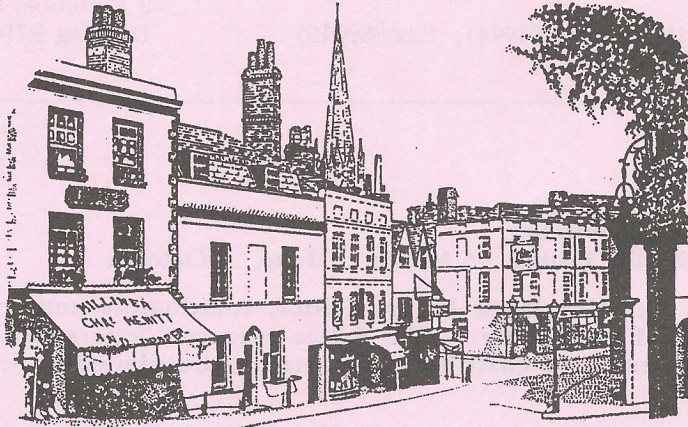


DORKING & DISTRICT PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Established in 1929

NEWSLETTER

No. 29

July 2001

Contents

Editorial	...	1
News, Notes, & Views	...	2
Public Transport	...	4
Heritage Open Days	...	4 & 7
Crisis in the countryside	...	5
Planning Report	...	6
Museum Report	...	7
Letters	...	9

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NEWSLETTER 29: July 2001

Free to members

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EDITORIAL

Under the broad heading *Making Dorking Distinctive*, the Planning Department of Mole Valley District Council has recently organised "workshops" to produce ideas which could "improve, enhance and celebrate" suitable sites around the town. After collecting the views of 53 people from community organisations, schools and businesses, no less than 47 areas of the town or general topics were identified for treatment, each one attracting a list of recommendations. From these, 11* were selected as the most important (including the British Telecom buildings in London Road - had someone been reading our last editorial?).

Even with the filtering process, the outcome of this well-intentioned exercise is a somewhat overwhelming, almost indigestible menu, likely to require a substantial outlay of public and private money and, given the modern British way of processing such things, not achievable in short order.

The project is indeed already slowing down, since the Council's budget for such jollies is said to be "more restricted than was anticipated" when the exercise was mounted. For the present financial year it will be limited to one item: the passageway between the High Street and the parish church. Indeed, if taken one at a time each year, the first eleven *priority* categories seem destined to take up more than a decade.

Popular suggestions for the various sites were tree-planting, planters and hanging baskets, none of these especially "distinctive" but noted as relatively inexpensive. That may be so but what about running costs and the sad necessity of protection from the activities of those who indulge in alcoholic revelry in public places at weekends? (We recall the deliberate damage to young trees along the A24 near the stations a few years ago.) More costly but also popular choices are new public art features such as mosaics, murals and "structures". Here again there will have to be precautions to limit desecration, this time by the graffiti school of modern art. Amongst the more barmy ideas are footbridges, surely not very pleasing to view or likely to attract much use.

The selection of Church Passage for the first project is open to question since it rests on the dubious assumption that in the 21st century the church is the "focal point" of the town, and also because the suggested improvements to its approaches will require substantial financial outlay by commercial premises and the church authorities. Can these be persuaded in less than a year to participate, or in the case of the church, raise the necessary funds for moving trees, erecting "sculptured gates" and installing new churchyard

lighting in competition with more urgent needs such as repairs to the church roof?

The true "focal point" in modern Dorking is, or should be, St Martin's Walk, not the parish church. Most people come into the town by car and use the adjacent car park, reaching the High Street through this development. Improvements to this area must await any Sainsbury proposals. This will presumably include a replacement for the ugly 1950s flats, perhaps in the form of a carefully sited low-rise block built over the northern section of the existing car parking area and designed to preserve the view towards the North Downs from the northern square and the area at present used by the Friday market. There will be a need to be ready with "Making Dorking Distinctive" suggestions for any rejigging of the St Martin's Walk/Car Parks complex, including simple low-cost improvements to the Friday market portion of the car parks. Why not keep this roof area permanently free of cars, redesignating it as recreational space? Furnished with bench seating, new paving and planting, a platform for open air concerts, suitable lighting and security cameras, it would make an ideal place

for all fresco entertainments and meetings. If the market is not moved elsewhere this would be easily convertible for that use on Fridays.

Meanwhile would it be more sensible as a first-year project to tackle some of the many low-cost suggestions for other candidates in the "First Eleven" * which could be realised without too much delay. And what about a winding York Stone path between West Street and the Museum entrance, bordered by cobbles?

ALAN A JACKSON

* The "First Eleven" are:

- Public signage
- Street furniture and street lighting
- Church Passage (High Street - St Martin's Churchyard)
- St Martin's Walk and Mill Lane
- Bank Chambers (former bank building south-east of Pump Corner)
- Pavements
- Stations areas
- Former Public Hall at west end of West Street
- Allen Court off High Street
- British Telecom, London Road
- Town approaches

NOTES, NEWS AND VIEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The move to the hall of the United Reformed Church in West Street proved to be a success; acoustically it offers a great improvement on the wide open spaces of the sports hall at Ashcombe School. The catering facility, having given enticing olfactory indications of its preparations, proved efficient. Business, smartly and quickly despatched, included a warm expression of thanks from a representative of The Curtis Road Residents' Association for the Society's £400 contribution towards their successful opposition to the proposed nightclub on the Curtis Road Industrial Estate.

After the coffee interval, we welcomed Mr Aldsworth. His account of Betchworth Castle, thoroughly pursued and illustrated, stimulated some nostalgic reminiscences of youthful exploration from the audience. Sadly the problem of public access to this ancient site remains unresolved.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS STATUE

Thanks to the generosity of Mr Adrian White of Denbies, Dorking now has two fine statues of famous past residents opposite each other at the Reigate Road approach to the town. Placed close to the main entrance to Dorking Halls, Will Fawke's depiction of Ralph Vaughan Williams in conducting mode is both lively and sympathetic. All visitors to the Halls will now be reminded of his leading role in music-making at this location.

Alas, as some had foreseen, the composer's flimsy baton proved too great a temptation for a young vandal. It was broken off in broad daylight right under the lens of a security camera at mid-morning on 21 May, a bare month after the unveiling. Thankfully it was very quickly replaced, no doubt much to the frustration of the perpetrator, deprived of perverted satisfaction from contemplating or flaunting his destructive handiwork.

LONG TERM CAR PARKING ON ROADS AND PAVEMENTS

A great fuss was recently made about temporary closure of Dene Street for building restoration work, but through-movement of road vehicles between the High Street and the A24 via Dene Street and Chart Lane is permanently rendered hazardous by the long line of parked cars which appears daily and stretches well beyond St Paul's Road towards the A24. Other all-day parking clutters up Heath Hill and the approaches to Cotmandene.

Observation of these unofficial "car parks" will reveal the regular presence of expensive marques not likely to be the property of those dwelling in the adjacent Council flats and small houses. It does not take a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that a very high proportion of these cars almost certainly belong to people working in the town centre who are reluctant to incur all-day car parking charges, preferring instead to inconvenience other drivers (especially those driving large trucks) by occupying usable road width. Or is it that there really is insufficient space for all-day parking in and around Dorking town centre? If so, should consideration be given to imposing a charge to non-residents for parking all day on the public highway?

Elsewhere in the town, where pavements are sufficiently spacious (as at the east end of the High Street - north side - and round into London Road) cars are regularly parked on the pavement, often forcing pedestrians to make a dangerous detour into the roadway. Of course, although neither of these features contributes to making Dorking distinctive or attractive to visitors (see above), we do not expect any action to control them. And as car use is still growing, particularly in Surrey, such indiscriminate road and pavement parking can only get worse.

CHANGES ON OUR COUNCIL

At the Annual General Meeting I spoke of our urgent search for a Planning Officer to replace Ann Champion, who wished to step down. I have much pleasure in reporting to the Society that we have found the person we needed, thanks to Ann's own contacts. He is Hank Etheridge, and his address is: 18 The Orchard, Ashurst Drive, Box Hill. He has recently handed over as Chairman of the Box Hill Neighbourhood Council, so he is already familiar with planning procedures and regulations. We are delighted to welcome him.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The District Council sent out a circular in April on this subject to every household and business in the Mole Valley following recent legislative changes which aim to make local government more accountable, efficient and open, increasing public understanding of its working. There were four options, two involving an elected mayor, one with a cabinet of councillors and a leader, and finally a committee structure similar to the present committee system. The Society's Council decided not to offer a reasoned endorsement of any of the options, merely expressing a preference for the current system as having worked well.

THE UNDERTAKER'S CLOCK

Those in their 70s or older become used to the feeling that each 24 hours passes in what seems like 80 minutes. If you experience this sensation, an antidote is available. Take a stroll along the High Street. On reaching the eastern end, glance up at the undertaker's clock in the former W J Robins's premises. It assures you that all the other clocks in the town are two hours fast. Now retrace your steps to the "Surrey Yeoman" and celebrate

No wonder an old acquaintance who had a high-pressure post at Guildford with Surrey County Council once told your Editor that whenever he felt stressed he would, finding some excuse, take himself off to Dorking for a therapeutic saunter up and down the High Street.

GOUVIEUX

Les Amis de Gouvieux have taken up corporate membership of the Society and we have reciprocated.

For several years Nigel Gibbons and David Leggett, both partners of Patrick Gardner Estate Agents in South Street, Dorking, have been acting jointly as our Membership Development Officers. David has now moved to his firm's Reigate branch and has asked to step down. We are all most grateful to both David and Nigel for having shouldered the task of being Development Officer on top of their onerous business lives, and we thank Nigel very much indeed for agreeing to continue on his own.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

"GO-VIA" GETS GOING

We wrote in our last issue of Go-Via's bid for the franchise of Connex South Central, including the services between London (Victoria), Horsham and the Sussex coast via Dorking. Following fast on this came the news that having made a hefty compensation payment, Go-Via had secured early surrender of the South Central franchise and were to be in control by the end of June this year - an event duly reported in our splendid local newspaper as a transfer of *bus* services!

This is good news for Dorking, as the improvements mentioned in our March issue may now come earlier than expected.

NO VIRGINS FOR DORKING DEEPDENE?

Virgin Trains plan to start a new hourly cross-country service early next year between Manchester/Liverpool and Brighton via Guildford and Redhill following completion of an additional platform at Redhill and improvements to the signalling between Guildford and Redhill. This will be operated by new "Virgin Voyager" diesel multiple unit sets as they enter service in 2002. It is not yet known whether these trains will call at Dorking Deepdene.

HALF FARE ON SURREY BUSES FOR PENSIONERS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The new annual bus permit, which gives bus travel at half the normal fare, costs nothing. It can be obtained in a few minutes at the Pippbrook cashiers' desk on production of the pension book or (if your pension is paid to your bank account) the DHSS retirement pension card, and proof of residence in Surrey (e.g. a Council Tax demand). If you are under pensionable age and have a serious disability, in addition to evidence of residence in Surrey, you will need to produce confirmation of physical disability or a doctor's letter certifying a medical condition that prevents you from driving a car. Pensioners cannot travel at half fare from Mondays to Fridays before 09.00.

CENTRAL RAILWAY FIGHTS ON

The Central Railway scheme for a new trunk route between the Channel Tunnel and Manchester and Liverpool, passing immediately north and north-east of our area alongside the M25 motorway and then through an eight-mile tunnel between North Leatherhead and Merstham, obstinately refuses to lie down and die. A generous loading gauge will enable this new trunk rail link to carry road trucks on flat wagons, eliminating transfer of containers between transport modes, and it is estimated that some two million freight truck journeys would be removed annually from the increasingly congested British road system, giving much relief from delays and air and noise pollution, not least along the M25. Central would also operate as a land bridge, moving Transatlantic maritime freight between Liverpool and mainland Europe, offering substantial transit time savings.

Here is a real challenge for Government; will they be bold enough to recognise the very sound transport planning sense this project makes? The protests of those living along the route have already begun and have received some publicity in our local newspaper, but it is interesting to note that property developers pay little regard to proximity to major transport routes such as motorways and railways. Houses have been built in former railway freight yards (as at Holmwood), and a residential estate is currently almost complete between Ashted and Leatherhead immediately alongside and above the roar and pollution generated by the M25, perhaps worse now than it might be if the Central Railway were built!

BEWARE OF BANK HOLIDAYS

One of the many nonsenses that came with rail privatisation is that at stations like Dorking which are served by more than one operating company, we now have the absurdity on Bank Holidays of one running on a Sunday service and the other on a Saturday service.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 September

See page 7

REPORTS OF SOCIETY OFFICERS AND GROUPS

CRISIS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

The foot-and-mouth epidemic among the nation's cattle, sheep and pigs is not yet over. We have been lucky in Surrey, the plague has passed us by. It may come as a surprise, however, to some of us to learn that Surrey has nevertheless been affected by its economic consequences. In our area the principal sufferers have been those who make a living out of the tourist industry. Business in this sector is not merely down; for three crucial months it came to an almost complete halt. Those who provide bed-and-breakfast accommodation for people visiting the countryside have been complaining loudly. The Government has urged local authorities to re-open footpaths, but most of them have been understandably cautious, and tourists remain discouraged. Would you make a decision to go walking in the countryside if you were not sure when you got there whether you could in fact go walking or not?

Even if organisations have been successful in modifying their programmes to get round the restrictions, they still suffered. The Field Studies Council at Juniper Hall were able to run all their courses, by re-arranging their field trips to areas where there were no cattle, sheep or pigs. It made no difference, people still stayed away. There has been a serious loss of revenue in those three months.

Foot-and-mouth, however, is only one part of the crisis in the countryside, and one thing we can thank it for is the attention it has drawn to the countryside's wider problem. The Common Agricultural Policy of the EU was absurd and had to be changed. But its simple erosion without policies to replace it other than 'market forces' has had catastrophic effect on farmers' incomes. Other factors have exacerbated the trend. Before foot-and-mouth disease there was BSE, a man-made disaster if ever there was. Even without foot-and-mouth there is hardly a sector of the farming business that is at present profitable. Many farmers, particularly on hill farms and in foot-and-mouth areas, will go out of business, and the countryside over the next ten years could well change substantially.

Why should this Society worry? The answer seems obvious: we love our countryside and want to protect it for its beauty. This is the soft, sentimental answer that in fact seeks to prevent all change.

The countryside changes continually and has always done so. In the two hundred years between the mid-sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries the strip system on agriculture in wide open fields was replaced by fields much as we know them today as land was enclosed. This was followed by about 150 years of relative stability during which, however, stands of timber became steadily more mature. The twentieth century saw the removal of thousands of miles of hedgerows, in order to amalgamate small fields into large ones. As agriculture changes, the countryside is bound to change with it - to say nothing with regard to changes in the pattern of land ownership. Already land is often held not for commercial agriculture but as an amenity for householders, as paddocks for their horses or as a *cordon sanitaire* to separate them from their neighbours. Most people who live in the countryside do not gain their livelihood from it at all. We cannot prevent change; our aim must be to ensure that what change occurs does not destroy the beauty of the countryside, and improves rather than destroys it as a home for the marvellous range of wild creatures and plants that inhabit it. To permit that would be to permit not only the destruction of the beauty of the countryside, but of the countryside itself.

The problem is that nowadays the pace of change has speeded up and is far faster than the pace at which wild animals can adapt. At this point this article might rehearse some of the now well-known arguments for the protection of the environment and the fostering of biodiversity. The newly-created Department of Rural Affairs will be a bitter disappointment if it does not proceed to formulate policies to tackle the problems that afflict farming and the other rural industries, as well as the problems of the countryside itself. They are frighteningly complex, but we would like to see initiatives involving the following:

- The reform of grant-aid to encourage rural industries to provide for biodiversity and the landscape.
- Research on renewable energy sources derived from agriculture and arboriculture.
- Investigation of possible schemes of protection and price-support to reflect the hidden environmental costs of transporting foodstuffs over long distances.

Continued on next page

- Schemes to educate the public to become more widely appreciative of the richness of the natural world and of its value and importance to an increasingly urban society.
- Finally, since if everybody who wanted to live in the countryside was able to do so it would cease to be countryside, we would like to see continued confirmation that Green Belt rules are maintained and strengthened.

This wish list contains ideas that would have to be debated not only at governmental level but at EU level as well, so there is a mountain to climb.

NICK OWEN and
MARTIN WEDGWOOD

PLANNING OFFICER

Our main areas for concern currently are:

- (1) **Affordable Housing.** This, of course, must be *affordable*. We feel that some developers are merely providing smaller properties amongst larger developments to comply with government guidelines. Smaller does not necessarily mean affordable. Affordable housing must have easy access to public transport.
- (2) **Telecommunication masts.** These are becoming an increasing problem with the expansion of the mobile phone network. We do not think it is right that our landscape should become blighted to accommodate those who use mobile phones and those who profit by them. We feel there should be much stricter guidelines on their appearance and location and even banned completely in some areas. We are also concerned at the possible radiation effects, so they should not be located in residential/public areas or near schools.

- (3) **Extensions.** The vast majority of planning applications are for extensions. We always consider these applications very carefully, i.e. use of materials, suitable design, etc. We note that pvc is becoming too widely used. We generally consider this material unsuitable, particularly on older buildings.

We noted that the closure of the Zig Zag leading down from Box Hill, during the Foot and Mouth crisis did not cause too much inconvenience to the residents of Box Hill. As the Zig Zag is becoming more and more a 'rat run', we think the National Trust should consider more frequent closures, total closure, or opening only at weekends.

Finally, I am leaving the chairmanship of the committee after having enjoyed the job immensely for several years. I am passing on the baton to the capable Hank Etheridge (see page 3).

ANN CHAMPION

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome the following new members:

Mr & Mrs F Parkhouse, Westcott
Mr & Mrs A L Bartels, Fetcham
Mr S C Etheridge, Box Hill

and we regret to report that the following members have died:

Mrs B H Lucas
Mr G V Hobbs
Mr L F Hall
Mr P Busby

PETER PARKIN

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2001

A reminder about **Heritage Open Days**, an event mentioned in our last Newsletter. There will be many properties for you to visit, guided walks, talks and other events - all for FREE! The weekend this year is **Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 September**.

A free booklet, giving full information about each event, will be available from August from various places in Dorking and the surrounding villages, in particular Dorking Halls, Pippbrook and Downs Solicitors at 156 High Street, Dorking.

Properties that will be participating in the Dorking area include: St Martin's Church, Dorking Caves (stewarded by Society members), Pippbrook House, Friends Meeting House, Downs (156 High Street, Dorking), Marelands Barn, Buckland Windmill and Walleys which is taking part for the first time this year. Booking is required for many of these properties and booking arrangements can be found in the booklet.

There will be many guided walks, one of Dorking Hostelries (with samples?!), "Horrible History?", "Dorking for Kids" and several more. Derek Forss, who has given interesting talks to Society

meetings, will be giving an illustrated talk at The White Horse Hotel on "Spirit of England", and there are lots more talks planned including one on "William Mullins" and one called "Proud Traditions" given by Nigel Barker, who has also spoken to The Society. It is hoped to have a "Pictures and Words" exhibition with poems by Mole Valley Poet Laureate Lorna Dowell and a display of old photographs of the district.

Now we come to the plea for help. The Society will have a stand at Friends Meeting House, Butter Hill, Dorking, and we need people to look after it. We also need some stewards for other events during the weekend. There have been a few volunteers, but several more are needed. We are only looking for an hour or two of your help so you will have plenty of time to visit the events as well. If you can spare any time on either Saturday 8 or Sunday 9 September, please do get in touch with me at 15 Yew Tree Road, Dorking RH4 1ND, telephone 01306-883699, E-mail: Pstomahawk@btinternet.com.

SARAH HAWKES

DORKING & DISTRICT MUSEUM

CELEBRATORY EVENT & OFFICIAL OPENING OF MUSEUM

9 June 2001

Text of remarks made by Museum Chairman to the assembled company

Lord & Lady Hamilton, Chairman of MVDC Maurice Homewood & Mrs Homewood, Sir Martin & Lady Wedgwood, our Society President Brian Carr, Chairman of Leatherhead Museum Peter Tarplee, MVDC Councillor Derek Edge, and all our guests - welcome to Dorking & District Museum. On behalf of our museum committee and the Council of the Dorking & District Preservation Society, our Trustees, thank you for coming to our special celebratory event and official opening of our expanded museum.

I have had apologies from Lord Baker of Dorking, MVDC Leisure Services Manager John Cawdell, Surrey Museums Development Officer Pat Reynolds, Chairman of Surrey Museums Consultative Committee John Butcher, Curator of the Museum of Richmond Simon Lace, and several of our stalwart supporters.

We were delighted to hear that Lord Hamilton would be able to officiate at this event, thereby following in

the footsteps of his father who opened Dorking's first museum building 25 years ago in January 1976. This is the building where we are now and houses our Library and Archive collection; the commemorative plaque is on the door. The first expansion was into part of the building opposite and was opened in 1983, also by Lord Hamilton's father. This allowed for the proper display of the very considerable collection of local artefacts, including Lord Ashcombe's collection of minerals and fossils.

As the years went by, it was clear that this space was inadequate so we jumped at the opportunity to lease from MVDC additional space in the adjoining building. The only trouble was that it looked a bit like a warehouse, having been used by the cleaning company, Lawrence & Tester; it was originally part of the old Dorking Foundry. Very considerable effort went into converting it to museum use and creating the displays. Many of the people involved in this are here today

and we thank all of them for their efforts given willingly and free of charge. There were costs for materials and charges for professional building and electrical work. These costs were met from Miss Ethel Clear's bequest and amounted to just over £10,000. This bequest was made to our parent organisation, Dorking & District Preservation Society, for the benefit of the museum. We are sure Miss Clear would be happy with the outcome.

We also have to thank other benefactors for donations to our museum - The Westmount Trust, the Bantam Trust, the Kathleen Cole bequest, David Crump, John Coombs, The Diageo Foundation, the David Loram memorial collection, Stewart Robertson, Gladys Arlett, together with many other personal donations. Mole Valley District Council and South East Museums Service provided grants for picture restoration, and the Heritage Lottery Fund gave a grant for mineral and fossil conservation.

Alongside our work in expanding and improving our exhibition area, much effort has also gone into re-cataloguing, indexing, cross-referencing and conserving our archives, photographs, maps and other documents. We thank our Curators and helpers for giving so freely of their time and expertise.

The Council for Museums, Archives & Libraries has recently awarded us Registered Museum status in recognition that the Dorking & District Museum has achieved approved standards in museum management, collection care and public services, is a suitable home for collections which are part of our common heritage and is worthy of support from public sources. We are pleased to make our exhibits, library and archives available for public inspection and hope that you will continue to support us and encourage friends to visit.

It is now my pleasure to invite Lord Hamilton to officially open the expanded museum area. This will involve cutting a ribbon at the new entrance and witnessing the fixing of a commemorative plaque. But before I do so I would like to present him with a copy of an old engraving from our archives which is entitled "Betchworth House, seat of the Rt Hon Henry Goulbourn by G F Prosser". As you go into the Museum, we would be grateful if you would sign the commemorative attendance list. Thank you."

Lord Hamilton expressed much appreciation for the gift of the picture of Betchworth House, his residence, and explained that the Rt Hon Henry Goulbourn was his great-great-grandfather and Chancellor of the Exchequer in Peel's government. After cutting the ribbon and declaring the expanded museum open, he said he was proud to be following in his father's footsteps. He and his wife assisted with the fixing of the commemorative brass plaque inside the museum, actions which were captured for posterity by *Dorking Advertiser* photographer, Peter Gardner.

Lord & Lady Hamilton and Cllrs Maurice & Valerie Homewood, along with 30 other guests, signed the attendance record and then toured the museum, expressing much interest in the exhibits and complimenting us on our achievements. They were presented with Dorking Museum 25-year commemorative teaspoons by our Sales Manager, Judith Mindan. These teaspoons are now on sale at the museum.

MARTIN COLE

LIST OF ACQUISITIONS BY DORKING MUSEUM SINCE 5 FEBRUARY 2001

1. Addressograph labelling machine patented by J S Duncan of Sioux City, Indiana, USA, on 24.4.1896, and metal table
2. Miniature sewing machine ("Lead" trademark) made in Japan - probably late Victorian or early Edwardian *
3. Produx mechanical handheld calculator (probably German) - 1935 *
4. Small circular china dish depicting Westcott village and church in the 1870s *
5. Lemonade bottle complete with stopper, W R Butler & Sons, Dorking (found in Ashtead Woods) *
6. 2" Mortar shell case (used!), found on Leith Hill *
7. Two leather cow collars, found at Gosterwood Farm, Forest Green *
8. China mug commemorating wedding of Prince Charles and Diana, 29.7.1981 *
9. China mug commemorating coronation of George V and Mary, 22.6.1911 *
10. Framed sketch of the gate to the Nower in Hampstead Lane by W H Dinnage
11. Framed print of the Pest House in Hampstead Lane
12. Unframed watercolour of North Street (unsigned)

* On display in the Museum

B S HODGES

LETTERS

15 May 2001

Dear Sir

As I think you will agree, there are two sides to any argument. I must presume that Mr John Arnold is an urban resident of Dorking from his letter concerning car use and parking in the town. For younger and near-town residents, with much of what he says I agree but has he ever considered the situation of the people in the villages around Dorking, who like our Dorking shops?

He wants us to use bicycles. Does he really expect the over-eighties - yes, and nineties - who are becoming increasingly frail, to revert to bicycles? I'm sorry, that is just not on. So we should revert to public transport? Oh yes, on weekdays from Newdigate there are three bus journeys into Dorking in the morning but none back, but three from Dorking in the afternoon/evening which do NOT pick up passengers on their return journey. On Saturday there is only one bus - at 7.40 am!! - and on Sunday there is no public transport at all.

Complaint of lack of passengers is largely the bus company's own fault. In 1957, when we moved to this lovely district, the fare into Dorking was 7d (say 3p in metric coinage); now the return fare is about £3.40. Whose income has increased in that proportion in that time? Mine certainly has not, and I am a retired Officer of H M Customs & Excise. It was because of the appalling fares increase that so many less wealthy villagers bought cars so that they could afford to visit our neighbouring towns to shop and to use the leisure and cultural facilities available, for which we have no

public transport - or are we deemed too ignorant to appreciate culture?

By all means discourage the street parking of urban residents but PLEASE consider how practically you can improve things for we humble rustics.

COLIN P HALES
Newdigate

28 May 2001

Dear Sir,

To suggest that it is premature for the Society to express a view on the future of St Martin's Walk, as Neil Maltby does in his letter in the April edition of the Newsletter, overlooks an essential element of effective campaigning. That is to get involved as early as possible, to express well-informed views and to seek to ensure that as, in this case, plans are prepared, due consideration is given to those views.

To wait until the plans are prepared is to reduce the chances of the Society being effective. By then significant capital - in a variety of measures - will have been committed by both the developers and the District Council, and it will be much more difficult for the Society to achieve the outcome it seeks.

In pursuing its laudable objectives, the Society must invariably act early, using whatever information it manages to obtain to support its particular case.

MARTIN RICHARDS
Coldharbour

PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

How many laudable projects in the Dorking area and in Britain generally in the last ten years have been the subject of quite costly feasibility studies, protracted discussion and the staff time of officials, only to grind into the sand? The Victorians achieved, and our French neighbours still achieve, real infrastructure improvements with far greater speed and facility than we seem to be able to attain. We hear too many proposals and plans, and there are too few sounds of metal being cut.

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 Street, RH4 2TU	740 553	Computer consultancy
Ashcombe School, The	Ashcombe Road,	886 312	School
Betchworth Park Golf Club	Reigate Road, RH4 1NZ	882 052	Golf club
Bits & Bobs	20 South Street, RH4 2HL	743 119	Party shop
Bradney & Co	21-37 South Street, RH4 2JZ	743 939	Chartered accountants
Bray Estates	278/280 High Street, RH4 1QT	740 837	Valuers, surveyors & property managers
Broadheath Restorations	Myrtle Cottage, Newdigate, RH5 5AD	631 773	Window frame restorers
Browns of Dorking	2 Allen Court, 56 High Street, RH4 1AY	881 212	Delicatessen and caterinh
Bullimore's	156 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 880	Chartered accountants
Burley, G & Sons	Burley Corner, Moorhurst Lane, S.Holmwood, RH5 4LJ	711 799	Amenity horticulturist
Chandler Cars	Unit 23, Vincet Works, Vinc't Lane, RH4 3HQ	882 001	Services and sales
Clear, S J & Co Ltd	65 High Street, RH4 1AW	883 340	Electrical contractors/shop
Country Gardens Ltd	Reigate Road, RH4 1NP	884 845	Garden centre
Cowan & Wood	114 South Street, RH4 2EZ	886 622	Solicitors
Dorking Desk Shop, The	41 West Street, RH4 1BN	883 327	Antique furniture dealer
Dorking Golf Club	Club House, Deepdene Avenue, RH5 4BX	886 917	Golf club
Dorking School of Motoring	3 Lyons Court, RH4 1AB	880 119	Driving school
Downs	156 High Street, RH4 1BQ	880 110	Solicitors and notaries
Downsman Ltd	Overdene, Paper Mews	877 023	Management Services
Edolph's Farm	Norwood Hill Road, Charlwood, RH6 0EB	01293 862 130	Farm
Ellis Atkins & Co	1 Paper Mews, 330 High Street, RH4 2TU	886 681	Chartered accountants
Friends' Provident Life Office	Pixham End, RH4 1QA	740 123	Life assurance
Garth House Nursing Home	Tower Hill Road, RH4 2AY	880 511	Nursing home
Graham Leather Ltd	64/65 West Street, RH4 1BS	887 727	China and glassware
Grossé UK Ltd	Portland Road, RH4 1JL	743 333	Wholesale costume jewellers
Hammond Concrete Tstg & Servs	PO 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 Ptnrshp	57 West Street, RH4 1BS	742 200	Ind financial advisers
Holly & Laurel	Horsham Road, South Holmwood	885 460	Fireplaces; tea-room
Hulsta Studio	120 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 330	Contemporary furniture specialists
Hurtwood Litho Printers	39a South Street, RH4 2JX	877 557	Printers
International Sports Mktg Ltd	Bales Court, Barrington Road, RH4 3EJ	743 322	Marketing consultants
John Arthur Gallery	Old King's Head Court, 11 High Street, RH4 1AR	741 120	Fine art gallery
King's Court Galleries	54 West Street, RH4 1BS	881 757	Art gallery and framers
Kuoni Travel Ltd	Deepdene Avenue, RH5 4AZ	840 888	Tour operators
Munro, Ian	10 High Street, RH4 1AT	882 270	Men's outfitters
Newspaper Press Fund	Dickens House, 35 Wathen Road, RH4 1JY	887 511	Charity
Newton & Co	173 High Street, RH4 1AD	884 208	Chartered accountants
Omya UK	Curtis Road	886 688	Mineral extraction
Palmer, R G	21 Monks Court, Monks Walk, Reigate, RH2 0SR.	01737 243 980	Public relations
Patrick Gardner & Co	16 South Street, RH4 2HQ	877 775	Estate agents
Priory School, The	West Bank, RH4 3DG	887 337	School
Rose Hill Nursing Home	9 Rose Hill, RH4 2EG	882 622	Nursing home
Schryver, Michael, Antiques	The Granary, 10 North Street, RH4 1DN	881 110	Antiques restoration
Sears, Philip, Designs	18c Horsham Road, RH4 2JD	884 477	Architectural building surveyors
Seymours Garden Centre	Stoke Rd, Stoke D'Abernon, Cobham, KT11 3PU.	01932 862 530	Garden centre
Songhurst, W Ltd	Rayleigh House, Chapel Lane, Westcott, RH4 3PJ	880 411	Builders
Super Specs	62 High Street, RH4 1AY	875 201	Opticians
Temptations	Old Kings Court, High Street, RH4 1AR	885 452	Antique jewellery & silver
Treeline	The Spinney, Horsham Road, Wallis Wood	741 800	Tree care and maintenance
Uden, C J & Co	Pledges Yard, Falkland Road, RH4 3AD	887 551	Drainage consultant and surveyors
Unum Ltd	Milton Court, RH4 3LZ	887 766	Disability insurers
Venhill Engineering	21 Ranmore Road, RH4 1HE	885 111	Specialist cable manufacturers
Viscount Agencies	Concept House, 3 Dene Street, RH4 2DR	880 715	Duty free agency
White, L A (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 Road, Beare Green, RH5 4LQ	713 200	Electrical engineers

OTHER CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIETY:

Amis de Gouvieux, Les	Holmwood Parish Council
Bartholomew Court Residents' Association	Holmwood Women's Institute
Betchworth Parish Council	Horley Parish Council
Box Hill Afternoon Women's Institute	Leigh Residents' Association
Brockham Green Village Society	Mickleham Parish Council
Capel Parish Council	Newdigate Parish Council
Coldharbour Sports and Social Club	Ockley Parish Council
Friends of Box Hill	Westcott Village Association

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Hon Secretary: Mr E White, 16 Deepdene Drive, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 4AH. Tel. 01306-882037

NEWSLETTER No. 29

Surrey Rivers

*They are quiet, unassuming, these Surrey rivers -
The Pool, the Wandle, the Beverley.
Once beyond the thrust of the North Downs
They become terrible wanderers, like
The Father who owns them - who they own - running in no straight line,
Filled with his character and ways -
The Hogsmill, the Mole, the Ember. . .*

*They make their way out of indeterminate beginnings
Over flat fields, through copses, woods,
The kind of soil which coaxes them on land
Encourages their indecision -
The Mole, Tillingbourne and Wey -
Running alongside roads, through conduits
The spaces between buildings, there
Gone wretched, thought never to emerge
Then found in quite another guise
And place, when found at all -
The Wey, the Windle, the Bourne. . .*

*That they should ever be the waters of a great estuary
Wider than fields, meet for a sea.*

*Threads teased out from the fabric of a childhood
Returned to again and again -
Wading in an unnamed stream
or lying on its bank,
Holding high an ox-eye daisy, its rays
Imposed upon those shooting from the sun
Beyond Isis, higher than her source, all her sons and daughters
Above the Pool, the Wandle, Beverley,
Hogsmill, Ember and Mole, Wey, Tillingbourne, Windle,
The Bourne. . . the Bourne. . .*

ROY BATT