



Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 – January 2015 Editor: Sue Tatham

Chairman's Report 2014

The Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group has had a very busy year as you will see from the many items in this newsletter. Considering we have been functioning as a group for just over two years we have made amazing progress. In addition to our various research and archive activities members have enjoyed several successful events organised for us by Judith Long. For the coming season Judith is planning a village walk in Shere with a visit to its museum and a trip to the Foundling Museum in London.

Our finances are sound with most of this year's capital expenditure going on conservation-grade archiving supplies. We have also paid for the conservation of a copy of P. F. Robinson's book about Mickleham Church, published in 1824.

The work to advance our knowledge of Mickleham and Westhumble's history is being carried out by various task groups. These are listed on page 2 along with the names and contact details of their leaders. The newsletter contains reports of their progress over the past year. Their work is helping us to organise our existing documents and photographs as well as adding further information about our area, past and present. The aim is to have a resource which is readily accessible by the public and of use to future researchers.

The St Michael's Churchyard group has worked away steadily, weather permitting, and have been surprised at how much manual effort is required to uncover the inscriptions on the gravestones.

I was very pleased that the War Memorial Group was able to organise an exhibition in the church to coincide with Heritage

Weekend. This attracted much interest with the added bonus that it was visited by relatives of some of the men whose names are on the War Memorial. There is still more work to do.

Unfortunately we have been unable to move forward our oral histories project – we have the kit and the people to talk to but no one to do the interviews and recording. Please volunteer – you will find it fascinating and worthwhile!

The Archives Group have met once a week and have made substantial progress as you will see from the report later in this newsletter.

Two new areas have been added to our task group list. I am glad that Jenny Hudlass is going to use her many years of experience at St Michael's School to write its history from the logbooks going back to 1863 and other records. You can see an example of the gems in the logbooks later in this newsletter.

And in response to the discovery of a collection of Westhumble Residents' Association minute books, Mike Giles has agreed to sift through these for useful and interesting information.

Much of what we have achieved so far is down to a small number of active members, who have found the work challenging, and, at times, frustrating, but extremely interesting. We could do with more helpers. Please join a task group – it's not all hard work, we have a laugh as well.

I am most indebted and grateful to Judy Kinloch and Judith Long for all their work and enthusiastic support and to our hard working secretary who has produced this impressive newsletter. I have seen at close quarters how much work has gone into it!

Ben Tatham

Do you have any photographs or documents we could copy to add to our archives?

Early photographs of Mickleham and Westhumble would be great, but we are also interested in more recent pictures –especially of people, places and events.

Please contact our librarian, Judy Kinloch 01372 37535 mail@jkinloch.plus.com

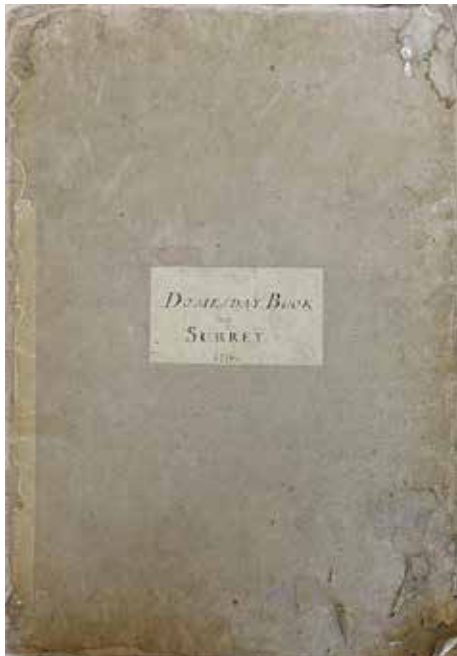
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*Cover and an inside page of proof copy of the Surrey Domesday Book
– dated 1776, found among the items in our archives. See page 12 for further details.*

Newsletter Editorial Panel

Unless stated otherwise reports and articles in this newsletter
have been written by Judy Kinloch, Judith Long and Sue Tatham

Our First Annual General Meeting

On 17th February, following the AGM of the M&WLHG in Mickleham Village Hall, we were treated to two highly informative and enjoyable presentations, firstly from Mari Ottridge, who had recently completed the group's first oral history project, and secondly from Ben Tatham, who spoke about the early history of Box Hill and the National Trust.

Oral History Project: Memories of Rose's Stores

Mari Ottridge began by emphasising the importance of oral history in preserving our knowledge of village life. Memories of Rose's Stores, the Mickleham village shop, proved an ideal subject for the initial project. Twenty people were interviewed, resulting in more than eleven hours of recordings from which Mari chose a small selection to give us a taste of the project.

The recording began with Rosemary Robinson, whose parents Stanley and Christine Butcher took over the shop in 1939. It soon became renowned throughout the area for its home-cooked hams. June Durrant, née Miles, frequented the shop as a young girl and recalled being given the broken biscuits and leftover bits of cheese.

Alison Stuart, daughter of Beryl and Peter Icke who took over from the Butchers, explained how she and her siblings would stand in open drawers (containing items such as coffee beans!) behind the counter so they could reach to help customers. The

shop was hard work, especially after the arrival of the Post Office, and competing with supermarket prices was difficult.

Anne Vaughan and her husband Robin had only been running the shop for a few months in 1996 when an armed robbery occurred. Anne was forced to lie flat on the floor and £8,000 was taken from Robin, money which had just arrived for pension payments. Fortunately, they were reimbursed by the Post Office.

Anne Weaver spoke about the Henry Smith charity, founded in 1628 to address social inequality. It provided some residents of the village with food vouchers which could be used in the shop. Finally, we heard from Serena Florides, who currently runs Rose's Stores. Serena fell in love with the shop after she saw it advertised on a visit to Dorking in 2006. Unfortunately the Post Office closed in 2009, being less than three miles from those in Leatherhead and Dorking. Rose's Stores, we hope, will be here to stay.

The whole Rose's Stores project is now available to researchers at the Surrey History Centre.

Oral Histories Task Group – Helpers needed urgently

Unfortunately Mari Ottridge has had to step down as Oral Histories Task Group leader so there has been no further work on this over the past year. We have identified many likely subjects to interview and it would be a pity if we do not take advantage of these rich sources of local history. If you would like to help with this, please contact Ben Tatham.

Early History of Box Hill

The second speaker at the AGM was Ben Tatham who gave a presentation about the history of Box Hill which he had prepared for the celebrations of the centenary of Leopold Salomons' gift of part of Box Hill to the National Trust. In the Domesday Book the Box Hill area is part of the Manor of West Betchworth. By the end of the 18th century the Betchworth Castle Estate had expanded significantly and in 1834 was bought by Henry Hope to add to his Deepdene Estate. Box Hill had become a favourite place for the wealthy to visit, with picnics very popular, as described by Jane Austen in *Emma*. The coming of the railways, particularly the opening of the Epsom to Dorking line in 1867, made travel to Box Hill much simpler. On one bank holiday alone an astonishing 24,000 people took the trains to Dorking and Box Hill stations. Tea rooms provided refreshments and donkey rides were a major attraction.

By 1913, Henry Hope was bankrupt and parts of his estate about to be sold. A campaign to prevent the development of Box Hill was led by Sir Robert Hunter, one of the founders of the National Trust. Fortunately, help was at hand from Leopold Salomons, owner of Norbury Park, who had made his fortune as a financier in the City of London. He bought 230 acres of Box Hill and donated it to the National Trust. The agreement was formalised in 1914, with Box Hill to remain 'ever as an open space for the use and recreation of the public'. It was managed by the Box Hill Management Committee and a highlight of the talk was a photo of the first Committee, including Leopold Salomons, HH Gordon Clark of Mickleham Hall and local notable, Frank de la

Garde Grissell. Two of the men are dressed for the Surrey Union Hunt, others sport an assortment of headgear ranging from top hats to flat caps (made fashionable by the then Prince of Wales).

For over 75 years the Management Committee operated without any subsidy from the National Trust and employed its own staff. Ben was the last Chairman because the management of Box Hill was handed over to the National Trust in 1991. At this time the income and expenditure of the Committee were in excess of £110,000 per year.



*Members of the Box Hill Management Committee 1914
Standing left to right: A W Ashton, H H Gordon Clark,
Sir Benjamin Brodie, F de la Garde Grissell.
Seated: A C Powell, Lord Ferrer, Leopold Salomons*



Juniper Hill from the side showing the glazed roof of the 'Winter Garden'

For the first of our two Summer Events, members of the local history group were delighted to have the opportunity to visit Juniper Hill on 6th July. Current owners, Jan and Jackie Murray, bought the house in 2000 and spent the following eight years supervising a massive restoration project. Many village residents will know of the previous owners, Kiiko Nakahara and her husband Jean-Paul Renoir, who fell foul of the Mole Valley Planning Department (not to mention the authorities in France and New York) and abandoned the house in mid-restoration.

Several of our group remembered the glass-covered Winter Garden

Visit to Juniper Hill

at the rear of the house, which had been partly demolished by the time the Murrays arrived. This has now been rebuilt and we were fascinated to see how part of the floor can be lowered, using an ingenious hydraulic system, to form the bottom of the swimming pool with the water being pumped in on top of it. In the drawing room, we were also intrigued by a fireplace located directly below a large window. Similar to one at Polesden Lacey, the chimney flue runs up one side of the window and a mirror, hidden in the wall on the other side, would have been pulled across in the evening to give a warmer feel to the room.

Jan told us that the house was built about 1780 for David Jenkinson, a government lottery agent, and then bought by Sir Lucas Pepys, physician to King George III and required to report on the King's madness! Another notable owner was Theodore Bryant of the Bryant and May match company. He made significant changes to the house, including the construction of the Winter Garden and a *porte-cochère* which allowed the family and their guests to alight from their coaches and enter the house without being exposed to the elements. Bryant's legacy also includes the Bryant photograph album (now at the Surrey History Centre), containing dozens of late 19th century photographs of the family, local residents and the surrounding area.

Viscount Bennett, the former Prime Minister of Canada, bought Juniper Hill in the late 1930s and proceeded to install twelve bathrooms! Ironically, he died a few years later after suffering a heart attack in one of the baths. He is buried in St Michael's churchyard, the only Canadian Prime Minister to be buried outside Canada.

We would very much like to thank the Murrays for giving up a Sunday afternoon to show us round their house. Jan is hoping to write a book about the history of Juniper Hill and we look forward to reading more about this important piece of local history.



Photographs from the Bryant album showing left: Juniper Hall west face (undated); below left: Juniper Hall entrance 1887 and below right: Juniper Hall's Winter Garden 1888.



Task Group Report: St Michael's Churchyard

We have discovered that information about who is buried where in the churchyard is incomplete. So we have set ourselves the task of surveying the area and recording the information on the memorials and marrying this up with various plans and records of burials we have found. We have information on the last known address for many people buried in the last century and Ian Woodall has a spreadsheet of the graveyard. Our ultimate aim is to produce a data base, incorporating the above information and linking this to a map locator of the churchyard.

We have copied two original plans, dated 1886, onto the computer system. These were mainly of the area to the north, west and south of the church. We inherited a photocopy showing some of the graves to the east of the church and we have surveyed that part plus a much larger area. We started by listing the graves in rows, starting from the east hedge, and so far have completed ten rows. The information we have listed to date includes, where available: row, grave number, surname, first name, middle names, date of birth, age, date of death, date of burial, burial register cross reference number and inscriptions.

At times progress has been slow due to the need to remove the overgrown grass from around the base of the graves. Some of the naming is on the stones that surround the base of the grave, rather than on the headstones, making them difficult to read. Poor weather has been a factor as we are unable to scribe, or use the lap top when it is raining.



A significant number of the graves that we have recorded so far have neither headstones nor base surrounds. As a result we do not know who has been buried in the plots. We plan to ask readers of the parish magazine to contact us if they can help to identify any graves that are not clearly marked.

We are extremely grateful to Judy Kinloch, Judith Long, Ben Tatham and Jill Wright who have been helping us with this work.

In the Spring of 2015, when weather permits we would like a team of volunteers to remove the grass, etc. from around the graves, particularly those which have stone base surrounds. We would then be able to list the information onto our records and to help people locate the graves of their past relatives.

Brian Wilcox & Ian Wright



One of the graves in the churchyard newly designated as a Commonwealth War Grave

After ninety-six years Percy Bodman's last resting place in St Michael's churchyard has been designated as a Commonwealth War Grave. Percy's name appears on the Mickleham War Memorial, but because he had been invalided out of the army

before his death on 1st November 1918, he was not recognised as a war casualty. Since 2011 Percy's granddaughter, Lesley Wood, has been working tirelessly to put this right.

Percy Bodman was born in London on 23rd November 1885. For seventeen years he was with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company at their London city offices. He was for some time organist and choirmaster at Frencham Parish Church, and was also deputy organist at Browning Hall and St Mary's Church, Soho, London.

On 27th March 1913 Percy married Daisy Arthur in Mickleham

Church. She was the daughter of Albert Arthur, landlord of the *Railway Arms* (now the *Stepping Stones*) in Westhumble. He enlisted in The Royal Garrison Artillery on 8th December 1915 in London as a Bombardier, he was 30 years old. Percy was gassed during operations at Nieuwpoort, West Vlaanderen, Belgium on 29th July 1917. After he was discharged as being 'no longer physically fit for war service' on 15th February 1918 he was treated at a Chest Hospital in Carshalton. He died, aged 32, at the *Railway Arms* on 1st November 1918, leaving a widow, Daisy, and baby daughter, Barbara, aged two (Lesley's mother). He is buried in Mickleham churchyard – his grave, marked with a small wooden cross, can be seen in the centre of the photograph above.

Percy's death certificate lists 'Tubercular Phthisis in addition to Cardiac Syncope' as the cause of death. Much of the War Graves Adjudication centred around Percy's medical records and in the end it was decided that his tuberculosis had developed on 'lung tissues damaged by poison gas on active service' and that his disability was attributable to the war.

Lesley Wood received confirmation of Percy's status as a Commonwealth war casualty on 5th January 2015.

Summer Walk Saturday 19th July 2014

London Road before the Bypass

WHY THE BYPASS?

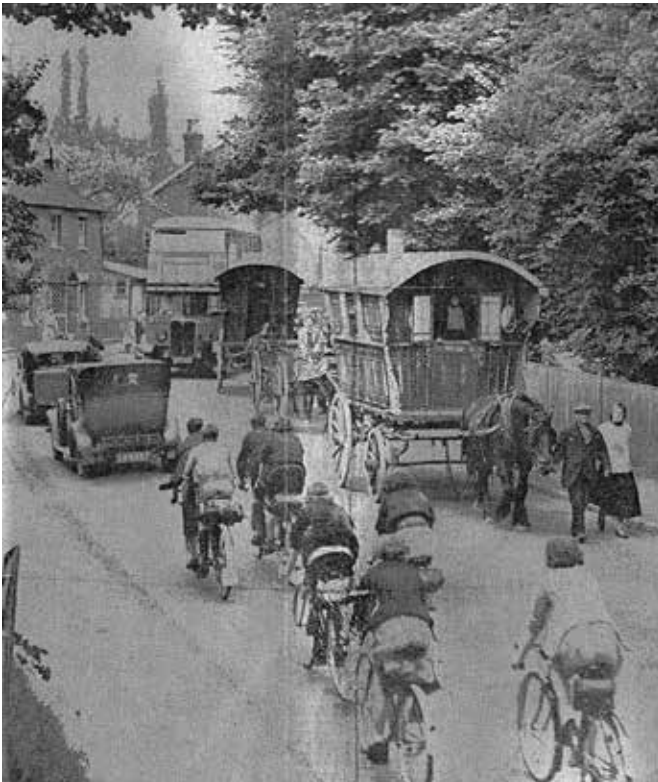
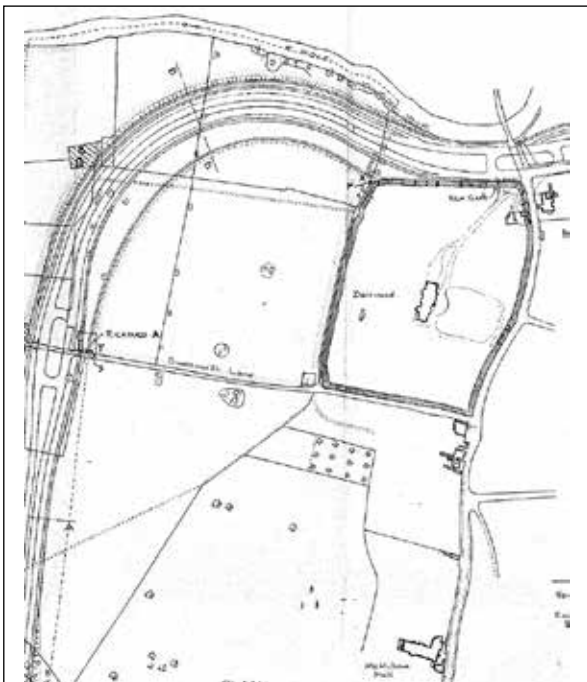


Photo from the News Chronicle in 1936 showing southbound traffic in London Road just before the Bytton Hill turning. House top left is now Frascati Restaurant.



Plan from a SCC Highways and Bridges Department drawing showing the area of land sold in 1936 by Mrs Fosbery for the bypass.

London Road was the turnpike road from London to Dorking Land beyond. All traffic came through Leatherhead High Street and then on to Mickleham. In the early 1930s, John Gordon Clark, who grew up in Mickleham, remembers on summer Sunday evenings watching the nose-to-tail traffic in the village street crawling towards the traffic lights in Leatherhead.

A Leatherhead and Mickleham bypass was being considered in 1928 (the same year the Recreation ground was opened to provide a safe space for children to play) but the putting up of Norbury Park Estate for auction in 1930 and the threat of it being sold in lots for speculative development meant that Surrey County Council felt action must be taken to safeguard our comparatively unspoilt valley.

Stories vary but either Mr. W. M. Willcocks or Mr. Chuter Ede (Surrey County Councillor who later became Home Secretary in Attlee's post-war government) took personal responsibility for the purchase of the 1300 acre estate for £85,310 which was then conveyed to the SCC. The Fredley estate was also bought in 1931 for £11,525, 18 acres being used for the bypass at the Burford Bridge end.

At the time there was 'grave anxiety' in the village about the proposed sale as so many depended on the estate for their homes and their livelihoods. However, by August 1930 the parish magazine reported that Norbury was 'saved from the builders of bungalows' and it hoped that the SCC could be relied on to run the estate to preserve its identity and its charms. Their worst fears were not realised. The cricket field was another matter. It was then opposite the Bungalow in Swanworth Lane and much time and attention had been expended on it. Unfortunately, it formed part of the land that was to be taken for the new road and although it was hoped that SCC would provide another site, this did not happen. Lucie G. Widenham-Fosbery, who had inherited *Dalewood* from her father, sold the land that stretches from London Road to Swanworth Lane in 1936 so the southbound carriageway remained in place up to the village corner while a completely new northbound carriageway took up farmland (including Hale Meadow) that had previously been part of Norbury.

OUR ROUTE

The walk takes us down to the bypass past *Old House Cottage* which was a tied cottage for the *Old House* gardener. Ernest Boxall and family lived here in the middle of the kitchen garden for nearly 50 years, working for various owners and tenants. He was a member of the PCC and very involved in the Horticultural Society. When the house was commandeered during WW2 he continued to grow vegetables which the Gordon Clark children would collect from Holmwood on their bicycles. He and Emma

Editor's note: The information on pages 6 – 11 was included in the booklet provided for members who took part in the summer walk. Judy Kinloch wrote the text; she and Judith Long did the research. Photographs were taken from our archives.



retired to the Almshouses and the cottage was sold in 1954 to Mo and John Chisman. They sold some of the garden to the Clarks who built *Spring Acre*. Substantial alterations have been made to *Old House Cottage* since Mo left in 2007.

The track that runs down to the bypass is labelled Occupation Way, a term given to trackways that allowed private rights of access to anyone with an interest in adjacent land. This would have been to farmland and allotments.

At the bypass, to our left, is *Mickleham Cottage*. There used to be stables behind much of the wall which were demolished, possibly when the corner was rounded off in 1920 to make it less sharp. This was called Tooth's Corner in the 17th and 18th centuries, after a prominent family at the time. (See memorial stone in centre aisle in the church). Opposite, the Weir Bridge (1840) was put up by H.P. Sperling, owner of Norbury Park, to replace a rotting footbridge and ford. Norbury Park Lodge was built at the same time (and another lodge at Pressforward) but both were demolished when the bypass was built. Before the bypass an AA telephone box was situated here and an AA patrolman was on duty.

The inhabitants at this end of the village were not gentry. At one time there were three firms of builders: Henry Haynes who inherited the timber business from his father; William Child



Old House Cottage

who rose from being a lodger to owning his own firm with his son; the Batchelors of *Mon Repos* and Batchelors' Yard. They all did everything from building houses to carrying out funerals. Villagers were mostly gardeners, coachmen or agricultural labourers and these cottages were their homes.

We shall finish at Byttom Hill. *Elm Cottages* are up the hill on the left. I am told they were sold to the tenants at knockdown prices by Lord Beaverbrook after the war. *The William IV* was the estate pub or beer house for Cherkley. The earliest date we have found so far is 1881 but William Duffell and Lucy were there from 1916 for many years and were followed by their children, Bert and Joyce. *The Almshouses* just above, built on land given by the Talbot family, we can look at another time...

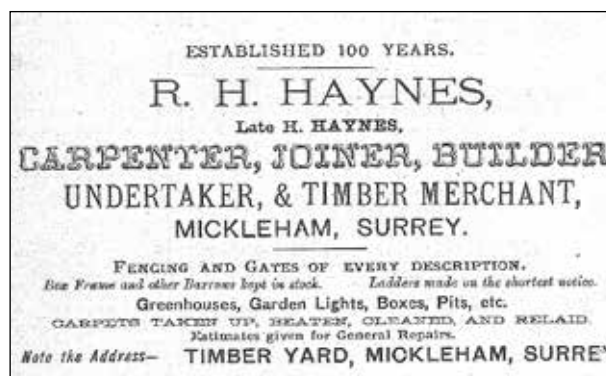
HENRY HAYNES – TIMBER MERCHANT AND BUILDER

Judith Long has discovered at least 40 entries in the parish records for burials and baptisms of different Haynes/Haines between 1760 and 1810 so this has been a journey of discovery.

Henry was born in Mickleham and baptised on the 23rd December 1804 and died on 17th August 1887, aged 82. His father Benjamin was married in London to Anna Maria. They had six children, and at the time of the tithe apportionments in 1841 he owned numerous properties and pieces of land in the village as well as occupying a dozen others. He is described as a timber merchant but he seems to be living very near to, if not at, what became Rose's Stores so it is not clear where he ran his business from.

When Benjamin died in 1845 his eldest son, also Benjamin, who was his executor, was living in Ewell and the family seem to have dispersed. One son, Raymond, born in 1812, left Mickleham in 1861 and was a timber agent in Middlesex; for some time prior to that he lived at Ivy Cottage with his wife Frederica and family and worked as a carpenter. Although Henry, the third son, is described as a baker and as a carpenter in 1841, ten years later he is married to Letitia, has seven children, and is listed in the census as timber merchant living in the detached residence that is now Ilex Trees. He ended his days here, living with his youngest daughter Agnes, his wife having died in 1876.

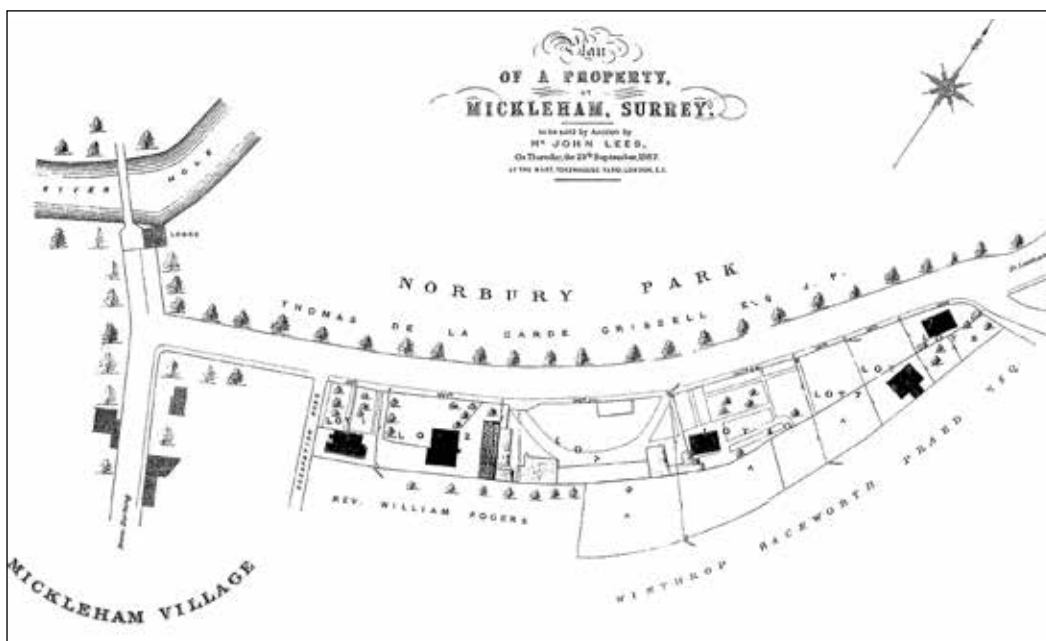
It is Henry who sold his stock to Thomas Rose and it would seem that he then concentrated on his timber and building business. Mike Boyle has said that Henry built Rose Cottage in the 1830s and he may well have built the house now called Ilex Trees; he was certainly involved in the building of the first Mickleham School and the almshouses. A memoir by George Rose describes with some pride how 'little Mickleham' was made famous in the



wider world by Henry, whose oak fences were erected round the zoo (Chessington?) and Barnes Waterworks'.

Henry's obituary in the parish magazine gives us some idea of his character and role in the life of the village. He was churchwarden for more than 40 years and was presented with a silver tea service in recognition. He was assistant Parish Overseer and Collector of Taxes. "Of the esteem, and we may add the affection, with which he as regarded as a master and employer there exists abundant proof in the heartfelt sorrow which his death has occasioned to those who were dependent upon him" writes the vicar but the feeling comes through that he is 'trade'. "Many floral offerings were sent, from gentlefolk as well as villagers," as if this were a rare compliment.

Although Robert Henry, his youngest son (who had ten children of his own) attempted to carry on the business, by 1901 his wife Sarah and various children are in Wimbledon but without Robert, who has become a boarder in Merton, occupation carpenter. So this is a mystery still to be solved...



Henry Haynes Estate – Plan Of A Property 1887

HENRY HAYNES ESTATE

Description of Property for Sale 1887

LOT 1 **1 and 2 Ivy Cottages**. 2 bedrooms, 2 downstairs and kitchen with copper. Woodshed and outside Closet. In occupation of Messrs. Robert Henry Haynes and George Hill at rents of £13 p.a. each. Shared Well. Sold for £340.

LOT 2 The pretty detached residence known as '**Rose Cottage**'. 5 bedrooms, substantial ground floor and basement. Verandah, pantry and WC. Force pump from well. 2 marble chimney pieces. Wine cellar, etc.

Stabling of 4 stalls, loose box, coach house, 2 grooms' rooms and loft over. Let at the 'very inadequate rent' of £40 p.a. to the Rev. D. Holden. Did not sell.

LOT 3 Business Premises of a Timber Merchant and Builder including the good will of the business. Buildings comprise a capital timber yard with double entrance, a range of wood and tiled buildings, sawpits, sheds, etc. Stabling for 5 horses, coach-house, cart-shed. Sold for £730.

LOT 4 [**Ilex Trees**] A capital Detached Residence 6 bedrooms,

W.C. Ground floor has 3 reception rooms, kitchen fitted with close range and dresser, pantry, back entrance with sink and store cupboard. Scullery and Cellarage. Large and productive walled garden, 2 summer houses. Possession on completion. Possibly sold for £740.

LOT 5 '**Laurel Cottages**'. 3 bedrooms, 2 downstairs, kitchen, cellar and larder. Shared well with pump. Wood and coal shed and Closet. Let to William Childs (£16p.a.) and Henry Tullett (£15 p.a.)

LOT 6 Pair of freehold cottages having a considerable plot of ground adapted for the erection of others. Each contains sitting room, kitchen, scullery, 2 bedrooms over. Woodshed and Closet in rear. Supply of water from Well on Lot 7. Let to Mrs. Elizabeth Potts quarterly at £14 p.a. and Isaac Denby weekly at £14. 6s. p.a.

LOT 7 Plot of valuable building land.

Lots 5, 6 and 7 sold for £980.

THE CHILD FAMILY

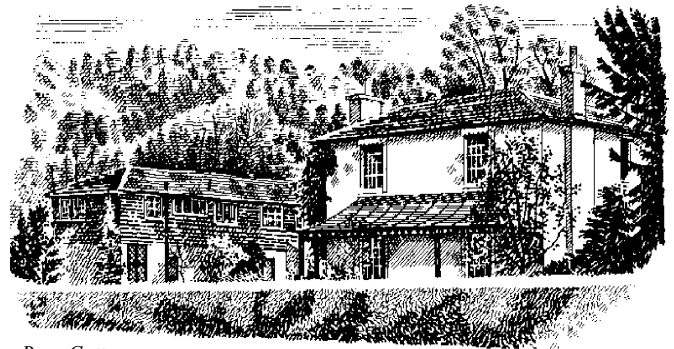
William Child was born in 1827 in Shere and came to Mickleham in 1851 where he is listed on the census as a lodger. He died in 1918 aged 91 at Timberyard House. Between 1867 and 1872 he is listed as a lodging house keeper. By 1871 he is married to Harriet Mundy and has 4 children: Alice, Walter, James and Rhoda. They are living in 1 Laurel Cottages. The 1890 Kelly's Directory lists William Child & Son (Walter) as carpenters and builders, and they are also on the 1891 census. During this time William built Queen Anne's Terrace and Upper Park Rise in Leatherhead. In 1901 they are at the Timberyard and William is listed as an employer so it would seem he has bought it. Alice marries in 1891. They continue to be listed as builders up until the 1930s by which time they own both 1 and

2 Laurel Cottage (let to tenants) and live at Timberyard House. Walter is thought to have made a bad financial decision over a job in Norbury Park and finally sold up about 1938.

Walter married Edith Kendall (from Yorkshire) in 1893 and they had three children. Billy died young in a diphtheria epidemic; Marion and Edith Marjorie attended the local school and later both taught there. Marion had joined the school during WW1, probably due to a lack of male teachers, and did not resign until 1926. The family played a full role in the life of the village, Edith sitting on many committees, and becoming a founder member of the Mother's Union. Marion does not seem to have married and ran the Slate Club as well as being involved in numerous charitable activities.

LONDON ROAD TODAY – THE HOUSES

Over the years there have been numerous owners and tenants, changes of use and changes of name as well as new buildings.



1. **Ivy Cottages** became **St Michael's Tea Rooms** in 1932 when it was bought by the Misses Hubble. Their father had been landlord of *The Running Horses* and after his death Alice Hubble continued for a short time. Their teas were said to be delicious. Later it became **St Michael's Restaurant**, run for a number of years by Major Willis and his wife, Nicola.

2. **Rose Cottage** was built by Henry Haynes probably in the 1830s. It has had a number of tenants, including in 1861 Robert l'Anson, a racehorse trainer, who at one time had 11 jockey lads in the stables. Training took place on Mickleham Downs. His brother William's racehorse, Blair Athol, won the Derby in 1864. The house has also been called **Rose Villa** and **Rose Lea** for short periods. In the 1930s the Misses Pemberton lived there. 'Always well turned out but late for church' is how one villager remembers them.

3. **Pine Cottage** is listed in the 1901 Census when it was lived in by the Denby family, whose grandson was a piano tuner. (I wonder if he was blind?) As the current house looks all of a piece with **Appletree Cottage** I wonder if it was rebuilt later.

4. **Appletree House** is a comparatively recent name. This was previously called **Timberyard House**. The old Timber Yard business was acquired soon after Henry Haynes' death by William Child who lived in Laurel Cottage. Later the Timber Yard was occupied by his son Walter, who joined him in the building business, and who lived there with his family. The house is named by the late 1920s, while the yard appears separately as workshops. In 1938 the house was bought by C. J. Bravery who continued to do business there until around 1950.

5. **Old Timbers** (the bungalow) and the barn behind it (which may have been part of the old timberyard.). Date unknown.

6. **Ilex Trees**. We think this is the 'Detached Residence' up for sale in 1887 where Henry Haynes lived with his family. According to George Laxton Rose, this site had at one time been Dockery's stables where racehorses were trained. The house was first named **Glen Lodge** in 1891, became **The Glen** in 1924 and

Ilex Trees circa 1945. It has had a number of owners including Lucie G.W. Fosbery, the daughter of David Evans of Dalewood who died there in 1950.

7. **Dalewood Cottages** were built in 1890 by David Evans as estate workers' cottages and were occupied by gardeners and coachmen at the turn of the last century. They were owned by Lucie Fosbery until her death in 1950. One had its name changed to **Abbott's Cottage**.

8. **Thorn Cottages**. Difficult to trace before 1887. By 1911 the tenants in No. 1 were George R. Pack, Sexton, and Mary Pack, Pew Opener. They lived in the village for 45 years and celebrated their golden wedding in 1927. In No. 2 lived Jessie Margaret Mortimore, widow of Robert, headmaster of the school. She taught, as did her two daughters, Grace and Evelyn and her son Robert Charles played the organ at Westhumble Chapel. Grace married George Moore, captain of the cricket team and partner in White & Co. Jessie died in 1928 after which George and Grace lived there as did Queenie Batchelor and Sally Beer.

9. **Laurel Cottages** were there in 1887 but it is hard to identify them earlier on in the census as houses are not named. Various called **The Laurels** and **Laurel Villa**. They were owned by Walter Child in 1932 and are now again in the ownership of the Child family.

10. **The Frascati Restaurant** has seen many changes. Originally it was a house and forge run first by William Tidy and then by the Tidy family. In 1851 Thomas Tidy is described as a smith and farrier who employed one man. A contemporary describes him as 'famous for the plating of racehorses', although by 1901 Frederick Patrick was running the forge. In 1929 a Mrs. E. Schwinge owned the house and smithy and ran refreshment rooms. In 1938 it was called **Highway Cottage** (still on the doorway) and I think run by Mrs. Bird who sold sweets, etc. Before it became Frascati it was a French restaurant, **La Chandelle**.

LOT TWENTY-FOUR.

A DWELLING HOUSE AND SMITHY

Situate in the PARISH OF MICKLEHAM, and close adjoining the VILLAGE

Let on Lease to William Tidy, for a Term of 100 Years, from 5th August 1843, at the Rent of 1s. Per Annum No. 36 on Plan, and containing about 12 PERCHES.

From the 1871 sale catalogue of 'A Valuable Freehold Estate' which included 'A comfortable and Gentlemanly Residence known as Mickleham Cottage' and various cottages and gardens.



Undated photograph of the junction of London Road and Byttom Hill looking north showing smithy and dwelling (now Frascati Restaurant)



Thomas Tidy (right) outside the smithy circa 1880



Wedding of Alice Child 1891



Mrs Mortimore and daughters circa 1895

There was a pay telephone box at the bottom of Byttom Hill, and it is here that the stocks are supposed to have stood. The bus shelter opposite contains a dedication to Dr. F. M. Margerison who was killed in an air-raid in 1941. 'This shelter was erected in memory of Dr. F. M. Margerison, daughter of the late Caleb McKune Margerison of Preston, Lancs, and Mrs. Margerison of Byttom Cottage, Mickleham, who was killed by enemy action 19th March 1941'. This inscription is in the shelter, located on the west side of the A24 opposite Frascati restaurant. It seems most likely that it was erected by the wishes of Frances's mother, Fanny Mary Margerison (née Thompson) who was a widow living at Byttom Cottage at the time. She was born in Spalding, Lincs, and married Caleb McKune Margerison who had died on the Isle of Man in 1924.

Frances Mary Margerison was born in 1897 in Walton-le-Dale, Preston, Lancs. She must have been 44 when she was killed in

an air-raid in north London, probably at Northwood Hall, Hornsey, Middlesex in 1941. I haven't discovered where she was working but she was clearly a high achieving woman of her time, being a member of the Royal College of Surgeons and a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, a title reserved for medical graduates of Oxford or Cambridge.



P.S. A bit more information about the Margerisons

Frances Mary was the third of ten children all born in Lancashire between 1894 and 1909. Her father Caleb and uncle Joshua had inherited a soap manufacturing business in Preston from their father – their most famous product was Margerisons White Windsor Soap – which was clearly successful as it allowed Caleb to retire aged 49 to the Isle of Man.

We do not know if Frances worked. We do know that she co-authored two books in Cassell's Health Handbooks series, one on 'Healthy Middle Age' published in 1934, but no further information is given about her. The next we know is the report of her death on 19th March 1941, aged 44, one of the civilian war dead in an air-raid at Northwood Hall, Hornsey Lane in Highgate. Northwood Hall was an Art Deco apartment block

built in 1935 in the shape of a cross, a design that caused it to become notorious during the Blitz when it was a marker for German bombers.

Around 1935 Mrs Margerison had moved into Byttom Cottage and from the electoral register of 1939 we know that daughters Mercy and Daphne were there with her, and by 1945 her son Michael as well. Mother and both daughters played a part in village life. Daphne was the Poppy Day organiser for the Royal British Legion which was very active at the time and both she and Mercy regularly entered and won prizes at the village shows; Mercy was also on the Horticultural Society committee in 1960. Mrs Margerison died on 19th April 1952, aged 86 at Byttom Cottage. Mercy was still listed in the phone directory in 1963.

Task Group report: St Michael's School

Jenny Hudlass, retired former headteacher at St Michael's has started sifting through a large box of documents and photographs that have been collected at the school over the years. The logbooks together with admissions registers which run from 1863 to 2003 provide fascinating insights into our changing way of life and education. It is hoped to publish a book on the history of the school. Please contact Jenny if you are interested in helping with this.

From a logbook:

29 November 1917 – The collection of horse chestnuts for munitions by the children of this school has resulted in the gathering of 2 tons 12 cwt 5 st. The result has won the 1st prize offered by the local newspaper.

Horse chestnuts and WW1 munitions

During the First World War nearly 250 million shells were used by the British Army and the Royal Navy. The basic propellant used to fire these shells, and for a whole host of other military purposes, was cordite. Acetone, a solvent used to make cordite, was produced almost entirely by the destructive distillation of wood. Therefore acetone was produced primarily in great timber-growing countries. Before the war Britain imported most of its acetone from the United States. After 1914 when stocks dwindled due to growing demands, plants were set up in Britain to produce acetone from potatoes and maize. But by 1917 German submarines in the Atlantic had cut off imports of maize from North America.

It was discovered that the horse chestnut could be used as an alternative for maize in the production of acetone. The

major method of collection was to enlist the aid of school children. Vast quantities of horse chestnuts were collected, but transportation was difficult and questions about piles of rotting horse chestnuts at railway stations appeared in *The Times*. Nobody really knew why they were collecting horse chestnuts. The government was, naturally, reticent to reveal the motive behind its scheme lest this novel form of acetone production reach the Germans.

After initial difficulties production of acetone from horse chestnuts began in April 1918, but it was found that these were a poor material from which to produce acetone. Work continued until July 1918 when the plant was closed. The exercise was not repeated the following year, as by then the war was over and shipping traffic in the Atlantic was increasing.

Task Group Report: The Village Archives

It has been a busy year at the archive for research and we have been able to help a number of people. An ecclesiastical student, studying for a Master's at Cambridge, had learned that a Victorian architect, Joseph Peacock, might have been involved in a restoration project at St Michael's in the 1870s. He was thrilled to find that we held a thesis on the various 19th century church restorations which contained just the references he needed to follow up in order to locate the originals. He visited the church and we were able to help him with photographs. He will send us a copy of his dissertation when it is completed.

We were also approached by an author who is interested in researching the life of Lady Hope who lived at Carriden House, a mansion demolished in the 1920s by which time it was known as Woodbury. Lady Hope was a Christian evangelist who possibly built a Mission Hall in Mickleham in the 1880s but the only reference we were able to find was of its being pulled down near the school in the 1920s. Lady Hope famously claimed to have converted Charles Darwin to the Christian faith on his deathbed. She had an interesting life, marrying two very rich, older men but she died in poverty in Australia having been swindled out of all her money.

Our slide collection has now been catalogued by Rosemary Robinson. It is stored at Warren Farm and is available for loan.

We have also been able to add to the research into some of the names on the War Memorial and in our research for the Summer Walk we discovered a great deal about the history of the houses along the A24 (the London Road) and their past inhabitants. This is a very distinctive area of the village, many of the houses being artisan cottages, not houses for the gentry behind high walls. One member is currently researching some of our listed buildings.

One find that excited the Surrey History Centre this summer was when I took them a copy of a very nondescript-looking book which was labelled "Domesday Book 1776" and contained writing that would need an historian to decipher. It turns out to be a pre-publication proof copy of the Surrey Domesday Book and might have belonged to Owen Manning, the historian who with Bray wrote the County History of Surrey. It will be researched further but is quite a rare item and we have donated it to them. I wonder who gave it to the archive?

We have spent some of your subscription money on restoring a copy of an 1824 book by P. F. Robinson, the architect who was responsible for the restoration of the church at that time. He wrote a book somewhat lengthily titled 'An Attempt to Ascertain the Age of the Church in Mickleham, in Surrey with Remarks on the Architecture of that Building'. We have eleven copies of this publication (in varying states of disrepair) which would appear to have been distributed among the local gentry, including Leopold Salomons and the Rev. Alfred Burmester. The book we have had restored was the property of Gordon Wyatt Clark of Mickleham Hall (it is signed by him) and contains, apart from the drawings and illustrations that are common to all, an original drawing of Mickleham Church by Miss Clinton, aged 13, which makes it unique. More mundanely, we have bought acid-free folders and photographic wallets for storage of documents.

The task of putting all the contents of the archive on to Excel continues. As you can see from the copy reproduced here, it is a painstaking business. We are following the system of classification recommended by SHC; eventually it will be available online.

Judy Kinloch and Judith Long
– with assistance from Angela Ireland.

Example from our Archive Catalogue

Ref No	Title	Folder Name	Item Description	Date	Extent/Format	Provenance	Related Records	Copyright	Condition
MW	MICKLEHAM & WESTHUMBLE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP								
MW/CHA/	CHARITIES								
MW/CHA/1/	ROYAL BRITISH LEGION								
MW/CHA/1/1	Minute Book	Royal British Legion	Executive Committee notebook 1	1961-1979	1 volume				Good
MW/CHA/1/2	Contribution Register	Royal British Legion	Contains names and addresses of members	1946-1965	1 ledger		People		Fair
MW/CHA/1/3	Notice to members	Royal British Legion	Includes Remembrance Day Parade, AGM and subs	Nov 1978	1 typewritten page				
MW/CHA/1/4	Closure Notice	Royal British Legion	Letter to members announcing the disbanding of the Mickleham and Westhumble branch as from Dec 1979	1979	1 typewritten page				

Lady Templetown (1747-1823)

As part of Heritage Open Days Juniper Hall Field Centre invited Ruth Thorpe, from the School of History and Anthropology at Queen's University Belfast, to give an illustrated talk on the life and artistic career of Lady Templetown, after whom the 'Templeton Room' at Juniper Hall is named.

In 1769 Elizabeth Boughton married the splendidly named Clotworthy Upton, who later became 1st Baron Templetown. They soon embarked on the Grand Tour and spent several years in Rome where Elizabeth immersed herself in the study of classical literature and art. She even tried her hand at sculpting, an unusual occupation for a woman of her time. Two of her figures, one sculpted in clay and the other in wax, survive.

After returning to their family home, Castle Upton in Templepatrick, County Antrim. Elizabeth turned her creative talents to the more womanly art of cut-paper work. Her elegant designs were seen by the potter Josiah Wedgwood who thought they would adapt well to his jasperware with white bas relief scenes on coloured backgrounds. He shrewdly solicited her designs on feminine and domestic themes hoping that they would appeal to female taste.

Wedgwood reproduced 14 reliefs after her designs and acknowledged her 'exquisite taste' and 'charming groups' in the 1787 catalogue of his ornamental wares. The Wedgwood collection in Dorking Museum includes some of these designs.

Ruth told us that the talented, confident and ambitious Lady Templetown was a member the Blue Stocking Society which emerged in the 1750s. This was a loose organization of privileged women with an interest in education who met to discuss literature while inviting educated men to participate. The women involved in this group generally had more education and fewer children than most English women of the time. During this period only men attended universities and women were expected to master skills such as needlework and perhaps painting in watercolours. It was considered 'unbecoming' for them to know Greek or Latin, immodest for them to be authors, and certainly indiscreet to admit it. Fanny Burney was a member of this society and it is almost certainly through her and her friend Elizabeth Lock of Norbury Park that Lady Templetown became associated with Mickleham.

Task Group report: Mickleham Choral Society

By consulting old minutes books and other documents Barry Boughton has started to compile a list of all the conductors and other key personnel involved in Mickleham Choral Society since it was founded in 1907. He is also recording how MSC

Ruth felt that through her visits to Mickleham Lady Templetown would have known Sir Cecil Bisshopp who had bought the Fredley estate in 1762. He later bought the Royal Oak, a small wayside inn opposite

Fredley on the London Road and over the years extended and transformed it into an elegant manor house which he named Juniper Hall. Neoclassicism was at its zenith in the mid-late 18th century, with interiors by Robert Adams the height of fashion. It is highly likely that, when planning his new west wing, Sir Cecil, sought the advice of Lady Templetown whose knowledge of the classics and exquisite taste were widely acknowledged.

According to Ruth, Lady Templetown would have used various pattern books to plan her design. The figures and other motifs would have been obtained from specialist plaster manufacturers. The exuberance of the design suggests that it was done by an amateur; Robert Adam's rooms were quite subdued with a predominance of white on white.

We looked at some of the figures on the walls of the Templeton Room – those representing the seasons and the one over the fireplace showing a seated woman with a veil over her face, with another woman washing her foot. Ruth explained that this was called the *Nova Nupta* (new bride).

Ruth was curious to know if there was any plasterwork in Norbury Park House that Lady Templetown might have designed for her friend, Elizabeth Lock. As access to the house is not possible at the moment, Judy Kinloch looked through our village archives and managed to find two interior photographs taken in Leopold Salomons' day. There above a fireplace is a *Nova Nupta*...



The Nova Nupta (New Bride) figure over the fireplace in the Templeton Room

Task Group report: Westhumble Residents Association

WE have been given a number of old minute books that record the committee meetings of the WRA from its inauguration at the end of WW2. Mike Giles as its current

chairman has agreed to undertake some research on the events and personalities involved in those post-war years. Does anyone else have information about the WRA?

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group
Monday 23rd February 7.30 for an 8 p.m. at the Stepping Stones
AGM followed by an illustrated talk by Lorraine Spindler, Curator of Leatherhead Museum
The many spies training in our area during WW2



Task Group Report: War Memorial

Work started by dividing the twenty-two names listed on the Mickleham War Memorial – eleven from each world war – among the task group team. Progress was slow due to our inexperience with carrying out on-line searches. We were helped by a teaching session with Andrew Tatham who highlighted potential sources of information.

It was agreed that we would mount a display about the War Memorial in St Michael's Church for Heritage Weekend in September. In the end we focussed on the men who had died

in World War 1, 2014 being the centenary of its start. For the display we compiled a booklet containing the information we had collected about these men. A copy of this is available in St Michael's, but its contents are incomplete. Since Heritage Weekend, much more information about these men has come to light, and further research on the names of the fallen from WW2 is yet to be done, so ours is very much a work in progress. If you would like to help with this, please contact Fiona Taylor who is now leading the group.

Mickleham War Memorial Cross

The idea of a memorial to commemorate the men lost in World War I was raised at a public meeting in the village hall in early January 1920. A committee was formed and costs were presented at a special meeting on 27th January. The estimated cost of £136 was agreed as was the proposed design of the memorial cross, to be constructed from grey Forest of Dean stone.

The Mickleham War Memorial Cross was unveiled at a ceremony on 23rd July 1920 by the High Sheriff of Surrey H. H. Gordon Clark D.I. It was dedicated by the Venerable the Archdeacon of Surrey assisted by the Rector the Reverend W. R. Lloyd, M.A. Bugler Wilfred Bruford, brother of Sydney who is named on the memorial, played the 'Last Post'.

The monument, adapted from a pardon cross in Normandy, is approximately 20 feet high. The cross itself rises from a plinth which in turn stands upon three slightly sloping steps. The Pardon cross or crucifix was first introduced



at the Marion Congress of Rome in 1904. Its aim was to obtain the pardon of God and to pardon one's neighbour.

The names of the fallen in World War II were added after VE Day.



The Grissell Family

Bernard and Francis Grissell (listed on the war memorial) were the great-grandsons of Thomas Grissell (1801-1874) who made his fortune as a public works contractor.

He was responsible for constructing a number of prestigious buildings in England, including Nelson's Column, Clerkenwell Prison, the Lyceum and St. James' theatres, and part of the Houses of Parliament. His firm was also engaged in railway building, including parts of the Great Western Railway and the South Eastern Railway.

As a result of the profits from his business, Thomas Grissell was able to live well. In 1850 he moved from Kensington Gardens to Norbury Park in Mickleham. There he was appointed a magistrate, and in 1853, high sheriff of the county.

In 1861 when the proposed route of the railway from Leatherhead included parts of Norbury Park, Thomas laid down stringent conditions, including a tunnel which should have no shafts and the company was forbidden to disturb the surface above it. At

his behest the railway station at Westhumble was built in the French château style.

Thomas died at Norbury Park and was buried in the churchyard at St Michael's Church in Mickleham. He left an estate of almost £200,000. There is a memorial to Thomas and various members of his family in St Michael's Norbury Chapel.

A stained glass window on the left hand side of the north wall of the church was given by Bernard and Francis' father, Thomas de la Garde Grissell. The inscription across the bottom reads: 'To the honour of The Great Redeemer and in memory of my grandfather Thomas Grissell and my father Thomas de la Garde Grissell I dedicate this window.' In its lower right hand corner is the family coat of arms and motto 'PRESSFORWARD'.

In Mickleham today we have Pressforward Cottages and Pressforward Bridge. (Pressforward Lodge was demolished in the 1930s to make way for the Mickleham bypass.)

The Grissell family continued to live at Norbury Park until 1890 when it was sold to Leopold Salomons.

Lest We Forget

In St Michael's Church during Heritage Open Days on 13th & 14th September the Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group mounted a display with information about the eleven men whose names appear on the WW1 section of the Mickleham War Memorial. A small task group has been researching the names for some months and had prepared a booklet with the information gathered to date.

In addition to the men's personal data we included information about their association with Mickleham and where their families had lived. In most cases we were able to provide contemporary photographs of their houses. This proved very helpful to descendants of Private Oliver Snelling who visited the display and had previously been unable to find his house, Ivy Cottage, which is now St Michael's Restaurant on the A24.

This War Memorial Project is very much a work in progress. Perhaps our most complete record is that of Private William Collins, thanks to the information given by his granddaughter, Maureen, during a recent visit from Australia.

William was head gamekeeper on the High Ashurst estate and his wife, Laura, was caterer for a shooting syndicate. Laura, one of 13 children, had been sent to work in the kitchen of a parsonage when quite young. The parson educated her with his own children and later on she worked in the kitchen of a house in Albemarle Street, London. She became an excellent cook.

William, serving with the Royal West Surrey Regiment, died, aged 41, on 12th April 1917 from wounds received during fighting near Arras in France. He has no known grave.

Alan Foxon

When I was asked to help with the research on Alan Foxon, one of the WW2 casualties listed on the War Memorial, his connection with Mickleham and Westhumble was a mystery. Alan William Keith Foxon was born in 1922 in West Ham, the son of William Foxon, a bank clerk, and his wife Mildred, a dressmaker. His two older siblings Eric and Phyllis were born in 1912 and 1914 respectively, before their father enlisted in the Royal Garrison Artillery in WW1.

Alan joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1942, training as a temporary midshipman on HMS Daedalus, the Fleet Air Arm base in Lee-on-Solent. He then served on bases in Durban, South Africa and Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). By 1945 he had been promoted to lieutenant and was serving on HMS Attacker, an escort aircraft carrier refitted as an assault carrier. He died during training exercises on 11 July 1945 when the arrestor hook on his Seafire (the naval equivalent of a Spitfire) failed to engage and his plane went through the barrier and into the sea.

The local connection became apparent when the 1945 electoral register for Westhumble revealed that Alan's parents were by then living at Bembridge (now 'The Hollies') in Pilgrims Way. Intriguingly, there was also a record of a Felicitie Foxon, aged 27, sailing from Durban to Southampton in September 1946 whose proposed UK address was also Bembridge. We discovered that Alan had married Felicitie Carson (a South African known as Dorothy) by special licence in May 1944 in Durban. Dorothy settled in England and later ran a night club in London.



After William's death Laura and her four children had to leave their tied accommodation. In 1921 with the money from William's life insurance policy (taken out by the shooting syndicate) and £100 borrowed from her brother, Laura bought a smallholding on Box Hill and began serving teas from the cottage. The Upper Farm business grew to include tea rooms, a camp site and, in 1933, a swimming pool. The business continued after Laura's death until her eldest son George died in 1971. Her daughters, Edith (Burbidge) and Gladys continued to live on Box Hill for some time after that.

I was very fortunate to make contact with Alan's nephew Roger Bacon, the son of Alan's sister Phyllis. Roger was born in Dorking and lived at Rosedene in Adlers Lane, Westhumble until he was 17. His family's house was behind that of the Foxons and a footpath joined the gardens. Although Roger was born after Alan died he did recall meeting 'Aunt Dorothy' when he was a young child.



In June last year Judy Kinloch and I met Roger and his wife Lesley at *The Running Horses*. Judy had moved to Mickleham soon after Roger left and she knew several of the people Roger remembered. After lunch we went into St Michael's Church where Roger's parents were married and then visited the War Memorial, last seen by him over 45 years ago and which Lesley had only seen in photographs. We would very much like to thank Roger for sending us the photo of Alan and filling in so many details about the Foxon family.

Judith Long

Westhumble Caves

Archive copies of newspaper cuttings about the rescue of a schoolboy trapped by a rock-fall in Westhumble Caves prompted an article for the Mickleham Parish Magazine written by Alison Walton.

The following includes extracts from Alison's account.

Westhumble Caves (also known as the Bat Caves) set in the hillside off the far end of Chapel Lane are not really caves at all. The area started as a chalk quarry and then developed into a mine, honeycombed with passages and chambers.

Chalk found in the deeper layers of the ground (called 'fat chalk') is used for agriculture and is an important source of lime for building mortar, although it is usually too soft to serve as a building stone. In some places, however, thin bands of hard, well-cemented chalk have been quarried for building materials. In the Westhumble mine, galleries were excavated deep into the hillside to pursue this stratum. It is one of the few places in Surrey where chalk has been mined underground rather than quarried in the open and is the only surviving accessible chalk mine in the county.

There are no early descriptions of the mine. Some suspect that chalk from it was used in Betchworth Castle (the fabric of which contains an assortment of building materials, including chalk, firestone, sandstone and brick), but no scientific testing has been done to verify any connection. A worker at Box Hill and Westhumble station visited the mine in 1912 and recalled seeing initials and dates on the walls going back to the 1880s.

On 26th October 1946, the mine was surveyed by John Hooper, with the help of his wife, 12 scouts from the 19th Wimbledon troop and their leader. They discovered that it consisted of a system of pillars with holes around them. The majority of tunnels are roomy, around eight feet high. Some are more difficult to navigate, with sloping floors, piles of boulders and low ceilings.

There are about 200 metres of tunnels, occupying a total area of approximately 2,200 square metres. The original floor may have

been some distance below the present, given the crumbly nature of chalk and the considerable breakdown that has occurred over the years.

On 14th February 1954, a siren shattered the peace of a Westhumble Sunday lunchtime as a police car raced along Chapel Lane, followed shortly by two fire engines, bells clanging. The emergency vehicles were heading for the Westhumble caves and a boy almost completely buried by a fall of chalk, rocks and rubble.

The boy was 16-year-old Fred Topliffe, who had cycled that morning from Wandsworth for his usual weekend 'pot-holing' expedition with four friends. The other boys had watched as Fred entered the cave, coming out of one hole, shouting 'Here's a good one!' and disappearing again. The next thing they heard was a low rumble and a cry from inside. The entrance was almost completely blocked by the fall and Fred was trapped inside. While one boy ran for help, the others crowded around the entrance, shouting to Fred to keep still.

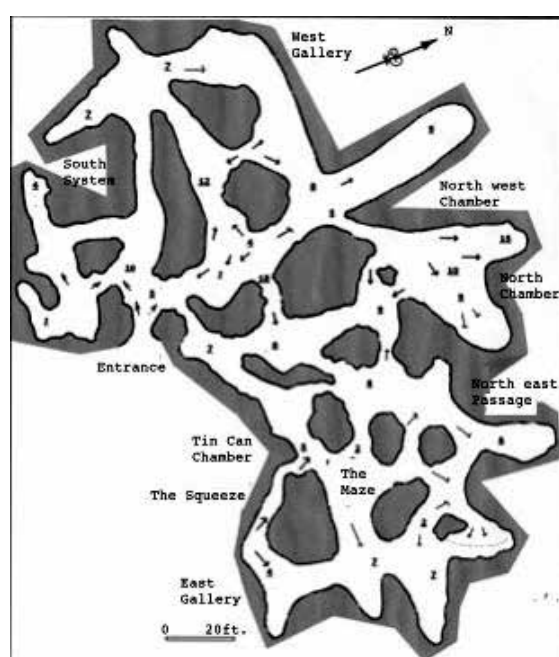
Firemen attempted to tunnel horizontally to reach Fred, but this caused further falls. A fire officer reported, 'The boy is in extreme danger.' The firemen then began to excavate vertically down to him, a slow, dangerous job of chipping and burrowing by hand, in which they could not use shoring or any other means to safeguard themselves or Fred. They shouted encouragement as they edged into the cave, inch by inch. Fred called back, giving them directions.

After they had tunnelled down by hand to a depth of six feet, Fred's head and shoulders were exposed and they were able to pass him a cup of coffee and hot water bottles. One of the firemen, Bert Bullett, then volunteered for the most dangerous job. With a rope around his waist, he edged head-first into the narrow aperture. For two hours he was suspended head downwards, clearing the rubble away from Fred, all the time encouraging him and gaining his trust. One false move and the cave could fall in, killing them both. Twice, doctors considered amputating Fred's leg.

Working with slow, painstaking care, Bert got his arms around the boy's chest. More than five hours after the excavation operation had started, the men outside pulled Bert and Fred to safety.

Fred was shocked but not injured. Two things saved his life. One was the courage of the firemen who toiled for hours, burrowing through the crumbling chalk to reach him. Second was the second-hand crash helmet he used for his weekend expeditions. It wedged down over his face and gave him vital breathing space. While the fireman battled to reach Fred, the police were searching for his parents, who were not at home. They were traced just before he was brought out.

Much of the chalk around the entrance where Fred had been digging had been fractured by frost but held in place by ice. Fred's actions caused the air to warm up, the ice to melt and the rocks to fall.



John Hooper's 1946 plan of the Westhumble chalk mine

Fireman Bert Bullett, who lived in Westcott, made light of his heroism, refusing to give his name to journalists and saying it was a team effort, with everyone taking turns to go into the cave. 'I happened to be picked to go in last,' he said. 'Any of the other firemen would have done the same thing.' In January, Bert had helped to rescue another boy trapped in the same caves.

The Queen approved the Prime Minister's recommendation to award Bert the British Empire Medal. He received the medal on 1st July from Sir Robert Haining, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey. The other officers received Certificates of Commendation for the 'initiative, resource and courage' they displayed on that occasion.

In 1974, the two entrances to the mine were gated as a measure to protect the resident bats (and wannabe explorers). Dr Frank Greenaway, who started studying bats at the Westhumble mine in 1980, estimated that it is among the top six most important sites in the country – probably the most important in southern England. Interest in the mine increased when a sighting of the rare Greater Horseshoe bat was recorded there in the winter of 1964-1965. Thirteen of the 16 British bat species have been recorded there, including some of the rarest. The rarest of all is the Bechstein's bat, which is thought to be Britain's rarest mammal.

Westhumble Caves are now managed by the National Trust.

PS Fred Topliffe recovered from his escapade and continued to explore underground workings in the south-east (though not in Westhumble!), and later more demanding caves and pot-holes in South Wales, the Mendips and the Pennines. He worked in the Antarctic, Arabia, Africa and the Indian Ocean Island of Aldabra, and was a founder member of the Chelsea Spelaeological Society. He is now retired – although he still likes to go caving when the opportunity arises.



Fred Topliffe (R) in the Westhumble cave



Bert receiving his British Empire Medal

The Effect of WW1 on the People of Newdigate

At our Autumn meeting, held at *The Stepping Stones* on 13th October, we were delighted to welcome back John Callcut, Chairman of the Newdigate History Society. Members who attended our inaugural meeting two years ago will recall that John spoke to us about setting up and running a local history group. This time he gave a very moving account of the impact of WW1 on the people of Newdigate, based on information painstakingly gathered from a variety of sources, including wartime editions of the *Dorking Advertiser* (read in an icy basement in Reigate), parish magazines and interviews with surviving relatives.

On 22nd July 1914, several weeks after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, the people of Newdigate were enjoying a Grand Bazaar and Fête at Ockley Lodge, seemingly oblivious to the threat of war. Barely a month later, an Emergency Committee had already begun to organise recruitment and relief of distress during the war. The Reverend Henry Bird wrote the first of many letters to his parishioners in which he encouraged the young men of the village to enlist, which initially they were keen to do.

By the end of 1915, eight soldiers connected with Newdigate had been killed, all but one of them officers (men from the 'big' houses, not really regarded as 'Newdigate people' by the villagers). Sir Henry Whatley Tyler, whose family owned High Trees Farm,

had lost a son and two grandsons and the Goldbergs of The Red House had lost their older son Herbert. His younger brother Frederick would die a year later. Wilfred Bird, the son of the Rector had also been killed. Soon afterwards Henry Bird published a list of men from the parish on active service, presumably to shame those still at home into enlisting.

The death toll mounted as the war continued, with families from all social standings now affected. Many of the casualties were from The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment). The family of Mrs Ellen Janson, of Newdigate Place, was particularly hard hit. She lost two of her sons and a nephew, as well as the nephew of her second husband. Mrs Janson had always been interested in wood-carving and in 1902 started classes for the young people of the village. She was very fond of her students and must have been devastated when, in addition to the loss of her family members, ten of her students were killed during the war.

There are thirty two names from WW1 on the Newdigate War Memorial. However, as John discovered (and the same applies to Mickleham and Westhumble), finding a connection to the village for some of the names required considerable detective work. Now, thanks to John's research, which has taken many years to complete, the personal story behind each name on the memorial has been revealed.

Mickleham Village Hall's Silver Trowel

One of the items I inherited when I took over as Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees in the late-1990s was a leather case containing a silver trowel bearing the inscription:

Presented by the Trustees to Mrs David Evans on the occasion of her laying the Foundation Stone of the Village Hall, Mickleham, to be erected by her and her daughter Lucie in memory of husband and father 5th April 1902.

The trowel was safely tucked away in the church safe and lay forgotten when I handed over to Mary Banfield in 2009. Recently it was re-discovered. After much discussion as to its future the present trustees have decided that it would be too risky to display it in the hall and so rather than store it away again enquiries were



The inscribed silver trowel with bone handle, 30 cm long, was made by Harry W Atkin, and bears the hallmarks for Sheffield 1901

made to see if Dorking Museum would be interested in displaying it. The response from the museum has been very positive, and it is hoped that soon it will available there for all to see. Sue Tatham

Who was David Evans?

The following article entitled 'Village Myth Dispelled' is taken from the July/August 2008 Mickleham Parish Magazine

I received a phone call recently from John Gajewski who is researching the history of Dalewood house for Box Hill School. Did I know anything about the house or the people who had lived there? 'DH Evans lived there at one time and Mickleham Village Hall was built in his memory.' I replied. John persisted 'Yes, that is what I have been told, but do you have any more information about the Evans family and the role they played in the local community?' I agreed to make some searches and ring him back.

First stop was the web where I found 'Records of D H Evans and Co Ltd, department store, London, England' and the following information: *Dan Harries Evans was born in South Wales around 1856. He was apprenticed to a draper in Wales before moving to London, England, in 1878 to start up in business on his own account. He rented a small shop at 320 Oxford Street in 1879 for the sale of linen drapery and fancy goods, where he employed two assistants. As the trade grew very quickly Evans was able to lease three adjoining properties in Oxford Street by 1885... In January 1915, D H Evans retired from the business. (I discovered later that he had become bankrupt.)*

Alarm bells started ringing. The trust deed for the village hall was

signed in 1902 and it states that the hall was to be built by the family in memory of the late David Evans of Mickleham who died on 9th January 1901.

So, who was David Evans? Through searches, we have found that David Evans was born in London in 1831 and married Sarah Paul in 1855. The first census to place the Evans family at Dalewood is 1891. In 1881 and before they were living in Lewisham. The 1901 census lists Sarah Evans of Dalewood as a widow. Old Mickleham Parish Magazines reveal that David served at least two terms on Mickleham Parish Council and was vice president of the cricket club. The cricket pitch was on his land.

How does one account for the myth that David Evans of Dalewood was D H Evans? There is no doubt that David was 'in trade' as the Victorians would say. The ten-year census records chart his progress from merchant, to warehouseman and agent, and finally to silk merchant and manufacturer. So perhaps he did have a store. Charlotte Daruwalla has a vague recollection of buying a silk scarf about 20 years ago from a firm called 'David Evans' in the Dartford/Bexley area. Can any of our readers add more information about the Evanses or other people who lived at Dalewood? Sue Tatham

David Evans – The Last of the London Fabric Printers

Information gleaned from various websites

With the setting up of bleaching grounds (to whiten cloth) from the late 17th century, Crayford was seen as an ideal site for textile work, as it was within easy reach of the main markets of Central London and the Thames ports of North Kent, and there was abundant clean water from the River Cray. About 120 acres (c48.5 hectares) of Crayford were used for this activity, continuing until the late 19th century.

From the early 18th century several fabric printing businesses also started or changed hands in Crayford. David Evans & Co. was almost the last to set up a textile printing business in 1843 and was the last remaining when operation ceased in Crayford in 2001. Already an established silk merchant in London, Evans took on the site on the Crayford/Bexley border from Augustus Applegath, also a printer but an inventor as well. Evans produced

good quality printed silks, and gained an international reputation for their Real Ancient Madder Silks, a special process involving secret recipes. Block printing was the way of production at first but then screen and automated printing were introduced. Quality was always the watch word and clients included, among others, William Morris and more recently Liberty's, Holland & Holland, Christian Dior and Elizabeth Emanuel.

The last silk square was printed in Crayford on 4th July 2001, and the firm's closure was a great loss to Crayford's industrial heritage.

There was an exhibition entitled *Pattern to Print: The story of David Evans, Crayford's silk printers*, telling the story of the area's roots within the silk industry spanning three centuries in Bexley's Hall Place last year (2014) – what a pity we missed it.