to the present day record those who have served as officers, and have given willingly of their time, enabling Graffham Tennis Club to survive difficult years and to flourish in more rewarding times.

The Ricardo legacy was indeed a golden one.

Mike Dimmer and Chris Major, 2015



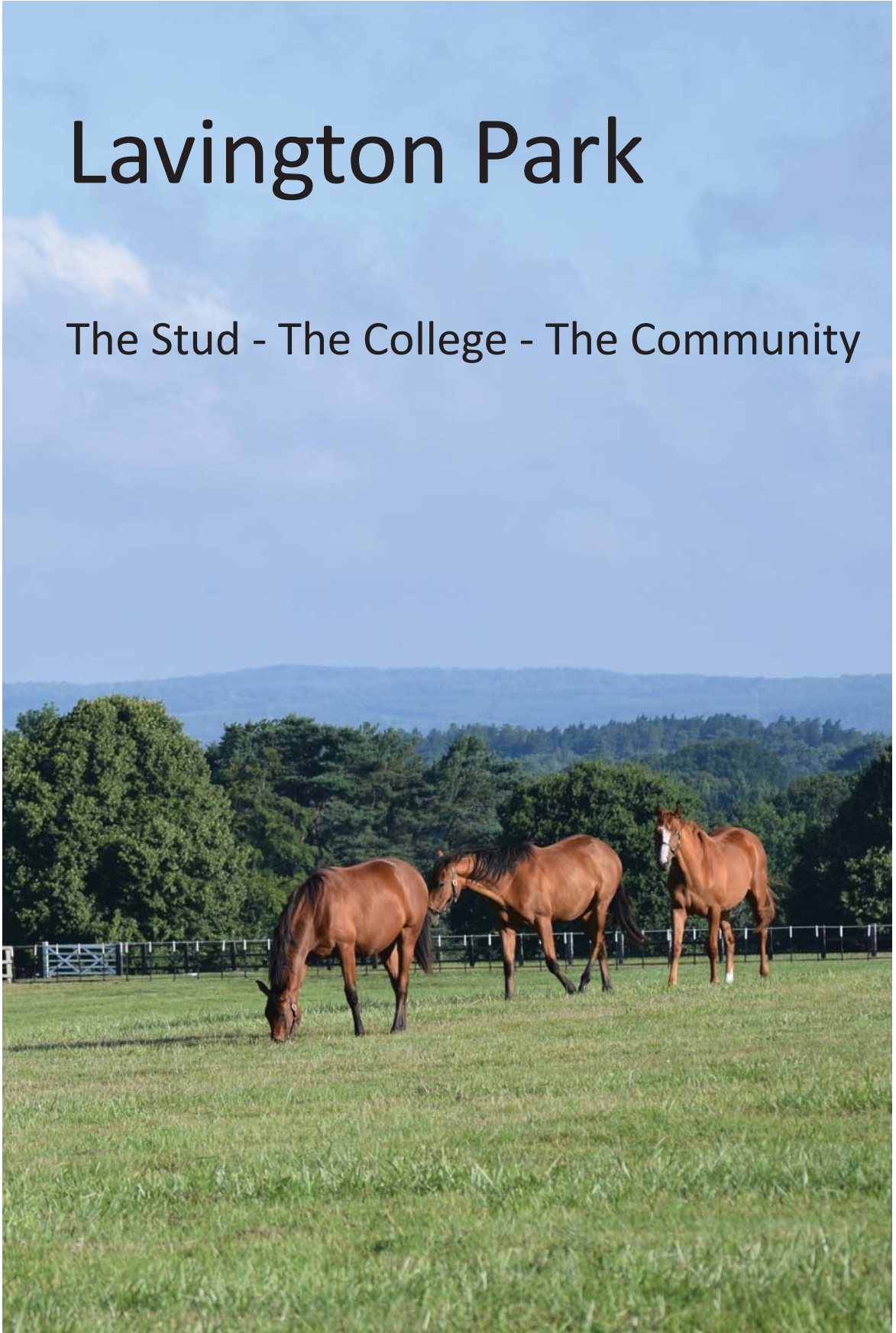
Mike Dimmer and Chris Major at the 50th Anniversary Dinner , 2014

With grateful thanks to Committee Members past and present	
1963-1980s	Beetle Clay
David Ashby	Denise Clay
Ian Callan	Andy Craig
Dick Challen	Brett Creed
Dorothy Flaxman	Annie Dennig
Mary Henderson	Mike Dimmer
- Hirst	Ellen Goemans
John Holland	Sian Green
- Johnson	Richard Gyles
Peter Parish	Pru Hart
Bill Robinson	John Head
- Spencer	Dinah Lamming
Peggy Sutherland	Chris Major
Doug Tupper	Lynne Marriner
Bill Wood	David Sanders
	Philippa Sanders
1995-2015	John Sutton
Emma Amin	Rosemary Sutton
Tracey Carr	Pat Watson
Wendy Challen	Val Watson

Trophy Winners 1995 - 2014					
	Mens Singles	Ladies Singles	Mens Doubles	Ladies Doubles	Mixed Doubles
1995	Mike Dimmer	Clara Jollands	Anthony Dimmer / Mike Dimmer	Clara Jollands / Pip Kershaw	Andrew Wilson Smith / Pip Kershaw
1996	Anthony Dimmer	Melanie Postma	Anthony Dimmer / Mike Dimmer		Ben & Hilary Major
1997	Ben Major	Val Watson	William Godman Dorington / David Blunt	Clara Jollands / Pip Kershaw	William & Amanda Godman Dorington
1998	William Godman Dorington	Sarah Villiers	Anthony Dimmer / Mike Dimmer	Sarah Villiers / Julie Boadle	Andrew Wilson Smith / Pip Kershaw
1999	Anthony Dimmer	Sarah Villiers	Anthony Dimmer / Mike Dimmer	Sarah Villiers / Julie Boadle	Andrew Wilson Smith / Pip Kershaw
2000	Anthony Dimmer	Karen Bennett	Ben Major / Andrew Wilson Smith	Henrietta Bell / Amanda Godman Dorington	Chris Major / Dorothea Haverhals
2001	Trevor Challen	Karen Bennett	William Godman Dorington / David Blunt	Anna & Emily Dally	Trevor & Lindsay Challen
2002	Ben Major	Anna Dally	Ben & Sam Major	Anna & Emily Dally	Chris Major / Dorothea Haverhals
2003	Andy Craig	Anna Dally	Ben & Sam Major	Karen Bennett / Rosemary Sutton	Chris Major / Dorothea Haverhals
2004	A Andy Craig B Mike Dimmer	Anna Dally	Ben & Sam Major	Anna & Emily Dally	
2005	A Anthony Dimmer B Beetle Clay	Anna Dally	Ben & Sam Major	Karen Bennett / Rosemary Sutton	Mike Dimmer / Philippa Sanders
2006	A Andrew Major B Chris Major	Anna Dally	Andrew Major / Mike Dimmer	Dinah Lamming / Rebecca Barrie	Beetle & Denise Clay
2007	A Andy Craig B Chris Major	Karen Bennett	Ben & Sam Major	Dinah Lamming / Rebecca Barrie	Beetle & Denise Clay
2008	A Andy Craig B Andrew Wilson-Smith	Rebecca Barrie	Ben & Sam Major	Jo Crow / Wendy Challen	Toby & Jo Crow
2009	A Andy Craig B Stephen Watson	Olivia Lamming	A Ben & Sam Major B Beetle Clay / Stephen Watson	Dinah Lamming / Rebecca Barrie	Andy Craig / Angela Thornley
2010	A Ben Major B Guy Lamming	Rebecca Barrie	A Ben & Sam Major B Mike Dimmer / Guy Lamming	A Olivia Lamming / Kate Hogan B Clara Jollands / Lynne Marriner	Guy Lamming / Dinah Lamming
2011	A Andrew Major B James Lamming	Anne Dennig	A Ben & Sam Major B Jonny Crow / Leo Montgomery	A Anne Dennig / Jo Crow B Anne Dennig / Kathie Gyles	Stephen Gray / Anne Dennig
2012	A Andy Craig B Finn Cowcher	Anne Dennig	A Andy Craig / Andrew Wilson-Smith B James Lamming / Finn Cowcher	A Anne Dennig / Kate Hogan B Jo Crow / Wendy Challen	Andy Cook / Kate Hogan
2013	A Andy Cook B Guy Brown	Sian Green	A Andy Cook / Leo Montgomery B Richard Gyles / David Sanders	A Olivia & Polly Lamming B Lucy Challen / Ailsa Green	John & Ailsa Green
2014	A Andy Major B Oliver Sanders	Ailsa Green	A Andy Cook / Leo Montgomery B George Pettifer / Oliver Sanders	A Sian & Ailsa Green B Dinah Lamming / Philippa Sanders	Oliver and Philippa Sanders

Lavington Park

The Stud - The College - The Community



Lavington Park

The Stud - The College - The Community

The large area that had formed the Lavington Park Estate since the time of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce was split following the death of James Buchanan, first Lord Woolavington in 1935. The Stud remained in the ownership of the Macdonald-Buchanan family. The house had a brief history in private ownership and wartime occupation by the army before being purchased as the new home for Seaford College. Both the Stud and the College have continued to play separate but significant roles in Graffham life.

In 2014 a new element was added to the equation. Seaford College sold an area of land to developer, Shanly Homes, who erected eighteen new homes for sale within the heart of the Park. Only time will tell the impact, if any, of this development on the Stud, the College and the Graffham community.

Seaford College, 2015



Lavington Stud

120 years old and going strong

An abridged version of an article by Sally Duckett in *International Thoroughbred Magazine*, 2010

Change is a necessity, and a willingness to change is a necessity to survive. While many things at Lavington Stud appear to have remained unchanged since the stud was first purchased and developed in 1890 by James Buchanan, the 1st Lord Woolavington, - and, remarkably, the stud is in the same family ownership – there have been changes in recent years; stallions have been moved on, the business has been reorganised, staff numbers cut. However, some things just don't change and the farm, which has a long history of producing champion racehorses, has been enjoying a great year in 2010 – 120 years after it was transformed from a dairy farm to a thoroughbred stud.

The stud's success finds its roots in the equine families which have been nurtured and developed by the farm, now owned by Alastair Macdonald-Buchanan, who has taken over from his father Captain John. It is run by stud manager Tim Read.

"Sans Frontieres traces back to Llyn Gwynant, whom we bought as a yearling," explains Read. She became a champion older mare in Ireland and has become a foundation mare.

It is fitting that the farm has enjoyed such success courtesy of one of its own broodmare families as in 2007 Read and the Macdonald-Buchanans decided to bring an end to its stallion business, moving Piccolo and Imperial Dancer to new homes in order to concentrate on the broodmare band at Lavington.

It was not a decision that was taken lightly as stallions had been standing at Lavington since 1903 when Black Sand, a winner of the Cesarewitch handicap and owned by James Buchanan, was retired to the farm.

"We decided to end the stallion operation," explains Read. "At the time if we had any spare cash to buy horses, it would go instead towards buying a broodmare so we decided to concentrate on the quality of our own broodmare band."

Aside from the basic difficulties that a small stallion operation faces in competition against the multi-million pound and euro stallion battalions in Britain and Ireland, the very nature of the breeding business has changed dramatically since the 1970s.

"We were originally geared up to cater for non-walk in mares," says Read, "but the trend changed more and more to walking in mares*."

"Towards the end of the stallion phase, 75 per cent of our mares walked in and we didn't earn so much out of those. We also ended up with far more staff than we needed. At our height we had 18 or 19 staff, and most had houses on the estate.

"I think we came out just at the right time – in the light of the ongoing recession."

So Lavington, which is found in a beautiful quiet spot at the foot of the South Downs and is on the edge of the village of Graffham, is currently going through a certain amount of reinvention.

* walk-in mare - a mare being brought to the Stud but departing immediately after service on same day



Lavington Stud, 2015

Natural Advantages

The natural geographical advantages that the farm enjoys have gone a long way to ensuring its survival as a family farm for over 120 years. It is not by chance that the Macdonald-Buchanans have become one of the few families to have weathered ownership of a private stud for so long and through such a tumultuous period.

“We still have the 16 cottages that the staff lived in, but they are rented out now which provides a new and important income stream for the stud,” says Read. “My job has changed a lot and I now manage the property as well as overseeing the broodmare and yearling prepping operation here.

“I have gone from dealing with early morning calls to book in a mare to visit a stallion to dealing with a leaking tap in one of the cottages in the village. But times change – at one time we had 250 horses here and had to hire stables; now we have 60 horses on the farm.”

But the farm is certainly not on a downward spiral into non-existence – the ambitions are there to make it a money-spinning facility.

“We had always covered 12-15 of our private mares, but now we have reduced the numbers to 10-12 in order to concentrate more on quality. So we can easily take in at least another 10 boarding mares. We have all facilities necessary including a vet on site,” says Read, in a rare spot of PR.

And Lavington really is something of a British equine idyll – even at the end of this summer the grass in the paddocks was still flourishing and would not be out of place on a farm in Tipperary.

“If I were a horse I would want to live here!” laughs Read, who joined the stud in 1989 and is one of only four managers to have run the farm. “We have our own natural water supply, plenty of room and, being away from Newmarket, it means we are not under such threat from disease issues. We walk in all the mares based here, which we feel is best for their routine.”

Origins in Whisky

Lavington Stud owes its existence to whisky – in particular to a Black and White variety.

The 1st Lord Woolavington, James Buchanan, was born in Canada, a son of two Scottish immigrants. His parents returned to their homeland shortly after he was born and he was brought up in Larne, County Antrim in Northern Ireland.

At 14, Buchanan joined a Glasgow shipping firm as an office boy before being quickly promoted to a clerk. In 1868 he joined his brother in the grain business until, in 1879, he moved to London as an agent for a company that sold whisky. Quickly realising that there seemed to be an untapped market in England for bottled Scotch whisky, he set about producing the Buchanan blend, still available today and known as the Black and White whisky.

Buchanan added the black Scottish terrier and the West Highland white terrier to the label and it was adopted as the brand's motif. The logo is still used today and was at one time one of the world's most famous trademarks.

*James Buchanan, First Lord Woolavington
by Bassano © National Portrait Gallery*



Buchanan was created a Baronet of Lavington, in the County of Sussex, in the 1920 New Year Honours. He joined the peerage in the 1922 New Year Honours as Baron Woolavington for being a “generous supporter of many public and charitable objects”.

There were rumours that he paid £50,000 for his peerage, and that he signed the cheque “Woolavington” and dated it January 2 – the day after the title was to be gazetted – so that the payment would bounce if he did not receive the honour he had been promised!

Buchanan became interested in racing during a trip to Argentina and on his return leased Queensberry Lodge stables at Newmarket, from which his Argentinian trainer Alvarez operated. From there he raced horses under the name of Mr Kincaid.

The Stud's foundation sire, Hurry On produced the winners of eight Classics, including Captain Cuttle who won the Derby in 1922. His son Coronach also stood at Lavington and became sire of Montros and Corrida, who remains the only filly to win the Arc de Triomphe twice.

Lord Woolavington died in 1936, and his daughter Catherine, Lady Macdonald-Buchanan, sold the main house. She also inherited Mary Tudor, the dam of Owen Tudor, winner of the Derby and the Gold Cup. From Owen Tudor, Lady Macdonald-Buchanan bred Abernant, one of the great post-war sprinters. Lady Macdonald-Buchanan died in 1992.

The stud farm at Lavington has since been maintained by her son Captain John Macdonald-Buchanan and now his son Alastair, who rode as an amateur both under Rules and in point-to-points. He is a member of The Jockey Club and is a director of Jockey Club Estates in Newmarket. He stewards at a number of racecourses and is a Trustee of the British European Breeders' Fund.

The family lives at Cottesbrook Hall in Northamptonshire, which has an award-winning garden, as well as the largest privately owned equestrian and sporting art collection in Europe. Known as The Woolavington Collection it is probably only surpassed worldwide by the Mellon Collection. It was moved from Lavington to Cottesbrook in the 1930s.

The final arbiter - success on the racecourse

The racing policy operated by the farm has also changed over the years and it is prepared to sell its fillies as well as its colts – as Read says Alastair enjoys his racing, but he is happy to sell on his stock too.

One of the first fillies to be sold by the farm fetched 20,000gns, was from the first crop of Night Shift, was running through Read's first year at the stud, was trained by David Elsworth and went on to become a champion three-year-old in Europe and Ireland, winning seven races including the International Stakes, the Champion stakes, the Coronation Cup and the 1,000 Guineas. Her name was In the Groove.

As Read goes on to explain, the final arbiter is success on the racecourse and it is what ensures

the survival of a private broodmare band – everything on the farm is geared towards the breeding and rearing of winning and hopefully Group-class horses.

In order to try and achieve these goals the farm is not shy of bringing in outside advice. In the last year it has been visited by Kentucky agronomists and nutritional experts, as well as Michael Youngs, who advises on mating plans, and veterinary Nick Wingfield-Digby, who casts his eye over the growing young stock.

The farm has also been spreading its wings overseas and has been running a few in the US, resulting in instant success with Rosinka, who was a Grade 1 runner-up.

“In 2004, with Michael's help, we bought a yearling filly by Soviet Star,” recalls Read. “We called her Rosinka and she won a maiden at Goodwood, but then had a little set-back so we

Lavington Stud, 2015





Church and School from the Stud, 2010

ended up sending her to the US to be trained by Graham Motion. Out there she became one of the top fillies of the year and won us over half a million dollars in prize-money.

“It costs just around \$5,000 to send a horse over the Atlantic, which in the run of things is not a lot of money, while the long-term results can definitely make it worthwhile, the upsides are just so good – the prize-money is so much better and pedigree updates are extraordinary.”

That is the crux of running a broodmare band - getting those pedigree updates, ensuring that those families whom you have trusted and who have performed for your farm over the years produce another stakes winner – so keeping their family alive and your operation funded.

This has been achieved at Lavington for years and is an ongoing achievement. The production of regular stakes race performance is the secret behind Lavington’s success. Sans Frontieres is the current flag carrier. His half-brother Hans

Holbein ran in the 2015 Derby.

“We have not invested a lot of money in mares over the years – we occasionally buy a mare and occasionally try and buy a filly,” explains Read. “We prefer to concentrate on the families that we have got and then when a horse like Sans Frontieres comes along that family, in this instance our foundation family, gets a huge uplift. That is how it works.”

The pendulum of success can swing widely between a youngster becoming a stakes horse or an also-ran, and once the yearling has left the farm the stud really can only become an observer.

“You just hope the yearling that you have reared and loved goes to the right trainer for that horse, and then remains injury-free,” says Read, who has seen it all before and realises how thin the line is.

Sally Duckett, 2010 (Abridged)

Lavington Stud employee, Andrew Toze talks about his job

from *Graffham Parish News*, October 2015

A typical day on the stud

I start work at 7 o'clock. Bob makes up the feeds, then I load them up and feed the yearlings. I check the mares as I go round. At the moment there's one paddock of foals, four of yearlings, three of mares and foals, several paddocks of mares whose foals have been weaned, and maiden mares.

It takes just over two hours to feed them all. The yearlings are on a special mix with an additive which is specially tailored to suit our grass. It's made by Saracens and a rep comes along every so often to measure the foals for weight gain and condition to see how they're doing on their feed.

I check them over to make sure they're not lame, no injuries. If there's a sight of one going lame or unsound I'll ring Bill, the Stud Groom, and report that the animal is a bit off. I always put my hand on them all. All the yearlings will come to me when there's a big line of feed out. They come up for a big rub and "check me out".

Are the horses friendly?

They can be friendly for me because I know them. I feed them six days a week when I'm on duty. When I'm foaling them I feed them seven nights a week for four months.

A pride in the job

After feeding, it's normal duties. I'm usually mowing and strimming three days a week, and the mower needs sorting out each day. I take a pride in this job so I try and make it as smart as I can. It



Andrew Toze, 2015

can take two to three days, depending on the weather, to get right round the stud. It used to take me a fortnight to get from the Almshouses to Old Park, just strimming a few years ago, but now I use the mower for most of it.

The horses won't touch long grass but if I've strimmed underneath the rails, they tend to go for the new grass that comes up so they help me keep that down a little bit!

I also prune trees, repair fences and any other maintenance that needs doing. If there's a rail broken we will stop, go back get a rail and attach it to the buggy and replace it as we go round. Sometimes you'll find several rails broken then you can go for several weeks without finding any broken.



Morning Feed - 2015

The Foaling Season

The foaling season is from January to mid-May. This year we had 26 foals, and the previous year 33. We also provide a foaling service for clients. I'm on duty from half past nine in the evening until half past five when I go home and get a cup of tea, then when it's light I go out to feed the yearlings.

Some studs use foaling alarms set off by the amount of moisture given off by a mare. They don't always work so we do it the old fashioned way and keep our eyes on the mare! If a mare is acting suspiciously I feel her to see if she's sweating.

We have four boxes under camera – two big boxes either side of me and two boxes further down so I can keep an eye on them all night. When I leave in the morning Bill phones me to check that everything's OK and listen to my report of the evening. If there's anything to report or if I suspect a mare will soon be foaling, I will tell Bill

then. When a mare's waters break I immediately phone Bill so there are always two of us there. This last year I've rung up Stella (a new stud worker) too, to train her in what's going on, but you can't always tell people - it's the years of farming, foaling, calving and lambing which have given me experience that counts.

Don't you feel like falling asleep?

No you daren't! If you do that then you might miss something. The hardest thing is going back onto days because the body clock is slightly amiss for several months. I daren't take a holiday immediately after foaling, I have to get back straight into work and bash the body clock good and quick.

About the horses

A number of mares with different owners are at livery with us, and some are our own. We foal them here, or, depending on which sire the owners are using, they may go to Ireland for foaling.



Lavington Stud, 2015

We no longer have stallions at Lavington. A box driver will come along pick the mares up take them to for example to Newmarket and they'll be home by lunchtime, covered at eight o'clock in the morning in Newmarket. They mainly go to Newmarket but can go to Hampshire or further up country depending on which stud they are going to visit.

Does anyone ever ride them?

No! No mares are ever ridden, they would be too expensive to ride!

How did you get into this business?

As a small boy I lived on the family farm on Exmoor. My grandfather's hunter needed exercising while he was lambing so I learned to ride as a 7-year-old on a 16 hand hunter that required exercising for stag hunting. I was hooked!

After school, I left the farm and joined the Blues and Royals. I spent nearly five years with them from 1974 to 1979. I loved my career – I even had the opportunity to ride Sefton! I have a picture at home of me riding Sefton down The Mall in 1976.

How did you come to Lavington?

After the Blues and Royals I went back to the family farm on Exmoor for a few years, but since 1987 all my jobs have been working with horses. I've worked for the Portman and the Wynnstay Hunts, the Fitzwilliam Estate, and the National Stud. Prior to moving here I spent six years at Shade Oaks Stud in Shropshire. I was contacted by Lavington through an agency. A visit here to look at a stallion followed by a call from Lavington Stud Manager, Tim Read convinced me, and Tim gave me a fortnight's holiday to settle in.

and what about life in Graffham?

I love the village, I have a lovely house on the estate and I love my job! In my spare time I enjoy my garden and my hens – I've recently been given a magnificent Brahma cock but I've yet to find a female for him as the breed is very expensive. However I have two browns, two speckleds and two bluebells.

I have no children myself - my children are the foals and the yearlings and always have been, I love them to death! If I ever have a holiday I tell Bill I'm going to miss them and he replies "You can always come back and feed them if you like".

Interview with Andrew Toze, August 2015

How Seaford College came to Lavington Park

An article written for *Graffham Parish News* by Joscelyn Johnson, widow of Headmaster Canon Charles Johnson, in 2008

People often ask why Seaford College retains the name of an East Sussex town whilst living for so many years in the Petworth area in West Sussex. The simple answer is that in 1884 the school was founded in Seaford on the edge of what was then a small town, surrounded by open fields. The building stood high on the cliffs overlooking Seaford Bay and there it continued for fifty years, passing unharmed through the first World War. In 1940, it was disrupted by a government order requisitioning all boarding school premises in Seaford (and by that time there were over thirty of these) and giving only six weeks in which to find safe homes elsewhere.

After evacuation in Worthing for four years, it was time to decide on the future home of the College. Returning to Seaford was impractical for many reasons and the governors spent many months travelling round England (and Wales) to look at possible sites. Nearer home in Sussex they were interested in Burton and in Lavington Parks. The latter had the advantage that the Mansion had been the HQ of the Commandos and it had been used as living quarters of officers. There were several small houses within the park which could be available for staff. The decision was made, the military would have moved out, and Lavington would be available for the Summer Term, 1946.

My wedding to the Revd Charles Johnson at St Peter's Woolavington (now the school Chapel) was on April 8th 1946. The mansion was now empty but we had received a warm welcome from the Rector, Mr Powell, at Graffham who was happy to allow us to celebrate our wedding at St Peter's, Woolavington before we faced the exciting challenge of bringing Seaford College into its new home. This was the place where we would begin our future life and work together.



The Chapel here would be the centre of all we hoped and prayed to do, so this, the first "Seaford" service was held in the Chapel with family and friends from Worthing and four senior Seaford boys from Worthing as ushers. The school chaplain, Canon Warner from Seaford, took the Service.

We had a brief honeymoon in Cambridge in the middle of which Charles attended a Governors' meeting in London. Then we returned to Worthing for three weeks of solid work in moving the masses of furniture, books, crockery and kitchen equipment to prepare for the senior boarders whom we would bring to Lavington for May 6th, the opening day and the start of a great adventure for us all.

This was all basic history. Now in 2008 we are proud to be part of the community here with a multitude of ties between us and the villages of Graffham and East Lavington.

Joscelyn Johnson, 2008

Seaford College

by Su Sayer, CBE, daughter of Headmaster, Charles Johnson and Vice Chair of the Board of Governors

Lavington Park with its three hundred and sixty acres of park and woodland has been enjoyed by many generations and some strong and famous personalities. Visitors can see the site of the original mansion house (built for the princely sum of £130 in 1587) and the one building that remains known as the " elopement gate" , the bottom storey of the former gatehouse which opened on to the flint and chalk coach road which led up to the top of the Downs.

Close by is St. Peter's Church which has a remarkable history and Samuel Wilberforce (William's son) often preached here. It was Samuel that planted the trees known as the Bishops Clump at the top of the Downs. Sadly many of the trees were destroyed in the storm of 1987 but the clump is still visible to anyone

driving from Petworth and approaching Duncton. There is also a pretty walk called the Bishop's Walk leading to the church as this is the path that Bishop Wilberforce always took. He is buried in the churchyard together with various family members and his Bishop's crook is displayed in the church.

The existing mansion house was built by John Sargent MP in the late 1780s although it was extended later and is now of course the centre of the Seaford College.

As my mother, Joscelyn Johnson, mentions in her article, the Commandos occupied the Mansion during the War and it was here that much of the D-Day planning was done. Every year since then the Commandos would return for a service of

Seaford College 2012



thanksgiving in the school chapel until their numbers dwindled and in 2001 they held their final service.

Since moving to Lavington Park in 1946, the College has grown and flourished, celebrating its centenary in 1984 and becoming coeducational in the late 1990s. It now has 680 pupils, both day and boarding, and includes a thriving Prep School. The College has had visits from royalty and some of the nation's heroes. Princess Margaret and Princess Alexandra spent time at the College and both Sir Barnes Wallis and Douglas Bader have spoken at the College's annual Prize Giving ceremonies.

The post war buildings have all been replaced with airy modern buildings. There are two boys' boarding houses built in the old walled gardens and there is a vibrant music school in the old stables which previously housed many famous race horses. During the 2015/2016 academic year a new state of the art fitness suite, dance studio, assembly hall/creative theatre and climbing wall will all be completed.

The Science Block with its eight laboratories, lab technician preparation room, and two chemical stores was constructed in 2004/5 with official opening by Professor J M Lynch on 25th June 2005.

The Walled Garden boarding accommodation for up to 128 male boarders was constructed in 2010/11 with official opening by Dame Judith Mayhew Jonas on 24th June 2011.

The Housing development of 19 individually designed 3 to 5 bedroom houses was offered to tender in 2012. Shanly Homes were successful and all the houses were completed by May 2015. They were carefully designed to reflect the other existing buildings on the Lavington Site. All but one are now occupied providing an extended community to Lavington Park and the College.

Throughout the decades the College has often been at the forefront of innovation and has made its mark in many different fields.



Canon Charles Johnson, Headmaster 1944-1990

In the 1950s there was an active Young Farmers Club. The College had a herd of Jersey cows and a flock of Dorset Horn sheep. Boys often found themselves helping in the milking parlour or in the lambing shed!

In the 60s the BBC televised the College's "geography lessons from the air" where pupils were taught from a helicopter flying over the various escarpments showing the spring line and the chalk and clay land below.

In 1966 King Constantine of Greece became the Patron of Seaford College. The sixties also hosted some very strong tennis players and the College was proud to win both the coveted Clark and Youll cups in 1968 both of which were presented at the famous Wimbledon Tennis Club.

Over the years there have been many remarkably professional, amateur dramatic productions including *The Browning Version*, *St Joan*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Hamlet*, *Richard II* and the *Importance of Being Earnest*. More recently the College has performed *Grease*, *The Little Shop of Horrors* and *Oh What a Lovely War* to commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

Seaford College 1944-2015

1944 - 1990 Headmaster - Revd Charles Johnson

1946	Seaford College moves to Lavington Park
1950	Millburgh House moves to Millburgh Hall in Selham
1953	The Assembly Hall is built
1975	The John Robertson Hall for indoor hockey, tennis and badminton is opened. Students in Millburgh Hall move back to Lavington Park
1981	The Hollington Centre (Sixth Form) is opened
1984	The new teaching block for English, History and RE is opened
1984	Seaford College Centenary
1990	The Craft, Design and Technology department is opened
1990	Canon Johnson retires as Headmaster, remaining at the College as Provost until his death in 2002.

1990-1997 Headmaster - Mr C Hannaford

1991	Wilberforce, the Seaford College Junior School opens
1996	Mansion House is opened for Girls

1997-2013 Headmaster - Mr Toby Mullins

2005	The Maths and Science Block is built to join the 1984 complex
2006	The Stable Block (previously Science) is totally redesigned to become the Music School
2011	Walled Garden Boarding Accommodation opened

2013-present Headmaster - Mr John Green

The College Choir has always been renowned for its excellence and has released a number of CDs over the years. There have been many choir tours. In 1976, for example, it visited Washington and Chicago and in 1981 it was asked to perform a recital of Christmas carols for Her Majesty The Queen and Prince Philip. Other visits have been to Moscow and most recently Paris.

Sport has always featured strongly at Seaford and it has had many fine sportsmen and athletes. The range of sports has increased with the introduction of girls and there are now netball matches to add to tennis, rugby, hockey, athletics and cricket. Sports tours have been numerous for both boys

and girls with recent trips to Barcelona, Barbados, and South Africa. In 2017 there is planned the first ever co-educational sports tour to New Zealand for netball and rugby.

John Green became Headmaster in September 2013. Mr Green is keen to ensure there are strong links between the village and Lavington Park. Over the past three years, the College has introduced a 'Community Action Day' which involves each and every pupil being out and about in the local community making a positive difference. The College also hosts the annual Graffham Tennis Club dinner further cementing links with the village.



St Peters Church - the College Chapel - with the Choir

The philosophy of Seaford College has always remained true to the original vision of its first headmaster, Colonel Savage, that of embracing every pupil no matter their creed or academic achievement. Over the years different headmasters have carried forward that vision each adding their own particular style and emphasis. However at the core is the belief that a school is there to bring out the best in each individual, to help them to reach their full potential. The aim is to enable pupils to leave the College feeling confident in their own abilities and able to contribute in the external world. The Christian ethos remains with its emphasis on excellent pastoral care.

Su Sayer, 2015



Su Sayer with Headmaster, John Green © Tracey Carr

The Seaford College Farmer

an interview with Ken Crosdil in the *Graffham Parish News*, 2014

Ken Crosdil is a very familiar figure up at Seaford College, walking around the college and park with his little dog alongside – down here in the village, even if you don't know him personally, you may well be enjoying "Ken's Eggs" from the village shop every day for breakfast!

Ken started life in East Meon. His father was a teacher but, during the second world war, worked for the Hampshire War-Ag (War Agricultural Committee). After the war the family moved to Graffham where they bought a farm and Ken lived there until 1957.

In 1957 Ken moved to Hampshire to manage a farm for the Johnson Trust where he stayed for eleven years. Seaford College Headmaster, Canon Johnson, was a Trustee, and when the farm was sold, he invited Ken to continue working for the Trust at Seaford College.

Ken moved to Seaford College in February 1968. At that time the School had its own farm. Ken was employed as farm manager and to teach the boys farming. The farm had a dairy herd of 130 Jersey cows and a beef herd of 50 Charolais as well as 500 sheep, 50 sows, and of course, poultry.

Ken Crosdil at Seaford College, 2014





There was a lot for the boys to do – they were keen workers and were all farmers sons. The farming lessons were all practical – they had to work on the farm, not sit in the classroom. Ken says he had no “trouble” with any of them and many come back to visit him now although they are now in their 50s. They tell him it was hard work at the time but they all remember it fondly.

In addition to the boys, the farm employed a herdsman, a girl to do the milking, Malcolm to look after the pigs, Bob the shepherd and two other workers. The animals were kept in the area which is now the golf course, together with land rented from Miss Blaker who owned a farm at the top of the Downs, and some at Forest Grange Preparatory School near Horsham.

Ken and his wife Ann lived and raised their family in a large bungalow in Lavington Park (in the area of the new Shanly Homes). Seaford College gave up the farm about 21 years ago. Ken took over the poultry side of the business, keeping around 1,000 hens in the park up until three years ago, paying the college a peppercorn rent of £1 a year.

Since the new housing development has gone up in Lavington Park, Ken has moved to a new home

within the Seaford campus. Aged over 80, you might have expected him to retire and take things a bit easier, but not Ken! He continues to run his own business and has moved all his hens to Petersfield. They now thrive on a farm owned by an Old Seafordian. Here Ken rotates the hens with an onion crop (two years hens, one year onions). Ken regularly attends the farmers’ markets at Chichester and Petworth. At the time of interview, he was preparing for the annual Slindon Sheep Fair. In addition to eggs, Ken will be selling his own pickled onions, and jams made by volunteers from the Macmillan Trust in aid of this cancer charity.

Ken’s own children (Bob, Peter and Paul) went to Graffham School with one, Paul, going on to Seaford College, and Ken now has two grandchildren at Seaford.

Those of you who attend the Christmas Crib Service on Christmas Eve at St Peters (the college chapel) will know it usually features live farm animals. These are supplied by Ken, and this Christmas he plans a treat for children and adults alike. He has already lined up a real donkey (with a cross on its back) for the Service!

Interview with Ken Crossdil, 2014

The Drive and Wallace Square

Jude & Matthew join our community

We found the new Lavington Park development in the grounds of Seaford College quite by accident. At the time we were living on the increasingly busy South Coast and wanted to move to a location within the South Downs National Park. We viewed a house on Beechwood Lane in 2013 and in walking around the area noticed signs for a development of 18 houses by Shanly. Initially dismayed that even here there was new development, it gradually dawned on us that one of the new houses could be right for us. We took many walks around and were struck by the variety of landscape and the tranquillity of the area. It was also in the middle of the area where Matthew does most of his conservation work with the Sussex Wildlife Trust and the National Trust. We visited the Foresters, White Horse and Cricketers Pubs and were

pleasantly surprised. A good local pub is a must. We knew a little bit about Graffham through Michael Blencowe and Matthew had worked on Heyshott Down and at Burton Mill pond in the past.

We have now been at Lavington Park for nearly a year and are really enjoying our new home. The summer has been full of garden work, digging beds and planting all sorts of greenery, many from the Graffham plant sale. This all paid off when the vegetable patch began producing delicious produce and Matthew still regards my tomatoes as Graffham Garden Show prize-winners. We have also spent many an enjoyable evening on the patio sipping tea or wine and enjoying the lovely sounds of a rural environment without the continual rumble of traffic. That is a rarity these days.

New Homes in Wallace Square form a backdrop to the College's Cricket Pavilion, 2015





Jude and Matthew join in the Graffham Easter Market, 2014

We are getting to know our neighbours, many of whom are retired. I think what has appealed to everyone at Lavington Park, apart from the natural beauty and tranquillity of the area, is the security of living within the grounds of the school with neighbours around to look out for each other. Perversely perhaps, we also appreciate the security from a lack of further development near Lavington Park.

Now that all the houses are sold it was time to get our management committee in place, so we had our first resident's meeting in August 2015, which was very well attended. The residents seem to be a solid and conscientious group with some jolly useful skills and it will be interesting for us to see how this new community develops. It is all new to us as we have never lived in a residential community.

During our time here we have embraced the many enjoyable activities in Graffham. We have found the Graffham community to be vibrant, welcoming and full of community-minded folks

with a great deal of energy. We have also been welcomed by Seaford College and tried to give a little back by participating in their Community Day in the form of taking a small group of lads up the Downs and making them rake up cut vegetation for two hours. We have joined the Graffham Down Trust and are now serving on the committee and attending the work parties. I started playing tennis after a 20 year gap and have been really impressed by the tennis club. I have had several lovely trips to gardens courtesy of the Graffham Garden Group. We look forward to another year of movies and music at the Empire Hall as well as all the other interesting events.

We count ourselves lucky to have found such a special place to live.

Jude & Matthew Sennit, 2015

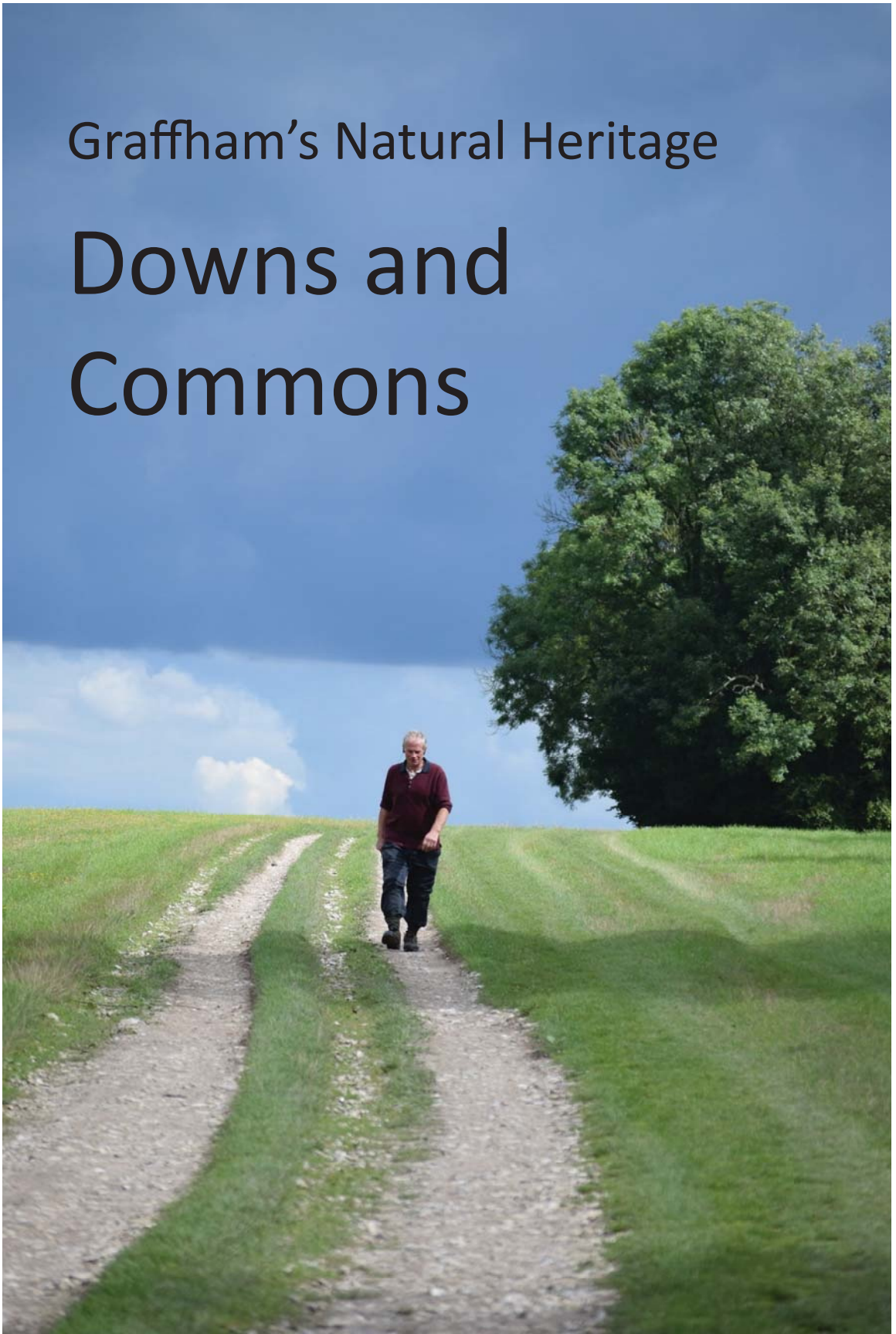


Building in the Park

Top: May 2013

Centre and Bottom: September 2014

Graffham's Natural Heritage Downs and Commons



The South Downs Way

The Destruction of Graffham Down - 1978

In 1978, Graffham Down was drawn to the attention of the public when Marion Shoard used it as an example in her controversial book, *The Theft of the Countryside*. The following extract from a review by Christopher Brasher sets the scene:

It was May and I was running gently along the South Downs Way, high above the greedy world, breathing English air, when I stumbled onto a battlefield.

Great trees lay dying on the Down, their roots stark against the heavens, like the limbs of fallen soldiers at the Somme. I picked my way through the deep-rutted mud left by the monstrous machines that had obliterated the cool downland grass, and passed on, saying nothing, doing nothing about such vandalism.

Last week I went back there, to Graffham Down, in the company of Marion Shoard, a young woman who has, praise be, done something. She has spent three years of her life, researching and writing a book.

In it she says: "A new agricultural revolution is under way. If allowed to proceed unhindered, it will transform the face of England. Already a quarter of our hedgerows, 24 million hedgerow trees, thousands of acres of down and heathland, a third of our woods and hundred upon hundred of streams, marshes and flower-rich

meadows have disappeared. They have been systematically eliminated by farmers seeking to profit from a complex web of economic and technological change. Speedily but almost imperceptibly, the English countryside is being turned into a vast, featureless expanse of prairie.'

Graffham Down, where I stumbled through the Somme, is one of the places that she uses to illustrate her thesis. It was, until last year, a little wilderness, a paradise of birds, butterflies and flowers whose names sound like poetry: selfheal and pink centaury; harebells and lady's bedstraw; viper's bugloss and rock rose. Through the wood and scrub, green swaths of grass led eye and foot along the Down. But now it has all gone, obliterated by man

The extract above is from a review by Christopher Brasher first printed in The Observer, 16th November, 1980 © Guardian News & Media Ltd

The Origins of Graffham Down Trust

Notes from the Graffham Archives by Miss E P M Scott c. 1983

The Parish Council thought the village would like to hear more about Graffham Down Trust - the original leaflet about it was delivered to every house so long ago that probably most people have forgotten about it.

It was very much a Graffham idea as Agatha and Marian Bowley and Muriel Samways and I had known the downland round here since the early 1920s and have lived here quite a long time latterly. It was the sale for farming of the former stud at Westerlands which included the gallops from the Bishop's Ring to the Graffham to East Dean track, just at the time the government was subsidising farmers to clear and fertilise neglected

and marginal land for arable, which led eventually to the idea of the Trust.

The top of Woolavington and Graffham Downs was an area of great ecological value because it has been uncultivated for a very long time, well beyond living memory. Much of the downland both west and east of us, even as close as the ridge of Heyshott Down, had been converted to arable since the Second War and the character of Charlton and Singleton Forests had been radically altered by the Forestry Commission's conifer plantations; but our Down ridge still had a good deal of old turf with characteristic chalk down flora and butterflies, though the abandonment of

Michael Paterson, Padoma Scott and Marian Bowley on the Downs, 24th November 1986



sheep grazing and the death of the rabbits in the 1960s had led to some scrub encroachment. This in itself, if not allowed to go too far, had value for nightingales and warblers in summer and winter flocks of siskins, redwings, fieldfares and finches.

So the four of us, from 1978 onwards when scrub clearance began west of the Bishop's Ring, tried to see if we could save some part of the ridge. In 1979 the then Chairman of the local branch of the Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE) and the Sussex representative of the Nature Conservancy both came up with us and confirmed that the area was very valuable for wild life (and very clearly only marginal land for agriculture). Marion Shoard, in preparing her book *The Theft of the Countryside*, visited the ridge and used photographs of the ridge tracks to illustrate what was happening to chalk downs. The BBC sent an interviewer and camera up on a frigid winter morning to Graffham Down top to show what we were up against.

We had valuable help from Stanley Field and Michael Paterson in trying to come to some agreement over the new use of the land, but we were not even able to buy a few acres at the narrow west end of the old gallops.

A survey in 1980 by the Wells Institute of Terrestrial Ecology showed in some detail the value of what was being lost to agriculture, but also of the potential value of some of the summit area west of the Graffham to East Dean track if it could be managed as a reserve.

In 1981 a four-and-a-half acre strip on the ridge of Graffham Down was offered at peppercorn rent for restoration, which led to the formation of the Graffham Down Trust, established as a charity in November 1983.

Padoma Scott, c. 1983

Below: Founding GDT members meet at Fitzlea Garden, 1986. L-R Diana White, Paul Dimmer, Michael Paterson, Stuart LeFevre, Peter Parish, Padoma Scott, Muriel Samways



Graffham Down Trust - A Short History

The Trust was formed in 1983 by a number of environmentally concerned residents of Graffham with the co-operation of a local landowner. The current Trustees have continued with the original objectives and are managing the initial area and several extensions.

Initially one small area of land just to the south of the South Downs Way, now known as Long Meadow, was involved. Some ten years later, two adjacent areas to the north were added and these are now known as Bowley's Field and Scott's Corner in memory of two of the original Trustees.

In the autumn of 2005 the Sustainable Development Fund and a Chichester District Council Biodiversity Grant made some funds available to help make a start on clearing further areas of scrub and larger trees. This created a much longer corridor of open land stretching from existing farmed land in the east to the boundary with Heyshott Parish in the west, a distance of just over one mile. This brings the total area under our management to 31 hectares.

Able-bodied friends of the Trust carry out much of the maintenance work, on 'workdays' in spring and autumn, but other heavier work is undertaken by professional contractors. In the autumn a small flock of sheep is introduced to graze the reserves in a natural way.

As a result of our active management, we are seeing increasing varieties of wildflowers and butterflies appearing each year as well as evidence of deer, badger and other wildlife. To encourage people to become aware of these reserves and the progress we are making, we have a 'Picnic Day' at the top in the summer and an annual lecture on a related topic in the village. Two newsletters are distributed in the spring and autumn to Friends of the Trust.

Diana White
GDT Secretary and Trustee, 1988 - 2014

Graffham Down Trust Objectives

- ⇒ To preserve and re-establish areas of open downland interspersed with trees and scrub on Graffham Down and in the neighbourhood of Graffham, to try to preserve and to re-introduce species of flora and wildlife which have been indigenous to Graffham and the neighbourhood and which are or may be in danger of extinction or substantial diminution in numbers
- ⇒ to allow residents of the Parish of Graffham and others free access, but on foot only, to open downland
- ⇒ to hold any land demised to the Trustees and to acquire further pieces of land
- ⇒ to raise, collect and borrow sums of money for the purpose of purchasing or leasing further land
- ⇒ to provide funds for fencing, improvement, planting, cutting, grazing and maintenance of any such land



Update on the Reserves, 2015

We are now in 2015 and the Trust has been in existence for 32 years and continues to cover 31 hectares of reserves. The foresight of those involved in setting up the Trust has been recognised in the naming of the reserves, Scott's Corner, Bowleys, Patersons, Parish and Dimmer. The reserves are now one of the many assets of the South Downs National Park and form part of a regional ambition to establish a corridor of chalk grassland along the South Downs to help sustain a diverse range of wildlife. The vision of the Trust's founders lives on through the objectives of the Trust.

The reserves continue to evolve into a mix of habitats including chalk grassland, woodland and scrub resulting in an increasing diversity of fauna and flora. Financial and technical support has been coming from a combination of the South Downs National Park, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation and Natural England.

Nature reserves or conservation sites require considerable management to shape and maintain them to the habitat that is desired. Today, this work continues to be done by a combination of volunteers and contractors resulting in ever



encouraging positive feedback from the South Downs National Park and wildlife groups. The key challenges are centred on encouraging sufficient volunteers to maintain the reserves and financing various capital and contractor costs.

Jim Kirke, Deputy Reserve Manager, 2015

Photos top, Enjoying the GDT Reserves © Tracey Carr; below, Work Party © Michael Blencowe



Plants in the Parish

In recent years Bruce Middleton of the South Downs National Park Association has led a wildflower walk at the Graffham Down Trust annual picnic on the Downs. The following article on flowers and plants in the parish was written for *Graffham Parish News in 2009*

I was asked to write an article about the Natural History found in Graffham. At first I wondered where to start, because there is so much of interest to be found here. However, I thought it would be nice to talk a little about the wonderful variety of flowers and plants to be found within the Parish and some of their past uses. This is because Graffham has a number of habitats lying upon either chalk on the Downs or Wealden clay and sandstone down in the valley.

A few years back I remember Graffham School carrying out a national survey recording the pretty flowers of the Lesser Celandine *RANUNCULUS ficaria* which is one of the obvious flowers to be seen adorning our hedgebanks in the spring. This plant can be variable but generally the leaves are heart-shaped and the flowers are a bright yellow. William Wordsworth described them in one of his poems as “bright as the sun itself”. Many people see this plant as a weed but back in Saxon days the juice was used from the plant to relieve the symptoms of piles and even called it Pilewort.

Up on the Downs it is the right time to be looking out for a number of flowers like the Bird’s-foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*. It has many other



names like “Lady’s shoes”, “Lady’s stockings”, “Crow’s toes” and “God Almighty’s thumb and finger”. The flowers themselves are shoe-shaped whereas the seedpods resemble birds’ claws. The name “Trefoil” refers to the three prominent leaves you can see looking like a three-leaved clover, however on closer inspection you will see two other small leaves close to the stem. Sometimes you can find this plant with red or orange streaks on the yellow flowers and then it is sometimes called “Eggs and Bacon”. Bees and wasps pollinate the flowers of Bird’s-foot Trefoil, while the leaves of this plant are the food source of the Dingy Skipper and the Green Hairstreak Caterpillars.

Another yellow flower out on the Downs is the Kidney Vetch. It has the other name of “Lady’s fingers” because of the white furry appearance it gives when fully mature mimicking gloved fingers. This is also a good nectar source for bees and wasps.

One of the herbs to look out for on the Downs is the Wild Basil *Clinopodium vulgare*. It attracts numerous insects for its nectar because of its strong smell. This pleasant smell has long been used to cover up unpleasant odours. It was included in posies and decorations for judges during the Middle Ages. It was used in warding off diseases by wearing it and was believed to help against convulsions, jaundice, cramp and a number of other ailments. Today the cultivated basil is used either on its own or with other herbs to improve the flavour of many meals.

On areas that have recently been cleared of scrub from downland there is a successful early pioneering plant called Hemp-agrimony



Wildflower Walk - 2013

Eupatorium cannabinum. The leaves do resemble the hemp plant and originally it was thought to be in the same family as Agrimony. Its flowers have been gathered and used to make a red dye for clothing and it is a wonderful source of nectar for insects. However, it can be a nuisance on sites where downland is trying to be restored because it has a tendency to swamp out less dominant plant species.

A plant that can be found growing commonly in our hedgerows and in chalk downland scrub is the White Bryony *Bryonia dioica*. The flowers are white to green and the leaves are generally maple leaf shaped. The Latin “*dioica*” means “two houses” which refers to the fact that you can find both male and female plants in this species that have slightly different flowers. In the past it has been used as a strong purgative. However, many people have been made seriously ill from eating it. It has been known to kill children and the elderly when the berries have been eaten accidentally. Its roots are swollen and twisted and sometimes resemble the shape of a human doll. Because of this, and its resemblance to Mandrake roots, it was sold by travelling fair charlatans to the gullible as an aphrodisia, reputedly from Biblical times. The poor gullible souls who

thought they had bought Mandrake root and tried it did not find luck in love but instead ended up writhing in agony after the charlatan had long gone.

Another sometimes painful plant but a well known one from an early age is the Stinging Nettle *Urtica dioica*. Again this has the Latin name *dioica* meaning there are male and female plants to be found. The majority of plants have both male and female flowers on the same plant. We all know the Stinging Nettle because it stings and causes a rash if we brush up against it. Stinging Nettles love disturbed ground and can soon take over large areas and so it is a menace to the farmer and gardener alike. In the past it was used by monks as a form of self-punishment for any bad thoughts they might have, and they would ritually beat their backs with them in the hope that it would stop them from having such thoughts in the future. The nettle has had many good uses over the years, for instance the stem fibres have been woven into cloth and made into clothes and until recently in Scotland table cloths. The leaves, when young, have been harvested and made into nettle soup and have also been dried and made into tea. The nettle is said to be a good source of iron and good for rheumatism. The hair

tips, found mainly on the topside of the leaves, cause the unpleasant sting, when they break off when touched and release an acid that causes a painful rash. The sting is a defence mechanism to keep animals from grazing it. However, if it is cut down and left a few hours, the sting is rendered harmless and then animals love it as if knowing it is good for them. The nettle is also the food plant source for the caterpillars of some of our most colourful species of butterfly like the Peacock, Comma, Red Admiral and the Small Tortoiseshell.

A small tree found on the Downs shows itself especially on windy days by showing the white underside of its leaves as they are blown about. This tree is known as Whitebeam *Sorbus Aria*. The name derives from the Saxon “Weiss baum” meaning “white tree”. It is a tough tree that can survive harsh conditions and because it is decorative with its white leafed undersides and

orange berries later in the year it is grown in gardens and new building developments. In the past the wood was made into cogs for machines until iron was used, while the berries were used to make sauces to be cooked with venison.

There are so many plants to talk about but one of note is the now rare Wintergreen *Pyrola minor*. It was thought to be extinct from Graffham until recently when it was rediscovered. It is one of only two known sites left for it in West Sussex. It was used to relieve muscular aches and pains and in particular back pains. In North America the juice is collected to make a tea and also added to flavour chewing gum and sweets.

**Bruce Middleton, Northern Area Manager
South Downs Joint Committee**

Graffham Down Trust Picnic 2015 - Wildflower Walk with Bruce Middleton



The Butterflies and Moths of Graffham Down

By Michael Blencowe, People & Wildlife Officer, Sussex Wildlife Trust

The flower rich meadows of the South Downs of Sussex have always been famous for their butterflies. When butterfly collecting was at its peak in the 19th century gentlemen with elaborate beards and tweed suits would take the train from London and prowl the Downs around Graffham with nets looking for specimens to add to their pinned collections. But the butterflies of Graffham would face greater threats than men in tweed. As time marched on the flower rich grassland so vital to the butterfly's existence was ploughed up and sprayed with fertilisers and pesticides. South of Graffham the rolling Downs were converted into a plantation and buried beneath shady beech trees. In other areas lack of grazing and neglect allowed coarse grasses, bramble and thorns to invade. Today it is estimated the original flower filled chalk grassland now covers only 3% of the South Downs. Luckily for Graffham, local volunteers from Graffham Down Trust have worked hard to ensure that this rare habitat and the wildlife that lives here remain an important piece of Graffham's natural heritage.

Thirty-five species of butterfly can be encountered on the reserve – 80% of the butterflies that can be found in Sussex. Each year the first warm days of spring will encourage Peacocks, Commas, Small Tortoiseshells, Red Admirals and Brimstones to emerge and search for nectar. These butterflies would have spent the winter hidden in evergreen bushes and Ivy around the reserves. As spring progresses they will be joined by Orange-tips, Green-veined Whites, Large Whites, Small Whites, Speckled Woods. The first flush of spring flowers to carpet the meadows will provide food for some of our smaller butterflies such as the Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Small Copper and Brown Argus.

These species are feisty, fast flying and keep low to the ground so can be easily overlooked. On the meadow edges the Green Hairstreak and Large Skipper can be found holding their territories and battling any rivals. The Common Blue and Holly Blue are the only blue butterflies found regularly at Graffham Down although the diminutive Small Blue has also been found here – its West Sussex stronghold is not far away at Cocking Quarry. Those other downland blues - Adonis and Chalkhill – are found mainly on the hotter, south facing slopes at the eastern end of the South Downs.

In the summer the meadows come alive with Meadow Browns, Small and Essex Skippers, Small Heath, Dark Green Fritillaries and the chequered Marbled Whites. Around the meadow edges look out for Ringlets, Gatekeepers and the impressive Silver-washed Fritillary. If you're lucky you may find a White Admiral nectaring on the bramble or gliding through the glades. In some years the resident butterflies of Graffham Down are joined by migrant species which have travelled north from France and Spain: the Clouded Yellow and Painted Lady. In 2009 millions of Painted Ladies arrived in Sussex on May 24th and thousands of these invaders used Graffham Down to refuel as they headed north on their migration. At the height of summer you'll have to look up to search for some of the reserves more elusive resident butterflies. In the tree tops in June and July you may well spot the jittery flight of the Purple Hairstreak. Later in the year you may catch sight of the Brown Hairstreak patrolling the ash trees or descending to dance along a blackthorn hedge searching for a spot to lay her eggs. But the extravagant star of the show is the Purple Emperor. Our largest Sussex species is an impressive iridescent purple. However,

despite his glitzy garb, he is rarely seen as he spends most of his time on his lofty throne in the tree canopy. Each year Graffham villagers and naturalists from across Sussex head to Bowley's Field on Graffham Down in the hope of the Emperor putting in an appearance. His aerial acrobatics often coincide with the Trust's annual summer picnic.

The butterflies of the reserve have been regularly surveyed by Paul & Bidy Dimmer and Dianne Hardcastle since a regular transect survey was established in 2009. Butterflies are counted along the same route each week from April to September. The results from this survey are fed into Butterfly Conservation's national dataset and help us understand more about our island's butterfly population as well as offering information on the populations on Graffham Down.

Graffham Down is also home to many species of moth and in recent years these have been the focus of studies and public events on the reserve. While there are just 58 species of butterfly in Britain there are around 2400 species of moth. The diversity of structure, patterns and colours is mind blowing; a fluttering kaleidoscope which chooses to appear only when we are asleep and vanish with the first light of day.

Moth surveying using mercury-vapour moth traps on Graffham Down has allowed us to gather more information on the species that can be found here. The current list runs into the hundreds and includes national rarities such as the Drab Looper and Olive Crescent. The amazing Ghost Moths gather like white-cloaked druids at a ritual and dance in the moonlight on the reserve in June – a rare sight these days. Each year Graffham Down Trust holds public events on the reserve and the moth trap openings are always popular. People get the chance to get close to some of our most impressive species such as the huge Privet Hawk-moth, colourful Elephant Hawk-moth and camouflaged Buff-tip.



From top: Dark Green Fritillary, Common Blue, Gatekeeper

The hard work undertaken by Graffham Down Trust over the years has been vital in preventing these meadows from becoming overgrown. Their efforts have created a fantastic wildlife reserve which the people – and wildlife - of Graffham can enjoy now and for generations to come.

Michael Blencowe, 2015

The Return of the Native

Michael Blencowe writes about Sussex Wildlife Trust's heathland restoration work at Graffham Common

The historic maps and aerial photographs in the County Records Office show that the landscape around Graffham used to be very different. This part of Sussex was known for its heathland; an open habitat dominated with low growing heather. Lowland heath is rare in Britain, rare in Europe and indeed rare on this planet and we were blessed with so much of it around Graffham. Heathland comes packed with a suite of unique and unusual animals and plants all adapted to survive in this dry habitat. In West Sussex it is home to rare birds such as the Dartford warbler, woodlark, tree pipit and nightjar and butterflies such as the beautiful silver-studded blue.

Holidays roaming the Commons

In 1960, David Bradford, then aged thirteen, and his brothers were keen to escape London to look for the amazing heathland wildlife they had, until then, only seen in books. David's fourteen-year-old brother was a member of the Camping Club of Great Britain and in their members' magazine they saw the perfect holiday destination for young explorers - Graffham. David recalls catching the train to Pulborough with his brothers – all laden with heavy tents and saucepans - and hitching a ride to Graffham. David said "It's amazing to believe that a group of boys from London – the oldest of whom was fourteen – would be allowed to disappear into the countryside, unsupervised,

Pine Trees on Graffham Common, 2008





The “Secret Lake” - exposed by the clearance of rhododendrons

for a week. These days it would be a case for social services!” His brother had to go to the Camping Club’s HQ in Rickmansworth where he had to pass a test in putting up a tent and cooking a meal outdoors. He succeeded and was awarded a pennant which allowed them access to Graffham’s Great Bury campsite, and which had to be hung on their tent to show they were experienced campers.

Their time in Graffham was spent exploring the heaths and searching for wildlife and David recalls finding glow-worms, adders and nightjars. They hiked to Bignor in their pac-a-macs and saw the Roman mosaics which were being unearthed by archaeologist Sheppard Freare and found ancient tumuli mounds out on the heaths. Each day they would walk to the local dairy in Graffham and David’s brother recalls being fascinated by watching the men milking the cows and filling the boys’ milk bottle. “It was all like *Lord of the*

Flies,” David recalls “without the violence of course!” The boys returned to Graffham for three more summers and it was the heathland around the village which sparked David’s lifelong love for wildlife. His cattle-obsessed brother grew up to be a farmer.

Heathland under threat

However the heathland habitat of West Sussex was under threat. Since 1810 around 91% of the West Sussex heaths had vanished. By 1980 only 670 hectares remained with a large percentage of this rare habitat lost during the previous few decades to pine plantations and development. In the 1950s and 1960s the Graffham Common and Gallows Hill area was planted with non-native pines, quick growing trees cultivated in neat rows in the hope of future profit. The landscape around Graffham changed but many people have fond memories of a more open landscape covered with colourful heather.

An “old boy” returns to Millburgh Hall

I met with Stephen Dean outside Millburgh Hall on a wet morning in early 2013. “It looks like some sort of French chateau now – a great section to the left, an extra storey and a mansard roof have been added. It didn’t look anything like that when I was living here” he said. Stephen spent a great deal of his youth here at Millburgh Hall. He came to Graffham from Surrey in 1960 when he was just thirteen and lived here for six years. “Millburgh Hall was an offshoot of Seaford College,” he explains, “each day we’d have to take a bus ride through Graffham village to the College – there and back. If you ever missed the bus you were in severe trouble!”

And, as Stephen recalls, sometimes you were in trouble if you did catch the bus. “There was a notorious driver called Curly who drove at fantastic speed through Graffham. As he took the corners there would be a great grinding of metal as the running boards scraped along the road. You



Above: Stephen Dean at Millburgh Hall, 2013

were lucky to survive a bus ride with Curly!”

Sometimes the bus would stop in Graffham village and the boys were put out and had to run back to Millburgh Hall over Gallows Hill in the dark. “Back at Millburgh there was only central heating in one of the dormitories and,” as Stephen remembers, “these were the winters of the early sixties. In 1962-3 there was snow on the ground for three months. It was freezing. Those sort of conditions would be condemned as cruelty to children these days!”

“I eventually ended up captain of my house and had the luxury of a one-bar electric fire – and a small boy whose job it was to polish my shoes”.

However Stephen has some warmer memories of his time at Millburgh. “I can remember on summer’s evenings looking out from my window over the heath right to the top of Gallows Hill. Sadly we rarely got the chance to explore the heath as we were only at Millburgh Hall in the evenings. It was largely unexplored but jolly interesting. We called it Selham Heath, it was a romantic and mysterious place. It was all heather – there was none of this plantation that’s here today.”

Changing Landscape

A conifer plantation now stands between the Hall and the top of Gallows Hill. It must have been planted shortly after Stephen left Seaford College as I estimate the trees here are around 45 years old. Stephen may not have had much time to explore the heathland when he was a boy – but he’s certainly making up for it now. He currently owns and manages 50 acres of heathland at Hambledon Common in Surrey and speaks enthusiastically of the work he has recently undertaken to bring the rare heath-loving sand lizard back to his site.

As we stand on the driveway Stephen points across the old heathland area, “There were no trees at all here when I left Millburgh - but there was a strip of a few tall pines which stood on their own at the top of the hill.” We decided to walk through the plantation towards Gallows Hill and see if these veteran trees still stand hidden amongst the rows of planted pines. In some areas



of the plantation, where the pines have allowed some light to hit the floor, you can still find remnants of Stephen's Selham Heath. "I'm envious of the amount of bell heather that has survived here under the pines. On the heathland I own and manage at Hambledon a lot of the heather was lost".

As we reached the crest of the ridge we found a distinct band of old pine trees which looked very different from the straight, regimented pines of the surrounding plantation. Their spreading, twisting branches are evidence of trees which have grown unchallenged in an open landscape, "These pines have grown up on a heathland," Stephen declares and turns to look back through the trees to his window at Millburgh Hall, "These are the pines I remember".

Sussex Wildlife Trust consultations

The **Sussex Wildlife Trust** became involved with Graffham Common at the turn of the century when a few events coincided. We had recently undertaken a piece of work to identify areas where new wildlife reserves could help to join up existing wildlife sites and create a connected 'living landscape' with major benefits for our wildlife. Land at Graffham Common became available for sale and we immediately realised that this area could form a vital bridge between the established heathlands at Ambersham and Lavington Commons. We were fortunate to receive a major donation at this time which allowed us to purchase the area behind Millburgh Hall – an area we called Graffham Common



Top: Michael Blencowe (in pink cap) leads a wildlife walk on Gallows Hill, February 2012

Below: SWT's Jane Willmott (on right) in consultation with Graffham residents, February 2012





Clearing the pine trees - View from Gallows Hill, October 2014

West. In 2010 another piece of the Common came up for sale – the Gallows Hill area – and through an appeal to our members we were able to raise the necessary funds to purchase the land.

Our intention was to restore the area back to heathland and complete an important ‘missing piece’ of the original heathland landscape of West Sussex. Throughout 2012 our Living Landscapes Officer Jane Willmott and I held a number of wildlife walks and consultation events to explain our plans for the site and to listen to the views of neighbours and villagers. Our consultation showed there was support for a heathland restoration programme which would be managed with the assistance of cattle grazing. We met with local people, horse riders, naturalists and walkers to agree on the plans for the site which we hoped would have a minimum impact on current users but maximum benefits for the wildlife and people using the common in the future.

Return of the Heathland

In early 2013 the first of the felling operations took place at Graffham Common West and 70% of the mature pines were harvested. To encourage heather growth the pine needles on the ground were scraped. In late autumn 2013 the area below Gallows Hill received a similar treatment. Graeme Ault was appointed as the volunteer reserve warden.

Now, as I stand at Graffham Common West in the summer sunset, there is a greater feeling of space and light. Under my feet the shoots of young heather are pushing through the soil and revelling in the sunlight after decades of exile under the pines. And, it may be my imagination but can I hear the distant call of the first nightjar returning to Graffham Common - or could it be the ghostly scraping of Curly’s running boards on the tarmac?

Michael Blencowe, 2013

With thanks to Stephen Dean & David Bradford.

The National Trust at Lavington Common

by Fiona Scully, National Trust

We acquired Lavington Common north east of the road on 18th November, 1937 from the Langport Trust Limited. It was given to the NT in 1937 and is a Registered Common with no Common rights.

The wildlife interest at Lavington Common is the lowland dry heath and wet heath communities. Acclaimed for its nationally important insect fauna the site is also extremely valuable in a regional context for its lichens, wet heath plants, reptiles and bird species. The Common was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in

Heather on the Common, August 2012



1965. There are four Bronze Age barrows on the Common, all are Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The Pot Brook stream was planted with rhododendrons in 1866, when Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford planted 100 ornamental bushes on the south side of Pot Brook, although these were destroyed by fire in 1918. Presumably the rhododendron ponticum root stock took over and it now forms a dense walkway alongside the banks of the stream, which is known as Merlin's Wood. The brook's course through the property is deeply incised and is used by sea trout.

Sand lizards were reintroduced on the Common in the early 1990s and we now have a good population. The Amphibian and Reptile Group help manage a small area of the Common and carry out reptile surveys.

The area south west of the road is Lavington Plantation gifted on 25th October, 2000 by the Robus Trust, on the condition that the area is restored to lowland heath. It used to be open heathland and part of Lavington Common around 70 years ago. The Scot's Pine was planted in 1935 and 1958. The site is known to contain five Bronze Age round barrows. The pine trees have been progressively thinned and the site now supports wet and dry heathland communities, with rare species such as bristle club rush, yellow sedge and oblong leaved sundew. The heath with its gorse and sandy tracks is ideal for all kinds of spiders and is rich in specialist invertebrates including digger wasps and solitary bees. In areas free from the heavy cloak of bracken, the wet heath is home to the bog bush cricket and attracts dragonflies such as common and ruddy darters, golden ringed and large red damselfly. Sections

of the old forestry tracks have become ruts perfect for holding water, with the peaty edges filled with sundews and sphagnum. The evocative chuuurrghhhh of the nightjar can be heard during summer months. Other notable birds are woodlark, Dartford warbler and stonechats. It's also home to snipe and woodcock.

Management today is to try and reduce the vigorous spread and dominance of birch and bracken. The aim is to maintain a balance of open areas with patches of scrub and a varied age structure of scattered trees. This is done through some grazing using our Belted Galloway cows, and using volunteers to cut back young birch to ensure the open landscape is maintained.

Both sites are open access where people can wander freely at any time and enjoy the openness and colours of the heath, with the South Downs silhouetted in the background. The only time we request people keep to main tracks with their dogs is during nesting season, as many birds nest directly on the ground and are vulnerable to disturbance.



Belted Galloway on the Plantation, September 2012

Fiona Scully, National Trust, 2015

Lavington Plantation in Winter, December 2014



Some of The Birds of Lavington Common and Plantation

A Personal View by Alan Perry
(originally written for *Graffham Parish News*, 2008)

As I walk the dogs, or undertake a survey (on behalf of the Sussex Ornithological Society) on Lavington Common/Plantation, the binoculars strung around my neck often prompt the well-meaning but erroneous question, "Are you twitching?" Let's clear this one up straight away. A *Birdwatcher* (or the modern term *Birder*) is someone who just loves looking at birds, rare or common, and loves being in the countryside, here or anywhere in the world. These two labels can apply equally to most scientifically orientated ornithologists or to any of us looking out of the

kitchen window at the bird feeder and trying to identify what we see. A *Twitcher*, on the other hand, is a collector of lists mainly of rare birds and will, to improve his year or life list (it is usually men) drop family and job to rush anywhere in the British Isles to see (often only briefly) and tick that rare bird. It is a highly charged and competitive business. So now you know, and can ask the correct question in the future when you see me, or someone like me, wandering around the countryside, binoculars in hand.

Below: Lavington Common, August 2010





Above: Lavington Plantation, January 2012

We are very lucky in this area and particularly Graffham as we benefit from such a diverse mixture of countryside; farmland, woods, downs and heaths, not to mention our gardens and hedged lanes. It is this lack of a monoculture that provides us, if we but look, with such a varied flora and fauna.

I'll write of my favourite birding places, Lavington Common and Plantation.

With some nervousness, I must admit to a particular interest in Lavington Plantation, as I realise not everyone has approved of the restoration work. It was acquired and then given to the National Trust by the Robus Trust for it to be returned to heathland. My co-trustee and I acquired the land, gave it to the National Trust, and dictated the overall terms of the project. Heathland (ours is actually "Atlantic Heathland") is rarer than rainforest and, over the 3000 or some years since it was first cleared by man, it has developed its own unique ecology which we will

lose unless it continues to be managed. All of the Atlantic Heaths of the UK could comfortably fit onto the Isle of Wight – we are indeed lucky to have such areas on our doorstep.

Let's first look at spring and summer. If it's a sunny day in mid-February (I know that's not really spring), when all that can be heard is the Storm Thrush (**Mistle Thrush**) and the first song of the **Robin**, listen out for a stubby but glorious songster either sitting in one of the pines or more likely in a bouncy, circular flight overhead. This is the **Wood Lark**, formerly a very rare bird, now one of the specialists of the new habitat on the plantation and which has, for me, the most spirit uplifting song ushering in the dawn of another new year's spring. This will be followed in mid – March by our earliest returning migrant the **Chiffchaff**. This does just what it says on the tin, sings "chiff chaff." Then all is activity on both common and plantation. Look out for the sentinel of the heath, the handsome **Stonechat**, whose alarm call will always give him away and which sounds like two bits of flint being knocked together. Especially on the common, amongst the heather, look out for a little dark bird with a long tail, flitting around using the Stonechat as a guard. This is the **Dartford Warbler**, a bird that disappeared completely from Sussex until 1989 and has now returned to us. Its song is a rather scratchy unmusical affair not at all a "warble".

As March gives way to April, our heaths and woods fill with breeding birds, both migrants and residents. Just to name a few :- **Yellow Hammers** ("little-bit-of-bread-and-no-cheeeese" song), **Linnets**, often forming small colonies, **Blackcaps** whose song people sometimes mistake for the Nightingale's it is so "luscious", **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** feeding in the pines on cones and insects, **Green Woodpeckers** setting to on the ground below feeding on ants.

A little later, as May passes into June, look out for a bird of prey that has long wings, similar to our town and village Swifts but looks like a mini Peregrine Falcon. This is the **Hobby** and, after virtually disappearing from the UK, it is now a

regular summer visitor to our area, especially the heaths. May is the time to look out for another visitor that breeds with us, the **Tree Pipit**. A boring little brown job but the male makes up for its lack of sartorial elegance by launching himself up into the air from a tree in the breeding territory and parachuting down singing as he goes; his song descending as he descends.

For the late-night people, there is the mysterious **Nightjar** to watch and listen for. A bird of the night (as you would expect from its name) and in previous times the recipient of much bad press due to its ghostly appearance and the strange churring noise it makes. Stand at the top of the plantation in a clear area and wait for the light to just about disappear and at that moment you will, or should, hear them. If you are patient, you may even see them flying giving an odd gloop gloop call or wing clapping to attract a mate. Less dramatic but also seen flying at dusk (a behaviour known as roding) are **Woodcock**, giving their

strange frog-like croaking call interspersed with a high pitched squeak.

Watch out in the autumn for families of **Buzzards**. I have seen up to eight, soar over your heads, seemingly just enjoying life in the thermals, which as far as I can see is exactly what they are doing. Meanwhile, flocks of **Great, Blue, Long-tailed and Coal Tits** busy themselves in the treetops accompanied, if you are lucky enough to spot them, by **Treecreeper, Goldcrest** and **Spotted Flycatcher** plus perhaps the more obvious **Great Spotted Woodpecker** and its handsome relative the **Green Woodpecker**. I love walking through Graffham Common and talking with Mr King, the forester but the birdwatching is rather limited, because as the trees in the forestry plantations mature, the birds become less diverse and more difficult to see. However autumn is a good time, if we listen and look hard enough, to find those feeding flocks in the pine tops.

Lavington Common, October 2014





Lavington Plantation in Winter, December 2014

Winter has its own influx of either northern or continental birds escaping the worst of the weather. Up to 60 **Meadow Pipits** roost in the heather (boring brown jobs again) and, in the years when their food is in short supply, flocks of **Crossbills** (the males are bright red), **Siskin** and **Lesser Redpoll** can be seen. If we are very lucky we will see a ghostly white male **Hen Harrier** hunting over the heather at dusk or, as we had this winter, a Scandinavian outcast – the **Great Grey Shrike**. This bird catches small rodents or birds and sticks them on sharp thorns for eating later!

I hope this just gives you a flavour of what can be seen and enjoyed within such a small area. Personally I treasure these heaths not just for their wildlife but as places that are still open and wild

*Walking the dog - a popular Graffham pastime
(at the National Trust Car Park, Lavington Common)*

in our very crowded county. Stand on Lavington Common or Plantation on a frosty late January day with the sun sinking red over the Downs and thousands of Rooks and Jackdaws moving south overhead to their downland roost that has been used for generations, and I hope you will agree with me that we must conserve these very special places.

Alan Perry
October 2008



The Bishops Ring and the Hurricane

A Landmark on the Downs damaged by the Great Storm of 1987 - archive notes by Padoma Scott and Marian Bowley

The great gale of last October was erratic in the damage it caused to trees and woodland on the South Downs. Unfortunately, one very severely damaged local landmark was the Bishop's Ring on Woolavington Down on the edge of Duncton Quarry.

The well-known ring of trees, beeches and holm oaks, is associated with Bishop Wilberforce, the most distinguished of the nineteenth century owners of nearby Lavington Park.

The Ring is a particularly striking landmark as it is just where the escarpment, after running almost due west to east from Harting, turns sharply southwards towards Bignor Hill. It is the highest section of the South Downs escarpment, and the actual highest point of the South Downs is very close to the Bishop's Ring in Crown Tegleaze Wood, an "Ancient" woodland. The Ring is the only one on the ridge of the Downs west of Chanctonbury Ring which can be seen from it, in the magnificent view slightly to the south-east.

The historical, as well as the landscape, interest of the high ridge and its southern slopes is not always realised. Of the two great Roman roads running north from Chichester, one, going to Silchester, crosses these Downs not far from Cocking; the other, the road to London (Stane Street), rather to the east by Bignor Hill.

Under the later kings of the Saxon kingdom, the southern slope down to the coastal plain was hunting forest belonging

to King Harold's House of Godwin, and most of it remained baronial forest or deer park or warren until at least the sixteenth century. There are moreover many traces of ancient occupation scattered over the area, from late Bronze and Iron age lynchets, crossdykes and barrows to small Roman farms in south-facing coombs. Indeed, anyone walking along the escarpment ridge will stumble over crossdykes and barrows and ancient tracks all the way from Harting right up to Woolavington Down by the Bishop's Ring.

Such an interesting and beautiful area is worthy of the distinctive landmark of the Bishop's Ring. It would be a grievous loss to the landscape if the Ring should disappear. It would also greatly impoverish the views of walkers and riders using the public paths leading from the main road (A285) at Duncton Hill up to Woolavington Down as well as those using the South Downs Way a little to the west of the Ring.

The South Downs Way near Graffham after the Great Storm, 1987
© WSRO (PH10231)



After the Hurricane

On the morning after the hurricane, my father said “don’t get up we can’t get outside - it is too dangerous”! We had no contact with anybody – the phone lines were down and nobody had mobiles in 1987, but we did have a battery radio so we knew what was going on.

When we went out we discovered the stabled horses were a bit shell-shocked. Those in the field were laying down where they felt safer. A lot of the fences were down so we couldn’t let them out until my Dad had fixed them. Several people pitched up to help and once the fences were mended the horses were turned out again.

There was so much wind all the leaves came off. Although it was October, it was like winter overnight. The windows of the house were filthy and leaves were blowing around.

We had no electricity for nine days and after about four days the novelty wore off.

We had a “Hurricane Party” in our house because the freezer defrosted. We had a fire with a back boiler so we had hot water and we cooked with a paraffin stove and played *Trivial Pursuits* which was very “in” at the time. We ate sausages and burgers from the freezer but we couldn’t cook the joints. We went to the pub a few times – they had candlelight.

A single track was cleared from the main road on the first day so people could get out of the village. This was done by the local farmers - the Council didn’t come until later. We couldn’t ride out on the horses for about a fortnight as it wasn’t safe with a single track

In the woods it looked as though a tank had driven through in a line. A lot of the trees were snapped off in large swathes at a height of about 10’. It looked a bit like old photos of Passchendaele. It was quite an uncanny feeling.

The hurricane created lots of jumps for the horses from all the trees which had fallen. Ron King looked after the woods and it took him a long time to make it passable! We got him to leave certain trees for us, and continued to use them as cross country jumps for a while.

Jo Morgan, 2015



Bridleway in East Lavington to go on the Map

By Celia Tinker and Vivien Gosden

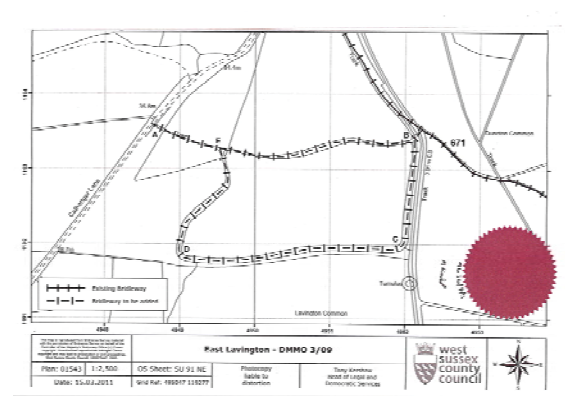
(reprinted from *Graffham Parish News*, August 2013)

On 11 July 2013, West Sussex County Council published confirmation of the addition of a bridleway in Cathanger Woods.

Entry is off Cathanger Lane, to the north of National Trust Lavington Common, it runs along to existing bridleway 671 and circles back to Cathanger Lane.

Now any walker, cyclist, horse rider can happily and legally use this path again. Bridleway signposts will soon be in place.

It was in February 2009 that metal fencing was erected on land recently sold by the Pitshill Estate. This was a great blow to the many people who had been using the path for well over twenty years. Ninety two people who had walked, ridden



or cycled on the path over the last twenty years wrote up user evidence forms. Roman law and common law formed the modern law which allowed us to claim use of the path as of right.

Celia Tinker and Vivien Gosden

Below: Exploring the bridleway on foot, June 2014



Long Bostle

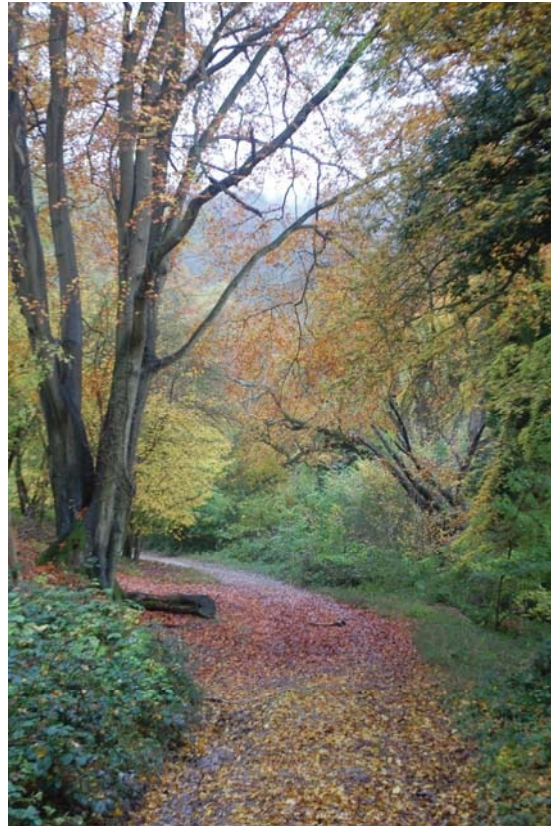
By Celia Tinker

Long Bostle Downland Preservation Society acts on behalf of the residents of Graffham, East Lavington and other nearby villages to protect the natural beauty and tranquillity of the villages and the local area of the South Downs and countryside. The society's aim is to preserve the rights of way for quiet enjoyment by residents and visitors alike.

The society was set up in 2001 with the support of Graffham Parish Council and it continues so that it can meet any future challenges to tranquillity.

The reason for setting up the society was that an Order was made on 24 June 1998 by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to make the Long Bostle track 952, then classified as Road Used as a Public Path (RUPP), into a Byway Open to all Traffic (BOAT) and legal for the public to use in any sort of mechanically propelled vehicle. This track runs up the scarp slope of the Downs starting at the bottom of Church Hill, alongside Ladywell Cottage and then joins the South Downs Way and goes west to Hillbarn Lane at Cocking near the A286. Because of objections there were two Public Inquiries. The first started on 16 May 2000 and it was re-opened 13 March 2001. Following the Inquiries the Inspector ruled that the track should be a BOAT thus allowing mechanically propelled vehicles such as trail bikes and 4x4s. The Long Bostle Downland Preservation Society was set up to fight this decision.

The only way to change this decision was to apply for judicial review, challenging the Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs. A large amount of money was needed and villagers and people from further afield contributed. The society was most ably advised by an expert on historic rights of way Tricia Newby. Her arguments resulted in the Treasury Solicitor conceding in December 2001

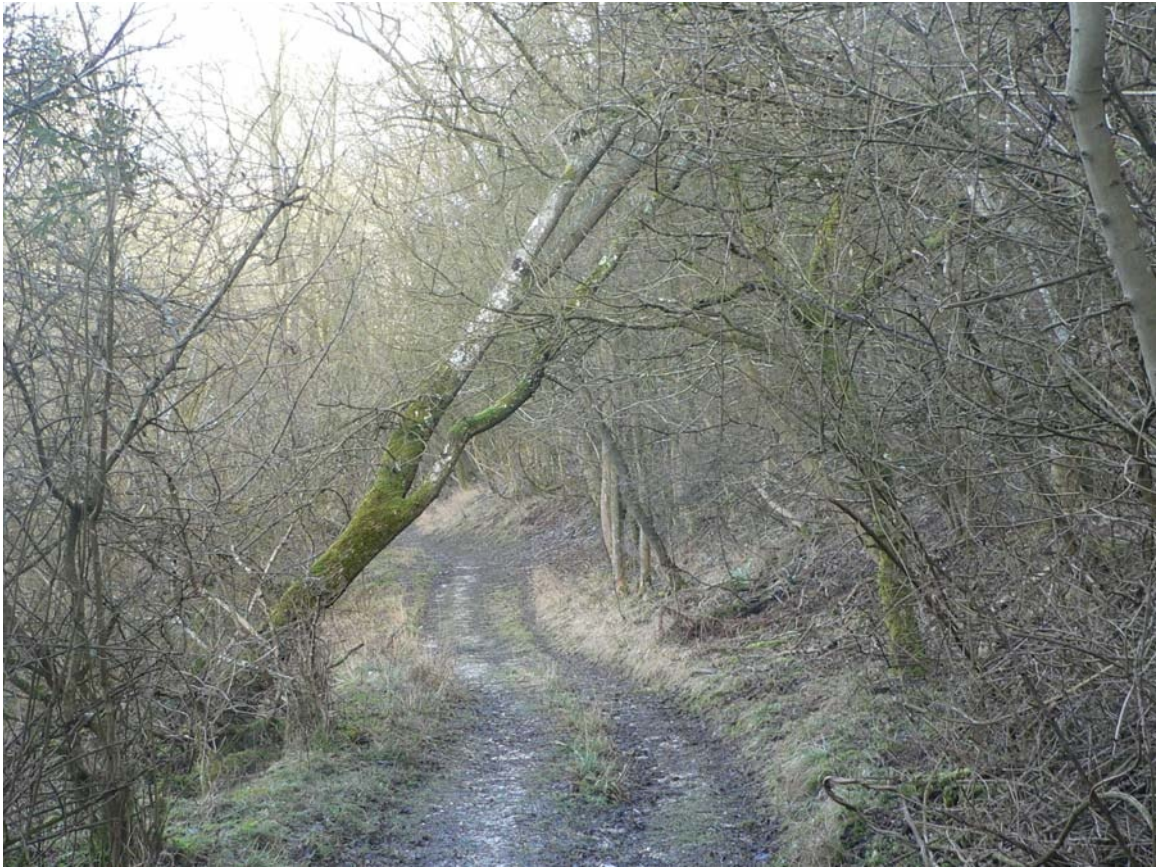


Long Bostle in Autumn

that the inspector had erred on two points of law and so the inspector's decision was quashed.

Long Bostle Road as it is described on old maps, returned to being a RUPP- a classification now out of date. As such it was targeted for a reclassification to BOAT by the Trail Riders Fellowship who wanted it for riding trail bikes (motor bikes). The society successfully fought this application and other attempts by the Trail Riders to acquire rights for trail bikes on Graffham paths.

The society was in agreement with other local groups in England that the law needed to be changed, because as it stood if there was once a right of way with horse-drawn carts it followed that there was a right with mechanically propelled vehicles. Thanks to lobbying by umbrella organisations called Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement and Green Lanes Protection Group the law was changed by the Natural



Long Bostle, February 2009

Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) of 2006. Long Bostle was given the brand new classification of Restricted Byway, a classification brought in by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and now implemented; this allowed horse-drawn vehicles but no mechanically propelled vehicles. The NERC Act saved lots of other tracks that cross the Downs in our area from ever being legally used by motorised recreational vehicles.

We wanted to do one more thing to safeguard Long Bostle from motor vehicles and that was to legally put gates across at each end. In 2008 a Traffic Regulation Order allowed the installation of self-closing bridle-gates wide enough for small horse-drawn carriages.

The only motor vehicles that are legal now on our area of the Downs are landowners' vehicles. But there has been illegal use. The society has supported the Pathwatch scheme set up in 2006.

Pathwatch enables any member of the public to telephone or go on the website to report to the police illegal motor vehicles seen on footpaths, bridleways or restricted byways on the Downs or around the villages.

Graffham and East Lavington were included inside the boundaries of South Downs National Park which was formally established on 1 April 2011. The society is pleased that one of the purposes of national parks is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.

As for the name of the society we know two definitions of bostle (or bostal/ bostall):

- a track leading up the chalk face of a hill
- a Sussex name given to a track that climbs up the northern scarp slope of the South Downs, often a former droving route.

Celia Tinker, 2012

The History of Graffham Camp Site

From an exhibit from an exhibition held by the Camping Club Committee in the 1970s (probably composed by Jean Bayles)

Mr Hubert Visick, who bequeathed the site to the Camping Club, was a dental surgeon living in Eastbourne. He bought the land in 1941 at a sale of a large part of the Lavington Estate as a retreat for himself and family. He built a three roomed hut called "The Shack" which, sadly, has now been demolished. The land at that time was covered with stumps of felled pine trees which had been cut for timber. The sawdust of the cutting pit is still apparent in one part of the site. Towards the end of the war, as a result of his friendship with Percy Lindsey, a well known old club member, he offered its use to the club as a site, reserving the area round The Shack for his own use. He allowed prisoners-of-war to meet for a camp fire and talk on Sunday afternoons.

In October 1946 Percy Lindsey, Wilf Groves and George Bayles camped for a weekend on the site to assess its possibility, and during that winter the Surrey DA caused local dismay by visiting the site by coach! At Whitsun 1947 the London District Association held the first meet on the site - and of the 20 or so people there are three on the present Committee - R Sheppard, J Bayles and M Groves. The outfits consisted of bicycles, tandems and one Austin Seven. All tents were lightweight and were pitched on the hill beyond the tumulus,

Campers at Graffham, 1941



Stephen Hillhouse (in hat) opens the Visick Shelter, 1948

much of the rest of the site being impenetrable. The stone road as far as where the Memorial Shelter stands was already in existence. Many a good campfire was enjoyed up there before it became necessary to ban fires.

For some time after this, the site was run by the Association of Cycle Campers and was not ready for general use, but in 1949 a joint LDA and Surrey DA meet was held, the Camp Stewards being J Hines and G Bayles. In March 1950 control of the site was taken over by W Clemetts of Headquarters staff. By this time Mr Visick had died and left the site to the club and "The Shack"



for the use of National Council members. In 1950, at the AGM, R Baigent was elected Chief Camp Steward, a post held so ably until 1969. Wilf Groves was elected Deputy Camp Steward, a position also held until 1968. On the Committee were J Hines (present Chief Camp Steward) and R Hines (present Chairman). The Chairman elected R Sheppard who held that office until 1968. The practice of winter working parties was established by this committee and the fees for the season were £97!

During the winter of 1954-5 the Memorial Shelter to Mr Visick was erected and the name of Percy Lindsey added. Throughout the 1950s and 60s the work went on, turning the site into its present form - extending the tracks - making further areas available for camping - planting to improve screening and beautifying the site - improving toilets, etc., BUT always keeping in mind the donor's wish that the essential character of the site should be changed as little as possible.

Through the first half of the 1970s the same principle has been observed, although terracing has been necessary to provide pitches for larger tents and to combat erosion. Much work has been done by the still voluntary committee supplemented by many members at working parties to provide the necessary service areas to cope with modern conditions. All work on the



site over the last 25 years, apart from building the cesspits, laying the water main, extending some roads and a certain amount of tree thinning, has been done by the members themselves. The names are too numerous to mention of those who have given their time and skill to "Visick".



*Aerial view of the
campsite, 1998*

How Graffham Campsite grew

Extract from an article in *Caravanning Club Magazine*, March 2015

The Graffham site was managed by volunteers until the late 1970s, with the Association of Cycle Campers taking charge in the early days, providing Stewards to oversee camping on site. The Club's South-East Region took on the responsibility a few years later.

By 1977 the Stewards rota included more than 20 Club members from as far afield as Twickenham, south-west London and Calne, Wiltshire. Every weekend the volunteers committed to run the campsite and welcome other members to camp.

Gradually Club Headquarters took a more prominent role, until it began appointing Wardens (now known as Holiday Site Managers) in 1979 - the same year the site was finally connected to mains drainage.

Today's name of Graffham is relatively new. For most of its life the campsite was known as Visick after its founder. It still holds true to his ideals, as club members and others pitch in secluded glades surrounded by trees and rhododendron bushes. It is a wonderful location to enjoy the beauty of the South Downs National Park.

Graffham Camp Site 2015



Pennygate - Graffham's Youth Hostel

Between 1938 and 1947, Pennygate in Nonnington Lane was a youth hostel. Graffham resident, Sonia Williams, tells how she first came to the village as a teenager, staying in the hostel just after the War.

I think I probably came to Graffham Youth Hostel in 1946. The War was just over and we had a lovely teacher at Chichester High School called Miss Yates-Brown. We learned Environmental Study – a special thing that you did in the sixth form. Of course I loved this subject because it was all about farming, Sussex, walking on the Downs, fishing, and everything to do with the country which is my idea of fun.

In the Easter Holidays she wanted a cycling tour to go to Graffham and back doing Duncton Hill on the way up and Cocking Hill on the way down so we did a circular and we broke the journey at Graffham. In those days you got to Graffham via Beechwood Lane at the bottom of Duncton Hill. It was a proper road. We passed Seaford College on our left and cycled down the hill. It made such a difference to the journey!

I think there were about twelve of us cycling and it was the most wonderful trip, I'll always remember it. We had to sleep in the dormitory – boys had to go in the roof and the girls were down on the first floor. We had a lovely time. It was the usual youth hostel setup: you got there and you started peeling potatoes and getting your meal ready because you had to do it all yourselves.



Rucksack Magazine, Autumn 1938 *South Coast Group*



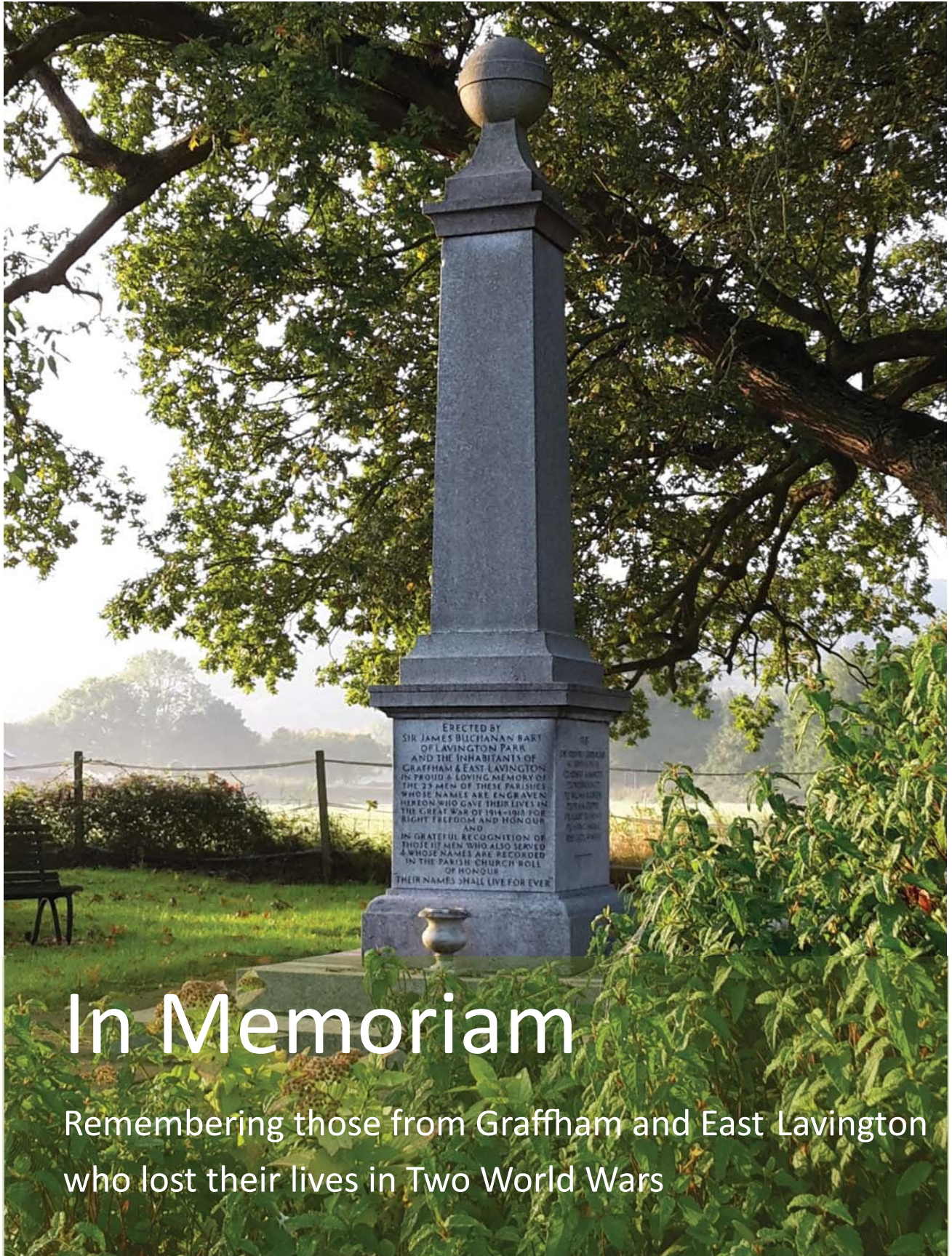
GRAFFHAM.

South Coast's chief news item is the opening of the new hostel at Graffham (see "Handbook Amendments"). It is the first of the long awaited South Downs hostels in South Coast territory. Negotiations are actively proceeding for the acquisition of a second.

You had to put your beds down - they were little beds already there and you had to have a sleeping bag so that you were warm. We all had our regulation sheet lining that you put inside. They provided them, hessian stuff. There we were for the night - and then the next morning we had bacon and eggs and everything - all cooked by us. There weren't staff there. There was a warden but she was just to keep order. Then the next morning we went back via Cocking.

Sonia Williams, 2013

Article from Rucksack Magazine and anonymously sketched postcard printed courtesy of the Youth Hostels Association England and Wales



In Memoriam

Remembering those from Graffham and East Lavington
who lost their lives in Two World Wars

Lest We Forget

by Brigadier Alan Gordon

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month (when the guns ceased fire in the First World War) each year the people of Britain remember those who have lost their lives in the defence of their country and on the nearest Sunday which is nominated as Remembrance Sunday. Ceremonies take place throughout our land at the Cenotaph in London and at churches and memorials in cities, towns and villages. As we remember, we acknowledge the debt those of us who are left owe to those who died, to their families who have lost so much and to those who suffer still through injury, be it mental or physical, by our contribution to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. We remember with pride and gratitude the human cost that has secured our freedom.

In Graffham there are two memorials, one in the Church of St Giles nestling under the Downs on the southern edge of the village and a memorial erected by Sir James Buchanan the squire of the village after the First World War, in the centre of the village surrounded by mature trees so appropriate to our beautiful County of Sussex and in view of the Downs. The names of 25 men of Graffham who died in the First World War and nine who died in the Second World War are engraved upon the memorials. There are very few left living in our village who can remember those days and we can only imagine the agony of the families as the news arrived telling of each death but we know our community today and perhaps we can be pretty confident that the families who suffered will have received huge

Act of Remembrance, 11th November 2011, with Revd Steve Gray and children from Lavington Park Federation





St Giles Church - in Graffham traditionally decorated with poppies

warmth and support in Graffham. The names are listed on the following pages.

In the weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday a gallant band of villagers collect in aid of the Poppy Appeal and we are proud of the generosity shown by the people of our community, and long may that continue for we are well aware of the continuing need from more recent conflicts as well as those from times past.

On 11 November at 1100 villagers meet at the War Memorial come rain or shine for a simple ceremony of remembrance led by our Rector. The names of those who have died are read by pupils from our village school, a poignant connection between the young with life ahead of them and those who gave their lives for them. The ceremony incorporates the immortal promise:

“They shall grow not old as we who are left grow old. Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them”.

The Last Post sounds and we stand in silence to remember. Then the exhortation inscribed on the 2nd Division memorial in Kohima in Eastern India erected following the battle against the Japanese:

“When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today” is said and the vibrant notes of Reveille sound.

Of course, this day may be in the working week and on Remembrance Sunday a similar ceremony as a part of a special Sunday service is held in St Giles’ church amongst a full congregation. It is led by a visiting priest because our Rector is also the Chaplain to Seaford College and a service is held there also. We have been blessed with notable speakers at these services. And so the community of Graffham remembers each year the sacrifices made by those who have died for our future.

Alan Gordon, 2015

1914-1918

BARRETT	Herbert Alfred	2nd. Cpl. 488552. 9th. Field Company The Royal Engineers Died of wounds 1. 10. 18. Aged 36. Son of William & Charlotte Barrett of 90, Prince Albert Street, Eastney, Hampshire, Husband of Dorothy Barrett, of Norwood near East Lavenham. Born in Goreleston, Suffolk and enlisted in Petworth. Buried Etaples Military Cemetery.
BRIDGER	Alfred Edward	Bombardier 95224. 80th. Brigade The Royal Field Artillery Died 19. 8. 16 Aged 27. Son of James & Maria Bridger of Graffham Born in Graffham and enlisted in Brighton. Buried Etaples Military Cemetery
BROCKHURST	James Arthur	Guardsman 6377. 2nd. Battalion. The Scots Guards. Killed in action near Ypres 18. 12. 14. Born and enlisted in Petworth. Commemorated on The Ploegsteert Memorial MR. 32
BOXALL	Reginald	Trooper 1157. The Household Battalion. Formerly with the Royal Horse Guards. Died of wounds 14. 4. 17. Aged 20. Son of Henry & Sophie Boxall of Middle Heath Cottages, Graffham Born in Graffham and enlisted in Petworth. Buried Aubigny Communal Cemetery Extension.
CLEMENTS	Albert Bertram	[SDGW and CWGC list him as Arthur] Private. TF. 200797. 1/4th. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment. 53rd Division. Killed in action in Palestine 23. 3. 18. Aged 23. Son of Arthur & Mary Clements of. 1, Oakleigh, Jubilee Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire, Born in Graffham and enlisted in Petworth. Commemorated on The Jerusalem Memorial, Palestine MR. 34.
COOPER	Frank	Private 30127. 2/5th. Battalion The East Lancashire Regiment. 19th. Division. Died. 8. 10. 18. Born in Graffham and enlisted in Chichester. Next of kin, Graffham. Buried Valenciennes (St. Roch). Communal Cemetery.
COOPER	R C	Driver 154149. 22nd. Reserve Battery The Royal Field Artillery. Died at home 8. 11. 16. Aged 38 Son of Mrs Mary Cooper of "The Brook" Graffham. Not included in SDGW. Buried St. Johns Churchyard, Sutton Veny, Warminster. Wiltshire
COOPER	William Henry	Private. 42615. 10th. Battalion The Lincolnshire Regiment. 66th. Division. Died of wounds 6. 9. 18. Aged 19 Son of Mary & John Cooper of "Woodmans" Graffham Born in Graffham and enlisted in Chichester. Buried St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen.
CURTIS	George Edward	Private. L. 1046. 9th. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment 24th. Division. Killed in action at Guillemont on the Somme. 18. 8. 16 Aged 22. Son of Mr & Mrs William Curtis later of Bittlesham Cottages, Northchapel. Born in Angmering and enlisted in Chichester. Buried Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval.
EADE	Lawrence	Bombardier 55752. 51st. Battery The Royal Field Artillery. Killed in action near Ypres 20. 11. 14. Aged 24. Son of Alfred & Georgina Eade of The Home of Rest, Graffham. Husband of Mrs Ethel Eade of Benwell, Newcastle on Tyne. Born in Havant, Hampshire and enlisted in Petworth. Buried Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Belgium.
EADE	Victor Charles	Gunner. 75431. 51st. Battery The Royal Field Artillery. Killed in action 20. 11. 14 Aged 18. Son of Alfred & Georgina Eade of The Home of Rest, Graffham. Born in Emsworth and enlisted in Petworth. Buried Sanctuary Wood Cemetery, Belgium.
ELLIS	John Charles	Sergeant 8245. 1st. Battalion The Hampshire Regiment 4th. Division. Killed in action 23. 10. 16. Aged 27. Son of John & Emily Ellis of Perrotts Cottages, Graffham. Born in Midhurst and enlisted in Chichester. Commemorated on The Thiepval Memorial MR. 21,
ELLIS	William Ernest	Private. L. 10092. 2nd. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment 1st. Division. Died of wounds on the Marne 11. 9. 14. Regular Soldier. Aged 19. Son of John & Emily Ellis of Perrotts Cottages Graffham Born in Midhurst and enlisted in Chichester. Included on Midhurst War Memorial. Buried Priez Communal Cemetery.

Information from the Graffham & East Lavington War Memorial supplied by and copyright of Roll-of-Honour.com

1914-1918

FRYER	Sydney Ernest	Private. G. 596. 2nd. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment 1st. Division. Killed in action on the Somme 15. 8. 16. Aged 33. Son of William & Martha Fryer of Graffham Formerly of Thornton Heath. Educated at Beulah Road School, Thornton Heath. Born in Thornton Heath and enlisted in Midhurst. Included on The Croydon Roll of Honour. Buried Flatiron Copse Cemetery, Mametz.
HOGG	Clarence	Sergeant 89501. "C" Battery 49th. Brigade The Royal Field Artillery Killed in action 28. 10. 15. age 23. Son of Thomas & Agnes Hogg of Lavington Park. Born in Edinburgh and enlisted in Reading. Buried Potijze Chateau Wood Cemetery,
HONEYBUN	George	Rifleman 5529. 1st. Battalion The Rifle Brigade. 4th. Division. Killed in action near Ypres 13. 10. 17. Born in Hampstead and enlisted in Petworth. Commemorated on The Tyne Cot Memorial MR. 30
LONG	Harry	Pioneer 172000 The Royal Engineers. (Att. Guards Division) Died of wounds 27. 9. 16. Aged 36. Husband of Mrs Esther Long of 27, The High Street, Graffham. Enlisted in Petworth. Buried Grove Town Cemetery Meaulte.
MILLS	Cecil Williams	Rifleman A/202118. 1st. Battalion The Kings Royal Rifle Corps. 2nd. Division. Killed in action 8. 10. 18. Aged 20. Son of George & Bessie Mills of Wiblings Farm, Graffham Formerly RASC. Enlisted in Midhurst. Born in East Horsley, Surrey. Buried
NUDD	Montague	Lance Sergeant 11272. 8th. Battalion. The Duke of Wellingtons (West Riding) Regiment 11th. Division. Died of wounds on Gallipoli. 27. 8. 15. Aged 22. Son of Robert & Ada Nudd of 20, Kynaston Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey. Born in Graffham and enlisted in Halifax, Yorkshire. Resident of Graffham. Commemorated
PAULL	Sydney G	Private. TF. 220612. 1st. Battalion The East Yorkshire Regiment. 21st. Division. Died at home 22. 9. 18. Aged 19. Son of Sydney & Elizabeth Paull of Westerlands, Duncton. Formerly with the Royal Sussex Regiment. Buried, St. Giles Churchyard, Graffham
POST	Frederick	Guardsman 17727. 3rd, Battalion The Coldstream Guards. The Guards Division. Died of wounds 19. 4. 18 Aged 37. Eldest son of Fredrick & Anne Post of Hertmonceux. Husband of Ruth Post of Upper Lodge, Graffham. Born in Mortimer, Berks and enlisted in Horsham. Buried Etaples Military Cemetery
SNOOKE	John Thomas	Private. TF. 242415. 2/6th. Battalion The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. 61st. Division. Killed in action 27. 5. 18. Aged 42. Husband of Florence Snooke of 2, Horndean Cottages, Ventnor, Isle of Wight. Formerly with the Hampshires. Enlisted in Newport IOW. Connection with Graffham unknown. Buried Isbergues
SUNDERLAND	Geoffrey	Captain. "C" Company 2nd. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment 1st. Division. Killed in action 24. 9. 18. near Vermand Aged 29. Son of John William & Agnes Henrietta Sunderland. Husband of Grace Lilian Sunderland of Abletts Cottage, Chithurst. Private Tablet. Buried Berthaucourt Communal Cemetery, Pontru.
TODMAN	Henry William.	Private L. 7465. 2nd. Battalion The Royal Sussex Regiment. 1st. Division. Killed in action at Richebourg L'Avoue 9. 5. 15. Born in Graffham and enlisted in Tillington near Petworth. Regular Soldier. Next of kin, Graffham. Commemorated on The Le Touret Memorial MR22
WELLEN	Edward Arthur	[Listed as (WELLIN on war memorial)]G. 19510. 11th. Battalion the Royal Sussex Regiment 39th. Division Killed in action 29. 4. 18. Born in Lower Launch, Surrey and enlisted in Chichester. Buried Voormezele Enclosure No 3 Belgium. (Above details for Edward Wellen). Other details, i.e. L/Cpl and date of death 1915. Refer to Rueben Frederick Wellen. 2nd R/Sx. Who appears on Midhurst W.M.

1939-45		
BANTING	Stanley James	Sergeant W/Op. gunner 1321638. The Royal Air Force. 61 Bomber Squadron (Lancasters). Killed in action 23rd. August 1943 Aged 21. Son of Henry & Clara Banting of Woodcote, Sussex. Buried Hei-Boeicop (Heicop) General Cemetery. Netherlands
JAGGERS	Alexander Frederick	Sergeant W/Op gunner 927337. The Royal Air Force. 102 Bomber Squadron (Whitleys). Died 3rd. September 1941 Aged 21. Son of Frederick William & Annie Matilda Jagers of Clapton. East London. Buried Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey.
JAMES	Cyril George	Lance Cpl. 6295654. 2nd. Battalion. The Suffolk Regiment. Killed in action in Burma 13th. April 1944. Aged 30. Son of George & Mabel James. Husband of Mrs Ellen Noel James. Commemorated on The Rangoon Memorial, Burma
LOADER	George Ernest	Lance Sergeant 6395992. 1st. Regiment The Royal Horse Artillery Killed in action at Tobruk 16th. July 1941. Son of James & Sarah Jane Loader. Husband of Florence May Loader of East Lavington. Buried Tobruk Cemetery, Libya
SAYER	George Arthur	Lance Cpl 5933052. 1st. Battalion The Cambridgeshire Regiment 18th. Division. Killed in action during the defence of Singapore Island 10/15th. February 1942 Aged 28. Son of Charles William & Georgina Esther Sayer of East Lavington. Commemorated on The Singapore Memorial.
WALLACE	David John Euan	Major. 240118. The Kings Royal Rifle Corps. Special Operations Executive. Att. Greek Army. Killed in action 17th. August 1944 Aged 29. Son of Capt. the Rt. Hon. Euan David Wallace MC. PC. And Lady Idina Wallace of Petworth. Husband of Joan Prudence Wallace, West Kensington. Buried Paramythia Civil Cemetery,
WALLACE	Edward Peter Euan (DFC)	Flying Officer. 133403. Royal Air Force 128 Squadron. Son of Capt The Rt. Hon. David Euan Wallace PC. MC. & his second wife Barbara Wallace of Petworth. Educated at Eton. Buried St. Peters Churchyard, Woolavington.
WALLACE	Gerald Euan	Wing Commander 33179. The Royal Air Force. 209 Maritime Rec Squadron Coastal Command (Catalina Flying Boats). Killed in action 20th. August 1943. Commemorated on The Alamein Memorial, Egypt.
WELLER	Douglas Arthur Wallace	Sergeant (Navigator) 1487005. The Royal Air Force. 426 (RCAF) Bomber Squadron. (Lancasters). Killed in action 10th. April 1943. Aged 21. Son of Stanley Wallace and Gladys Louise Weller of Graffham. Buried Florennes Communal Cemetery. Namur, Belgium

Remembrance Day, 2009; Alan Gordon 2nd from left



Celebrating the Royal Family

1952 - 2012



Norwood Contractors Float at the Diamond Jubilee Parade, 2012 © Martin Taylor

Lillee Puttick remembers the Coronation

On the morning of the Coronation (June 1953) we went over to the Recreation Ground and we planted a copper beech tree (which I hope is still there). Several youngsters put their spadeful of dirt in. The tree was donated by Mrs Elphinstone, Martin Buckley's aunt, and my father dug the hole to plant it in.

I can remember planting the tree. It's a big copper beech over by the Bowling Green.

Actually we planted two trees, the second one was just below the Pavilion to make shade for the spectators to sit under. There weren't supposed to be two, but when Mrs Elphinstone bought the beech hedge which goes down to Heydon House,

the second copper beech was in with the ordinary beech, so we planted the two. My father was Mrs Elphinstone's gardener.

After the Pavilion became a club, and a bar was introduced, the second tree was suddenly cut down because the lorries couldn't get up the road. (Martin was very upset and I have a horrible feeling that some day somebody is going to cut the other one down - people have such queer ideas and they don't think back to how it might have got there.)

After the tree-planting ceremony, we went to the Hall where a little television set had been hired and we watched the Coronation.

Coronation Fete, June 1953 by George Garland, © WSRO (N40268)





Coronation Fete, June 1953 by George Garland, © WSRO (N40266)

Television then was quite something and there were quite a lot of us in the Hall. It was black and white. Colour wasn't around then. I was in my twenties and my son, Clifford, was seven years old.

I was one of the judges at the Coronation Fete with Tomlinson from the Stud and I do remember being on the float but not much else. We used to have a lot of bonfires, so that's more than likely, but it's not something I remember. I don't have very many photos as I couldn't afford to buy them. Several of the nice photos I've got have got numbers on them. They used to do a big sheet in the Post Office when Jack Pescod ran it and I used to get them when he took them down, otherwise I wouldn't have had a record. I didn't have money for that sort of thing.

I can't remember quite honestly whether the little ones were presented with mugs. I've got one with the Coronation on which I'm using as a

tooth mug. I know we bought a cup, saucer and plate for Clifford, and I've got a pair of vases that mother gave me.

I was probably working!

Lillee Puttick, 2008

A Post Script

The only thing that sticks in my mind about King George VI dying (February 1952) was Princess Elizabeth being in Kenya on safari. I can't remember what I was doing.

I do remember the day King George V was buried because I was going to my first job. That was January 1936. I was going to be taken in a car which was quite an excitement in those days, and we couldn't leave until rather late because of the funeral, the processions and so on.

Village Revels

From the *Midhurst and Petworth Times*, June 1953

Graffham Coronation Committee, which arranged the village's main festivities on Saturday, congratulated itself on Sunday. Everything went without a hitch and, unlike the rest of the district who celebrated the previous Tuesday, Graffham had ideal sunny weather.

The programme included a procession of decorated vehicles, prams and bicycles, sports, teas for the children, and ended with men v. women stoolball and cricket matches.

After touring the village the procession lined up on the Recreation Ground for the judging.



Coronation Fete, June 1953 by George Garland, © WSRO (N40267)

Sports, organised by the Cricket Club, were then held. Later the children went to the Empire Hall for a tea. About 150 attended, and Mrs Small, assisted by Mrs Mackenzie and helpers organised the catering. Members of the Women's Institute branch helped to serve. Coronation souvenirs were distributed.

Coronation Fete, June 1953 by George Garland, © WSRO (N40269)





Royal Milestones on Camera

Clockwise from Top Left: Wedding of HRH Prince Charles to Lady Diana Spencer (on the Rec, 1981); Wedding of HRH Prince William to Catherine Middleton (Curry and Barn Dance in the Empire Hall, 2011); Wedding of HRH Prince Charles (June Challen dresses as "Mystic Meg" for fancy dress stoolball, 1981); Queen's Golden Jubilee (Challen children at the Pavilion, 2002); Queen's Golden Jubilee (Picnic on the Rec, 2002); Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's 99th Birthday (picnic 1999)



Remembering the Silver Jubilee - 1977

(a facebook chat)

Jane Stickley: There was a massive party at the White Horse in the evening.

Kathy Boulton: Party day at the Rec and BBQ at the White Horse; I think it was stoolball; I think it was men v women, Raoul Correa and Dad cooked lamb the way they do in Argentina.

Bronwen Jones: We had a lot of fancy dress parties, stoolball playing and lamb cooked by Raoul in those days. They all seem to merge into one another. I still have my Jubilee coin.

Ginny Barrett: I remember that lamb being cooked. It was the most exciting thing.

Jane Stickley: I remember the coins.

Jo Morgan: Definitely Stoolball Tournament at the Rec! We entered a team for Norwood Equestrian Centre and lost nearly every match we

played. I think we were the last but lots of hilarious memories! I remember our key card was a Canadian friend who was staying and was a good baseball player, when it was his innings he hit a huge strike only to be out first ball, caught by a tiny little stoolball enthusiast in the outfield. We were embarrassingly awful, but thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. I remember the BBQ by Raoul in the field next to the White Horse. All the lambs were out on crucifixes as per the Argentinian way, all day and the BBQ and disco in the car park of the pub in the evening! Great fun. Remember my dad picking up old Janey from the village and dancing her round the car park and all of us doing the Can Can with a huge line of people. Everybody seemed to be there. What fun we had. A lovely happy day. Wonderful Memories.

Maureen Roddick

A lifelong supporter of the Royal Family

from *Graffham Parish News*, June 2012

The Moneys of Graffham have always been staunch supporters of the Royal Family. Mrs Money's children Maureen (Roddick) and Robert were both at Graffham School at the time of the Coronation in 1953.

Robert remembers going through the Park with his classmates to the Claydons at Lavington Stud. The Claydons were one of the few households to have a television in those days, and the older class at Graffham School were allowed to watch the Coronation on their set as a special privilege. The



Maureen Roddick (née Money) with Coronation Medal

Moneys, along with most of the village, had no television.

Mrs Money's daughter, Maureen Roddick, was younger than her brother and was not invited to watch television. She does however remember the presentation at the school.

"We all lined up and had to go in to the school hall and get our picture taken. When we had our picture taken we walked to the end of the hall to go out and as we left we were all given a medal and a mug".

Maureen's mug and medal started her on a lifelong collection of royal memorabilia including mugs, medals and a cup and saucer from Queen Victoria's reign. Her favourite Royal was Princess Diana and Prince William is "extra special" for Maureen as they share a birthday.

Now Maureen wants to inspire a future generation of Graffham children with her own passion for the Royal Family and she and her husband John very generously donated Diamond Jubilee mugs to all the children at Graffham School.

The Diamond Jubilee - 2012

A Street Party at Graffham School and Mugs for the Children

Up at Graffham School the children started the Jubilee Celebrations with a STREET PARTY in the playground on Friday 1st June. All the children at the school received commemorative mugs donated by Mr & Mrs Roddick.



Diamond Jubilee Celebrations - 2012

At our first meeting to decide just how Graffham would celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of our Queen, the guiding principle was "if YOU want it to happen, then YOU must organise it"! Graffham took that message to heart and really celebrated this historic occasion in style and with an enormous amount of activity.

Over the long Jubilee weekend we enjoyed an academic lecture, a flower festival, a tea party, two exhibitions, a service of thanksgiving and commemoration with bell ringing and a choir, a "big lunch", a parade to end all parades, traditional children's games, a village photo, a huge outdoor dinner for the entire village and a tug-of-war! Happily the weather held out for most of these events (although unfortunately the proposed 20-Twenty-XX three-team cricket match was rained off).

Children at Graffham School received commemorative mugs and some of the smallest members of our community helped plant a tree on the Recreation Ground.

Flower Festival and Exhibition at St Giles

Our JUBILEE FLOWER FESTIVAL at St Giles Church was masterminded by Church Warden and professional landscape gardener Alan Sargent. Alan and the St Giles flower arranging team filled our church with a truly magnificent display for the week of the Jubilee.

In the church, the Flower Festival was supplemented by an exhibition of local and national photos and cuttings *Celebrating Our Queen* set up by Tracey Carr.

The Exhibition © Tracey Carr





Jubilee Breakfast

Within the Village the Diamond Jubilee Weekend set off on Saturday 2nd June on a scholarly note with a JUBILEE BREAKFAST LECTURE entitled *The Monarchy* at the White Horse by our Church Organist and Seaford College Teacher, Richard Bailey.

Graffham School in the Reign of the Queen

At Graffham Infant School, material from the school archives with work by current pupils was combined in an exhibition *Graffham School in the Reign of the Queen*. The exhibition was mounted by Maureen Boulton (ex-pupil, ex-parent and now a member of staff).



Tea in the Churchyard

The weather held out for "Tea in the Churchyard" on Saturday after the opening of the Flower Festival.





A Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration

On Sunday (3rd June) we held A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING AND CELEBRATION for the reign of Queen Elizabeth II at St Giles Church. Our guest preacher was the Very Revd. John Treadgold, formerly Chaplain to the Queen and Canon to the Royal Chapel, St Georges Windsor, also a former Dean of Chichester Cathedral.

Church bells were rung both on Saturday and before the Sunday Service by the Graffham Bellringers led by Captain, Hilary Major. Music was from St Giles Choir and organist, Richard Bailey. Anthems included *View Me Lord* by Thomas Campion, set to music composed by Richard Bailey.

The Big Lunch

Following the Service, Rector Steve Gray and his wife Fiona hosted a Bring-and-Share lunch at the Rectory, which was part of "The Big Lunch", a national celebration.



The Jubilee Parade - 2012

OUR JUBILEE PARADE ON 4TH JUNE takes its place in a long tradition of parades in Graffham. Photos in our archives show villagers parading as far back as 1911. The Jubilee Parade set off from the shop car park led by the Graffham school entry - children waving distinctive balloons in school colours, green and purple, followed Ollie Boulton's matching green open-topped mini. After the school came all the clubs, groups and organisations of our village waving banners - about 25 represented. A separate equestrian parade started at Norwood Lane meeting the rest of the village on the Recreation Ground. We all had the best time ever at this amazingly joyous village event. Congratulations to Chris Major who originated the idea and put in an enormous amount of work to make it such a terrific success, together with Simon Mitchell, John Head and others. It was an occasion to remember for a long time to come.

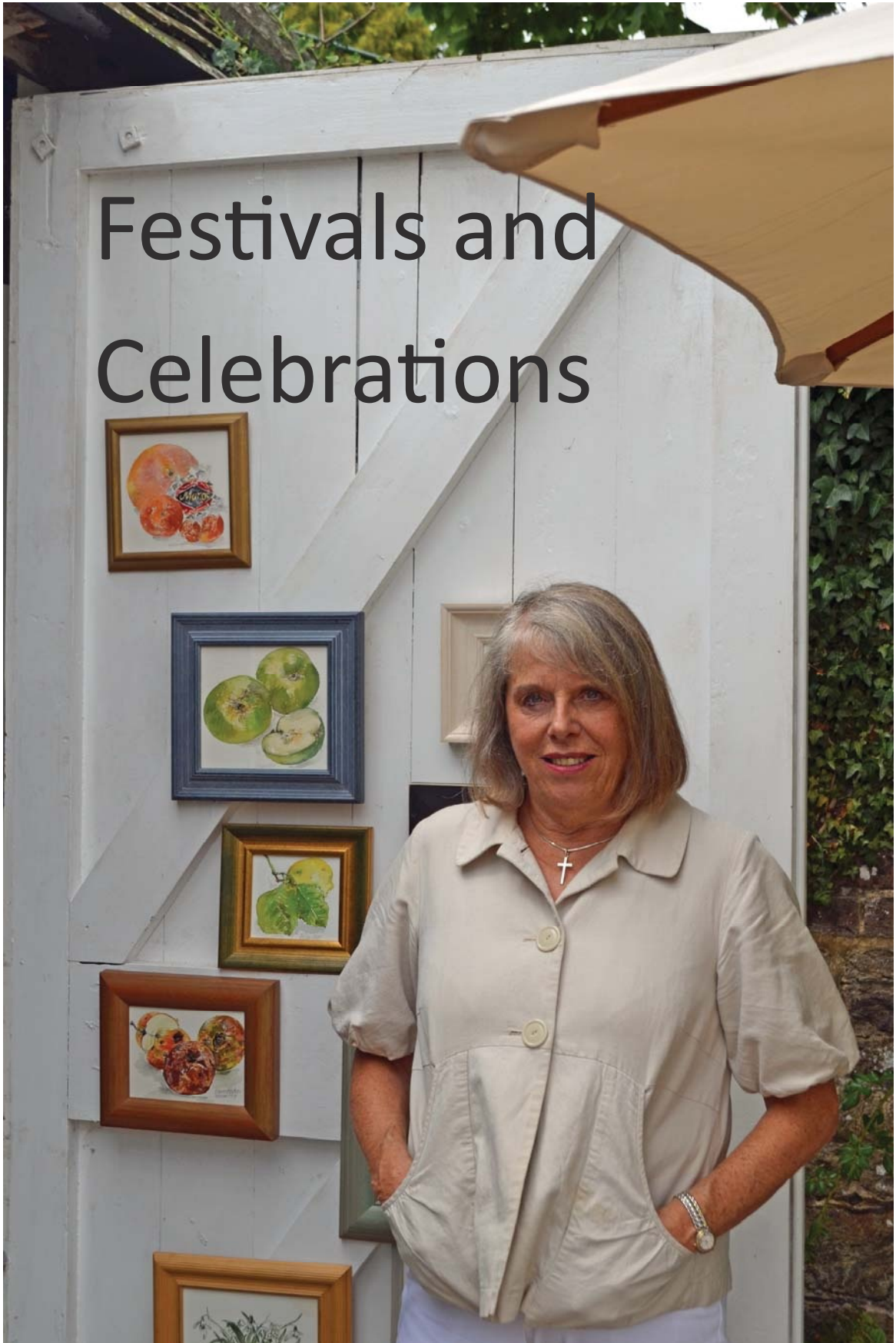




Games and Supper “Al Fresco”

Following our Jubilee Parade there were traditional children's games on the Recreation Ground, an ice cream van and a musical interlude from the Midhurst Players. At 5.30 everyone assembled for a village photo taken by Colin Barker, then our tiny tots were invited to plant a commemorative tree at the end of the Rec. Photos were taken as they scattered handfuls of earth so they can be reminded in years to come! Finally it was time for our scrumptious bring and share dine-out meal. We all sat down in a huge square of tables decked with Union Flag bunting and summer flowers. The weather in the evening was fine and our al fresco meal was a really joyful village occasion. Prosecco ran freely from the bar and the extra-hungry were able to grab a burger from the Tennis Club BBQ. Our final Jubilee activity was the tug-of-war. Several teams recruited during the evening battled it out to the finish before we all drifted back to our homes to watch events in the rest of the country on TV.

Festivals and Celebrations



Sue Hill Studio, Graffham Arts Festival, 2014

Festival of Britain - 1951

I was fifteen at the time. Our School (Midhurst Secondary Modern - where Midhurst Rother College is now) was freshly opened. We went to the Festival of Britain in London. It was quite a trip by coach and we went to all the exhibits.

The Graffham photo (below) shows the Stoolball Teams. The First Team was wearing old fashioned dresses from 1851. The costumes were provided by Mrs Loring of Graffham Rustics. The Second Team were wearing modern (1951) clothes.



Festival Fête at Graffham, 1951 by George Garland © WSRO (N35677)

June Challen, 2015

Festival Fête at Graffham, 1951 by George Garland reprinted courtesy of WSRO (N35677 and N35676)



Festival of Britain - 1951

Skylon - The Graffham Connection

An unsung practitioner of modern architecture, Sir Philip Powell, was the son of Graffham's war-time Rector, Cecil Powell (1939-1947).

Philip spent part of his life in what was then the Rectory, no doubt thoroughly enjoying himself in Graffham's beautiful countryside. It is said he cut his architectural teeth working on the conversion of the property, which probably involved blocking up the passage that was thought to have run from the main part of the Rectory through the annexes thus enabling the incumbent to walk directly through the property out to the west door of the church.

Philip went into practice as an architect and here is the point. He designed for the Festival of Britain a futuristic-looking, pointy cigar-shaped structure called the Skylon which became the abiding symbol of the Festival. In truth there was a partnership between him, Hidalgo Moya and Felix Samuely. Felix did the clever engineering stuff, enabling Philip's and Hidalgo's creation to "float" vertically in the air.

One of the great disappointments of our hero's life was the decision by Winston Churchill (himself a great lover of cigars) to have the Skylon demolished along with much else of the Festival as it looked too much like a socialist inspired vision of the Government he had just ousted.

Very successful in life, Philip was knighted in due course for his various innovative works, including the remarkable concrete edifice known as the theatre in the round in Chichester.



One of life's strange coincidences is that with my family I moved to the Old Rectory in 1976, and while I commuted to London to earn my crust I found myself working for Philip at both his offices in Chelsea and his home in Little Boltons, where on the wall of his study hung a photograph of my house, the Old Rectory at Graffham.

George White, 2015

Celebrating the Millennium - 2000

Graffham joins the Parish Map Project

Our Millennium Map was masterminded by Elly Spilberg and Pru Hart. They were the driving force behind it and did much of the hard work. They were both very efficient and we always met in Pru Hart's house. Kim Leslie, of the West Sussex Records Office also pushed and shoved us along.

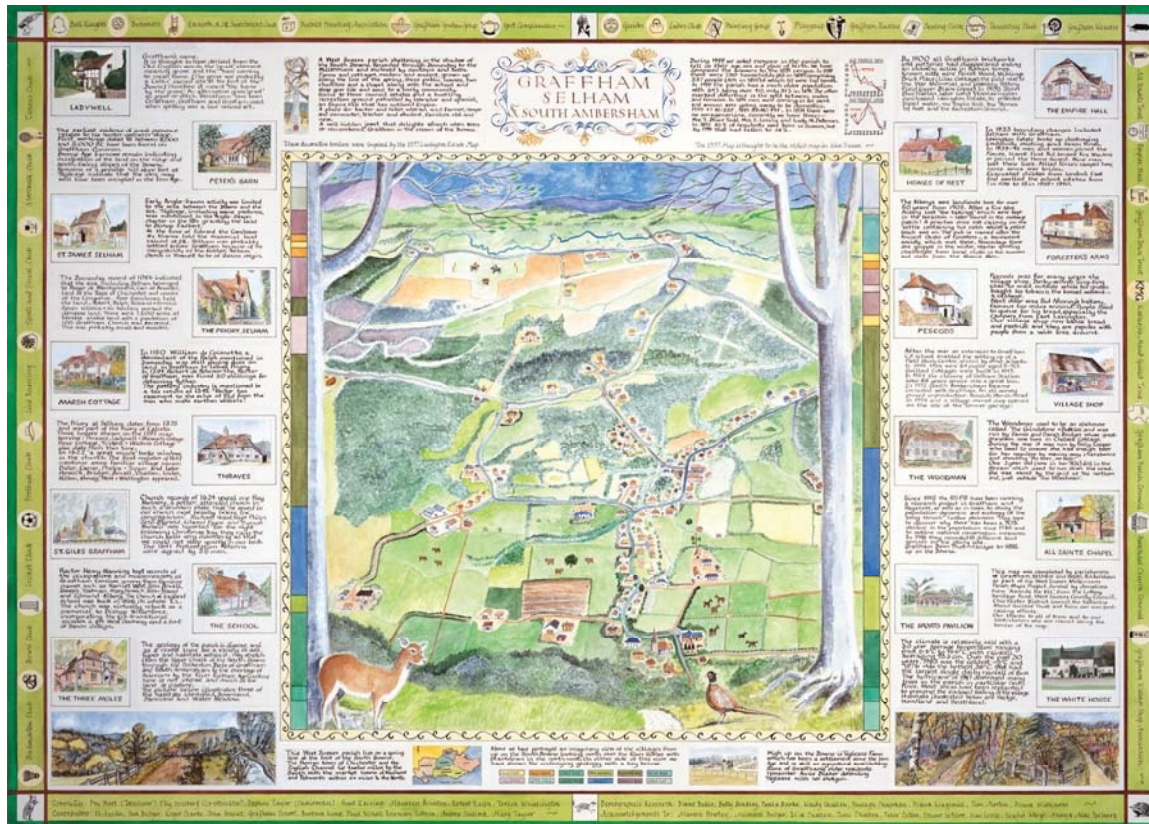
Our map was included in Kim's book *A Sense of Place* published by WSRO. The map was worth doing but I was glad when it finished!

Daphne Taylor, 2015

The Graffham Map Team

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Ed Austin | Diana Kingsmill |
| Diane Bellis | Stuart Le Fevre |
| Maureen Boulton | Kim Leslie |
| Marian Bowley | Tim Morton |
| Betty Bradley | Phyll Nicholl |
| Ina Bridger | Robert Ralph |
| Michael Bridger | Rosemary Robson |
| Paula Burke | Andrew Shilcock |
| Dick Challen | Anny Spilberg |
| June Challen | Elly Spilberg |
| Wendy Challen | Mike Spilberg |
| Shelagh Chapman | Daphne Taylor |
| Roger Clarke | Mary Taylor |
| Peter Cotton | Teresa Whittington |
| John Fellows | Diana Williams |
| Pru Hart | Graffham First School |
| Barbara Kemp | Seaford College |

The Graffham Millennium Map © Kim Leslie and the Graffham Map Team





*Clockwise from top:
Marion Wilder selling the Graffham Millennium Mug
Detail from the Graffham Millennium Map;
Daphne Taylor and Elly Spilberg at the Archive Exhibition in the Empire Hall*

Trafalgar Bi-Centenary - 2005

On 22nd October 2005 the Empire Hall hosted a Dinner to celebrate the Bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar. Sarah and Russell Walker organised the event. With tables set in a “V” shape round a central Cap’n’s table, we enjoyed a delicious traditional Old English meal, and, with “the sun well over the yard arm” – drank many a nautical toast while being serenaded by our own “Two Tenors”.



Maggie Paterson, 2007

Susie Jones and Angie Thornley in costume

Graffham at the Heart of the South Downs National Park

An Announcement in the *Graffham Parish News*, April 2010



The South Downs is now officially a National Park, having been designated as such on 31st March 2010. The Park stretches from Winchester in the west to Beachy Head in the east with Graffham just about at its centre.

As a park, it is the largest in the UK and is the tenth National Park in England, stretching over 100 miles with varied geology and differing landscapes. It is the most highly populated National Park and has a large variety of wildlife and plants including many rare and protected species. Over the next year, the park authority will operate as a shadow body to the South Downs Joint Committee and will take over all statutory responsibilities from the 1st April 2011.

In Graffham, we are fortunate to enjoy the rolling downlands and heathlands with their beautiful trees, plants, birds and animals. We are also fortunate to live in a village with a wonderful community and many different organisations and activities to take part in and enjoy.

To celebrate, you are invited to join a village picnic. It's your party to celebrate the Park, so please feel free to bring kites, bats and balls etc to make it your afternoon with friends and others in our community.

There will be a village trail suitable for walking with younger children, (accompanied by parents) to take in some local points of interest and find out a bit about the countryside we live in, but otherwise, it's just a chance for you to enjoy yourselves with friends.

Tracey Carr, April 2010

(Sadly 1st May was extremely wet and most of the activity took place in the Pavilion. Below, Martin and Mary Taylor at the "Heart of the Park" Exhibition)



Graffham's First Arts Festival

First village festival shows off artistic talent

An article by Graffham artist, Richard Davidson, printed in the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, 31st July 2014

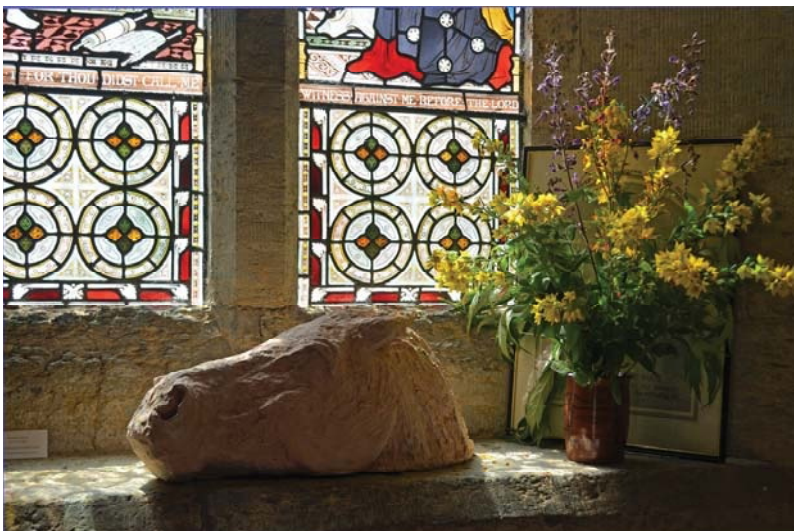
The first ever Graffham Festival emphatically fulfilled its aim of celebrating local artistic talent and life in the community.

The Graffham Garden Group Show had a significant increase in the number of entries and welcomed a number of new exhibitors. Later that day Magdalena Reising, performing al fresco at the Foresters Arms, had a large audience enchanted by her medley of folk, jazz and classics sung and played on the harp with the backing of Terry Seabrook - piano and Raffaele Bizzoca - guitar. The forecast of thunderstorms, which, at the beginning of the evening had threatened to send everyone indoors, had lifted by the time the music was underway and her unusual fusion of music got the musical side of the festival off to a great start.

The Festival Service at Saint Giles on Sunday was held amidst the stunning flower arrangements prepared by Alan Sargent and his helpers as part



of the Flower Festival - which carries on throughout the Festival week. The theme is "Graffham" and the visual impact created by the contributors was amazing. The church choir, led by choirmaster Richard Bailey, performed at their very best in a number of pieces specially chosen for the festival, with their singing of Richard Farrant's *Lord for thy Mercy's sake* particularly memorable.



Above: Richard Davidson in his studio

Left: Art and flowers merge in the Flower Festival with sculpture display by Melanie Jamison

The often hidden musical talent in the community was brought well and truly to the attention of a full house at the village concert held at the Empire Hall. Once again, Richard Bailey who masterminded the event, succeeded in creating a wonderful evening of high quality music to suit all tastes. The evening opened with four songs beautifully sung, with plenty of oomph, by girls from the local primary school, the Lavington Park Federation school whose version of *Rocking all over the world* brought the house down. The first half of the show included lovely guitar and vocal performances by two village couples, Michael and Sally Blunt, and David and Sue Garrard, three pieces by the church choir, outstanding solo and duet singing from Nikki Pennicott and Ginny Barrett and a rousing sing-along led by members of the Midhurst Players. It was wonderful to see how enthusiastically the audience joined in. The second half of the show featured solo singing by villagers Philip Trower and Dirk Koopman before they teamed up to give a lively rendition of Offenbach's famous *Bold Gendarmes* duet. Some fine playing by Hazel Freeman (cello), Tracey Carr (flute) and Richard Bailey (piano) led up to a final set by the Midhurst Players and the evening closed with a spirited communal singing of *Jerusalem*.

St Giles Church was full for a concert of English organ music given by Richard Bailey (the organist at both St Giles and St Peter's, Seaford College Chapel) and his pupil, Graffham resident Tracey Carr. The pieces ranged from the lyrical work of Vaughan Williams and Elgar to more complex work by a number of English cathedral organists and culminated in the fiendishly difficult *Tuba Tune* by Norman Cocker – which was rapturously received by an admiring audience.

*Photos from top:
Philip Trower and Dirk Koopman;
Tracey Carr, Ginny Barrett and Nikki Pennicott;
Hazel Freeman*



The Festival Poetry Evening at the Foresters Arms was a real eye-opener. In the relaxed atmosphere of the pub garden a surprising number of local poets read or performed their work. Many hidden talents were revealed. There was a special appearance by the “Speech Painter” (aka Geoff Allnut) the stand up “performance poet” whose other job is to run Allnut’s watch repair shop in Midhurst. He performed a number of pieces - ranging from hilariously comic to deadly serious - and had the audience’s rapt attention throughout.



There was a capacity audience (with a number being turned away) at the three illustrated talks given at All Saints Chapel. All the talks had a Graffham connection – the first, given by the ubiquitous Richard Bailey, was on the life of Aegidius of Athens, the patron Saint of Graffham (St Giles) and the others, by Richard Davidson and Bidy Elkins, on the work of two famous artists who spent many years living and working in the village, Henry La Thangue and Ivon

Hitchens. Whilst a number of locals were aware of the Hitchens connection, and knew his work from Pallant House, many in the audience were completely unaware of the fact that La Thangue was internationally famous or that his Graffham paintings can be found in galleries all round the world.

*Above: Geoff Allnut, the Speech Painter, recites at the Foresters Poetry Evening
Below: Interval during the popular art-themed talks at All Saints Chapel*



Village opens Gardens and Art Studios

From the *Midhust & Petworth Observer*, July 2015

Over the weekend seventeen artists and craftsmen showed their work in the Open Studios art trail and seventeen village gardens were open, some for the very first time, to the public. A steady stream of visitors from the area – and a number from London, Guildford and further afield – enjoyed the art or the gardens, or both!

On the Saturday there was a day of communal fun and games on the recreation ground as the festival drew to its close and the village Tennis Week began. There was a village BBQ and bar and, at 5.30pm the newly refurbished Pavilion was officially re-opened by June Challen whose family have lived in the village, and participated in its activities, for generations.

Artists: Clockwise from Top

*Clive McBain with his wife Sidonie;
Rosemary Roberts;
Ceramicist Karen Machin (paintings in background by
Dominique Kenway);
Angie Mitchell*





John Hitchens with Melanie Jamison and children at Graffham School

As part of the festival, Graffham children had their very own art display at the school.

Organised by sculptor Melanie Jamison, the exhibition encouraged quite young children to produce work unaided wherever possible - an incentive to take part was provided by allowing them to price and sell their own work.

Artist John Hitchens was invited to judge the work on the final day of the festival.

All winners and runners-up received a distinctive medal in the shape of a swallow, the emblem of the festival.

Children and parents waited anxiously in the playground for nearly an hour as he considered his decisions before coming in for the prizegiving.



Sue Hill and Karel Mondek at Westerlands



Open Gardens

Gardening is quite probably Graffham's most popular hobby (although riders and dog owners may disagree). In the twenty-first century, gardens small and large have been opened to the public in aid of local causes (most recently the Pavilion). This appears to have become a biennial event.



Science Festival - 2015

In 2013 Richard Davidson, at that time Chairman of the Parish Council and himself an artist, realised that Graffham had a large number of artists and proposed an Arts Festival for 2014. A subcommittee of organisers was convened consisting of Richard, Jim Kirke, Richard Bailey and me. A logo was duly designed by Clive McBain, with enhancements by Karin Skanberg and the ball got rolling. As it gathered momentum it came to light that the village had more artists (and musicians and poets) than originally realised and the festival was a tremendous success. The committee convened afterwards and decided that it could become a biennial event, therefore establishing that there wouldn't be one in 2015.

It was during this time, in a chance conversation in the pub, that I became aware that one quiet Graffham resident who, whilst a student, had worked with a conducting polymer called

polypyrrole, and had discovered (or maybe accidentally stumbled across is a more accurate description) a technique for synthesising it in such a way that it vastly improved its conducting properties. Scientists flew over from the United States to learn from him how it was done - not bad for a student project.

What other scientific talent might be lurking in those picturesque houses behind those pretty front gardens? Now was the opportunity to find out and 2015 became the year for celebrating the Sciences.

The logo was expertly tweaked by Karin, and Jackie Woods and Simon Mitchell joined me in planning a week of Science. PhDs appeared from behind closed doors, experts who had written for learned journals and magazines, people who had spent much of their career helping people to see or to avoid malaria, understanding how planes fly,

"An Evening by the Pond" - Wildlife Talks at Topleigh



learning about bones, how to maintain coastlines, studying wildlife, enjoying mathematics or indulging a passion for astronomy, Darwin or cars crept out of the woodwork.

Graffham and Duncton Schools got involved and had fun during the school day with friends and relatives coming into the school to share their knowledge and experience.

But it wasn't just limited to Graffham and the neighbouring villages. Richard Bailey travelled up from Cornwall to give a talk and to host a most excellent tasting of exclusive champagnes, Paula Garraway was drawn in to demonstrate her prostheses from Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust, mad scientist Brad from *Blast-Science*, who used to set displays for children at the Science Museum, trekked over from Hastings, and Sussex Wildlife Trust's Michael Blencowe virtually moved from Small Dole to Graffham for the week.

But there were still worries - would anyone on a beautiful summer's evening want to hear about science? Well it seems they did. Sixty five people turned up for an evening of talks - including A level students from Midhurst Rother



College and even from France, over thirty people quaffed champagne, forty plus individuals turned up for an excellent quiz and a similar number for an evening of wildlife talks and the maths treasure hunt attracted children from both within and outside the village.

The whole event made a £350 profit which was shared between the Empire Hall, the pavilion, the shop, the church and the school but more importantly we ALL went away richer.

Ginny Barrett, Organiser

Science Talks in the Empire Hall



Blast-Science at Duncton School





Weaving and Other Crafts

Barbara Mullins at Shuttles, 2008

A History of Graffham Weavers

An article written by Graffham Weaver, Barbara Mullins, for *Graffham Parish News* in May 2008.

My parents, Gwen and Claud Mullins, moved to Glasses, Graffham, in 1948. I had trained as a primary school teacher at Bedford Froebel College and was teaching at Wispers School, which was then near Stedham.

My mother had learned a little weaving just after she was married and living in London. During the war she worked alongside the Occupational Therapist in Horton Hospital, Epsom, setting up looms for the patients. Discovering that the hospital had bookbinding equipment that nobody knew how to use, Gwen enrolled in classes at the local art school to learn it herself.

Gwen Mullins and Barbara Mullins

Having settled at Glasses she thought she could organise something with the old farm buildings at the bottom of the garden. The cowshed was fitted with the old-fashioned stalls with a gutter behind to catch the manure. My mother gathered a few craftsmen and articles and hired the Empire Hall to have an exhibition to get people interested in the subject.

I was teaching in France at the time and when I returned, we had a meeting and gathered together interested people to discuss starting some kind of crafts workshop. There was plenty of enthusiasm and several men agreed to convert the building in their spare time, while my mother provided the



materials. They levelled the cowshed floor and glassed in the other shed which was open and had been used for storing farm equipment.

We then started classes of bookbinding, basketry, carpentry and weaving. A doctor from St Richard's Hospital commissioned us to bind some medical journals, and Edward VII Sanatorium wanted books mended. The basketry was a success and went on for several years, though the carpentry, which was taught by Fred Diggins from Stewart's Cottage, did not last long as the woodworking tools, which had belonged to my grandfather, gradually disappeared.

Beryl Peters, who lived in what is now Weaver's Cottage, was the best bookbinder and weaver but eventually the bookbinding ceased as she preferred weaving. Soon we changed the name from the Graffham Crafts Centre to Graffham Weavers.

My mother believed that crafts were to be enjoyed by everyone and not just the rich. She wanted to keep prices low and in reach of everyone in the village. We had our first exhibition in 1952 and then held them twice a year thereafter.

I started teaching at Conifers School in Easebourne and found three children who were very good with their hands; I invited them to come on Saturday mornings to learn to weave. They enjoyed it so much that soon they came to stay for a week during the holidays. Several of the children from the village came to join them on the Saturday and we put a table out on the lawn and invited the youngsters to dig clay out of the garden and model with it.

Some years later, we opened a craft camp for children. Several well-known craftsmen sent their children and many local people came too.



Graffham Weavers Exhibition at Shuttles, 2008

Distinguished people from the craft world came to teach. The first year the children lived at home and gave hospitality to those who lived too far away, but the second time we all camped in the field with parents providing meals.

During this time Jeff Lowe, who taught at Bishop Otter College in Chichester, helped us build a wood-burning kiln in the garden. We fired it all night.

During another period in the life of Graffham Weavers we had students from the UK and other countries for a year at a time. We converted part of the cottage where Beryl Peters lived and created three bed-sitting rooms for accommodation for the students. They came from the United States, Sweden, Turkey, Germany and the UK.

After a few years we gave up having students as they took up a great deal of my time and I really wanted to concentrate on my own weaving so Graffham Weavers became just my mother and me with the help of Beryl Peters and Maud Jones, who lived in Cartref. Beryl and Maud stayed with us for many years until they became too old to carry on, when my mother and I were then the only ones. I went to teach part-time at the Farnham Art School where Ella McLeod taught me to spin and do things that I could not learn by myself or by trial and error.

When we started weaving seriously, we were very unhappy at the limited range of coloured wool available in the shops, so we decided we would have to dye our own. Living in such beautiful countryside the obvious way was to make natural dyes using plants we collected from all around. We found weld (which produces a yellow dye) on the Downs which we gathered up and brought down on our horses. We produced a wonderful range of orange dyes from lichens which, before they were protected, we collected from Dartmoor. Madder, for red, was available from Holland as it was used in hospitals for barium meals, and we also bought indigo from abroad. Wood bark was good for various shades of brown, and one year I was given permission to sweep the floor in the Dolmetsch recorder workshop in Haslemere to collect the rosewood chippings to bring home.

We used natural dyes for many years until, much later, I went on a chemical dye course in Denmark and learned how to mix the dyes to obtain the shades I wanted. I then found dyeing simpler and more creative and could more accurately match the colours I had previously been using.

We had a great deal of help and encouragement from our friends and held exhibitions in other parts of the country, including the Tea Gallery in London, and galleries in Richmond, Edinburgh and Guildford. In 1982 we also exhibited in Paris and, of course, we had our twice-yearly shows. Architects began to commission us for various projects. We made rugs for St Gabriel's Training



Barbara Mullins 2008

College, Exeter College, Oxford, a piece for Worcester cathedral, the Bishop's Chapel in Chichester, and many other places. The Crafts Council, the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Edinburgh Museum all bought examples of our work.

Gradually my mother's eyesight deteriorated and she finally had to give up weaving when she was well into her eighties. She died in 1997 at the age of ninety-two.

I am now running Graffham Weavers with the help of Harriet Rowntree. I still hold exhibitions twice a year, and although I also have sight problems, I will carry on weaving for as long as I can.

Barbara Mullins, May 2008

Editors' Note: Sadly, like her mother, Barbara also suffered from failing eyesight and had to give up weaving in 2011. Barbara passed away in 2015.

Bare feet and tie-dyeing

Jo Harper remembers Craft Camps in the 1970s

We learnt to spin wool, some of it collected on walks round the fields plucking tufts of wool from the fences. The dyes we used were all natural with onion skins and indigo featuring. The subsequent weaving was done on hand looms but we did progress to big looms and I still have the rugs with wiggly edges.

Tie-dyeing involved pebbles tied in with string and the T shirts we made could be seen wandering round the village.

Corn dollies were a highlight for me, neatly finished off with scarlet ribbon.

Wooden spoons were hewn from pieces of wood we gathered and we seemed to spend hours sanding and sanding, carrying on in the evenings sitting outside our tents.

I remember we walked from Barbara's field barefoot mostly and we must have been very grubby as I don't recall washing. My sister Kate and I were obsessed with winning the tidiest tent competition at the end of the week. I think we did or were we pipped at the post by Martin Taylor.

I also remember running away one night - back to Quiet Court - all of a hundred yards or so away, but that's another story.

Jo Harper (née Kingsmill) 2015



Craft Camps, 1970s

Graffham Craft Camps - 1970s

Jeff Lowe writes about Barbara Mullins children's camps in the 1970s, where he taught woodwork

During the early seventies Barbara Mullins introduced summer activity weeks, Graffham Craft Camps, to provide a range of craft experiences for children, mainly from the village. Tents were set up in her fields, a latrine was dug in an adjoining wood and a general meeting area set up near the stables. Meals were also taken where breakfasts were basic, hay box cooking provided porridge to supplement the cereals and fruit. Lunches and some suppers were generously and creatively provided by parents and were invariably welcomed.

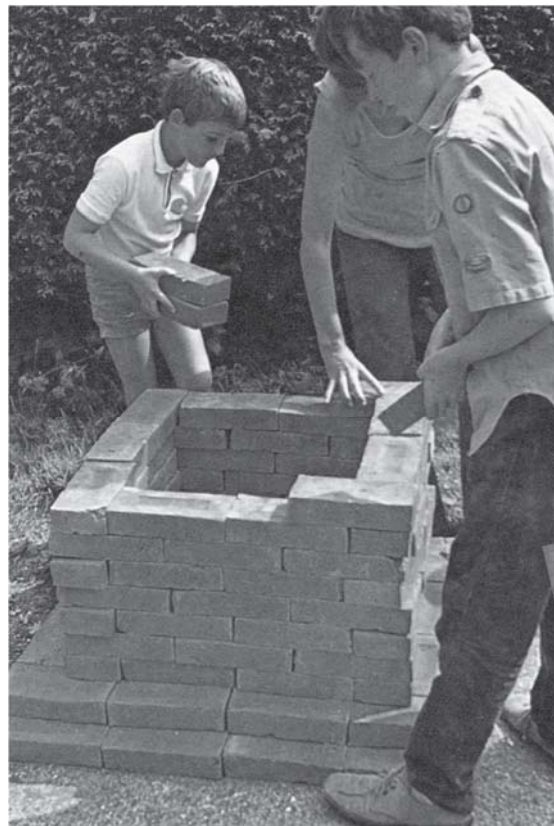
The structure of each day focussed on the activities which were usually taught in morning and afternoon sessions in the workshops at Glasses Barn.

Barbara enlisted craftsmen and teachers from among her friends. I helped with the camping side as well as tutoring working wood and clay. Barbara taught vegetable dyeing, weaving and tapestry and on some occasions was assisted by one of her long-term students. Each year other crafts were included to expand the range available. One year, forest school camps shared the venture which gave a slightly different emphasis to the day's proceedings, the most memorable seems to be the early morning rallying call from "Beefy" the camp leader. He also introduced tent inspections and competitive games for the after supper sessions. Most days followed the usual morning and afternoon sessions though occasionally an afternoon swim in a neighbour's pool provided a refreshing and relaxing break.

Following supper, woodland walks, wildflower finds and quizzes. Camp fires duly accompanied by traditional camping songs concluded the day.

After such busy days getting to bed was a varied procedure, some crashing out and others chattering late into the night, eventually peace reigned.

For the weaving sessions Barbara had prepared looms, for the dyeing workshops children had collected the plants and prepared the wool by washing and mordanting the skeins, which finally produced a range of delightful colours. Fleece was used for felt-making which involved the children stamping it bare-footed in soap suds to bond the fibres to make a piece of felt. The fleece was also used for spinning by wheel and spindle which enabled them to produce their own yarns



which they duly prepared for dyeing. Some chose the vegetable dyeing and others opted for indigo, an exciting process producing a range of beautiful blues.

For the clay work, a visit to the local sandpit to scrape away the sand above the narrow seams of fine clay was great fun. This clay was supplemented by a supply from Pitshill Brickworks which was also visited to give a fuller perspective of the clay industry. They also found quite a few fossils, parts of ammonites. The kiln for firing the children's work was built using Pitshill bricks, a simple box form in which layers of dry sawdust and their clay pieces were built up and left to burn slowly. The sandy content of the clay from the sandpit gave strength to withstand the heat; most works survived. The whole experience was to provide a basic understanding of the clay and the effects of firing to transform it into terracotta.

Some aspects of working wood made use of hedgerow materials, notably willow and honeysuckle for simple baskets and mobiles of fish and birds. Elderberry was used for whistles and spoons and carving a totem pole from a long pine log involved four boys for the whole week, at the end of which they each sawed off their section to take home. Other small pieces were fashioned by cutting and rasping of dry softwood branches and twigs for simple sculptural pieces.

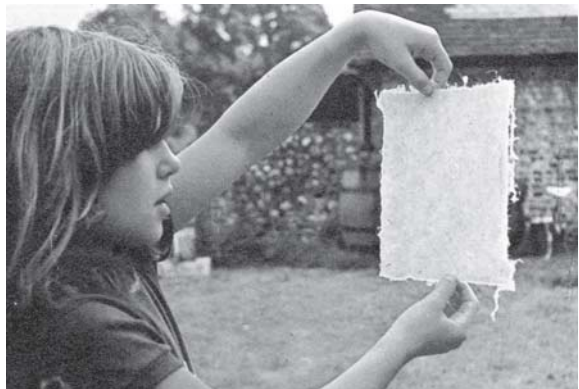
The inclusion of papermaking one year gave an exciting exploration of material. Plant fibres, some left over from the vegetable dyeing, as well as oat straw and hay were boiled and laboriously beaten to a fineness and subsequently collected on simple moulds, dried in the sun to be eventually peeled off as leaves of paper. On one occasion an attempt to create some music using the elderberry whistles, a xylophone from logs, stones and a flowerpot or two was attempted. This produced an original composition and lots of hilarity. Such a cacophony of sound had never been heard before!

I recall other activities included macrame, corn dollies and off-loom weaving.



These weeks were very successful and enjoyable. Such experiences enrich understanding of managing materials and friendships. Several children have reflected on the pleasures that the Graffham Craft Camps gave them, fulfilling Barbara's intention.

Jeff Lowe, 2015



Start Making that Lace!

Article from *the Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, 1978

Mrs Joanna Smith, wife of a history master at Seaford college, moved to Selham Road, Graffham, in January of this year and brought with her the old art of lace making, which she now teaches to girls between the ages of seven and fourteen on Saturday mornings because she wants to perpetuate the art.

At the moment the classes are attended by Vivienne Challen, Tracy Earle, Patricia Petter, Kerry Skilliter, Elaine Sturges, Rachel Watkins, Heidi Watson and Joanna White.

The girls pay 20p for their class - from 10 am to noon - to cover the costs of thread, pins and pattern cards, in the making of their Torchon and Honiton lace.

The girls started with a basic cloth and half stitch strip making little flowers from where they progress to making handkerchief edging,

bookmarks and Honiton pieces for appliqueing on to net - which was the style of lace used for Queen Victoria's wedding gown. Mrs Smith learned the art of lace making in Hertfordshire six years ago. She has also studied in Devon under Mrs Luxton, a teacher of Honiton lace making, and in Bruges where some of the best lace in the world is made. She hopes eventually to expand her classes to include adults, perhaps on a Tuesday afternoon, and eventually get members of the Lace Making Guild to come down and explore other avenues of the craft.

The rarity of lace bobbins is a complication, so if anyone has any or other related paraphernalia they would like to sell or give to Mrs Smith - including any examples of old lace - she would be pleased to hear from them at Millburgh Cottages, Selham Road, Graffham.

The All Saints Kneeler Group

I came to live in Graffham in 2002, and one of my favourite hobbies throughout my life has been embroidery, so I was delighted to join in a group of volunteers in 2007, to make some new kneelers for the All Saints Chapel, inspired by Sylvia Smith.

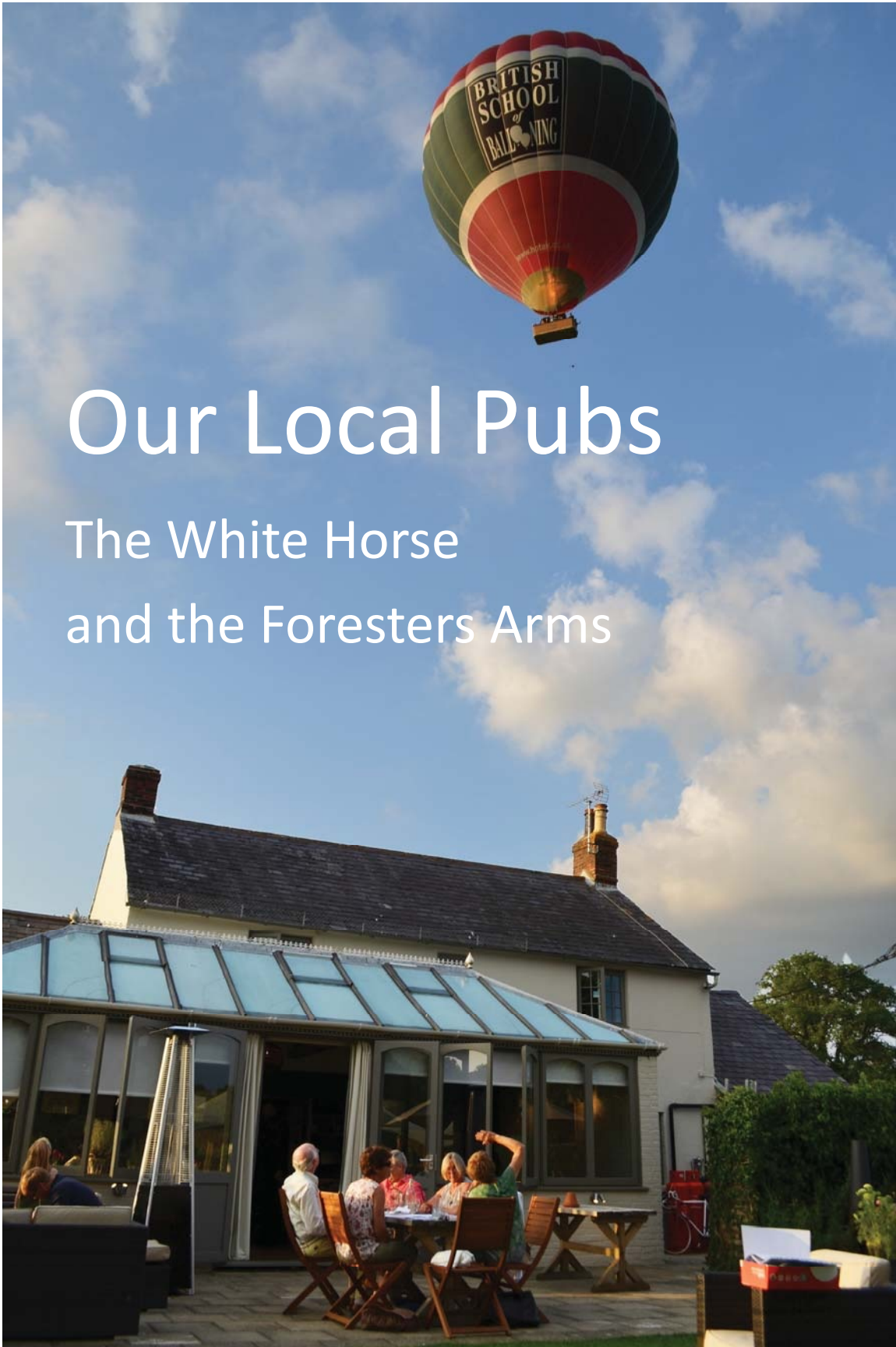
Using money, gratefully donated by local villagers, to purchase the materials required, we were all given a piece of canvas and six shades of wool, and could work to our own design, as long as we all used the same background colours.

During the year we met regularly to sew, stretch and make up our work, while enjoying a chat, and a cup of tea.

The set was finally completed by November 2008, and the kneelers make a colourful addition to the Chapel.

Vera O'Hara





Our Local Pubs

The White Horse
and the Foresters Arms

Quiz Night at the White Horse, 2014

Graffham Pubs and Publicans

Notes from the Archives

There were two public houses and an alehouse in the village until 1959 when the Woodman became a private dwelling, leaving only the Foresters Arms and the White Horse Inn. There was also a cider press at the back of Hillside on land owned by the Bridgers and here people brought their own apples to be pressed.

Looking at the Census forms for 1841 - 1881 we find Joseph Vowles listed himself as a beerhousekeeper in 1841, Thomas Bagwood was at The Star and Garter (now the Foresters). In 1851 Mr and Mrs Ayling were at the White Horse, George Goff was innkeeper at the Star and Garter in 1851. In 1871 no publican lived in the village, but in 1881 Samson Davis, George Boxall and Robert Nudd all appear. After that we move into the realm of living memory.

The Woodman (late 16th century), nicknamed “The Grindstone and Bottle” on the quality of their beer, seems to have encouraged regular patrons to have their own seats and keep their own mugs there, some of them being quart-sized. The names that came to mind were such regulars as Jack Pescod, Bob Burt, Jack Lee, Perce Parry, Samson Davis and Jim Pressey. Monty Hinton was a landlord who believed in keeping his till in his waistcoat pockets. He kept small change in various pockets, but if you needed change for a note he had to make a trip upstairs. Casual visitors were often rationed so that regulars should not go short. Polly Cooper was a landlady famous for her attitude to Mystery Coach Tours. If one should stop outside the Woodman she used to rush out shouting to the driver,

The White Horse c 1955 © The Francis Frith Collection



“Don’t you let them get out. We’ve only enough for our regulars.”

All the usual pub games were played, with skittles in the outside room and strict rules about no games on Sundays. Polly Cooper insisted on scoring for all the darts games, despite many attempts to replace her. It is quite hard to imagine playing darts by oil-lamplight - the only lighting available until 1938, when electricity came to the village.



The Foresters Arms - with Albery's shop

In the late 1930s the Woodman was granted a wine licence.

The White Horse Inn is housed in another old building (1838) set outside the main village and surrounded by fields. Until 1970 it was approached by a narrow lane and had only a tiny car park - so it was a question of “first in last out”. The ground floor was divided into the bar and the committee room where several village clubs held their meetings. Games were played in the bar and sometimes Billy Rough played on his fiddle.

Publicans at the White Horse included the Lovegroves in the 1920s, Charles Randall and George Phillips, who also ran a milk round supplied by local cows.

The Foresters Arms was kept by the Nudds until the advent of the Alberrys in 1903 and they continued until 1959. They kept their takings in a square bread-bin and one story involved Mrs Alberry losing this for three days following a fire in the brewhouse. It was in among the cabbages. Another story involved Cecil Alberry as a schoolboy. He used to be sent to school with a bag containing £200-£300 takings in gold sovereigns which he hung on his peg until the lunch hour. Then he would ask permission to go to the bank.

There are many incidents connected with the Foresters over the years - two being memorable. One was the donkey who was urged into the pub, complete with his rider, Jennifer Dent, one Boxing Day. The other concerned Joe Partridge who stowed his poaching catch in the ancient settle and calmly sat over it throughout a police search of the premises.

The name Foresters Arms came from the Ancient Order of Foresters, a benevolent club which met upstairs and functioned until the coming of Social Security Benefits for all.

The village has been very lucky with two such good social centres and there must be many memories to add to ours.

Jim Bridger and Pru Hart, 1985

Pub forges links with country sports

From the *Midhurst & Petworth Observer*, August 1981

The White Horse, Graffham, is a village pub with a fascinating history, well documented in the legal Abstracts that show the changing ownership over the years. The present owner, Mr Jim Godman-Dorington, a local farmer, bought it in 1971.

The beautifully handscripted documents show that it has always had about 12 acres of land, once part of 1,200 acres which were the subject of the Woolavington and Graffham Inclosure Act in the 55th year of the reign of King George III.

In 1718 the property is described as a barn and lands known as Readen, but a century later a malthouse is documented and in 1834, when it was bought for £1,036 3s 9d by the Revd Henry Manning, of Woolavington, it was described as a dwellinghouse with three gardens, malthouse, hay barn, stable, cowstalls, two hovels, piggery, yard and five several pieces or parcels of land, known as Lands near Colliers Reeds and Colliers Reeds.

Particularly fascinating is the way in which local names crop up throughout the documents, such as Tupper, Howick, Money and Callaway.

During the twentieth century the pub has changed enormously. It used to be one of the three in the village, and Fid Bridger, Graffham's oldest resident at 89, can remember going to the back door when he was just a lad to collect a "quarter of gin or something," but by 1910, when he was 18, Fid considered the White Horse his local. Although then as now he was not a daily regular, he knew everyone there and relates how when he came back to the village in 1967 after many years away, he still knew everyone who drank there. It is with a hint of loss for the old days that the same cannot be said of 1981.

Until comparatively recent times there was a small dairy herd kept by Mr West, and after him

his son-in-law George Philips. As well as selling beer they did a milk round, by bicycle.

Nowadays things are very different. Mr Godman-Dorington had the premises completely renovated, and when the present manager and his wife, Paul and Maggie Rixon, took over in 1974, it was a far cry from the village local where three or four farmworkers used to gather of an evening over a pint of beer.

The accent now is on country pursuits and most of the regulars are interested in at least one of the sports of the area.

Shooting is very high on Paul Rixon's list of interests and the pub's involvement in competition mirrors this.

Two years ago the ladies team, Viv Gosden, Louise Harber and Wendy Virgo won the ladies cup in competition at Petworth. Last year the boys' team, Russell Hillsden, Trevor Pritchard, Mark Walker and Edward Harber Jr. brought home the Junior Cup for under-15s, also in competition at Petworth.

A pub team shoots against other pubs and shooting clubs (by invitation as unfortunately they do not have their own ground), and the Boxing Day shoot for regulars has become a popular tradition.

The record is not quite as bright in the twice yearly clay pigeon shooting competition against Seaford College, in which the two establishments compete for the Whitbread Cup. In fact in the past three years the College has won every time.

The Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray Hunt has strong ties with the White Horse which is involved in their fundraising activities, and Paul rides out whenever possible. He runs their bar at



The White Horse, 2015

the annual Action Research for the Crippled Child sponsorship ride, and next season will see a meet at the pub.

Paul and Maggie, with their son, Carl, are also keen “foot followers” of the hunt.

Another colourful activity that sometimes uses the White Horse for the start of a meeting is the Sussex Harness Club.

It is lovely traditional scene to see the horse-drawn vehicles, coming from a wide area, collected together on the forecourt, the drivers in traditional garments with an accompaniment of horses and riders all prepared for a delightful drive through some of the most beautiful countryside in Sussex. They have the advantage of being able to admire the scenery from “green lanes” often closed to the motoring public.

The life of a village is somehow made timeless with the annual visit of the Morris Dancers, and

The White Horse has been fortunate to have both the Bowood Morris Men and the Chanctonbury Morris Men performing.

The White Horse is a very busy and popular free house, most of its custom coming from local people, and Paul is helped by Mrs J Wakeford.

There has to be something to bring customers back time and again, apart from the common bond of country people with a mutual love of hunting, shooting and fishing (many are keen fly fishermen).

Quite a lot of the praise for this can be taken by the food provided by Maggie and her helper, Mrs E Brown. The emphasis is on a good bar snack menu, but the meals served in the 15-seat dining area are also very popular.

Although Paul and Maggie see the White Horse as very much a local pub, it seems that every time there is an event worthy of celebration the walls

expand to hold the crowds. For the Queen's Silver Jubilee and, more recently, the Royal wedding, everyone seemed to meet there, and when the Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray Hunt has its Point-to-Point at Midhurst, or during Goodwood Week, its popularity can be in no doubt.

Inside the extensive renovations have taken nothing of the old atmosphere away. During the winter months a huge log fire burns in the grate, and the many links with sport are echoed in the

trophies, photographs and memorabilia displayed on the walls.

In 1981 the gentle, persistent throb of Space Invaders has taken over from the Graffham Band, which once used to play there, and the busy pub is a far cry from the old "messuage with malt house" of 200 years ago. But it is a change in keeping with the changing face of life in a country village which has grown rapidly during the past 100 years, and for the locals, a change of which they approve.

Recent events at the White Horse

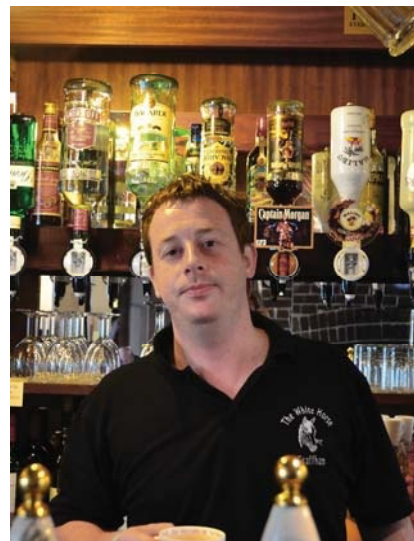


Clockwise from left

Parish Breakfast, 2014

Adam Mordue, Manager, 2012

Cemetery Work Party Lunch 2011





From top:

Christmas Quiz 2014

Men's Breakfast, 2013

Barbecue, 2015

*BBQ and Pizza Oven , 2015, with Archie
Godman-Dorington, Manager since 2014*



Chiddingfold & Leconfield meet at the Foresters, November 2015

Previous landlord, Lloyd Pocock remembers his time at the Foresters

We owned the Foresters from 1994 to 2014. I ran it myself up to 2005, after which it was tenanted until we sold it last year.

A bit of history

The Foresters had been owned by the Alberys for a long time. They ran a shop and bakery as well as the pub. Albery was also the coal merchant and ran a betting book. The shop later became part of Pescods, selling hardware and items such as paraffin and firelighters.

Stan Standing followed the Alberys. At that time the Foresters was owned by the Chichester

brewery, Henty and Constable who sold it to Ind Coope. Stan ran the pub up to around 1980 when he bought the freehold from the brewery, then sold it on to Peter Snowden. Peter was followed by the Tuckers, then Peter Rail. Derek and Christine Taylor bought the pub in 1987, running it until the early 90s. It shut for a year but I bought it and reopened in 1994.

Moving to Graffham

I bought Popple Hill Cottage in 1978 and lived there while I commuted to my engineering business in Surrey. I liked the village, and, although I had connections because I'd been to

Seaford College as a boarder, it wasn't that which drew me here particularly. I met my wife here. She was a local girl.

I took on the pub when I gave up my business. We were moderately successful - we never made a fortune and it was hard, hard work for what you got out of it but it was something of a lifestyle. It was a big pub with six bedrooms and a living room and kitchen upstairs which made a good family home to bring our children up in. We loved it and we had some good times there.

The Foresters was Grade II listed so obviously we had to be a bit careful; we did up the inside piecemeal. Outside there were two barns and we eventually got permission to turn them into two letting rooms. We did accommodation with breakfast as a hamper in the room so that when we did let it we had the best possible unit. We also restored the garden, at the same time getting planning permission to build a house at the back.

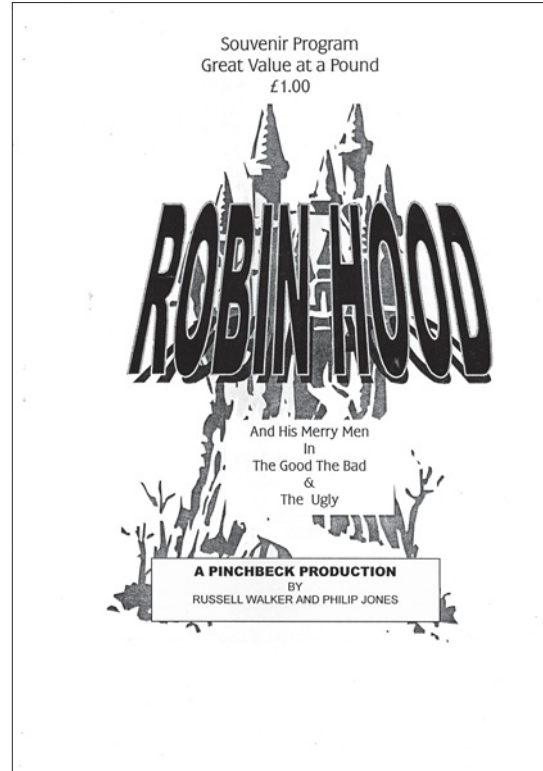
Village oriented

The Foresters was very much a village-oriented pub. We wanted to be part of the village and, having lived here before we took the pub over, I was to some degree known. We had a good bunch of local customers and we gave it our best shot while we were there.

We had several social events while I ran the pub, including two pantomimes which we put on at the Empire Hall. They were very popular and great fun to do. We did *Treasure Island* one year and then *Robin Hood* two years later. They were written by Phil Jones and Russell Walker. The cast was made up of the early evening drinking set who came into the pub on various nights of the week. There were a lot of people involved, both in the cast and helping out.

The pantomimes were put on in the Autumn. The content was slightly risqué and both played to a full house!

We had a cricket team and there was some rugby interest at one time. We also played bowls once a



year against the village for a few years. We weren't big on darts. We had quiz nights and I set the questions for those.

Free house

We were obviously a free house which meant we had a free rein on what we could sell in terms of the beer so we had reasonable support and following from CAMRA. We were in *The Good Beer Guide* every year I was there.

We had chefs. I did a little relief cooking but I was certainly no chef! We had some pretty standard pub fare but for spells we did have some quite reasonable menus - things that were a bit out of the ordinary. We weren't afraid to do game and other seasonal things.

The Hunt

The Hunt met six or seven times when I was there. They arranged to meet at 11 o'clock and they would start arriving at 10. When they were

largely assembled we handed out mulled wine and some savouries for the mounted field - the hunt staff and subscribers first then the others. We served the foot followers afterwards if there was enough left. Then they'd blow to go up on the Downs, or, occasionally, down the road to go towards Graffham Court.

Social Change and Pub Culture

Pubs change all the time. If I were to take on the Foresters today I'd be well out of date! In areas like the South East pubs are continuing to move up-market. Some of the really successful pubs have chefs trying to get Michelin stars, but that's not what I think it's about. I think there's a happy medium with food at reasonable prices but done well. Even if it's gammon, egg and chips, make it a bit special somehow, but don't charge £25 for it, charge £14.90! It was a tenner when I was doing it, probably a bit more than that now.

The other big change in pub culture is the admittance of children. I think if I had my time again I'd just say no children under 14 because their parents can't control them. They think they're in a public place so they run riot and make as much noise as they like.

The law was confusing when I ran the pub. Children were fine in the garden but when we let them in the restaurant, we'd find them running around the drinking area which was not allowed. Socially it is now accepted that pubs will let children in but I don't think the law has changed to really allow that fully.

And a bit about the White Horse

When I first came to Graffham I drank at the Foresters, but after Stan Standing left in 1978, a lot of customers decamped and went up to the White Horse. Paul and Maggie Rixon were managers. They ran a really good drinking house and Maggie did a bit of food. At that time the football club had ceased meeting in the pub and it developed a hunting, shooting and fishing clientele and a lot of clay pigeon shooting was



Lloyd Pocock, 2015

based around the pub. This lasted from around 1981 to the late 80s when they left. The building wasn't very atmospheric but Paul was an excellent landlord.

1981 Celebrations

In 1981 there was a big celebration of the Royal Wedding at the White Horse. The field from the pub to the house on the corner had some horse jumps put up in it, creating a circuit for people to run round and jump over obstacles. It was like a point to point but a "point to pint". The day was enhanced because we had the Wealden Mink Hunt there. Quite a few people from the White Horse followed the Wealden Mink Hounds. They were in their infancy then but they came over and made a bit of a day of it so the event was quite well attended. I think I made a commentary from the roof.

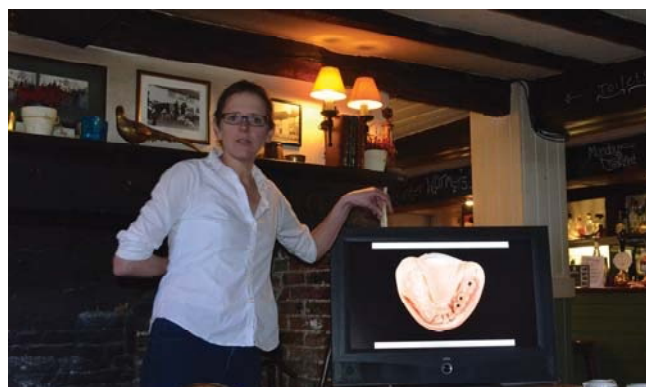
Lloyd Pocock, 2015



The Foresters, 2011

Recent events at the Foresters

James Tippett-Iles, landlord, 2012



Breakfast Talk with Ginny Barrett, 2014





Vintage Cars 2014



Christmas Jazz Night with Richard Bailey and Sara Reynolds, 2014



Current Landlord Ray Tough writes:

Before moving to Graffham, my wife Lesley and I lived in the small Surrey village of Abinger Hammer. I was a former shipbroker who worked in London for nearly 40 years. We purchased the freehold in August 2014 and set about repairing and renovating the building. The Foresters Arms is now being run as a family business with my Italian son-in-law Francesco heading the kitchen and bringing a Mediterranean flavour to the menu.



Local Enterprises

Hoyle Depot, 2015

End of the road for Roy's pumps?

An article from the *Observer*

Common Market uniformity could bring an end to the taste of history for motorists who call at Graffham's village garage.

Two of its three petrol pumps date back to the 1940s but they will have to go if proprietor Roy Griffiths is ordered to dispense petrol by the litre.

The pumps cannot be modified to dispense litres, so their old pump shapes may have to be replaced by the metric pump in the squat styling of the 1980s.

Typical ...

Typical of the many rural garages, Graffham Service Station Ltd evolved from the village blacksmith business and has its roots in the heydays of Britain before the Brussels bureaucrats cast their grey shroud of conformity.

The eyes of motorists who draw up before the pumps mist over when they spot the pound, shillings and pence signs still there. Once they could fill their tanks for less than a pound ...

The oldest one, an Avery Hardell, bears a mark that it was calibrated by the Customs in 1946.

"Even my youngest pump is 20 years old but they all work perfectly well and I have no wish to replace them. They are regularly checked and still accurate to within plus or minus one fluid ounce per gallon," said Roy.

"By next January we are supposed to sell by the litre. The Motor Agents Association is up in arms about it and trying to get regulations changed for people like me, and I can't say I am very hopeful they will succeed.

No Choice

"We don't sell a great volume of petrol but we do



give a good motoring service to the village and it seems an imposition that we should be forced to replace pumps that are working perfectly well at a cost of £1,000 each," he added.

He has not thought of trying to get a preservation order on his pump, but one thing he is determined - even if he has to replace them, they will not be lost for ever.

"If that happens, I would like them to go to a museum instead of a scrap dealer," said Roy, seen in our photograph with his trigger finger at the ready.

An apprentice in the 1960s

Michael Morton writes about Graffham Garage

I started work in 1965 at Graffham Garage. I signed a 5 year apprenticeship and my first week's wages was £2.6s.3d.

There were three petrol pumps. Shell were the suppliers and they were the old Shell pumps – the ones with the big yellow Shells on top. They sold three types of petrol: the cheapest petrol was 4/11 a gallon; That was in 1965 which is nearly 50 years ago.

As well as selling petrol, we did MOTs and servicing here. The garage was owned by Mr Laughlin and Dick Clay Peters was the mechanic. The garage was just galvanised sheds with no heating and no toilets. If you got a big job like putting a new clutch on a Landrover, you had to do it out in the yard and lie on the ground.

We serviced everything. Dr Rolands who lived at *The Malthouse* had some very old “AC’s”. We used to do all the work on those. They're sports cars and they still make them now.

We did work on one of the old Bullnose Bentleys which was owned then by Mrs Philips's son who lived at *Ramblers*. We used to do everything. It was a really good apprenticeship. I was the first one here to do a clutch on a 1300.

When I worked here as an apprentice I lived at Heyshott and used to pushbike over here. Then I got a scooter. Dick Peters used to take me out when I was learning to drive and when I passed my test I got a car.

After I'd served my five years here Mr Laughlin died so Mrs Laughlin took the garage on. When I'd finished my apprenticeship and got all the papers that I needed, Mrs Laughlin said that unfortunately she couldn't afford to keep me on. She kept the garage going for about five more years then it was bought by Manns of Chiddingfold. Roy Griffiths was the manager and he eventually bought it because Mann's son was a keen racing driver. (I went to Silverstone with him once as his mechanic).

Michael Morton, 2013



Graffham's Fourth Emergency Service

The Story behind Hoyle Garage by proprietor, Bob Crosdil

I came to Graffham when I was five – living at Seaford College with my mother and father until I got married at 27.

I did an apprenticeship from 1978 to 1981 with Roy Griffiths at the village garage (located where the current village shop is). I worked there until 1990 when I went to work for a garage in Chichester for two years.

At that time I had my own business in Norwood Lane. I'd been renting a farm barn from Jamie Cameron. I was working a rota in a garage in Chichester and in Norwood Lane when off shift, and I was often approached by people in the village who asked me to look after their cars.

Eventually I was laid off from the garage in

Chichester so I came back to the village and set up permanently at Jamie Cameron's.

Graffham Garage folded up sometime between 1991 and 1992. I understood it was originally sold to a developer for houses, but sold back to the village later. Roy Griffiths left the garage around 1992 to go to the White Horse (as publican) and Les Blackburn ran it for a time.

The Norwood Lane business was called "Crosdil Motor Services". When I went there some of the locals didn't really want a garage there. Planning permission on the building for change of use was needed so my wife at the time, Vicky, and I applied for this and it was granted. We wanted to call it "Norwood Garage" but couldn't use that title as there was opposition to the garage.

Hoyle Garage, 2015



Eventually Jamie Cameron retired and sold his farm, supporting us through the process of finding alternative premises. Sue Cooper informed us that Hoyle Depot was available and once again we had to go through a planning application. We got through this because of the support which we received from the village. When the Chichester Council were approached about putting a garage in a wooden building in the middle of the woods, where I would be draining fuel tanks and welding, they said “you haven’t got a cat in hell’s chance”! But through the incredible support of the village it was granted.

I think there were about 400 letters supporting the application and only four against (and since moving the garage here I’ve done work for all four of them).

The volume of letters and phone calls meant the decision had to go to Committee. When the Committee met there must have been nearly sixty of us turning up. We all sat in a little room and I needed four people to speak for us. These were Vicky, Miss Paula Burke, Peter Pine-Coffin and Maggie Paterson. It was great to have everyone on side. We even had people who weren’t customers phoning the Council and writing letters.

Since moving to Hoyle the business has continued to build up and almost all my customers are from Graffham. I look after all brands of car, and undertake servicing and MOT work. Unfortunately I can’t do the actual MOTs here. The Council wouldn’t permit this at the time because of the amount of traffic on this narrow road. It’s now ten years ago since we got the original permission so it might be time to go back to the Council and re-apply for permission to do MOTs.

My father still lives in Seaford College. He’s 82 this year! I’ve stayed an active villager and regularly support local events. My daughter went to Graffham School, then Herbert Shiner and Midhurst Grammar.



I used to come to work in the morning to open up the garage then Vicky would arrive later to help after she had taken Emily to school. Vicky still plays an active role in the garage even though we are now divorced.

Graffham is very supportive of things going on in the village. When things need to happen then the villagers do get together. I go out at any time of day, in the rain and even if I don’t know the person because, at the end of the day, I’m providing a service. When my fiancée Liz is not at work she enjoys getting involved and helping me collect and deliver customers cars. She also helps me with local events like the village fete and the church fair - after all that’s what village life is all about.

Bob Crosdil, 2015

“The Bug Farm” at Hoyle Depot

An article by Sue Cooper from *Graffham Parish News* 2011

Have you ever wondered, as you pass our gateway on your way to Heyshott, what goes on in those greenhouses, particularly on a winter evening when the lights glow orange among the trees and smoke rises from the woodburner chimney?

Their story begins back in 1980 when the site belonged to the forestry company English Woodlands, who managed estates all over the south east of England. Forestry work is chiefly winter work, and finding things for the foresters to do in the summer could be difficult. For the previous ten years or so they had been carrying out the new practice of biological pest control, which involves releasing parasites and predators of crop pests into glasshouses, with three of their staff who were interested in

horticulture, Len Shaw, George Lintott and Doug Stevens.

They worked in conjunction with the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute at Littlehampton, now sadly a housing estate but once the leader in applying science to the flourishing glasshouse industry on the south coast, and brought biological control insects from a company at Yapton called Natural Pest Control, run by the very knowledgeable Ivan Worrall. Under the initial supervision of scientists from GCRI, they visited the growers and monitored the progress of pest control in the crops. Growers needed some persuasion because, while chemical pesticides usually give a quick kill of pests, biological controls take much longer, so trust in the method developed gradually.

Eventually growers had enough confidence in the procedure to want to do it themselves, and English Woodlands decided to invest in a production facility of their own to sell direct. In 1979 I joined them from Natural Pest Control and in 1980 the glasshouses were erected and we started breeding a range of parasites and predators. After the big storm of 1987 English Woodlands had a couple of very hectic years clearing up and replanting, but then things went quiet and they had to re-structure the company. They decided to split it up into its separate activities, thus the sawmills at Cocking became independent and so did I with the bug production under the name "English Woodlands Biocontrol".

Finally they sold the Hoyle depot to Tilhill Forestry along with much of the purely forestry activity, and Tilhill sold the site to the Crosdils who were looking to move from Norwood Lane at



Sue in the glasshouse at Biowise

that time. In 2001 I rechristened the business "Biowise" as the connection with English Woodlands was by then irrelevant.

The range has widened over the years as biological control has become the norm for edible crops and popular too with ornamental plant raisers. Pests have developed resistance to chemical pesticides, the cost of developing new ones has escalated, and environmental and health concerns grown as we realise the unintended consequences of releasing chemicals into the soil, water and atmosphere.

The glasshouse industry has changed radically, many of the small family-run nurseries having disappeared but some very large enterprises having grown up. All have been hit by steeply rising fuel costs for heating the crop, ever-increasing red tape in the form of Health and Safety legislation and EU directives, and competition from imported produce, but at the same time enthusiasm for locally-grown food has risen.

The market for biological pest controls has extended to amateur gardeners as many are just as effective in a small greenhouse or on pot plants on the windowsill as they are in acres of tomatoes, and today I rear 9 different species of insects and mites, some exotic such as the whitefly parasite *Encarsia* and the red spider mite

predator *Phytoseiulus*, some native, and buy in a variety of others to cope with most of the commoner pests, though sadly not woodlice, lily beetle or horse chestnut leafminer.

For each of them, I grow host plants enjoyed by the appropriate pest and multiply these up (that's why we have to be in an isolated spot away from gardens and nurseries!) then allow a proportion of them to be attacked by their respective controls. Then a proportion of these are harvested and packed in tubes or bags or boxes for dispatch in the post. Nematodes - microscopic worms - I get from manufacturers Becker Underwood at Littlehampton, where they are brewed up in steel vats of nutritious but smelly broth before being extracted and packaged for distribution.

Like my grower customers, I have been hit by rising heating costs in particular, thus the woodburner to supplement the oil-fired boiler, and the budget has tightened in the last two winters. However, demand for the bugs is holding up, now through internet sales to amateurs as much as to professional growers, and it is a lovely spot to work, with the Crowsdils and my cat Rosie for company and buzzards, treecreepers, flocks of tits and chaffinches and the odd red kite overhead.

Sue Cooper, 2011

Sue retired from "The Bug Farm" in 2012



Up Norwood Lane

Jo Morgan writes about Norwood Equestrian and Norwood Contractors

The Norwood Equestrian Centre

I came to Graffham in 1974 with my family – father (Peter Broadbridge), mother and brother. We moved from the outskirts of Chichester where we had originally had a mixed arable and dairy farm, but had turned it into a market garden with glasshouses.

We literally arrived in Graffham on horseback as we had 23 horses and we rode them all over the Downs from Chichester to our new riding school in Norwood Lane.

We thought we'd be welcomed and it was a bit of a shock when we weren't! We cleared a lot of land and grew tomatoes under plastic while we

applied for planning permission to put up glasshouses and a bungalow. There was a lot of opposition to this and a meeting was held at Seaford College to stop the permission going through.

We did get permission – the man who came out from the Council to see the site was appalled at how we were being treated. We didn't get permission for as large an area of glass and plastic houses as we had wanted, and as the Equestrian Centre took off we gave up the tomatoes.

The riding school was great fun. We used to go all over the place at speed. We ran our own show each summer for a few years which was open to everyone. We also used to have mock hunts with

Norwood Equestrian in the 70s; Jo is 2nd from right



a “hunt cup” to give everyone a bit of Dutch courage before we started. Two riders would set off with streamers and the others would follow after 20 minutes. If we hadn’t caught the “fox” after a while, we would stop and have a rest in the middle of Ambersham Common, then, after 20 minutes, off we’d go again.

After a while my brother moved out of the business and went to Chichester and my mother was not in good health, so we stopped the riding school and changed to just livery. I ran this with Lesley (who worked for us for 17 years) so that Dad could look after mother.

I have rented out the stables from time to time when I’ve needed a break. Although I still teach every now and then, they are currently rented as I’m trying to take life a bit easier!

Norwood Contractors

Andy has been here 22 years and we got married twenty years ago. When I first met him he was a chicken salesman, but he had always wanted to do gardening and had decided to set up a gardening business.

He started off with a second hand van which he bought from my Dad. At the beginning we made a decision to stick to garden maintenance and soft landscaping rather than hard landscaping which requires a lot more equipment.

He put cards which I made into shop windows and the word spread. At the beginning he had customers all over the place. Now he has enough clients in Graffham and the surrounding villages of Lurgashall and Lodsworth, although he has one large client on the coast. He employs two people, Nathan and Mark.

Marian Bowley (the economics professor who lived at Brook Orchard) was one of Andy’s first customers. She had a prize collection of irises and lilies and when she died she left Andy some photos and books.

Jo Morgan, 2015



Peter Broadbridge with Western Saddle



Jo and Andy (in Medieval costume) 2012

Graffham Lives

Graffham People tell their Stories



Bob Whittington at work on Lavington Stud, 2015

Growing up in Post-War Graffham

Sylvia Smith remembered what life was like in the late forties

We were, and still are, an old Graffham family traceable back to the 17th century. My father worked on the land and my mother kept house. I had two younger sisters and life was very different to the life style of today.

Mealtimes were strict – no leaving the table without permission and the food seldom varied from one week to another. The Sunday joint was somehow stretched to the following Thursday presented in various guises. My pet horror was the sight of dead rabbits hanging just inside the larder door at eye level! They were waiting to be skinned and paunched before being cooked and served. Close encounters with our forthcoming dinner somehow stemmed our appetite.

Father kept chickens and we were discouraged from becoming attached to them. We also had a huge vegetable patch and I can still remember the peppery taste of lettuce and the unique flavour of new potatoes.

On the plus side, mother's chocolate sponge and suet pudding with treacle and many other favourites were beyond compare.

Up to the early fifties, mother cooked on a paraffin stove (how I do not know) after which we acquired an electric cooker.

Today's fare – pasta, chilli, garlic, ready meals to name but a few items, were unheard of in our house.

Turning to creature comforts, there was no electricity or proper sanitation. The toilet was a bucket in a shed in the garden and upstairs we used a commode or chamber pot. We were scrubbed once a week in a tin bath which doubled as a receptacle for the feathers when mother was plucking chickens.



Sylvia 2008

Sometimes I went with mother to WI meetings in the Empire Hall. I remember the heads of deer sporting magnificent antlers which were somehow fixed to the walls - seriously scary!

In winter when it was very cold, frost made beautiful patterns on the window panes. My mother went to great lengths to clad us warmly. A sensible vest with sleeves, a liberty bodice, thick lyle stockings, serious knickers, scarves and knitted gloves were essentials.

Church took up most of our Sundays. We attended Saint Giles twice, plus Sunday school and my father was one of the bell ringers. Mother

and father would rest on Sunday afternoons, possibly to gather strength for evensong, and we children dare not make any noise.

We all had bicycles to get about, but I was not allowed on the main road – (my sister was!)

Other images come to mind – our shoes were mended by father until they fell apart. He was often called upon to dispatch any dog or cat, too sick or too old to go on, and he did so humanely.

I am seeing Graffham through the eyes of my childhood, but I imagine different impressions might be recalled by others.

We did not have much in material terms but I believe as children we were happy. Certainly there was no pressure on us children compared to the lives of young people today.

Sylvia Smith 2012

A young man in the fifties

Alan Russell-Smith remembers some Graffham characters from times past

As a boy in the early fifties I spent many holidays in Graffham with my aunt and uncle before my parents moved to the village. The characters whom I met and who formed the web of village life remain vividly in my memory sixty years later.

The church, which I attended, was a central part of the life of the village. The spiritual needs of the parishioners were looked after by the Rector, the Revd Michael Townroe, ably assisted by Canon Campion, a man whose zeal in preaching the word of God was rivalled only by his zeal in the pursuit of foxes. The Rector was a friendly but somewhat straitlaced soul who visited our house from time to time. On one occasion he was mischievously informed by my father that I was going to a somewhat risqué (at that time) nightclub in London, at which there would undoubtedly be a show of chorus girls, with the elder daughter of Mr & Mrs Leigh Williams who lived at Nonnington Hall. Undaunted, he rose to the challenge: "In which case" he replied, "he may avert his gaze".

The church boasted a choir whose mainstay was the Pescod family, proprietors of the post office

and general store. Regularly at Sunday Mattins the father's stentorian voice could be heard welling up to the roof of the church, to the delight of the congregation and relief of the choir, rescued, as it often was, from a somewhat indifferent performance. Other parochial duties were discharged by Mr Parry who, unfailingly attired in a black cassock when in church, acted as bell ringer, sidesman and grave digger and whose heavily moustachioed face endowed him with the appearance of an Albert Schweitzer lookalike.

Corporeal comforts were provided by the Albery family who played a major role in the village. Cecil Albery, a jolly, rotund man, was not only landlord of the Foresters Arms and proprietor of the adjoining store but also village bookmaker, catering to the needs of the ever hopeful punters of whom my mother was one. The Foresters Arms was frequented by the highest echelons of Graffham society including, no less, the pater familias of the Leigh Williams family, alias 'Bangkok Bill', so known through his service in the Foreign Office. Despite his social status, he was not much given to ceremony and, regularly on Sunday mornings, he could be seen loading up

his car with return empties to motor to the Foresters Arms and, on the strength of the proceeds, enjoy a swift half or two.

George Philips was the proprietor of the other inn, the White Horse. A somewhat taciturn character with a strong Sussex burr, he dispensed warm ale to a group of equally taciturn drinkers assembled in a spartan room offering comfortless chairs and a plain wooden bar.

Neither establishment provided any food, the gastro pub being fifty years into the future, and it is difficult to say which was the more inhospitable - probably the White Horse by a short head.

The garage was owned and run by Ronnie Boxall, assisted by Dick Peters. Ronnie, so I was told, had a glass eye with the somewhat disconcerting result that the good eye looked straight at you but the other away at an angle of 45°. His wife Mary, a jolly, buxom lady; was very partial to gin and the two of them in the company of my aunt and uncle spent many an evening in the pursuit of bacchic pleasures.

The village postman and coal merchant was George Worsdell. Worsdell was the source of much information gleaned on his daily round which he was not averse to sharing with others. My uncle was greatly amused when he was handed a postcard accompanied by Worsdell's cheerful comment that he was pleased to know that I was having a good holiday in Jersey.

Other characters abounded: Billy Ruff, the ardent socialist, never without his tam-o-shanter, Major Bruce Todd imposing on his horse, the Lorings, she the founder and mainstay of the Graffham Rustics, he every inch the Colonel, the Pearces of Carpenters Town with whose daughter Naomi I passed many an hour riding in their wood, Claude Mullins of Glasses, the former magistrate, whose daily walk round the village was as regular as clockwork, George Money, the baker, always with pipe in mouth when delivering the bread, and many others. Sixty years on the memories remain. Will the characters of today be remembered in their turn? I wonder.

Alan Russell-Smith, 2012

Pescods 1950s



Ivy Money's Story

I was eight years old when I came to Graffham, and now I'm 95, nearly 96. My parents first moved from Shere in Surrey to Wisborough Green, where my father Alfred worked on a farm. Then they moved to Graffham where he was employed as head cowman by Mr Lacaita at Selham House.

When the calves were delivered, Mr Lacaita gave my father twenty pounds (which was a lot of money in those days) because he was so pleased the calves had lived.

We lived at Firtree Cottage then at Eggshell Cottage. In time my grandfather, Wallace Sherman, put my father into the Three Moles at Selham so we all moved there.

During the war the pub was busy. Troops were billeted at all the big houses in Graffham, and airmen from the Fleet Air Arm in Selham would also visit the pub.



They played darts and my sister played the piano. They got around the piano and sang all the old songs like *Hang out the washing on the Siegfried Line*. They had a really wonderful time ...

Courtship at the Three Moles

I met my future husband, Sid Money at the Three Moles when I was home one weekend. Sid and his father were the bakers in Graffham. Sid came in with a group of footballers and I gave him a light ale. I didn't work behind the bar very much as I didn't like being in the bar, but my father had gone out to see to his chickens and pigs.

I came back to Graffham when my sister and I decided to get married just before the war, September 9th 1939. We got married at Selham Church - I married Sid and she married a signalman. It is the only double wedding that is recorded in that Church to date.

The Graffham Bakery

Sid's grandfather and father both ran the Graffham bakery and Sid used to go round with his father to deliver bread by horse and cart from a young age. Sid's father worked for Mr and Mrs Pescod who also kept the village shop and Post Office, and Sid worked for them with his father at first.

The Pescods handed the bakery business over to Sid during the war because they couldn't cope with the subsidies and docketts .

We lived at Hillside Cottages across the road from the Bakehouse, and the cottage next door to us was used as a maternity home during the war. The Bakehouse was in The Street on the site of the newer house which is now called Pilgrims Cottage.

Sid baked bread throughout the war and was up at 4-5 am every morning. We made every sort of bread. The smell of the bread cooking was wonderful. We also made cakes and lardy rolls and all types of loaves. Sid had a contract with a London firm to supply rolls to Seaford College which were delivered to them by van.

I would join Sid when it was time to deliver the bread. We went out together every weekday. We had two rounds which we did on alternate days: the Duncton round took in Norwood, Burton and the outskirts of Petworth; the Heyshott round took in Selham, Ambersham, Heyshott and Topleigh. We delivered to houses, to the people, that's why I knew everybody in Graffham! We worked very long hours and rarely got to bed before about eleven or twelve o'clock at night.

Things eased off a bit after the war. The Graffham campsite opened and the campers would sometimes queue from Elm Cottage up to the Bakehouse.

War Babies

I was called up during the war but I didn't go because I was pregnant. I had signed up on the nursing reserves and I volunteered my services overseas, but when I was called up I was expecting my first baby, Robert, who was born in 1942. Although I didn't get into nursing the wounded, we had to do bandages and everything for the Red Cross in a little tin hut at Calloways.

Mrs Pressey, the local midwife, lived next door to me at Hillside and she opened up a maternity home for expectant mothers—not just evacuees. The schoolmasters' wives had their babies there. My first baby, Robert, was born at home, but my second, Maureen, was born at Mrs Pressey's maternity home.

Evacuees

Then we had all the evacuees! My cousin was bombed out of her house and she arrived from near Epsom. Her second boy was born in the air



Sid Money at the old bakery

raid shelters and she came straight down to me afterwards. I had Robert and she came with two children and stayed three years. Her husband used to come down at weekends. He had quite a high job on the railway so he didn't go to war.

I'd only got married in 1939 but I was asked to have a little girl of four from London, and I had another girl of thirteen, Heather. We had mattresses all over the floors in the bedrooms. At that time Mrs Robbins was the billeting officer and supplied the mattresses. I only had enough furniture for my own family because you could only get so much with docketts. If you had a bed and table, chairs and settee then your docketts were finished. You hadn't got enough docketts to buy extra beds for all the evacuees.

We got everything we needed to make bread including sugar, flour and fat, without rationing because we were bakers, so we were able to supply them all with bread. I forget how many evacuees were in the village, but I know the school number went up. We were feeding them up there at the school as well. There were 125 or 135 children up there at that time. That's why they

had to take meals down to the shack and at one point some of the children were fed at Thraves as well.

After the War

In the sixties Sid had a stroke and we sold the bakery.

I nursed Sid through his illnesses and looked after him for 13 years after his stroke. During that time he had a part-time job gardening for Mr Godman-Dorington. To supplement the income I used to go fruit picking up at River with my sister and June Challen's mum. One day we were asked if we could help out at the Kirdford Growers packing apples and pears and from then on they used to come and collect a little crowd of us every day. We were employed as casuals but the work lasted to April or May. After that I worked for Kirdford Growers for about eleven years.

My husband Sid had been born in 1906, and had gone to Graffham School as a boy. He died in 1979 aged seventy-three and had never moved



Ivy, 2012

outside of Graffham. I'm still living in Graffham which is my home, and I have my family and friends around me which is good too.

Ivy Money, 2012

Guillods, 2015



Freedom and safety in a rural community

Linda Smart (née Challen) remembers her childhood 1948-67

I feel very privileged and extremely lucky to have grown up in such a safe and friendly environment, where everyone knew each other and there existed a really supportive community.

I was born in 1948, the first child of my parents, Ted and Lottie Challen, followed in 1950 by my sister Kate (Kathryn), in 1953 brother Nigel was born and last but by no means least our brother Lawrence in 1954. As part of the large Challen family we were never short of playmates, or aunts and uncles who would look out for us. It is well documented that many players in the Graffham football team were Challens and indeed many also played cricket. I can recall standing on the sideline on a cold winter's day watching a

football match against a neighbouring village. My Dad would open his coat and tuck me inside to keep out the cold, then when half-time was called the players would be offered a plate of sliced oranges as refreshment.

In the early years of my life sugar was still rationed, I would often be sent to the village shop, Pescods, just a minutes' walk away from our home, 1 Guillod Cottages, to buy a few groceries. To the right of the shop was the public telephone box from which we would all make our calls usually to a doctor, dentist or relative living out of the village. Often in the evenings PC Dadswell could be seen doing his rounds on his little grey police motorbike and I believe he used the phone box to call in to Petworth police station which was his base at the time.

Phone Box, 2015



As children we all attended Graffham Primary School. There were just three classrooms, Miss Sabine taught the infants, Mr. Steele taught the next age group and Miss Beevor the older children prior to them going on to either Midhurst Secondary Modern or Midhurst Grammar School. We were given a good grounding in all things educational and encouraged to appreciate the world around us. Miss Beevor was very keen on needlework and I believe this is one of the reasons that my pleasure in this subject has remained with me until this day. Two abiding memories I have of these days are firstly arriving at school one morning after a bitterly cold walk and having such cold feet that I was in tears. Miss Sabine, bless her, took me into the infant's room where she sat me down in front of the blazing open fire, took off my socks and rubbed my feet until the life came back to them. I wonder if this course of action would be frowned upon these days but I was so thankful that she had done this for me. The other memory

is of the third of a pint bottles of milk we would have to drink each morning. Again, during cold weather by the time we got to school the milk had been left outside so long that it had frozen, expanded in the bottles, pushed the caps off and an inch or so of ice would be standing proud on the top of each bottle in the metal crates. On these occasions if we were lucky, Mrs Robbins, the cook, would warm the milk and if we were very very lucky it might have some cocoa added too.

During the summer on a Wednesday afternoon after school my sister and I would often walk to our Granny's house at Woodcote for tea and television, a real treat for us at that time as we had no TV at home. On the way there while walking between the White Horse and Woodcote we would often encounter Miss Ursula Wyndham walking her small herd of goats. She did this to allow them to graze the verges. The most irritating part of this was that the goats would make a beeline for us and rub themselves against us leaving the most pungent aroma on our school clothes. This would instantly get us into trouble when we arrived home in the evening.

Life in Graffham offered us the freedom and safety to explore our surroundings so long as we abided by the rules laid down by our parents and generally this was respected by everyone. Playing on the recreation ground afforded us some independence and we would be quite happy to spend time with friends just using the swings, the see-saw and later the climbing frame or in summer just making daisy chains.

One of the events that everyone in the village looked forward to was the August Bank Holiday village fete, still going today I believe. It was at one of these fetes, probably 1959 or 1960 when something happened which changed our lives as a family. An announcement was made that there were two puppies for sale at £1 each and if they were not sold on that day their future was not looking good. As children we were desperate to be allowed to take one home but our parents were adamant they had enough mouths to feed. As the

afternoon progressed the price dropped to 10/- and still we begged and pleaded but the answer remained the same. The fete was almost at an end and a voice came over the loud speaker "the puppies are going for 5/- last offer". We were all amazed when we were told by Mum and Dad, "alright then you can have one". We chose the male and I believe the Morton family from Woodcote bought the bitch. Overjoyed, we took our prize home and named him "Lucky" for obvious reasons. Lucky turned out to be the kindest dog anyone could wish for and lived to a ripe old age. He was also responsible for curing both my brothers of their fear of dogs.

Many families would take a walk on a Sunday afternoon, no shops or shopping on a Sunday in those days. One of our favourite places to go on these walks was on top of the Downs, taking either the path on the right just past Ladywell Cottage or the one near Thraves as it used to be called. In those days the grass at the top was short and springy all kept cropped by the numerous

Linda



rabbits that lived there, but this was in the days before myxomatosis. The sight of those poor rabbits with bulging eyes and oozing sores is a memory I am sad to have. Much happier times on the Downs were had picking blackberries, pounds and pounds, with Mum and several neighbours, all the produce to be later turned into delicious jam or jelly.

I think all the children of Graffham and Heyshott must have happy memories of the wonderful Christmas parties given to us by the Ameer and Begum of Bahawalpur who also had a home at Selham House. In the Empire Hall we were treated to a magnificent tea followed by some entertainment and before we left for home everyone was presented with an appropriate present.

Another reason for feeling so lucky to have grown up in Graffham is for the skills we were able to learn at The Craft Centre, run by Mrs Mullins and

her daughter, Barbara. Saturday mornings would see many of us visiting the craft centre to learn about pottery making. We were even taught how to construct an outdoor brick kiln in which some of our pots were fired. I still have one or two of my pieces to this day. Weaving was also on the agenda. You would start off on a table-top loom and once you had learnt the basic techniques and your legs were long enough to reach the treadles you progressed to a full size loom on which rugs and small blankets were made. Carding and spinning the wool was an important part of this journey. Barbara also taught us about dyeing the wool especially using natural dyes. It was always a proud moment taking a finished item home.

While still living at Guillod Cottages, we used to love seeing the stallions from the stud being walked around the village by their grooms as part of their morning exercise. Even more thrilling was seeing the famous stallion Sing-Sing being paraded round the village; you could not help

Graffham Fete, 1960s





Graffham Brownies c 1961

admiring his beautiful glossy black coat and his strutting stride.

A Brownie pack was held at Thereaway, the home of Mrs Callan. Mrs Joan Ellerton and Mrs Callan ran the pack together. When it started there were two sixes, the Pixies and the Fairies. We had so much fun at those meetings. It was at one of these that I was introduced to Rudyard Kipling and the Just So stories, magical. We did a lot of cooking on Mrs. Callan's Aga, closely supervised of course and encouraged to work tidily and safely. We played many games at these meetings, one in particular was a favourite memory game where a number of items were placed on a tray in front of us for so many minutes then taken away. We then had to see how many items we could recall. It really made us concentrate.

At the age of eleven we left the idyllic childhood spent at Graffham Primary school and ventured off to Midhurst, although not far away the journey sometimes proved a bit of an adventure. We were driven by Peggy Weller in coaches owned by Basil Williams of Emsworth. I think some of these coaches had seen better days and poor

Peggy would often be left struggling to get a coach started on a cold morning or one would break down en route to Midhurst but Peggy would always maintain a smile for us and do whatever she could to make sure we arrived safely at our destination.

In 1965 I started a two year course at Chichester College and the only way to get there each day was for me to cycle from Graffham through Seaford College out to the Cricketers Arms at Duncton where I would leave my bike ready for the return journey in the evening. Very occasionally if I was lucky my mother would drive me out to the Petworth to Duncton road to catch a bus into Chichester but this did not happen often.

In 1967 I was married in St Giles Church and we had our reception at the Empire Hall as so many couples have done. Both my children were christened at St Giles because I wanted them to have that connection with the special village that has played such a huge part in shaping my life.

Linda Smart (née Challen), 2013

June Challen Remembers

I moved to Graffham with my mother, Gladys (Ford) Parry, my step-father, Leslie Parry and my sister Josie in August 1949. We came to live in No 15, Guillod Cottages. These cottages had just been completed by Midhurst District Council. There were two Airey houses, 12 three-bedroom houses, four one-bedroom flats and four two-bedroom flats. They were named after Mr & Mrs Guillod who lived at Fairacre and who were very generous to the village – hence The Guillod Trust which the Parish Council administers to this day.

I did not go to Graffham School as all over 11 years of age were taken by the Hants & Sussex double-decker bus, driven by Peggy Weller to Easebourne School. These journeys were quite interesting when we had snowfalls as the bus did not like Bex Mill at Heyshott. Many a time we all got off and had to push, or it would break

down and we had to wait for a replacement, all very pleased to be late.

The Hants & Sussex double-decker was the service bus to either Midhurst or Petworth. On Wednesdays and Saturdays it would go to Chichester. In the evenings it would go to Midhurst for the cinema, but left at 9.40pm just before the films ended. Needless to say many people had to find their own way home.

I left the village in 1951 and worked for a year looking after the four Bertram boys (Sir Harry & Lady Ricardo's grandchildren) in Linton, Cambridgeshire. After that I entered Dr Barnardos and did three years of nursery nurse training, qualifying as an N.N.E.B. I married John Challen (twin to Mary Challen) in 1957. He was the youngest of the nine children of Edward (Ned) and Dorothy Challen (nee Boxall).

June, 2012



John had left school at 14 and worked in the grounds of Seaford College, run by Canon Johnson. He then went to work with his brother "Ted" in the woods. After that he worked for Morleys Wood & Coal Merchants (now Wests Yard at Half-Way Bridge). He then went to work for Stan Weller at Brick Place, now Lilac Cottage on his combining machines which went to work for most of the local farmers. When they ceased operating he worked for Sir Albert Clavering and his son Nigel at Woodcote Farm - cows, pigs and arable. The Claverings were bought out by Jim Godman-Dorington who also had Haylands Farm.

We moved into 2, Flint Cottages, Woodcote after our marriage and had three of our children while we were there, Wendy, Trevor and Judith. Colonel Loring found a house for us to rent until the Council could provide one for us. Eighteen months later we moved into 9, Guillod Cottages where Vivienne was born. We have been here ever since and are now awaiting a smaller affordable dwelling.*

When I first came to Graffham :

The Church

Revd Michael Townroe and family in the Old Rectory, Miss Sabine (teacher) in the small flat in the Rectory plus Canon (retired) and Mrs Campion in the larger flat. All wedding photographs were taken on the Rectory lawn in front of the spreading yew tree.

The School

Miss Beevor - Headmistress; Miss Sabine – Infants; Mrs Robbins – Cook, assisted by Mrs Kingshott and Mrs Money.

The Garage

This was where the village shop is now – up to 2007. It was run by Mr Ron Boxall and mechanics Dick Peters and Harry Collier.

The Shop (Pescods Stores)

The shop was run by Mr Jack Pescod and his brother, Fred. Jack was the Postmaster. Fred served in the shop with a “fag” burning with a long, long ash and everyone held their breath as to whether it would fall into their sliced bacon or cheese. No health and safety checks in those days! The shop was situated on the right hand side of the road, past Guillod Cottages.

The phone box was situated outside the shop and was used regularly as few people had telephones in their homes.

The Bakery

A few yards past the old shop (where Pilgrims Cottage now stands). This was run solely by Mr Sid Money and he delivered to all surrounding villages as well as Graffham.

Builders

Dick and Fred Cooper plus Arthur Puttick. The works yard was on the approach to Stuart Cottage (where Heirist has been built).

Papers

Collected by Percy Boxall on his bicycle from Selham Station and then delivered around the village

The Dairy

George Phillips (landlord of the White Horse) had a herd of Guernsey and Jersey cows. A dairy was in the barn at the back of the pub and he delivered around the village with the help of Freddie Bicknel and Mary Challen.

Taxis

Mr Kemm, Eldridge Lane and Mr Smith (who lodged with Miss Barker)

Public Houses

- ⇒ The Woodman run by Mr and Mrs Hinton
- ⇒ The Foresters Arms run by Mr & Mrs Cecil Albery
- ⇒ The White Horse run by Mr & Mrs George Phillips

Guillods in the 1950s

When Guillod Cottages were first built there were, at one stage, 40 children who all played happily in the road during the day. Most vehicles were used by men for their work, hence no cars on the road during the day. Everybody took a pride in keeping their house and garden very tidy. The flats changed quite a lot as the number of children increased and they had to move to larger accommodation.

Lots of friendships were made and lasted until the present day. Mrs Ivy Money has lived in No 14 since they were built and Olive Challen lived at No 11 until her death last year.

June Challen, 2013

**Since writing this article, June has been allocated a house at All Saints Cottages*

A Streatham Girl comes to Graffham

by June Taylor

Coming to Graffham

I was born in Streatham and brought up in a Salvation Army home with my two sisters. When we left there we went on to work at Charterhouse School in Godalming which is where I met my first husband.

When I first got married, I lived in Fernhurst with my husband's family, then we heard about the flat in Graffham - I think we were on the Council list. There were twelve flats in the Guillods but only two are left now.

I came to Graffham in 1953, the Coronation year. I had just one boy then, my oldest son Raymond who was eight months old. He's coming up for 60 in January! I had my second son, Christopher, in the flat. The local midwife came. After that I moved into the house I'm in now and I've been here for 44 years.

A chicken from the Stud

My first husband walked out on me when I had the two boys and then I met David who lived in the Guillods. He was a Graffham man and he lived up Eldridge Lane which is now Peter's Farm. He died in 2004.

David worked on the farm at Seaford College and then at the Stud. He drove the tractors. The Stud gave us a bag of potatoes and a chicken for Christmas and I still get the chicken every year.

Working in the Foresters

When my boys were old enough to go to school, I worked at the Foresters Arms for eight years behind the bar. I used to love it – Mr Standing was the publican.



They used to have discos in the pub on the weekend in the 60s and 70s. They danced in the pub itself. And we had lovely New Year's Eve do's as well when we used to dress up. One year I dressed as Dame Edna Everidge in a wig. Another year I was a fairy, but at the time I had a bad leg and wore an elastic stocking so they called me the geriatric fairy. Everybody dressed up. They had bands sometimes; Tony Speake used to have a band and they used to play there as well. We had some great times.

In the pub they served a lot of things "in the basket" – chicken in the basket and chips. They also used to do huge T-Bone steaks.

Both Mr Standing and I used to cook and I used to run the pub when he went on holidays. He asked me if I would like to work behind the bar. In those days you had to add up in your head as you went along – there weren't any computers and tills, the money was just in a drawer. At first I said I couldn't do it but of course I did. (I wouldn't be able to do it now though).

Mr Standing paid for me to go to Goodwood once and gave me some money to put on a horse - I lost it. He said "You're going to Goodwood this afternoon" and a couple of his friends took me. I had a good afternoon and although I'm not a horse racing fan, I enjoyed it.

A Duke and Duchess

I have a Christmas Card every year from the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland! In the 1980s I used to work for them down at the house by the campsite – The Potteries. When they lived there they were Lord and Lady Percy but when I asked what I should call them, Lady Percy said "Oh for goodness sake call us Jane and Ralph". She was just like us really, an ordinary person.

When they had their first baby Katie I used to look after her for a fortnight at a time when she was tiny as they used to go away skiing and things like that. There was nothing snobbish about them, they were lovely people. They even bought me a

scooter. I said "I can't drive that", but they said "Yes, you can" so I went down the Recreation Ground and I practised down there, going round the field with an "L" plate on.

Guillods

Years ago the first friend I ever made in Graffham was Rene Brown – she was lovely – she was the first person to talk to me in Graffham because I was walking around with a great high pram. She lived in Guillods and when I moved from the flat, I lived next door to her.

It's changed now because there aren't many of the old ones left. Olive Challen, Ivy Money and I are the only original occupants left.

We had good times at Guillods years ago. We all used to be one happy family but now there are so many different people. We used to have little coffee mornings every Wednesday. We'd go to someone's house and have coffee and biscuits or a cake if they made one.

My youngest son, Michael had a grant from the Guillods Trust to go to college and study graphic design.

"Right to Buy"

A lot of people were against this when it came in because they thought it was wrong. It doesn't give anybody who can't afford to buy their houses a place to live – there's nowhere to rent now. I couldn't afford to buy my house. I would like to downsize into a smaller place now but I want to stay in Graffham. If they built a one or two bedroomed place then I would move and my house could be used for a family. I'm rumbling about in a three bedroom house I don't need.

Young Wives

We had a Women's Institute but I didn't belong to that. I belonged to what they called the Young Wives years ago. Young Wives was for young women who had children and we used to have a meeting once a week. It was lovely. We met at



June and David

different people's houses. We had a chat and we used to take the children.

The Sports Club

I used to go to the Sports Club on Saturday nights. It was a social club and they used to dress up on New Year's Eve which was quite nice. We had bingo down there – Maureen Boulton used to do the calling. If you wanted a drink you could get one from the bar – I just used to have a cup of tea and biscuits. The Club was open on Saturdays. The footballers used to go in in the afternoon and it stayed open through the evening. We went down there for a social life. Different people ran the bar.

The Queen's Silver Jubilee

We celebrated in both pubs. I was on duty in the Foresters for a long time, then I said to Stan "That's it. I've had enough" and Sylvia Smith and I went up to the White Horse.

My daughter-in-law's father, who was Polish, said "You've got to wear something special for the Jubilee". I was a little bit daring in those days and I had a garter with "Silver Jubilee" on.

We went down to the White Horse that night. The celebration was in the forecourt. Raoul Correa had lambs on barbecues spread out and we celebrated there with singing and dancing. Most of the village were there.

The Parish Council gave Silver Jubilee mugs to all the children.

Day Trips with the DNA

I joined the District Nursing Association when Jean Bridger took over. She asked me to come to meetings and be on the Committee. She left and then Priscilla Thomas took over; she was followed by Sylvia Smith, and now I'm still there with Alison Davidson so I've been on

that Committee for many years.

We used to have a trip to Worthing every summer with the DNA and also we used to go to Portsmouth at Christmas.

We used to take the children to Worthing to go to the beach. The DNA organised it and paid for the coach but people had to contribute. Anybody could go but if you didn't belong to the DNA you had to pay a bit more. It was the same with the Christmas Shopping Trip to Portsmouth. The trips were very popular.

Sadly they don't run the trips any more. The Treasurer won't pay for a coach as it has nothing to do with health, however we do have a party for the hospital drivers!

And has Graffham changed?

I think the people have changed – perhaps they aren't so friendly. Years ago this was a really friendly little village, but to me it's not so friendly now. I suppose it's because there's so many big houses, but you don't see the people who live in them so you can't really say they're not friendly! Also, more people have cars so they aren't walking around.

June Taylor, 2013

A Life on the Land

Bob Whittington

I was born in 1948. My father was a farm worker at the Stud. We lived at Ladywell Cottage which was owned by the Stud until 1957 then we moved to Well Cottage for a few years.

Ladywell Cottage was a horrible place then – damp with no heating apart from open fires and an old black stove and range.

There was an open ditch on both sides of the road with water running down them all day but there was hardly any traffic. I remember seeing the water running in the back door and coming out the front door of Ripples. I was living in Ladywell when they put the water into the village on the mains. I was only a little boy but I remember a great big digger coming through the village. But I can't remember what year it was.

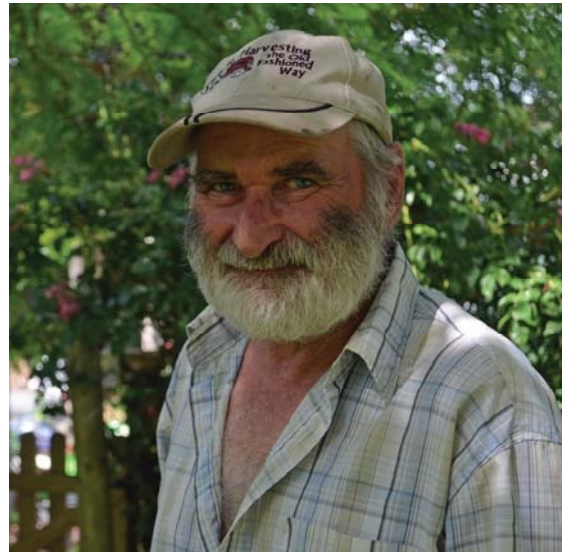
Graffham School

I went to Graffham School from five to eleven (1953 to 1959). I used to walk up to the school from Ladywell. Miss Beevor, the Headmistress lived opposite. When I was about ten, I had to go and get the key and open the school. They trusted me to open the school which they wouldn't nowadays, would they?

When my brother was there he reckoned there were 107 kids at the school and I reckon there were 101 when I was there. It's completely changed now.

We used to climb over each other to get to the teacher's desk! Two classrooms were in the main hall. You had partitions and Mr Steele was up one end and Miss Beevor was up the other end. Miss Sabine was in the little room as you go in on the right. That was it! There were only the three classrooms. The toilet was outside.

I was about six or seven when the hut was put in;



Bob Whittington, 2015

they only knocked it down in 2014 – it was a “temporary classroom”. There was a little pond above it.

There were 31 in the class. I learned more at Graffham School than I did anywhere else. After Graffham I went to the Secondary School in Midhurst. I hated Midhurst School. There were a thousand kids at Midhurst.

Land and Landscape in the 50s

My father did all sorts of jobs at the Stud. Thatching was part of his work, but he packed up when he left the Stud in 1957. I can remember going out with him to pull out the straw for thatching the ricks on the Stud. I was about six or seven. You made the straws wet and then you pulled them and put them into dogs. We carried them up the stack in a dog. You set this thing on the ground then you filled it up with straw then you carried it up on the ladder.

There's a photograph of one of them in the Records Office. It was taken in the field opposite Calloways as you turn to go up to the school.

When I was a kid that field behind the football ground used to be all trees. It used to be hazel trees. No pine in those days, hazel was used for everything. They cleared it all out in the 1950s



Making straw dogs - "Evangelist Week 1950" by George Garland reprinted courtesy of WSRO (N33119)

and planted grass both for cows and hay. There's a photograph (in the archives) of a skipping race on the recreation ground taken in 1953 ... up across the back of it, across the Stud there's not a tree in 1953! All the hedges have all been let go since then.

In the 1950s all the farmers kept cows in the village. There was a dairy farm up here (at Woodcote) and then old Billy Rough had cows over the road. He used to have cows down at Adams Farms. Old George Phillips who had the White Horse had cows, and Hazel Durrell used to deliver the milk round the village. And then Peter's farm (opposite the White Horse) had cows. Mr Kenrick down at Upper Norwood Farm had cows. The field at the back of the football ground was all cows.

I started work at Peters Farm when I was fifteen in 1963. I did a bit of tractor work and other farm work - milking cows, mucking out, and a bit of everything. That's when you could buy a tractor and a trailer for a thousand pounds ... now its crazy money. I was at Peter's Farm for 21 years.

Working at the Stud

I went from there to the Stud in 1985. There were seventeen staff then and now there are six. They've got bigger machinery. We had three stallions and 150 horses in those days. All the boxes were in use. Now we don't use them in the summer.

They don't have stallions now - it doesn't pay. Mares are taken to the stallion now. In the old days, mares used to come in, stay and foal, then stay for so many days and get back in foal for the next year.

Now I feed the horses every morning. I did twelve years of night work which I don't do now, ten years of seven nights a week. We used to foal nearly 100 in those days when I first started, now it's only 30. I used to go back into work in the morning to clean the boxes or do tractor work - I had a mortgage to pay. Nowadays I clock in at 7 o'clock but I still get up at 5 - I don't like to rush things!

Bob Whittington, 2012

Bob at work, 2015



Ron King

Woodsman and guardian of Graffham Common, 1935-2012

Ron was born in Easebourne Cottage Hospital on 13th October 1935. His father was game keeper on Cowdray Estate, living at Locks Cottage. The family moved to Barnetts Cottages when Mr King became game keeper for the Mitfords' Pitshill Estate and from his earliest years Ron developed the skills and knowledge of the true countryman, helping his father.

Ron shared his wartime childhood with the Probert family, evacuees from London whom his mother had welcomed into their tiny cottage when Mr King found them stranded on Selham Station platform. The boys slept three to a single bed sardine-wise. All water had to be carried up a steep path from the stream. The lights were oil and the wood-fired cooker remains today. The heavy wireless battery had to be carried to their garage for recharging so its use was restricted but Ron did have an old wind-up gramophone for which he saved up and bought records. In the shed was a wood-fired wash boiler where in addition to the household washing, Mrs King washed for the soldiers at the army unit opposite "Selham End". She also had soldiers' wives to stay at weekends.

The children walked the 2½ miles to Graffham School until new neighbours who had an old car gave them a lift. One harsh winter the younger boys were dragged on their homemade toboggan. Many happy summer Sunday afternoons were spent picnicking and swimming at Tumble Bay on the Rother.

In 1950 Ron's father died after a fall from his bike on Popple Hill. Mrs King and Ron had to move from the keeper's cottage and lived for a while at Fitzlea where Mrs King looked after the Hancocks' pigs. Later she secured the Pitshill keeper's job herself and they moved back to Barnetts.



On leaving school, Ron worked for a short time at Heath End Garage picking up some useful mechanical experience. From there he went to work for the Ansteys at Cathanger. While there he bought his first motor bike which brought new opportunities to explore and to visit the cousins in Dorset with 'Mum' riding pillion. Graham Anstey remembers a trip to Smithfield Market riding pillion on Ron's bike —I think a first visit to London.

In 1964 Ron started working at Hurlands Farm but eventually chose to work for himself, coppicing the Pitshill chestnut and working the woodland. He was immensely strong and managed to shift huge butts of oak and beech with his ancient tractor but was really distressed when this involved trampling the carpets of bluebells

which he loved. Later in the year he looked forward to the heather and took a pride in management of the rides and firebreaks.

A vigilant and conscientious guardian of Pitshill Woods and Graffham Common, he was constantly aware of all passers-by and delighted in engaging them in conversation from which it was often difficult to escape. But one always learned something from the encounter - whether garden folk-lore, the weather or how to get the tractor going with recycled or home-made parts. Ron also loved to share the progress of his numerous clutches of newly-hatched chicks. They were his pets and when he had to go so unexpectedly to hospital, he left 26 cockerels crowing in chorus as well as his laying hens.

As well as tending the legendary vegetable garden which he continued to maintain after his mother's death, he could always be found working in one of the village gardens, hedging and ditching, fencing, grass cutting or delivering logs. He was sorely missed when his failing eyesight stopped him from driving. However, he miraculously coaxed his ancient tractors into life to continue his work in woodland—often spending hours feeling around in the leaf litter for a dropped nut, bolt or spanner. He never threw anything away yet could remember exactly where to find every staple or file.



Mrs Hilda King at Fitzlea, 1940s

Ron could turn his hand to anything and was always ready to help in the emergency of escaping animals, leaking water, clearing fallen trees or other people's broken down tractors.

Ron had a remarkable memory and never failed to enquire the progress and condition of each member of one's family. At Christmas he would trudge round the village bearing boxes of treats to those who had kept him supplied with home-made cakes and goodies. Alone in his hospital chair once his sight had failed, he relied on his memories of all those he had met at his garden gate.

Maggie Paterson, 2012



Ron's father, Ernest King, Ron and Derek Probert

An Evacuee at Barnetts Cottage

Ron Probert's Story

originally printed in *Graffham Parish News*, 2008

Sunday 3rd September, 1939 ... we assembled in the playground at Stonhouse Street School in Clapham with the other children and their mothers. While we were there, the air raid sirens sounded and a policeman cycled past the school shouting out that war had been declared – it was about 11.00 am.

We went to Victoria Station by bus and tram. Most of my school friends went to Reading – they went without their mothers. My mother came away with me and my younger brother Derick. We left Victoria by train and went to Pulborough, then transferred to buses and eventually arrived at Lodsworth Village Hall where local people were waiting to take us into their homes.

Among the local people was a lady called Mrs Koenig who owned a poultry farm at Selham – Hurlands Farm. She already had evacuees but was able to billet us in one of her employees' cottages.

Mrs Hilda King, 1940s



I went to Lodsworth school for about a month. This first foster home did not prove very successful and my mother was going to return to London with us. I remember waiting outside the Three Moles at Selham, killing time before the train arrived going to Pulborough, when Mr King, a local gamekeeper, arrived on his bicycle to get some tobacco. When my mother told him of her intention, he insisted that we did not get the train. He said that he would discuss with his wife the possibility of us living with them and he promptly rode off on his bicycle. He returned shortly afterwards and told my mother that we were going to Barnetts Cottage.

So started what was to be the three most memorable years of my life. I was then one month from my eleventh birthday.

Mrs Koenig took us and our belongings by car to Barnetts Cottage and I remember Mrs King running down the garden path to greet us.

I started school at Graffham. I was the only evacuee from Clapham, the rest came from the Elephant and Castle area. There was also a teacher from London, Mr Sinclair, who was later called up for military service. He was replaced by Mr Bourdon, who in turn was called up and replaced by Mr Cox.

Miss Beevor was headmistress and Mrs Robbins cooked school dinners. We had our dinners in the recreation hut near Calloways Farm and had to carry our chairs there and back each day. This hut was also used by a dentist on one occasion when visiting the school. On another he used the cottage near the school (probably the lodge at Seaford College gates).

We went to church twice a week. Mr Powell was the vicar.

Some of the school ground was used for allotments. I shared with another evacuee, Tom Lock. Our allotment was by the two big larch trees.

I remember on occasion going to Lavington House (now Seaford College) to the outdoor swimming pool. Football and cricket matches were also arranged with neighbouring schools.

Just up the hill from Barnetts Cottage is Barnetts Farm – a family by the name of Peters lived there. Their son Gerald was about six months older than me. They also had evacuees, two boys and one girl by the name of Davies. When I returned to London my place at the Kings was taken by Ivy Hoffman and Valerie Hales.

My brother Derick and I were joined at the Kings by Tom Lock. We all walked to school and back. It was about 2 ½ miles walk each way in all weathers but later we all got bicycles. I can't remember how long I walked the journey to school, but on one visit from my father, who had stayed in London, he brought a bicycle for me and that made the journey much easier.

During school holidays and on Saturdays, I worked on the poultry farm at Selham and later at Norwood Farm, gardening and cleaning the household silver. My mother was a cook there and lived in. In those days Norwood Farm was owned by a Mr Grant-Ferris who was in the RAF. I also did fruit picking at Courts fruit farm. Because Barnetts Cottage was outside the village I seldom went back to Graffham once I was home from school.

I always considered myself more fortunate than the other evacuees because, as Mr King was a gamekeeper, I was able to roam around hundreds of acres of woodland and he often involved me in his work. We had four gun dogs – two spaniels and two Labradors. I helped him make cider in the winter. He also marked out a piece of ground for a garden and gave me seeds to grow



Ron King, Derick Probert, Ron Probert

vegetables. When my father visited me from London he would take fresh vegetables back.

I used to go out with Mr King a lot catching rabbits. I also remember going pheasant shooting in the winter, I was a beater. At lunchtime I would sit under a tree with a bottle of home made cider, a chunk of bread and cheese and some shallots to eat. Mr King's garden was so big that we were self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables. There was also no shortage of eggs or meat such as rabbits, wild duck, pigeon and hare to supplement the meat ration. Mrs King also made all of her jam. The only thing we didn't get were bananas and oranges.

During the war, a school at Petworth was hit by a bomb and a number of local children were killed and injured.

On one Christmas a party was given for all of the children in Graffham by Euan Wallace and every child received a present.



Ron and Derick with their mother Maude Probert

When the Americans took over Lavington House I remember going to a party and film show. I also went to whist drives on Friday nights at the Empire Hall with Mrs King. These were organized by Mr and Mrs MacKenzie. I won several prizes.

On another occasion Mrs Koenig organized a fete at Selham. It was held in a field near Morley's Mill. All of the marquees were white and during the afternoon a German bomber came out of the clouds and bombed us but the bombs missed and fell in Lodsworth.

We used to watch the dog fights from the school and it was not unusual to find empty shell cases in the paddocks surrounding the school.

We had no gas, electricity or water at Barnetts. Mrs King cooked by wood stove. I helped Mr King cut up firewood and logs with a cross cut saw – no chain saws in those days. Our lights were oil lamps and our drinking water was a natural spring in the woods necessitating several trips a day to get buckets of water. Mrs King did washing for soldiers at a nearby army unit and also had soldiers wives at week-ends.

When Ronnie King started school Miss Beevor allowed my younger brother Derick aged three to start school as well so that he would be with other children.

Tom Lock and another evacuee came to live with us and I remember a harsh winter with lots of snow so we all made a toboggan and used to take Ron and Derick to school on this.

When the Peters family left Barnetts Farm and moved to North Mundham, the new tenants were a family named Woodbridge. Mr Woodbridge had an old car and used to take us all to school.

We made the most of Christmas despite shortages. Mrs King made the cake and also sweets. We also managed to collect hazelnuts and holly from the woods and there was always chicken or goose. My father who was a cabinet maker also made wooden toys for Ronnie and Derick – and of course there was always Christmas pudding.

I have never stopped returning to Graffham. After I returned to London I cycled several times to Barnetts before getting a motor cycle and finally a car and have visited Mrs King (sadly now passed away) and Ron, on many occasions over the years.

Ron Probert, March 2008

Ron left Graffham aged 14 and went back to London during the Blitz to start a joinery apprenticeship. After working on various building projects including the Royal Festival Hall in the 1960s, he joined the Fire Brigade repairing fire engines (in the days when they were made of wood covered in aluminium) and fire escapes. Most of his working life was spent in the building trade in London, but on his retirement Ron and his wife moved back to West Sussex (North Bersted) where he was on both Bersted Parish and Bognor Town Councils for many years.

Graffham Farrier, John Behan

Remembered by his wife, Shirley

The Move to Graffham

In 1979, John and I and our young children, Kathleen and William, moved to Graffham.

John had always wanted to live here. He had a lot of work in this area and his forge was at Graffham Court. There was a small yard of ponies there that he shod. It was managed by Harry Olsten, also known as “Harry the Horse”.

There appeared to be polo ponies everywhere. When they were on the roads being exercised there was one groom to three ponies. It was quite daunting as a car driver to meet nine or twelve ponies with only three or four grooms between them in these narrow lanes.

I can't remember all the yards he was farrier to. There was Eastwood Farm run by the Roberts (two of them also played polo), Moor Farm, Selham and Todham farms. In Lodsworth, Langham Stables housed the French Polo Team, and up near King Edward Hospital, Allan Kent, who also played polo, kept his horses at Madams Farm. Milland was the home of the American Team's polo ponies. I remember they did fantastic barbeques with massive steaks and cowboy-style beans. John also worked at Ambersham and Cowdray playing fields on polo days.

Meeting Prince Charles

One hot day at Cowdray Polo Field, John was busy replacing a pony's shoe between chukkas. One of Prince Charles's bodyguards approached him and said

“The prince would like to meet you”. John looked up and said:

“Tell him I'm sorry but this horse is needed in the



next chukka”. He had just finished his shoeing and was picking up his tools when a voice behind him said

“So you are John the blacksmith”. John turned around and stared at him, and for once in his life he was speechless. The Prince shook John's hand saying

“If Mohammed won't come to the mountain then the mountain must come to Mohammed”. He went on to say he had heard a lot about him through Raoul who used to manage Eastwood Farm and now worked for the Prince. He asked if John would like to come to Windsor and shoe his horses. John had to refuse this offer on the grounds it was too far to travel because sometimes you'd be called to a yard just to replace one shoe. The Prince accepted this and gave John a bottle of champagne. I wasn't allowed to even touch that bottle because it had Prince Charles's finger prints on it. He kept that bottle for years.

Race Horses and Racing

John's greatest loves were race horses and race courses. Over the years he was farrier to many racing yards. The ones that stand out in my mind are Bill Wightman at Bishop Waltham. He trained Flying Nellie. She was a great horse and won lots of races. There was also Sid Woodman's in Lavant, later taken over by his son Steve. They trained two of John's favourite horses, Indian Cottage and Ivory Lace, both good horses in their time.

John was happiest at a race course. He was a regular farrier to Goodwood for forty years, Fontwell for twenty years and visiting farrier to Lingfield, Newbury and Kempton. For many years he was also farrier for Listowel races, his home town in Kerry, Ireland. He reluctantly had to give Listowel up due to pressure of work in this country. He would say that of all the race courses he'd been to, Goodwood was the most beautiful. He always looked forward to their race days, especially "Glorious Goodwood" in July.

There were also many other horses in and around the village that he shod - the pet horses, a donkey or two and an occasional goat, Mike Flemming's dressage horses, Hilary Major's trial horses and many more.

During the years John was kept very busy and became well-known throughout Sussex. He was also known for being a bit late at times!

John was known for enjoying a pint or two. He could often be found sitting on a bar stool, pint in hand, telling some yarn or singing an Irish song.

The Hobby Horses

Back in the 1980s the Foresters Arms in Graffham and the Unicorn in Heyshott arranged a hobby horse race. No-one seems to remember who won that race, but one hobby horse vanished and the other found its way to the Foresters. The race team from the Unicorn came over to the Foresters and stole it, so the Foresters team, which included John, stole it back.



Shoeing at Graffham Court

This became a game with only one rule – no one must see you steal the horse, and, if challenged, you must put it back. Whichever pub had the horse on Christmas Day would be declared the winner. Over the following months that poor hobby horse was back and forth between the two pubs. It was always a good excuse for John to go to the pub because he was going horse rustling.

There was many a ruse used to get the horse out of the pub. If it was quiet and only the landlord behind the bar, he would be asked for something that meant him going to the kitchen or turning his back on the bar, and in those few moments he was gone and so was the hobby horse.

One night in the Foresters when it was quite busy, someone found the electricity switchboards and switched all the lights off in the bar causing confusion. After a few seconds they were switched back on but by then, the hobby horse was gone.

Eventually Christmas Day came. John was happily thinking about the hobby horse, safe at last on the Foresters' wall. On arriving at the Foresters, they found that the hobby horse was once again missing and the game was lost.

Later Years

As the years passed there were less and less polo ponies around the villages. Prince Charles had retired from playing polo and this may have had an effect, so John then spent any spare time working as handyman at Courtlea Residential Home for the elderly in Petworth. The residents

loved him and his jokes and funny stories. He also got on very well with the staff who were mostly female, although he did sometimes say there were too any bossy women around.

John was always interested in raising money for charity. Years ago old horse shoes would go to the Convent in Midhurst. The nuns would cover them with black lacquer, paint little flowers and a name on them if requested. They sold them at their fetes. He raised money for Courtlea but his favourite charity was the Injured Jockeys Fund.

One year he decided he would raise money for the Graffham Church spire so he had his head shaved in public in the White Horse. Even Fr Mark came down to witness the event and was pleased when John raised £600.

John's Proudest Day

John's proudest day was when he gave our daughter Kathleen's hand in marriage to Peter Houghton, our lovely son-in-law. Although Catholic, Kathleen and Peter decided to marry in Graffham Church. Fr Mark married them and it was a lovely service in a beautiful setting. All the neighbours came out and stood on the roadside to wave and wish them good luck.

There was never a dull moment living with John. He was a very colourful person, even his language was tinged a little blue at times. He seldom had a bad word for anyone. He loved horses, he loved people and he loved life. He also loved Graffham. His favourite saying was "I love, love, love life".

Requiem

John died suddenly, at home, aged sixty after a five week illness in January 2008 and I still miss him so much. Fr Mark had been very fond of John and he came immediately.

John had a requiem mass at the Sacred Heart in Petworth where we were married. People came from everywhere. There were racehorse owners and trainers, jockeys and polo players, stable lads and girls. He had so many friends. Even after he died he raised money by requesting no flowers, with donations to the Injured Jockeys Fund instead. The Mass was taken by our own Fr Peter but I was pleased to see Fr Mark assisting.

After the Mass John was returned to Graffham as he had wished and was buried in the village he loved.

Shirley Behan, 2012



John shows his children Kathleen (4) and William (2) how to shoe a horse.

Ruby Allen remembers Graffham life with her husband, Don

We first came to live in Graffham in the winter of 1982. It was a wonderful wildlife discovery at Eastwood Farm with our 10 acres and two ponds. The early spring brought the adders and grass snakes out of hibernation and, having nearly trodden on an adder curled up in a ray of sunshine, I wondered why I had ever been afraid of snakes. How beautiful he was and sleepily glided off into the long grass. Then came hedgehogs, stoats, nesting ducks and birds, a kingfisher, owls, toads, young fawns left in the long grass for safety, family of foxes and many more. As summer came the banks of the ponds were lit up by glow worms in the darkness.

Settling into village life was also a sheer delight. We were fortunate to be there when Dick Challen was one of the mainstays of any sport and social life. A friend of everyone and everyone loved him. Don fell happily into this environment joining in everything he could and I too joined him in playing badminton and bowls and was able to have a dog again.

Later on we were privileged to find four duck eggs, abandoned in the nest by a tufted duck. I put them under my lovely broody old hen. She thought she had hatched some very dumb chicks when they failed to follow her example and feed themselves. On advice from the Arundel Wetlands I sat in the stable for hours just dropping chick crumbs before them until one finally got the hang of it; they only peck at moving objects. We released them on our ponds when they were mature and one female returned two years running, coming close for the food we offered whilst her new wild mate stayed his distance.

On another occasion my, by now three dogs, were looking at something under a large oak on a bridge



Don Allen, 1988

path which I found to be a baby tawny owl. I picked it up looking for the parent, but knowing horses and more dogs would soon be sure to pass by, I tucked it in my jacket and took it home. Don had recently lost his cat to cancer but when he saw the large notice I had pinned to our bathroom door 'baby owl inside' his face lit up. Again, I sought advice, and fed him on raw rabbit meat with fur attached. Once people heard about it there were daily 'gifts' in our porch of day old chicks from the farm and mice that cats had brought it. He quickly outgrew our bathroom and Don made an aviary of an outdoor poolside changing room. We tried not to tame him, I just whistled. By summer he was fully grown and we allowed him to fly free but still putting food out every day for him. Eventually he flew away. Even so, I used to go outside and whistle in the darkness and once a huge tawny owl whistled back and swooped low over my head.

Don loved giving parties and this extended to organising a fund raising St Valentine's Dance in

the Empire Hall with a full twelve piece band with vocalist. This attracted a great number of people of assorted ages from those who loved to dance and listen to the band to those who liked to socialize and be entertained. I was put in charge of the catering, a full buffet supper usually of platters of sliced ham, turkey and beef and found no problem in finding friends from the village willing to help make salads and deserts.

Don discovered artistic talent too in the village and persuaded them to make wonderful decorations for the Hall.

The first St Valentine's Dance was so successful that Don organized one every year until finally, one sad day, the band (which I think was Littlehampton Big Band) had increased their charges too high for us to make any profit for the Hall and he reluctantly called it a day. It was only later on that I learned that each one was only ever referred to in the village as 'Don's Dance'

Eventually after 18 happy years, time and health problems forced us to sell up in Graffham and move to a less demanding property in Duncton. It

had to be within 3 miles so that Don could carry on being part of all the committees he served on.

Don died of cancer in October 2004. His funeral was held in St. Giles Church with a three piece jazz band playing on the lawn outside greeting people as they entered. Every seat and standing place was taken. He is buried in the Churchyard alongside many of his contemporary friends.

I had a small pavilion built for the Bowls Club at the end of the green in Don's memory to provide shelter from showers and sun. It replaces the original thatched one which had long since fallen into disrepair. A brass plaque says Don Allen 'Always bowled over'.

The vicar from St Giles blessed the pavilion and everyone enjoyed drinks and refreshments afterwards.

Ruby Allen, 2015

Fr Mark Gilbert and Ruby at the new Bowls Club shelter, 2008



“55 minutes to Victoria”

A newcomer’s tale by Alison Moxom

It was 1987. We had left France for the long drive home, thirteen hours, mostly NOT, in those days, autoroute, three small children asking “Are we nearly there yet?” on average once a minute, two cars in convoy, a rough ferry crossing followed by the nightmare of the A20 Dover – London. We just about managed to feed the kids and unpack before we fell into our own bed for some well deserved rest.

About 45 minutes later the burglar alarm went off.

Two hours later, house thoroughly checked for non-existent burglars, kids calmed down, given drinks and sent back to bed, we reconvened in our own bedroom;

“Blasted alarms” I said “always going off for no reason in the middle of the night, I can’t stand the thing.”

“No choice” replied my best-beloved “If you live in London, especially in this part of London, you can’t be insured without one.”

“In that case” I muttered, grumpily “Maybe it’s time to leave London.”

We slept, eventually, on it. The following morning, the rush hour was as vile as ever, the kids noisy and quarrelsome – well, who could blame them, cooped up in a small townhouse all day because it wasn’t very safe for them outside – London as crowded, dirty and depressing. My husband came home with a copy of *Country Life*.

“Look.” he said, quite simply. I looked, and there it was. A small house, or maybe a large cottage, that looked as if it was growing out of the green lawn surrounding it. Wisteria curled around the windows, flowers grew around the edges of the drive. “I’ve checked it out” said Peter, “it’s 55 minutes on the train to Victoria from the nearest

station, which is about 20 minutes drive from the house. Or you can go from Haslemere to Waterloo, the service is more frequent even if Waterloo’s not quite as convenient. The saving we’d make on the council tax would more than cover the cost of the season tickets, even if we went first class.”

“And it would be so much better for the children, they could grow up in the countryside, play outside, do the sort of things we used to do, we could even have a dog” I said dreamily. “I’ll call the agent.”

Which was how, the following Saturday, we came to Graffham and the White House for the first time. We sped down the A3 and found ourselves in a different world. The moment we stepped into the house it just felt “right”, warm and welcoming with rooms just the right size and shape for our growing family, a garden with space for swings, climbing frames, even enough room for the boys to play cricket without threatening the windows. The only thing it lacked was a view of the Downs – but we’d been looking out over the bricks and mortar of North London, compared to that a somewhat overgrown garden and a screen of trees was sheer heaven anyway.

The formalities didn’t take too long, selling the Islington house proved surprisingly easy, and we exchanged contracts on the house sometime in the first week of October. Our dream was becoming reality. Things trundled along perfectly happily until October 16th, when we woke to a London we didn’t recognise. There was debris covering all the roads, there were huge trees lying, uprooted, in the normally manicured squares and parks, all public transport was utterly disrupted, the Radio was telling us to stay at home and sit tight, and it took me an hour to walk to the office – which wasn’t terribly serious, most of the staff

hadn't made it, but then nor had our customers, and so many phone lines were out, how would they have known anyway.

"But what is happening in Graffham?" was all we could think of. Not surprisingly, it proved impossible to contact our vendors. We found out afterwards that Graffham had been cut off for three days, without power and with giant trees blocking the ways in and out. The news was terrifying, the 1987 hurricane had been the worst since 1703, people had died, houses had been gravely damaged, mature woods had been decimated, there was talk that it would take years for people and places to recover.

Finally – the following Wednesday, by which time we'd been battered once more, by Black Monday on the stock market – the telephone rang.

"Hello there" came our vendor's cheery voice "I thought you'd like to know you've still got a house!"

We moved to Graffham just after Christmas that year, in time for the best bluebells ever as the



Alison on the French stall at the Christmas Fair, 2004

woodland regenerated itself. We watched the landscape recover and our children grow, and spent the next twenty years very happily in our dream house, dogs and all.

Alison Moxom, 2012

Holidays at Chelsea Cottage

by Norma Temperton

We had holidays in Graffham with our Auntie Lottie (Bridger) who lived in what is now called Chelsea Cottage. The house was like a time capsule, going back to the mid 19th century. Nothing was ever thrown away - letters going back to the Crimea War and WW1, and old pictures etc. We loved visiting. Auntie Lot used to be a cook at Slindon House and she made beautiful cakes, egg custard, etc. and homemade wine. Cooking was all done on the blackened range. There was no running water in the house, only in the wash house outside.

We used to be frightened at night because upstairs was only lit by candles, which sent shadows

round the room. In the wash house outside was a buttoned boot, which belonged to little Harry, who died from diphtheria in 1898. The toilet was down the garden, next to the chickens. We delighted in collecting eggs for our breakfast. We used to climb up the Downs to collect wild flowers and chalk, for whitening Auntie's step.

If Auntie was just finishing a letter, the postman would sit and wait for her. She didn't approve of dogs in the house, so when our relatives stayed for a few days, they brought the dog into the house secretly in the middle of the night.

Norma Temperton, 2012



Graffham

Memories Articles Photos

Edited by Mary Butterworth and Diana White