

DORKING & DISTRICT PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Established in 1929

NEWSLETTER

No. 19

January 1998

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NEWSLETTER No 19: January 1998 **Free to Members**

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The opinions expressed in this Newsletter by the Editor and others do not necessarily represent those of the Society. The Editor welcomes letters from Members and other readers.

EDITORIAL

In Newsletter 10 we wrote a piece about tourism in the Mole Valley area and now return to the subject after reading in the *Dorking Advertiser* that our local councillors, or at least some of them, are pressing for a stronger exploration of the area's tourist potential in the form of a 'coherent, well thought-out plan'.

At the moment any tourists spending a few days at the White Horse, the Burford Bridge Hotel or in B&B or holiday lets will soon find that they are left very much to their own devices, so much so that many must give up prematurely and soon set off elsewhere. Unlike most places in Britain and abroad that have something to offer in this respect, the Mole Valley and Surrey generally see almost no active promotion of tourism. The hapless visitor will look in vain in the town centre for anywhere dispensing information and advice and will be surprised to discover that in contrast to those in their own country or even those in neighbouring counties such as Hampshire, amenities like the Dorking & District Museum (which attracts a surprising number of overseas and out-county visitors) are left to survive as best they can with no more than token support from the local authorities.

There is of course a down side, or at least one that will be advanced in argument. Those who suggest that tourists should be encouraged will be told that the result will be to clutter up further

the overloaded streets and roads with yet more motor traffic; tourists will crowd the local residents out of the shops and stimulate the opening of new shops full of meretricious giftware. Tourists in serious numbers are best confined to their traditional target areas such as London, Windsor, Canterbury, Edinburgh and Stratford-on-Avon; they are a sub-species tiresome to have under one's feet, especially if they do not have a complete command of the Mother Tongue. Surely, they will say, there are far better candidates for the increasingly restricted local authority funds.

There is little doubt that a higher level of tourist activity would greatly benefit the local economy, especially Dorking's flagging small retailers. Nor need there be serious concern that increased numbers of visitors would add to road traffic, of which we already have a surfeit. Dorking enjoys excellent rail services from all four points of the compass; there are now more taxis in the town than at any time within living memory and those who take a little trouble and use their legs will find the surrounding countryside accessible by bus and by the Redhill-Guildford railway.

If our local authorities (District and County, for this is a shared responsibility, incapable of worthwhile progression if left to the first alone) are really keen to pursue this rabbit, they need not, as is their wont, lavish public funds on expensive consultants' reports. We can tell them

here and now that any encouragement of tourism on a scale likely to make a difference to the local economy, which is what they presumably have in mind, will certainly require considerable expenditure and (to use a fashionable phrase) hard choices, so long avoided. They would for example need to address such sticky questions as making the centre of Dorking much more amenable and comfortable for the *pedestrian* in preference to motor vehicles. West Street, which could certainly be transformed into a very successful tourist honeypot, with its intriguing antique shops, interesting old buildings and its potentially attractive local museum, could not be allowed to continue in its present form as a nasty narrow channel for noisy fume-laden motor traffic, including buses and long lumbering lorries. Traffic calming through the High Street and Dene Street would also have to be implemented if the town centre is to become attractive to leisured visitors. A few trees and tidying up of signage will not suffice. Councillors seriously interested in building up tourism might take a look at what has already been done in places such as Andover, Chichester and Dorchester and speak to the retailers in the pedestrianised streets there. They should look too at well-supported museums such as those in a town of comparable size like Alton - which has two! Other necessary improvements, less challenging, and insufficient in themselves, are obvious enough: information points at the main railway station and in the town centre; and distribution of tourist literature, maps etc. (at present confined to the immediate area and largely preaching to the converted) might pro-

fitably be extended to suitable locations in London and to airports, where they will reach potential visitors.

A decision is probably needed. Do we wish to attract tourists in sufficient numbers to make an economically favourable impact? If so, the policy makers must indulge in a little preliminary thinking, trying to see the area through a tourist's eyes and imagining what they might make of it. Not much! As far as Dorking is concerned, they will then experience a town of narrow streets rendered unattractive by too much road traffic, often driven too fast, a town where local government awards a very low priority to the comfort of the pedestrian or to improving the quality of local tourist attractions.

Twice during 1997 your editor escorted parties of outsiders round the town to study places and buildings of interest. Although both occasions, a Sunday afternoon and late on a weekday evening, were at what might be considered quiet times, it soon became clear that in the town centre this is a highly stressful, even at times dangerous exercise, fit only for the young and brave, one which not only involves fighting to make oneself heard over the roaring motor traffic but keeping an eye on the safety of members of the party hassled by speeding cars. If we are really serious about attracting a significant tourist trade, there is indeed much to be done. The encouraging thought is that if the nettle were grasped, it just might also benefit the residents.

Alan A. Jackson

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS NOW OVERDUE

Subscriptions were due on 1 January 1998 at the following increased rates:

Individual Members	£5
Family Rate	£7
Senior Citizens (over 65)	£3

Please make sure you have paid and if you have a banker's standing order - the favoured method of payment - that you have authorised the increased rate. All queries please to Mo Bushell at 51 Deepdene Vale, Dorking RH4 1NJ, 01306 883941, E mail: mo@dunx.demon.co.uk.

Poetry Requests

Mr Eric Ferguson (01306 884018), our resident calligrapher, who so splendidly decorates the back page of each issue of this Newsletter, has asked whether anyone has a copy of the poem *Box Hill* by Sir Herbert Warren. He also seeks copies of Dorking poetry by 'Ol' William'.

Mrs Woolven of Anstie Grange, Holmwood, wrote to me asking for the name of the author of the poem *Willow Walk, Dorking* which Mr Ferguson calligraphed for Newsletter 18. The initials stand for Violet Whitehead, a charming lady still very much with us in Dorking, who has agreed to the cancellation of her modest anonymity.

A.A.J.

THE CHAIRMAN WRITES

First of all may I start by wishing all members of the Society a happy and prosperous New Year.

Since there are a number of items of news, I will endeavour to be as concise as possible.

The Town Twinning Ceremony

As members will have read in the local press, the Town Twinning with Gouvieux took place over the weekend of 15 and 16 November and, given the work of the Steering Committee chaired by Derek Edge, proved to be a happy and successful celebration. Although the committee relied heavily upon the generosity of committee members, the Chamber of Commerce and other benefactors to meet the costs of accommodating and entertaining our French visitors, who numbered 40 persons, it was achieved and everyone involved considered that it had been a very enjoyable occasion. I am sure that this will lead to increasing cultural interest between the two countries. The formal signing and exchange of charter documents took place in the Council Chamber, followed by a simple but appropriate service in St Martin's Church. The number of exchange visits between schools, sports association and other organisations amply demonstrates the advantages to the community of these town twinning arrangements. Hopefully, the Steering Committee, on which Ian Brochie has now succeeded me, will establish a Friends of Gouvieux Association to encourage a wider membership among those residents in Dorking interested in developing links with our French friends.

School Heritage Awards

By the time members read this Newsletter, the award sponsored by the Society will have taken place at Priory School at which prizes of books chosen by the winners, purchased against book tokens, were presented to four pupils by Mr Adrian White CBE - the project being based upon a study of Denbies Wine Estate. Pupils were required to answer a number of questions on the advantages of the site, how soil fertility is maintained, and the type and number of jobs in the vineyard. It is hoped that this award, which will be annual, will create an interest in our heritage and environment among both the pupils and their parents.

The Performing Arts Library

The Society, although not represented by a member of the Council due to other commitments, made a submission to the Special Meeting held recently at Pippbrook, supporting the retention of the Library in Dorking and reminding Surrey County Council of their role in the promised partnership agreement with Mole Valley following the retention of the two tier local Government system. The Society were prominent in their support for the retention of the District Council and Surrey County Council.

Appointment of Honorary Secretary

I am delighted to announce that Susan Bush has accepted my invitation to become Hon Secretary. Provided that she has no second thoughts after the first three months, my worries on filling this important post are over.

The Caves

A proposal has been made to the Mole Valley District Council on meeting the costs of installing a low wattage lighting system in the Caves which will enable them to be opened on a regular basis in the future. We shall await a response in early 1998. It is good to report, however, that the Society is much indebted to the Dorking & District Chamber of Commerce for their pledge of financial support for this initiative.

In the meantime, parties of visitors unable to see the caves during the Heritage Open Days event in September have been accommodated over three Sundays in November and December involving over one hundred people. Hopefully, some of these visitors may join the Society as members in the future.

The Society's name

Following my original comments on this subject some time ago, there have been a number of comments and suggestions but none of the proposed titles seemed to get universal support. I wonder what members' views are on the following idea?

'The Dorking & District Heritage Society'

Please write and let me know your reactions.

Barry Collins

David Loram 1915-1997

David was a member of the Society from the time he moved to Dorking on his retirement until his recent death. He was one of those people who are essential to the smooth and successful running of a Society like ours. By that I mean that he was always reliable and just got on with whatever he was doing for the Society quietly and cheerfully without ever expecting or seeking thanks or praise.

He has so many friends in Dorking both in and out of the Society and we join in sending our sympathy and good wishes to David's wife, Marie, to their daughter Judy and to her family. In fact it was to be near Judy that David and Marie moved to Dorking. They were and are a close and loving family.

Many people will know that David had a distinguished career with NAAFI, which he joined in his home town of Plymouth before the last War. When he came to Dorking, as Martin Cole mentions in his Museum Notes, David became a faithful supporter of the Museum. In particular he was a member of its Working Party, which has done so much to improve the Museum premises and the display of exhibits.

Aircraft Noise

On 26 August 1997 the Society's Chairman invited Sir Paul Beresford, Mole Valley's choice as its new MP, into his home, to meet leading members of the Society. As it was a fine summer evening, the party drifted into the secluded garden, once part of Deepdene Park, where Sir Paul addressed the gathering, notably upon the difficult problem that areas such as ours faced in accommodating the ever increasing number of new households. Despite his strong speaking voice, several minutes of his remarks were suppressed by the row from Gatwick departures, flying as they often do at low height, well north of the curiously-named 'Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs)'.

This incident prompted your Editor to write a letter to Sir Paul in which the question of the safety of extending the Heathrow holding pattern over Dorking where it overlaps the Gatwick departure zone was also mentioned. At the time of writing a substantive reply is still awaited. Watch this space!

While never pushing himself forward, David served on the Society Management Council under the Chairmanship of Bernard Grimsley and then, when the name changed, on the Society Council. He was always ready to express his views on what was needed to be done to protect Dorking and its surrounding countryside. He was a member of Owen Russ's Planning Team, together with Brian Hodges and Bill Merry, and brought a practical and sensible judgement to consideration of the Planning problems of our area. It is good that his close neighbour, Bill Merry, continues on the present Planning Team, run by Martin Wedgwood and that Brian Hodges, who also worked with David on the Museum Working Party, still carries on that aspect of his work for the Society.

David did not enjoy good health in recent years. He bore his troubles with courage and patience, supported by Marie, his family and friends. Despite it all, he was able to continue his interests for so long. We could do with more like David in our community and he will be very much missed.

CBC

Dr Cole, Chairman of the Dorking Museum Committee, has also recently been much troubled by Gatwick noise, in this case somewhat past his bedtime. He has received the reassuring news from the Gatwick 'Noise Information Manager' that 'British airports will not be permitting any of the older, noisier aircraft to operate from the airports after 2002'. This is something that Germany did a considerable time ago. The leaflet accompanying the letter to Dr Cole devotes almost two pages to explaining why aircraft so often wander away from the NPR and create a nuisance over Dorking. It adds somewhat surprisingly that there are no sanctions, financial or otherwise, against deviations from NPRs and also reveals *that there are no noise monitors in the immediate Dorking area.*

The real solution to this serious environmental nuisance lies with Ministers. Hence the aforementioned letter to Sir Paul. There seems to be very little point in complaining to Gatwick other than to get particular incidents recorded for possible future use when policy changes are being

considered. If you are bothered by aircraft noise, after making the free telephone call to Gatwick (see issue 18/8) *write to the MP*; this will at least bring the matter to the attention of Ministers.

AAJ

As this newsletter was being processed, Sir Paul's reply was received and the relevant paragraphs are reproduced below. The Society is of course a member of the GACC.

Dear Mr Jackson

.....Relating to your comment on aircraft noise, I have been in correspondence with the Department and also with Brendan Sewill of Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign. I note your comment relating to the statements that quiet aircraft were being developed. This has actually happened and there has been a slow decrease in the noise from aircraft at

both airports. However, this has not diminished the campaign. I have replied positively to a suggestion that I meet BAA at Gatwick Airport in the near future. I still await the response from them as to a date.

I do believe that the campaign by GACC, backed by a number of local MPs, is having a positive effect on the reduction of noise.

Perhaps of even greater concern is the prospect of further consideration to a second runway subsequent to the year 2016 when the present legal restriction expires. If you felt it useful, and I believe it would be, the joining of you and others to the GACC may help strengthen the campaign.

Yours sincerely

(Signed) Sir Paul Beresford
Member of Parliament for Mole Valley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

It is with great interest my husband and I read your Newsletters. Regarding the Society's name, we are both in favour of retaining the present name..... Regarding membership levels, may I make a suggestion; each time the Newsletter is sent out, one or two application forms be included and members be asked to help recruit.

I wish to express appreciation and gratitude to all those busy people who give their time and energy to the Dorking & District Preservation Society. We should be in a sad state if no such Society were in existence.

SYLVIA HEARNE

[Mrs Hearne also raised points regarding gaudy advertising on boards placed outside a shop in the High Street and cycling on the Nower. These have been dealt with by the Chairman - Editor]

Norbury Park

This park, some 320 acres, mostly elevated woodlands, was purchased by Surrey County Council in 1935 when the area was threatened with residential building development during the unrestricted interwar outwards growth of London. It was intended the land should be safeguarded in perpetuity as an open space accessible to the public. The area involved excludes the mansion and its immediate surroundings, which

Dear Sir

This is a Thank-you note. Yesterday (Saturday) a friend and I visited Dorking from Richmond to take advantage of the Heritage Open Day. Among other things we joined the 3pm Guided Walk around the historic sites and buildings in the town.

It was a most enjoyable walk and we would like you to thank the gentleman who acted as guide. He was very well informed, had done his research extremely well and gave us an interesting and well-paced tour. Please thank him.

MRS M MULVANEY

remain in private hands. SCC Rangers supervise estate management based on good forestry practice and generally watch over the Park, which has recently been designated a 'Garden' Grade II by English Heritage.

A recent Consultants' Report on better use of the site, partly funded by the Countryside Commission, included a suggestion that an Arts Centre

be formed within the Park with open air sculpture exhibitions and the like. Objections were lodged to this, with its suggestions of more intensive use and as a result the Surrey County Council Estates Officers established a liaison committee which is advised of work done and whose views are sought on future initiatives. The aim is to prevent development into an intensively 'touristy' complex and to encourage better use of the area by youngsters and families. The Society is represented on this liaison committee by Daphne Rice.

AAJ

Autumn Meeting

As usual, this was the occasion for presenting the awards for the Best Development Competition and coloured photographs of the entries were displayed on a board. As a back seat observer, it occurred to me that it would make this occasion even more interesting and enjoyable in future if colour slides of the entries could be projected, particularly of the successful entries, so that the audience could study the buildings whilst the commentary was proceeding. Subject to the agreement of all involved, it would also of course be of great value to future historians if the pictures of the entries and comments of the judges were to be placed in the Museum Collection.

We also heard at this meeting of the latest developments regarding the Deepdene Gardens Project. The Report of the Consultant's Survey is now available and although a copy is in the Museum Library where it is available for study by Members, it is to be hoped that it may prove possible for a talk to be given which will both summarise and fully illustrate the Report and what has been done so far with the help of Society funding. Such a talk might take place at one of the 1998 Society meetings or, better still, at a Public Meeting since that would provide the Society with a useful publicity and recruitment opportunity.

AAJ

An Opportunity to be Grasped

With the final decision on the Sainsbury proposal still hanging in the balance, it pleasing to report that the Mole Valley District Council's proposals for the redevelopment of the Baker garage site in Reigate Road are going ahead and that a firm of

architects has been appointed to supervise work which is scheduled to start around Easter 1999.

One of the most encouraging features of this will be the demolition of the untidy and decaying 1930s filling station frontage and a setting back of the building line to ensure that the recently rebuilt frontage of the Dorking Halls will no longer be obscured by its neighbour on the east side. We have yet to see the proposed designs for the frontage of the new swimming pools and sports centre but it would seem likely that the end result, with Sports Centre, Dorking Halls and Pippbrook all contributing to the vista, will be a worthy eastern entrance to the town.

We understand that when the work is complete, the existing swimming centre will be demolished and the car park behind it will be retained.

AAJ

What News and Views from the Outback?

Your Editor is very conscious that this Newsletter can easily slip into the rut of becoming fixated on Dorking town, neglecting the rural areas that are also a responsibility of the Society. When we started publication in 1990 - yes, we shall soon be ten years old! - the Society wrote to all the parish councils and the 17 community associations, inviting them to make use of this Newsletter 'to give a wider airing to matters of particular interest and concern'. After some initial response, this aspect of our coverage quickly faded away and has now all but vanished.

We would therefore very much welcome regular contributions of news and views from the rural area and extend a warm invitation to anyone who feels able to fill this gap by sending a page or so in time for our 'press dates', as detailed immediately above the Editorial. Leave it to us to eliminate any duplication or summarise any written material already prepared and please include your telephone number in case we wish to discuss any particular point or request further information. If you are writing as the official representative of a parish council or community association please make this clear, but we would not wish to confine our potential corps of 'Outback reporters' to that group. Remember too that your immediate local interests and concerns could well be of value to others outside your

parish area and that our columns are read by decision makers.

Nor need it stop with brief statements of news and views. To bring some balance to our pot-stirring, we would very much like to include an occasional 'Guest Editorial' on any subject related to the interests of those who live in these areas. The controversies about controlling traffic

through country roads and the threat that rising numbers of separate households may require the siting of substantial concentrations of new housing in areas of Surrey countryside hitherto protected from such development seem likely subjects for wider discussion. And there are surely others.

AAJ

Reports from the Dorking & District Museum

David Loram (1915-1997)

David Loram, who died on 9 November, will be sadly missed by his museum colleagues. He had been a member of the Museum Working Party for many years and was a Stewards' Representative on the Museum Committee. Until a couple of weeks before his death, he had been working with Fred Plant on the computerisation of the records of museum exhibits. Our condolences go to his wife and family.

Appointment of Curatorial Advisor

We have been most fortunate to obtain the services of Simon Lace as our new professional Curatorial Advisor. Simon, who is Curator of the Museum of Richmond, has set himself the target of helping us to raise our status with the Museums & Galleries Commission from that of a provisionally registered museum to full registration.

He has already made two visits. The first was in October when he met all the Curators and several stewards and other helpers. The second visit in November was to discuss our policies and procedures for acquiring, documenting and indexing items. He was pleased to discover that our methods were similar to those used by his own museum and thought they should meet the Museum & Galleries Commission requirements. Simon has made many useful suggestions and visited us again in December to give advice on certain aspects of the computerisation and indexing of our records.

Funding the Museum Extension

For the last three years we have had possession of the warehouse-like building adjoining our existing museum and have been using it for

much needed storage and as a workshop. This meant that the ground floor of the library building could be cleared and used for group visits, committee meetings and temporary exhibitions. We had hoped to obtain Heritage Lottery Fund money to convert the extension building to museum use on two floors. The bid was unsuccessful and we have now drawn up lower cost plans for an exhibition area on the ground floor with storage above.

It is proposed to have a new entrance and reception area in the extension and to make a way through to the existing museum, so creating a much enlarged area for both permanent displays and temporary exhibitions. We will be discussing our plans with Mole Valley District Council as our landlords and also to ensure that we comply with the building regulations.

All of this will necessitate a lot of building work. We also need to heat the building and are thinking of a gas-fired system which would serve not only the extension but also the existing museum, where the present system is both ageing and noisy. Together with the extensive building works, this is going to cost many thousands of pounds. We plan to do the work in stages, using a lot of volunteer help. We have an enthusiastic buildings working party under our Curator, Terry O'Kelly, and they are ready to go. If you would like to help, please let us know.

Some of the work can be funded from our own resources and we plan to seek grants towards specific items such as the heating system and display cabinets. As the museum does not receive any of your subscription towards its running or development costs, we are going to have to have an appeal for funds.

Martin Cole
Chairman

Dorking Museum Library

It is very gratifying to know that Dorking Museum Library is becoming widely known as a useful source of information on the history of the area. In the last few months we have been consulted by the BBC, the National Trust and English Heritage. We were able to help researchers for the BBC Television series *One Foot in the Past* with a feature which included the Hope Mausoleum, the National Trust with its new guide book to Box Hill and English Heritage with its researches into Betchworth Castle. Of course most of our visitors are individuals engaged on family history or on finding out about their houses, etc. School projects are also much in evidence.

We were able to mount a special exhibition for *Heritage Open Days '97* which we called *Lost Buildings of Dorking*. Using photographs from our vast collection, we showed many buildings, great and small, which have now been demolished. Although some were already in a state of dilapidation, others were a great loss to the town. I am happy to say that visitors were complimentary and as a result we kept the exhibition up for about six weeks, even though it took up precious study and work space. We have now been asked to mount regular exhibitions, which will be much easier when we have the museum extension open. Of course it all costs money and raising enough to refurbish the extension is a formidable task.

Money is also needed for the proper conservation of the library collection. The maps are badly in need of protection and in particular the 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps, many over 100 years old, receive a great deal of handling. Storing them alone in individual clear wallets would cost over £500, half of which may be available as a grant. Protecting the library building from extremes of temperature would also be desirable - at present it is only heated during museum open

Local History Group

On 15 November our latest publication was launched. In *The Holloway, Dorking*, Vivien Ettlinger traces the history of the Holloway Estate from its origins as a medieval farm to the present residential area around Ridgeway Road. As usual Vivien has meticulously researched her subject and presented us with a very well written booklet. It costs £5.40 and you may purchase a

hours, and then not always adequately. Again, it all takes money.

Additions to the collection arrive weekly and I believe we are soon to have a copy of the report of the Survey of the Deepdene Gardens commissioned by the Society's Council at a cost in excess of £16,000. I am sure members will be pleased to be able to have access to the report and to see how their money is being spent.

Mary Turner
Curator (Library & Records)

List of Acquisitions By Dorking Museum since 1 August 1997

1. Lillicrap's green glass honer for safety razor blades - c. 1940s*
2. Horse brass, worn on noseband, made by Smiths of Dorking*
3. Framed watercolour painting of Church Street and St Martin's Church by Mr Leslie West - 1966
4. Miscellaneous collection of old agricultural and horticultural implements from Lemon's Farm, Abinger Common
5. Enamel advertising disc for 'Pratt's Motor Oil' from Shalford Railway Station - December 1929*
6. Carpenter's gluepot - early 1900s*
7. Corona Portable Typewriter - 1920s
8. Pitney-Bowes Postage Meter Machine from Dorking Court House
9. Collection of lace making samples and other items connected with Eric and Norah Phillips (née Dewdney)
10. Silver cup engraved D - L - S - B - C (Dorking Ladies Swimming Bath Club) Cull Cup - Doris Gilliam 1931*

* On display in the Museum

B S Hodges
Curator (Exhibits)

copy from our Sales Officer, Audrey Seeley, from the Dorking & District Museum, or from Waterstones.

A week earlier, the Group was involved in the Surrey Local History Council's symposium at Chertsey. Representatives of many local history societies from across the county met to hear

lectures on various topics with the overall theme *Victorian Celebrations*. Each society mounted its own exhibition on the same theme. Our display was afterwards on show for a limited period at the Museum.

Our regular meetings included talks on the Excavation of the Roman Villa at Abinger, Village Industries in the County and a Windmill at Buckland. Our Members' Evening this time was entitled *Dorking Artists* and featured an exhibition of paintings and books. The evening proved to be a great success. We meet on the

first Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm at the Friends' Meeting House in Butter Hill. New members and visitors are always welcome.

May I remind members that subscriptions to the Group are due on 1 January. Those who have not paid their 1997 subscriptions by 31 December will, I am afraid, be deleted from our lists. The current rate is £5; additional members at the same address £2.

Mary Turner
Chairman

Notes from the Planning Team

During the four months August to November your Planning Team wrote some 48 letters, most of them to the Chief Planning Officer for Mole Valley and all but two of them in connection with individual planning applications or appeals arising from planning applications.

One of the great joys of the work is that almost every one of the cases on which we write is interesting. The main interest, however, is often in the detail. This creates a problem in reporting on these pages, because it is difficult to convey much of this detail in the length of an article. The selection I have made, however, contains a number of what might be described as 'hard cases', which are usually the most interesting of all.

The Dorking Lawn Tennis and Squash Club, which lies between Roman Road and Ridgeway Road, has nine tennis courts. Permission to erect lights for two of them, so that tennis could be played after dark, was refused by the Council in 1990, but won on appeal in 1991. They applied in July for permission for 18 further lights, to illuminate four more courts. This met much local resistance, which we supported. The grounds for objection were that the lights would enable more intensive use of the premises after dark, creating more traffic on residential roads, as well as noise. In addition, excessive light other than in town centres is now also recognised as a form of pollution. The application was refused. The applicants appealed and also submitted an alternative application for nine lights. We wrote again in the same vein. This application was also refused early in December. We expect that the Tennis Club will appeal on this application too. We expect both appeals to be heard during the course of 1998.

Tennis clubs provide first-rate leisure facilities for all their members and of course we want them to flourish, but all property owners, including tennis clubs, have a right not to be disturbed by their neighbours. If planning regulations did not exist, there would have to be other mechanisms for ensuring this.

Newdigate Brickworks has been disused for a number of years, and the application by Woodside Waste Services to resume clay extraction and to construct a new and larger brickworks was submitted early in 1995. The questions were first whether the extraction rights had lapsed through disuse and the passage of time, and secondly whether the enlarged scale of operations proposed would be acceptable. We saw it as potentially a dismaying step back for Newdigate. The County Council refused permission in August 1996, and the applicant appealed. The appeal was heard in August 1997, and allowed by the Inspector. Although he imposed certain conditions, we are much disappointed by this result.

The plans by ARC plc to extend the operations in **Tapwood Pit** at Buckland for a further seven years, by extending the pit at each end, have undergone a similar procedure and have also been allowed on appeal, even though this site is pointedly excluded from the Surrey County Minerals Plan and the arguments for refusal, which we would have thought pretty clinching, were fully summarised the Inspector's report. It seems as if there is an unwritten policy that, where there are available mineral deposits, they should be extracted 'in the national interest', even though it is demonstrable that there are plentiful deposits elsewhere, less awkwardly situated. It is extremely upsetting that the people

of Buckland now face seven more years of dust and extra traffic.

It is now probably well known that SmithKline Beecham have vacated the Beecham laboratories at **Brockham Park**. There is a planning application, to be decided early in the new year, for a scheme to demolish the laboratories and build 46 houses instead. The scheme is well designed and the layout has been well planned. It includes provision for a new site for Brockham Bowls Club, who have for some time been trying to move from their present home. Your entire planning committee visited Brockham Park and we wrote supporting the application, at the same time making a number of suggestions. The upsetting truth, however, is that this is deep in the Green Belt, where under any other circumstances a housing estate of this size would not be permitted. The labs were first allowed just after the war as an exceptional case, because of their importance for the export drive. In an ideal world, after they were torn down they would have been returned to the Green Belt. There seems to be, however, another unwritten rule, that no site can be left derelict and allowed to return to nature. There are, in planning terms, only two possible outcomes: either the site should continue in commercial/industrial use, or it should be converted to housing. If we had opposed the application for conversion to housing, this would only have had the effect of increasing the possibility that the site would remain in commercial/industrial use.

As a result of the end of their lease on nos: 228-232 High Street, Dorking, **W.J. Robins Ltd.** are relinquishing the western two-thirds of their premises. This involves some reordering of the façade by the incoming tenants, including the removal of the curious - and long disused - first floor shop window of the middle unit, and the restoration of the original façade of the westernmost one, which is a handsome five-bay structure. We wrote making suggestions for some improvements to the designs for the shop windows, submitted in an amendment to the application, and were highly gratified to discover that the scheme which was submitted to the Planning Committee of the Council, and was passed by them, included further amendments which incorporated most of our suggestions.

I wrote in the September newsletter about Cleveland Lodge and Inholms Farm, and owe readers an update on events. The **Inholms Farm appeal** against the refusal of the Council to grant a

certificate of Change of Use and the accompanying enforcement notice was refused by the Inspector. A second application by the Royal School of Church Music for an alteration to the conditions governing their use of **Cleveland Lodge** was duly announced. Unfortunately it was almost the same as the first, and we had regretfully to write again to oppose it. It too has now been withdrawn. We do entirely appreciate and understand the Royal School's problem, but one has to insist that any solution must not include features that leave huge and unwelcome implications for the future - rather like Brockham Park 50 years ago.

The Inspector's decision on the **Upper Farm** caravan site on Box Hill is still awaited. On **Juniper Hill** the Inspector came down firmly on the side of the Council. More encouraging still, the appellants decided to comply at once with the enforcement notice, and the old Downs Way has been reinstated along its old route. Sadly this does not of course apply to the vegetation, which must be left to regenerate naturally over the next half-century. Nevertheless it is a great victory.

Surrey Structure Plan

The revised Consultation Draft of the next Surrey Structure plan came out in October and we have submitted it to careful scrutiny. I am happy to report that ideas of no longer giving top priority to maintaining the Green Belt have been scrapped. Surrey is also strongly resisting central government pressure to releasing more land for housing. This is predicated on the belief that there is no point in facilitating net immigration into the county, thus putting even more strain on existing infrastructure and facilities, which include the Green Belt. A report in the 13 November edition of *Country Life* on the Government's housing policy had a headline 'Taking a stand' for its paragraph on Surrey. To help you appreciate what is happening elsewhere, the headline for Hertfordshire was 'Goodbye green belt'.

The County Council deserves our thanks for taking this stand but, more important, it needs our support, because the Structure Plan, to be adopted, requires Central Government consent. It is with Central Government that the County's case has been and must continue to be argued.

Martin Wedgwood

Corporate Members Supporting the Society

Note that all addresses are of Dorking town and all telephone numbers have the code 01306, unless shown otherwise.

Name	Address	Tel:	Business
Abbey Information Systems Ltd.	1 Paper Mews, 330 High St. RH4 2TU	740 553	Computer consultancy
Bales Tours Ltd.	Bales House, Junction Road, RH4 3EB	885 923	Travel agents
Betchworth Park Golf Club	Reigate Road RH4 1NZ	882 052	Golf club
Bivwater Group Ltd.	Biwater Ho., Station Appr, RH4 1TZ	740 740	Water treatmt, eqpt, services
Bradney & Co	56 Dene Street, RH4 2DP	743 939	Chartered accountants
Bullimores	156 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 880	Chartered accountants
Classic Bedrooms	120 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 330	Retailer
Country Gardens Ltd.	Reigate Road, RH4 1NP	884 845	Garden centre
Cowan & Wood	114 South Street, RH4 2EZ	886 622	Solicitors
Croxtan + Garry Ltd.	Curtis Road, Dorking	886688	Mineral extraction
Dorking Golf Club	Club House, Deepdene Avenue RH5 4BX	886 917	Golf club
Dorking School of Motoring	3 Lyons Court, RH4 1AB	880119	Driving school
Downs	156 High Street, RH4 1BQ	880 110	Solicitors and notaries
Edolph's Farm	Norwood Hill Road, Charlwood RH6 0EB	01293-862 130	Farm
Ellis Atkins & Co.	1 Paper Mews, 330 High St., RH4 2TU	886 681	Chartered accountants
Friends Provident Life Office	Pixham End, RH4 1QA	740 123	Life Assurance
Patrick Gardner & Co.	16 South Street, RH4 2HQ	877 775	Estate Agents
Garth House Nursing Home	Tower Hill Road, RH4 2AY	880511	Nursing home
Graham Leather Ltd.	64/65 West Street, RH4 1BS	887 727	China and glassware
Hammond Concrete Tstg & Servs	P. O. Box 75, 2 Cedar Close, RH4 2YX	887 854	Concrete contractor
Hart Scales & Hodges	159 High Street, RH4 1AD	884 432	Solicitors
Harvey-Jones, Phillips Prtnrship	57 West Street, RH4 1BS	742 200	Ind. financial advisors
Hurtwood Litho Printers	39a South Street, RH4 2JX	877 557	Printers
International Sports Mktg Ltd.	Bales Ct., Barrington Rd., RH4 3EJ	743 322	Marketing consultants
King's Court Galleries	54 West Street, RH4 1BS	881 757	Art gallery & framers
Kuoni Travel Ltd.	Deepdene Ave., RH5 4AZ	840 888	Tour operators
Locomotive Software Ltd.	Unit 10/11, Vincent Works, RH4 3HJ	747 757	Computer software
Newspaper Press Fund	Dickens Ho., 35 Wathen Rd., RH4 1JY	887 511	Charity
Newton & Co.	173 High Street, RH4 1AD	884 208	Chartered accountants
Rapley & Co.	Jubilee Terrace, RH4 1LE	882 605	Wheelchair sales/repairs
Rose Hill Nursing Home	9 Rose Hill RH4 2EG	882 822	Nursing home
Michael Schryver Antiques Ltd.,	The Granary, 10 North St., RH4 1DN	881 110	Antiques restoration
Philip Sears Designs	18c Horsham Rd., RH4 2JD	884 477	Architectural bldg surveyors
W. Songhurst Ltd.	Masters Ho, Guildf'd Rd, Westcott RH4 3NG	880 411	Builders
Unum Ltd.	Milton Court, RH4 3LZ	887 766	Disability insurers
Venhill Engineering	21 Ranmore Road, RH4 1HE	885 111	Specialist cable mfrs
Ventrolla	Myrtle Cottage, Newdigate RH5 5AD	631 773	Window frame restorers
Viscount Agencies	Concept House, 3 Dene St., RH4 2DR	880 715	Duty free agency
L. A. White (Dkg) Ltd.	11 Yew Tree Road, RH4 1HU	885 245	Builder
White & Sons	104 High Street, RH4 1AZ	887 654	Estate agents
Whitelegg Machines Ltd.	Fir Tree House, Horsham Rd., Beare Green RH5 4LQ	713 200	Electrical engineers

Other Corporate Members Supporting the Society:

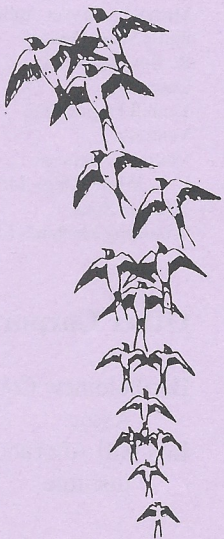
Bartholomew Court Residents' Assoc.	Brockham Green Village Society	Friends of Box Hill
Box Hill Afternoon Women's Institute	Coldharbour Sports and Social Club	Holmwood Women's Institute
		Leigh Residents' Association
		Westcott Village Association

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Birds...



Without the birds, what would life be
Their perfect beauty not to see?
Would we not miss their song, at dawn
That wakes us on a summer's morn?
The larks like specks up in the sky
Do lift our weary spirits high
And with continuous notes so sweet
Grow smaller as the clouds they meet.
Swallows diving after flies
Like acrobats before our eyes
We feel freedom through their flight
And thank God for the gift of sight.
The graceful swan through waters glide
Majestic bird - so full of pride.
The Barn owl - ghost-like, seeks his prey
In the fading light of day.
We betide the roaming vole
Who wanders too far from his hole!
The peacock, glorious his display



The almost takes our breath away
His fanning tail such colours show
So rich with iridescent glow,
Martins on migratory flight



O'er land and sea, through day and night.
We hope that they return each year
To gladden hearts deprived of cheer.
And through the empty winter days
The homely Robin with us stays
And many more will brave the cold
Their varied charms to us unfold.
From birds much joy we do derive
So we must help them to survive.

JENNIFER M. HUBER

