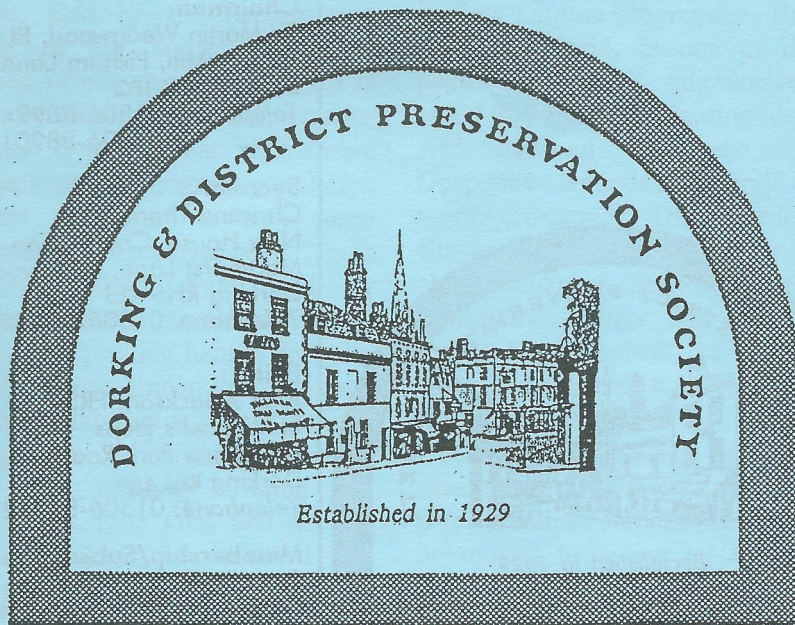


NEWSLETTER

of the Dorking & District Preservation Society

No. 39

Autumn 2004



Registered Charity 246806

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of the Dorking & District Preservation Society

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editorial

It might seem that Dorking and its surroundings do not suffer from any lack of trees. Indeed in some parts of the district, voices are occasionally heard saying there are too many and that distant views have been blocked out by over-zealous planting, particularly of ugly dark green cupressus, often started as hedging then left to grow far too high.

We now learn that it takes twelve mature trees to absorb the amount of carbon dioxide emissions that we each produce every year through the exhausts of our cars and those of the road trucks and vans that serve our daily needs for food and services, also by the heating and lighting of our homes, even the operation of our computers. This is surely enough to make us all pause for thought. It seems that maintaining and supplementing our tree population (but not cupressus) is now more important than it has ever been. Trees can help counter water and air pollution, absorb greenhouse gases, save energy, provide habitat for wild life and improve human health. When planning permission is sought for new developments on a more intensive scale, using existing building and garden plots, it is vital that as few trees as possible be uprooted and planting be made in replacement when

trees are felled to make room for the new structures.

The Royal Society of Arts is currently campaigning to get the whole nation planting trees and is urging individuals, schools, community groups and businesses to consider how much CO₂ they are pumping into the atmosphere, planting accordingly. A visit to its website <www.RSAtrees.org> will provide full information about suitable trees or planting schemes and other relevant data.

Action on tree planting is a very suitable and relevant subject for the Dorking & District Preservation Society's future programme. Between 1932 and 1934, in one of its first positive initiatives, this Society provided 200 trees for planting along the A25 between what is now the Deepdene Roundabout and Betchworth crossroads. The varieties then chosen were weeping silver limes, alders, Japanese cherries, scarlet oaks, Lombardy poplars and red-twigged limes. Many (most?) of these have since disappeared. It is high time for the gaps to be filled.

Is there anyone amongst our membership, perhaps newly-retired from full-time employment, who will be moved to action by visiting the RSA website and will then consider

taking this or some alternative tree-planting project forward after consulting with this Society and the local authorities? A noble and worthwhile task awaits, one capable of enthusing

others and which, after its completion, will generate for its initiators a pleasant and lasting satisfaction in retrospect.

Alan A Jackson

chairman's report

Our October meeting was very well attended and I would like to thank all those of our members who made a special point of being there. To those who were not able to come, I can report that the first part of the proceedings, the Extraordinary General Meeting, lasted for ten minutes at the outside and that members present voted unanimously for both Resolutions. A major milestone is now passed on our road to becoming a company limited by guarantee. Let us now see if the Charity Commission will give us a smooth passage and our negotiations with Mole Valley District Council for the purchase of the freehold of the site of our Museum come to a successful conclusion. On the latter, I can only report at present that discussions are still continuing.

The next part of the meeting was the announcement of the results of this year's Best Development

Competition and the presentation of the awards. Sarah Hawkes has written fully on this event on page 15, but I would like here to thank Peter and Sarah for the considerable amount of work that they both put into what has turned out to be one of the most successful competitions in recent years, and congratulate them on the beautiful slide presentation that accompanied the announcement of the results.

After a break for coffee, we welcomed Gail Sperrin and Caroline Cation, who made a most professional presentation on the organisation and activities of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It was, without doubt, one of the best illustrated talks we have enjoyed at our meetings in recent years. I have written to them, expressing our warmest thanks.

Martin Wedgwood

news&views

Retail needs and balance

We constantly hear the opinion voiced that Dorking now has enough, if not too many cafés, tea shops and restaurants. As well as an attraction for visitors, this plenitude of gastronomic resorts is helpful for the many who live alone or with a partner, both working all day and not having the energy or skill to cook for themselves in the evenings. It also makes life easier for people such as the man we heard of recently who said the main thing that held his marriage together was that he and his wife had a candle-lit dinner at a restaurant every week, he on Mondays, his wife on Fridays.

Perhaps we do not need any more commercial catering but when empty shops become available, it is sometimes the case that those taking them depart before very long, having found trade disappointing because their assumptions on the likely demand for their speciality have been over-optimistic or poorly researched. Yet it also seems possible that there are items or services that no Dorking shop can currently supply or provide in sufficient variety.

We often encounter school-children carrying out surveys of shops and shopping in the High Street, South Street and West Street. Perhaps

such educational exercises are capable of being adapted to establish and then make public what shoppers in Dorking would really like to see offered by any new retailers arriving in future.

Improving the appearance of our major roads

Whilst a commendable and daily effort is made by the District Council to keep the town centre of Dorking tidy and clear of litter, this civic care is not matched even once or twice weekly by the County Council's Highways Authority along the "A" Class roads around the town. Occasionally men are seen picking up litter from the verges of major roads but in the long periods between such activity, drink cans, food wrappings and other rubbish are daily thrown from cars or discarded by untidy pedestrians. Parts of cars such as exhaust fittings and wheel discs, lie long in the roadway or are thoughtfully removed by kind passers-by for display on the verges. The fast-moving nature of passing traffic removes most of the rubbish on to the verges where, except in winter, it stays to be churned up for more widespread distribution when the grass cutters arrive.

Also damaging the appearance

of major roads is a growing tendency to erect along railings or on other roadside structures temporary notices about Antiques and Craft Fairs, Farmers' Markets, Flower Shows, new housing developments etc. These are put up with an enthusiasm that is not always matched by prompt removal after they have ceased to be relevant.

Permanent roadside finger posts (such as those pointing towards the Magistrates' Courts etc. on the roadside at Dorking Deepdene station) are mischievously turned in other directions by *personae non gratae*. They are then left for long periods to mislead strangers.

These are not matters requiring heavy expenditure, deep thought or tortuous negotiation but simply a question of our elected County councillors requesting that officials consider how they might be remedied, or existing procedures improved. A small extra cost may then be identified as the justification for inaction but we are confident our elected councillors will already have some ideas about matching economies elsewhere.

Night aircraft noise

Invited to respond to a Government review of night flying restrictions, our colleagues in the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign have suggested a levy be imposed on all night flights at that airport, graduated

according to the level of noise nuisance generated.

For those that live under or near Gatwick flight paths, the row created by aircraft is greater at night, especially in rural areas but also around towns (where background road noise quietens down). There seems not to be much hope that aircraft can be made any quieter, since engineers are running out of ways to lower the noise level without adding weight and lowering fuel efficiency.

Until now, there has been a curious imbalance of night aircraft noise pollution between Heathrow and Gatwick traffics, with the former restricted to an average of 16 arrivals between 23.30 and 06.00 compared with Gatwick's 30, a situation about to change since Heathrow's night total appears likely to rise steeply next autumn after the Government's review.

In beauty and peace there lurks danger

A recent stroll in Dorking Cemetery, surely one of the most beautifully-situated burial grounds in all Britain, revealed that some of the areas containing older graves have been enclosed with chestnut palings, rendering close inspection difficult if not impossible. Binoculars now seem advisable if any visitors wish to read the inscriptions. It seems that the current obsession with Health and

Safety has caused officials to bully those responsible for maintaining burial grounds to protect the public from the perceived danger of grave-stones falling upon them without warning, possibly claiming them as customers for any still vacant plots.

Those who have never explored this pleasing and peaceful feature of the town's amenities, established with dignified architecture and landscaping by our Victorian predecessors, should not however be deterred from what can be a relaxing and inspiring hour's exploration.

This lovely spot is now managed by someone rejoicing in the title 'Head of Leisure' (not precisely appropriate here?) who declares it 'a facility available for all residents of Mole Valley'. He or she kindly offers an enquiry card at the entrance gate, asking if we are happy with the facilities, the service provided and whether there are any improvements we might wish to suggest. You may consider you should fill one in before it is too late.

Yes – but how is it to be done?

A thorough ten-year study by University College London has recently stated what we have long suspected and indeed heard confirmed by shopkeepers in such places as Dorchester and Andover – *reducing car and truck traffic levels in town centres can*

improve local retail turnover. Fine, but how is traffic reduction to be achieved in Dorking, where opportunities for diverting it are non-existent or at best minimal without major and unacceptable rebuilding?

Meanwhile traffic through our town centre continues to grow year by year and daytime parking of delivery vehicles and cars narrows still further those parts of the street system which remain unchanged from the days of modest usage by horse carts and carriages, such as West Street and the eastern end of the High Street. What seems to be lacking is an analysis of the day-long heavy flow of trucks and cars. Just how much of it is *simply passing through the town*, not contributing in any way to its retail prosperity? If any information on this aspect has in fact been gathered in recent years by Surrey Highways, we cannot recall that it has ever been published.

What is clear is that if a way could be found of excluding noisy, dangerous and polluting through road traffic from even the upper section of West Street for at least part of the day, many more visitors to Dorking would be attracted into that retail area than is the case at present. At the moment, penetration on foot is limited to local people with definite objectives in mind and only the most determined minority of strangers. We have seen other obvious visitors take one look at

the maelstrom* and turn back along the High Street or up the somewhat more inviting and less intimidating South Street. The narrow and dangerous pavements of West Street do little to encourage pleasurable exploration or leisurely window gazing.

In his article below, the Dorking Town Manager hints (on page 8) that this problem is at long last receiving some attention, giving some hope that it might be overcome or at least reduced before much longer.

* A strong tidal current in a restricted Channel located in the Lofoten Islands.

Really?

It was disappointing to read in *The Dorking Advertiser* (21 October) that Councillor B Tatham (Con.) considers that 'Dorking is rather short of Residents' Associations and other groups', a remark made in the context of a proposed survey on 'developing Dorking's role as a market town'. Even if we modestly set aside our own existence and activities over the past 75 years, this seems a puzzling statement, given the number of other groups, dutifully listed in an annual MVDC publication.

town manager's report

The summer, although generally a quiet period for many shops, is a busy time for traders moving into the town as ideally they want to be up and trading by October, allowing plenty of time for the Christmas build-up. For Christmas 2004 we welcome quite a few new shops to the town: *Bakehouse* (fashion shop) in West Street; *Steamer Trading* (award-winning kitchenware retailer) on the high pavement, along with *Absolute Temptation* (luxury lingerie shop); *Carphone Warehouse* (mobile phone shop); *BET* (state-of-the-art betting shop); *DAPA* (music and dance shop);

Village Ceramics (bathroom shop); and *The Design Solution* (contemporary furniture shop). These have all joined Dorking's vibrant town centre.

The restaurant trade has also been busy with many new faces joining the town during 2004: *Seven* in Old London Road; *Sang Thai* in High Street; *Brasserie* in Junction Road; and *Prezzo* opened at the end of 2003 in the old NatWest building. Italian café/restaurant *Viva* is scheduled to open in West Street in late November. These new additions plus the huge variety of existing eating establishments certainly makes

Dorking a gastronomic destination.

It is interesting to note that out of the five finalists in the annual Commercial Premises Awards, three appear above: *Prezzo* and *Seven* restaurants and *Village Ceramics* bathroom shop. We need to thank our local planners for encouraging new shops to push the envelope when considering shop-front design and how it will integrate with our local environment. I expect that some of

the new businesses that opened after the 2004 judging deadline will be potential finalists in the 2005 competition. Nominations please to Rod Shaw at Mole Valley planning (01306-879247).

I would like to draw the attention of the DDPS membership to some far-reaching plans being discussed for our most prized of streets, West Street. The antiques trade, although much exposed in



West Street (and traffic!) at Christmas time 2003
Photo: John Miller

popular TV bargain hunt programmes, is experiencing tough times. Since the New York terrorist attack and the troubles in Iraq, deep-pocketed Americans are not buying as much. TV home makeover shows showing minimalist contemporary furniture have added further woes, and the worry over pensions has added another nail in the coffin. However, against all these external factors, the ever-buoyant West Street Association, headed by the Clock Dealer and humorous newspaper columnist Pat Thomas, have been fighting back with a vengeance.

West Street fights back

This has started with many shops repainting their frontages and having a good clear-out and clean-up. The popular November West Street Festival has been completely revamped with a new team building on the successful *Art & Antiques in the Evening* summer event. The two-day festival on 20 and 21 November promises to be a great showcase of what West Street offers. Looking further forward, the controversial decision to support a restaurant application in mid-street did raise some eyebrows. However, having a good 'footflow' generator such as Italian café/restaurant *Viva* in the

centre of the Street makes good business sense for all. This, with the refurbishment of the *Old House at Home* public house, significantly improves and widens West Street's eating and drinking offer – more reasons to have a mooch down the Street.

New retailers are being encouraged into the Street; contemporary furniture shop *The Design Solution* compliments the antique furniture perfectly. The new fashion shop *Bakehouse* adds another reason for the ladies to enjoy the Street, especially with *Bonita shoes* directly opposite. This new mix of shops and eateries hangs well on to the core antiques trade the street is known for. As I write this, I hear the encouraging news that the long-vacant Grade II *V&E centre* has been let to an antiques dealer. This will hopefully be the start of a new generation of antiques shops trading together with others in this historic Street.

narrow pavements are dangerous

The last and probably the most difficult and controversial part of the equation is West Street's actual streetscape. Anyone who has walked down the Street and found themselves within inches of a juggernaut

whizzing through or seen a mother trying to negotiate a buggy on the narrow pavements, has experienced first-hand the key problem of the Street – its accessibility and perceived safety. To this end, members of the West Street Association have been working closely with Surrey Highways to come up with a vision of how the Street could be re-engineered to make it more pedestrian-friendly and allow the businesses to continue to operate successfully. First drafts of a plan have been produced and are progressing through the tortuous and

regrettably risky financial bidding process. If successful, then a working plan will be produced for public consultation, and maybe within a couple of years West Street will be re-engineered with a scheme of which most people will approve. Watch this space for updates.

If you have any comments or suggestions about the overall management of Dorking, please contact me on 01306-655017 or e-mail me at <town.manager@visitdorking.com>.

Simon Matthews
Town Manager

planning committee report

Catch-up time

In the summer issue, we reported on a wide range of activities we had been engaged upon since the Spring. Most of the Applications in our report have now been resolved – with or without our involvement.

The **Burton development** on the High Street was approved, and building should be taking place any time now. Our suggestion about making the rear elevation more interesting was taken on board, and we understand that it will now reflect the 1930s Art Deco look of the

retained frontage on the High Street.

The next Application we mentioned was a proposal to put a Mansard roof on and make **additions to an office building in South Street**. This was refused, and the owners have gone to Appeal.

The Application to convert **two listed buildings in West Street** into a coffee shop cum restaurant has been approved.

If you remember, we went into a great amount of detail about a proposed development in **Longfield Road**. Surrey County Council wanted

this scheme to be linked to the provision of 'Affordable Homes' on the Starhurst school site but left their intentions a tad late so that the Application had to be refused on technical grounds. Cala Homes, the developer, immediately went to Appeal with a very good case for the decision to be reversed. After much discussion between them and the LPA, the Appeal was subsequently withdrawn, and a new Application combining the Starhurst School development is imminent.

The proposed development at the rear of W H Smith and Halfords in the High Street has been approved and the Section 106 (explained in the last Newsletter) is awaited by the LPA. There is, however, a small query about refuse collection to be settled.

The LPA awaited our written opinion and suggestions about proposed alterations and extensions at Mickleham Downs House before approving the scheme. All our recommendations were incorporated into the Condition of Approval.

There has been a great deal of planning activity in the Horsham Road area east of South Street in the past two months. We first looked at an Application to demolish an old bungalow and outlying garage at Furze Hollow, Tower Hill. The proposal was to build a 'U'-shaped complex of 12 apartments, with one

side of the 'U' devoted to a rather elegant carport. Sounds pretty straightforward, doesn't it? However, when we saw the elevation drawings, we were lost for words. The exterior design incorporated about 500 years of English architectural styling from Tudor, through Jacobean to Victorian. The explanatory notes accompanying the drawings said that the design was meant to blend with that of the adjacent Garth House (itself a multi-style building) at the entrance to Tower Hill. We wrote a letter suggesting various elements be 'toned down' or redesigned, especially what we called a 'Welsh chapel window' over the main entrance. The developer came back with redesigned elevations incorporating our suggestions but, in the meanwhile, the LPA decided that the overall size of the scheme was too large and it was subsequently refused. It has now gone to Appeal.

17 apartments on South Street/Vincent Lane corner?

We also looked at a proposed development of 17 apartments on the corner of South Street and Vincent Lane. After visiting and photographing the street scene around the site, we wrote a letter making various suggestions about external finishes but

objecting to the height of the buildings. We were sent revised drawings and a letter from the developer which addressed most of our points. The LPA are still considering this proposal which may have to be scaled down and some buildings relocated on the site. More about this in the next Newsletter.

Yet another major development proposed in the area was a large Apartment block on the site of the Edwardian nurses' home (*The Nook*) in the grounds of Dorking Hospital, fronting on Horsham Road. Nine of the apartments were allocated for nursing staff. Both Lady Wedgwood and myself visited the site two or three times. We were also contacted by residents in Cliftonville worried about the impact of a large roofscape on their properties. In addition, we were concerned about the closeness of the proposed building to the classical, colonnaded, listed building in the hospital grounds currently being used as a children's nursery but once part of the Victorian Workhouse. In our letter to the LPA, we said that the proposed design was far too big, too high and of mundane design. We were also not happy with the proposed access to the project. The Application has been refused.

We looked at an Application for the renewal of an approved small development at the rear of 165/176 High Street. Although we had made

no comment about the original Application, we were impressed enough this time by the excellence of the design to write saying so.

Other parts of our area

A proposed extension at listed Logmore Farmhouse, Westcott, earned our approval for its elegant design and intelligent use of materials, and we wrote saying so. It has been approved.

We discussed an Application to rebuild the old Windmill at Elmer's Farm, Ockley, on its original base and external specifications. The interior top floors will be for living accommodation with some extra properly-scaled windows. We liked the idea of reconstructing this once-famous landmark in the village and wrote recommending its approval. The applicant has since telephoned me thanking the committee for its recommendation. We await the LPA's decision.

As a rule, unless a telecommunications aerial is being proposed to be erected in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, we make no comment. Nowadays, most aerials for mobile phones are hidden unobtrusively within church steeples, petrol station forecourt signage and so on. From time to time, however, we do receive complaints from residents in rural areas about intrusive masts. We then check with the Case Officer and,

if we feel the complaint is justified, do something about it. Recently, I was contacted by a resident living in such an area who told me that a 'flagpole' aerial mast was proposed to be erected on the roof of a stable close to where he lived. Now, the roof ridge of the stable is, presumably, about 10 or 12ft. from the ground, and the flagpole's 'gubbins' at the top of the mast, 8ft 3in. on top of that, well off the ground. Although there is a 'field' around the transmitted signal, it certainly doesn't – as far as we know – come anywhere near the ground beneath it to be a danger to health. Anyway, I rang the Case Officer, who told me that the telephone company had been given a PPG8 Certificate, which means that health issues pertaining to the Application cannot be taken into account in the Planning procedure.

About a year ago, we opposed an Application to build a badly designed Apartment block at the old Unigate Diaries site, Westcott. It was refused. A new Application for a rather nicely designed, 'L'-shaped building has been submitted. Most importantly, all apartments will be 'Affordable'. We have written suggesting various improvements to the scheme and to the grass verges on the sidewalk in front of the site but have recommended its approval.

An Application to redesign the interior and provide a wheelchair

ramp at the Burford Bridge Hotel looked straightforward until we noticed the designs for the graphics on a canopy over the front entrance and on the wall alongside. The wording on these showed a large *McDonalds* and, underneath in smaller lettering, *Burford Bridge Hotel*. In our letter to the LPA, we raised this fact and asked if this meant, at some time in the near future, the Burford Bridge Hotel is to become *The Box Hill McDonalds*. I must admit to a small amount of 'tongue in cheek' in asking this, but we thought it a serious point. We could have left it there but a wry comment from one of the Committee prompted the penultimate paragraph to our letter: *Because of McDonalds having the same name as its international namesake, people may assume that the Box Hill McDonalds is an up-market name for this famous Company. They might also think they could dine on Steak haché dans une brioche, avec fromage et pommes de terre frites français in the hotel dining room*. Who says this job isn't fun?

Hank Etheridge
Chairman of the Planning Committee

The new planning

Having just completed the marathon process of submitting evidence to the Surrey Structure Plan, which went public early in 2003, it has come as a shock to be now embarking on the planning process to produce two new

plans governing the extraction of sand and gravel and the management and processing of waste. Both these plans are the first of the new form of plan now being introduced under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004. Martin Wedgwood explained the ramifications in the April Newsletter. The new Framework Plans replace the old Local Plans. In the case of mineral extraction and waste, the County Council retains the power to produce these plans which are county-wide. Although the government intention was announced as speeding up the planning process and securing better community engagement, the omens with regard to the new plans are not good on both counts.

Minerals extraction: 400 people attend meeting

The proposed Framework Plan for the extraction of Minerals has kicked off with two possible sites within which extraction of silica and soft sand could be considered in Buckland and Betchworth. I went to the public meeting on the proposals held in the Ashcombe School, Dorking on 19 October 2004. Clearly the organisers were overwhelmed by the sheer number of people who turned up for the meeting. Some 400

crowded into a small room, and the Chairman, Councillor David Gollin, had to re-convene the meeting in the main school hall. Unsurprisingly, the mood of the meeting was unconstructive from the start. It was obvious that many people in Buckland and Betchworth had already rejected any possibility that the extraction of sand could be carried out without damage being caused to their locality and to the people who lived there.

As an exercise in engaging the community, the County Council had without any doubt set back a constructive approach and made it more difficult to present a balanced case. Even though the purpose of the public meetings had only been to elicit information on potential zones of working sand, following a preliminary – not final – planning assessment, the public only acted to close down any potential there was to utilise this resource. This experience serves to show that engaging the community must be very carefully arranged. There is not much to be gained by calling public meetings without any firm focus. In the case of mineral deposits, these are already in place and represent an economic resource which it is government policy to exploit. The detail of the location and the problems contributing to issues that are likely to beset exploitation can be determined without calling on the views of the public before knowing what a firm set

of proposals will entail.

The industry is waiting in the wings to make an application to work sand and gravel resources, and this can be done at any time. Why does SCC act as though the supply-side of the equation does not exist? A considerable body of knowledge and expertise can be drawn on to allay genuine community fears. If community fears are expressed, these can be drawn on to impose safeguards in the form of legal conditions that can stipulate phasing, the detailed working of the resource and importantly the

Importance of protection and restoration of landscape

protection and restoration of the landscape. The important point is to formulate this information to complete the picture of what is demanded by Governmental edict, the real safeguards that must be realised to prevent harm to a community, and how an operator will carry out the task of opening and recovering identified mineral reserves before the proposals are put before the public.

If the same process is adopted for the Waste plan, there is bound to be a great deal of controversy about operational detail and the selection of sites thought necessary for the location of waste processing facilities.

Surrey County Council has been preparing Issue Papers on the constituents of managing waste disposal across the county for some time, and these will shortly be delivered. In

SCC is preparing papers on waste disposal management

addition to sites for waste disposal, the Best Environmental Policy Options, Sustainability and the broad Environmental Assessment of what will need to be provided will be covered. It is to be hoped that by engaging with the detail in participant workshops together with interested industry representatives, as well as the public, this will help to highlight the major issues and encourage a reasoned form of participation. DDPS has been invited to the next workshop, and we will insist that – before going public – the background and issues are fully explored to encourage and facilitate a reasoned and cogent public response.

Derek Rowbotham
Vice chairman Planning & Policy DDPS

Best Development Competition

The awards for this year's competition were presented by Baroness Thomas, our President, at the Society's Autumn Meeting. Members heard that there had been 20 entries this year – a record. All had been of a good standard and the judges, who were Valerie Homewood and John Northcott (Mole Valley Councillors), Clive Smith (Head of Planning at Mole Valley DC), Beryl Higgins and Peter Mills (DDPS), and Greta Morley (*Dorking Advertiser*), were spoilt for choice. Sadly, time at the meeting did not permit each entry to be mentioned, and only slides of the winners and commended developments were shown.

The winner of the large category (for buildings larger in size than a four-bedroomed house) was *Millfields* at Charlwood, built on the site of the former Gatwick Zoo. This development of 17 dwellings, including affordable housing, had been designed by Michael Phillips of MBP Partnership, for Charles Church. The judges were impressed by the diversity of design and the care which had been taken to site garages to the rear of the buildings so as not to interfere with the village streetscape. Mr Phillips attended the meeting to receive the cup.

The winner of the small

category was the *Prezzo Restaurant* in High Street, Dorking (the extension to the front of the old NatWest Bank), designed by Carrington Stevens Moore. The judges felt that this was a most innovative design and, although modern, blended in well with the surrounding buildings. The lift for wheelchair access had been incorporated into the design without upsetting the overall appearance of the extension.

The renovation work at *Warren Farm Barn* in Mickleham, which belongs to the National Trust, designed by Philip Sears Architectural and Building Surveyor, of Dorking was Highly Commended. High quality materials had been used and the style complimented the existing structure – it is hard to tell where the renovation work begins.

In view of the large number of entries, the judges commended a further five developments:

- *Pasturewood Farm Barn* at Holmbury St Mary, designed by Jonathan Barlow Partnership for Latchmere Properties. The barn was originally designed by Lutyens and included a lantern, a feature which has been carried through to the new design.
- *Vincent Studios* in Vincent Road, Dorking, designed by Brewer Jewell Partnership, architects of Dorking for Colin Marsh. This development had caused the most difference of opinion amongst the

judges, one in particular feeling that the design was too modern for this Victorian backwater of central Dorking.

- Garage at *Chadhurst Lodge* in Coldharbour Lane, entered for the competition by the owner Peter Hines and built by E & B Engineering Services of Horley. The garage compliments the existing building very well, and the attention to detail – for instance the pattern of the brickwork reflecting the pattern on the Lodge itself – particularly impressed the judges.
- *Darroch* in Harrow Road West, Dorking built by Acorn Building Contractors to a design by Philip Parkinson. This was another extension that particularly complimented the original building.

Naming the place: placing the name

Once upon a time, a sturdy Anglo-Saxon chieftain led his people into a valley set between lush, wooded hills and stream-crossed meadows and decided to settle. His name was Deorc, and his 'people' – members of his family, his warband with their wives and children, plus a few British slaves – started to erect the Hall, the

- *St Joseph's Catholic Primary School*, Vincent Lane, Dorking, designed by Mr Jarosz of William Crabtree Jarosz Architects. The first floor extension balances the building beautifully – the overall impression can best be admired from Wickes car-park.

The organisers would like to record their thanks, firstly to DDPS, Mole Valley District Council and the *Dorking Advertiser* for their sponsorship and support for this competition which is now in its 15th year, and secondly to the judges who gave much of their precious time to viewing all of the entries and meeting to select the winners.

Sarah Hawkes

essential main building in any Saxon settlement. Other buildings, including a Mill, soon sprang up. When the community grew to a reasonable size, it was known as *Deorcingas*, the front part being the name of the leader and *ingas* 'the people of'. At the time of Domesday, this had become *Dorchingas*, reflecting its Old English pronunciation. Now, we know it as Dorking.

The above was the beginning of

an article I wrote around four years ago for a local magazine, and which was subsequently reprinted in another. Since that time, I have continued with my research into settlements, waterways and topographical features that gave rise to the names of towns and villages in our area.

These early warrior/farmers had a keen eye for the features of the places and surroundings where they settled. Just as the Eskimos have many words for snow, so did Anglo-Saxons for fields, woods, hills, valleys, streams and other waterways. These words were used on their own or affixed to personal names with an addition of 'farm' (*tun*); 'settlement' (*ham* or *wick*); 'ford'; 'brook' (*baece*, *bruk*, *lacu*, *laece*, *rithig* etc); 'wood' (*holt*, *wold*, *hyrst*, *leah*, *withig* etc) and so on. Two examples of this can be found locally in 'Epsom' derived from *Ebbesham* (Ebbe's village). The latter name was still in existence in the late 18th century. Another local name has three features in its make-up: *Woldingham* (the settlement (*ham*), of the people (*ingas*), of the forest (*wold*)).

However, not all of the towns in our neck of the woods have Anglo-Saxon names. One exception is 'Leatherhead'. Until 1980, it was thought that the name was from the Old English, 'The ford over which people can ride'. This was because the ninth century name for the place

was *Leodridan*. A scholar from the English Place Name Society, after years of research, established without doubt that Leatherhead derives from the British words meaning 'Grey ford'.

The next town along the A25 going east is Reigate. Its name comes from Anglo-Saxon *Raege* (doe) and *Geat* (gate or gap). In other words, it was a settlement either at the entrance to a deer park, or a gap in the boundary of a deer park. The next town along, however, didn't come into being until 1301. It was called *Redehelde* meaning 'Red slope' rather than *Redhyll* meaning 'Red hill'. The slope in question was most probably what is now Redstone Hill. The *Red* bit was taken from the colour of the soil in that area.

The County seat, Guildford, has nothing whatsoever to do with *Guilds*. Its original name was *Gyldeford* meaning 'Golden ford', so-called from the golden sand at the place where the Pilgrim's Way crossed the Wey (British name). Just to the south of this ford was *Shallowford*, now Shalford.

Other local names I investigated were 'Cobham' (Cobbe's village); 'Felbridge' (bridge on open land); 'Charlwood' (*Churl's wood*) (woodland of the peasants); 'Buckland' (*Bucland* meaning *Bookland*, land given by written charter); 'Headley' (clearing on a Heath); 'Ewhurst'

(Yew tree, wooded hill) and 'Oxted' (Oak tree place – nothing to do with oxen but using the Anglo Saxon word for Oak (*ac*) combined with 'Stead' (*Stede* = place).

I have been studying Anglo-Saxon history for over thirty years, and it is still fascinating to me, after all that time, that we can map the spread of the English over what was once a Romano/British landscape by understanding the etymology of place

names. Because most of the 'Landscape' place names are derived from the earliest settlers, and the personal name places slightly later, we can discover a timeline for the Anglicization of Britain and the movement westward of the British (*Wielisc*, the Welsh, meaning 'foreigner/slave') who ended up mainly in the western edges of the island.

Hank Etheridge

Heritage Open Days

These took place on 11 and 12 September. Peter Tarplee, a member of the organising committee and also a stalwart of Leatherhead Museum, gave the opening talk at Fetcham Park House. He got the proceedings off to a very good start with his talk entitled 'Industrial Heritage in Mole Valley'. This was well received and it was standing room only. The Chairman of MVDC, Mrs Bridget Lewis, attended and made a short speech.

Mindful of the problems with disabled access in 2003, we took particular care in preparing the brochure this year. I wrote to Mr and Mrs Bignell (the people who complained), sending them an advance copy of the brochure and inviting them to attend

the opening event at Fetcham Park House. They accepted the invitation to the opening event but did not actually turn up on the night. Another wheelchair user did and was very complimentary about all the arrangements, which was encouraging.

Generally it is felt that fewer people attended the event than last year; we will not know for certain until all the returns are in. However, those that did attend seemed very interested. Simon Matthews arranged a survey, the results of which he may have by the time of the meeting. Many people who attended came from outside Mole Valley, so perhaps we have saturated the local market and need to think about distributing the brochures over a wider area. Many people had obtained details of events

from the website. We will look for some fresh ideas for 2005 (assuming I can persuade the organising committee to run an event in 2005).

As ever, my particular thanks to Rod Shaw of Mole Valley Council

who has done the lion's share of the work. He was helped by Sandra Grant (Simon Matthew's assistant) who did a lot of work on the brochure. Also I am very grateful to Simon Matthews for his help and enthusiasm.

Sarah Hawkes

dorking museum report

Despite two years of negotiation (latterly using a professional property negotiator), I have to report the melancholy fact that up to the time of writing this, we have been unable to make any progress on acquiring a permanent home for the Museum. What is particularly galling to me is that many Councillors are unaware of our predicament, that opportunities to acquire important new material are being wasted as we run out of room and that we are unable to fulfil our role as an educational tool for local schools to the extent we might.

We are still persisting with our loan boxes which we take to and collect from schools, our guided visits for local infant and primary classes, Brownies and Guides, and U3A groups, and our exhibitions for the general public (the current one is *Our Farming Past* and next year we plan a 60th Anniversary exhibition on

Dorking in Wartime) but we lack the facilities to supplement the study of history for GCSE and A-Level students – a long-cherished aim which I discussed with Councillor Maurice Homewood some years ago. We can ask 22 seven to eight year old visitors to sit on the floor for an introductory talk as I did recently but can hardly expect their 17-18 year old equivalents to do likewise.

I am sure that most people in Dorking would want the Museum which has served them for nearly 60 years to be suitably housed, and the exhibits they have generously donated to be invitingly displayed – at no cost to the taxpayer – thanks to the far-sightedness of Owen Russ who left us a generous endowment for the purpose of acquiring a permanent home. Unfortunately, in the immediate future, Museum visitors must continue to pick their way through a car park to

seek out the former industrial building in which we are inadequately housed, and must make other arrangements for the mementoes and documents and works of art which they may have planned to leave to us for the benefit of future students of Dorking history. Thank heaven some have faith that this will not always be the case. We have just been left a photographic and document collection in the will of Doris Mercer, and our Curator of Documents, Mary Turner, has begun the lengthy task of accessioning the items it contains, including a fine watercolour of Deepdene Hotel, shortly before its demolition.

Bette Phillips
Museum Chairman

Library

Since the beginning of the year there have been 97 accessions to the Museum's archive collections, producing just over 400 new items. These include:

- Minute books and other records of the Dorking Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 1813-1992.
- A collection of 25 postcards of Dorking, 1891-1936 (mostly c.1910). Considering our large collection of postcards, we were very surprised to find so many that are new to us.
- Architects' plans and maps relating to proposed alterations to the Deepdene Hotel for Southern Railway, who purchased it in 1939.

- A collection of papers relating to the recent traffic experiment in Pixham Lane.
- A new publication – *Roman Surrey* by David Bird.

To be accepted, a new item has to have a Dorking connection, it must not duplicate another in the collections, it should give useful information about the history of the area (no matter how recent) and it must not take up too much room. It is always sad to have to turn things away because we just do not have room to store them. The Ashcombe Dorkinian Association (ADA) is considering giving us its archive collection, which would be a welcome addition. But, even discarding duplicates of material already in our collections, it is unlikely we can make room for it. Other groups would also like to give us archival material.

Many of us who belong to local groups and societies know just how much paperwork they generate. Officers usually have large boxes of past minutes, programmes, correspondence etc which often have to be kept at home. It is very tempting to get rid of it by giving it to a museum – it saves having to throw anything away. The Museum has to be careful that it does not become a dumping ground for unwanted rubbish. Bearing in mind that we are all volunteers and already spend many hours a week on Museum library work, it would help

us considerably if a society's members sorted, slimmed down and listed its archive before offering it. However, having said that, it is unlikely that we could accept such archives in our present restricted premises. In some cases, including the ADA, this would be a loss to those who are interested in the history of Dorking and its surrounding villages.

Mary Turner
Curator of Archives

Recent accessions include:

- (a) Beige skirt with brown embroidered hem, worn by Miss Bertha Jane Beaumont, 1910. In textile store.
- (b) Medal, made by manufacturing medallist and silversmith, D George Collins, 118 Newgate Street, London, in original case, awarded by Dorking Fine Art Exhibition 1899 to Miss C Lawrence for *Needlework*.
- (c) Watercolour painting of Deepdene Hotel by Dorothy Parsons, 1967. Displayed in Room 1.
- (d) Lamp assembly from WWII inflatable dingy. Brass casting from Dorking Foundry machined by Clears at their Portland Road works, 1942. Displayed in WWII cabinet.
- (e) Multi-blade hand shears for grass/hedge cutting. Shown in Agricultural collection.
- (f) Hand held knife-sharpener known to have been in use at 6 Milton Street, Westcott, in 1920s but believed to be older.

- (g) Wireless crystal set made by the late Gordon Bishop in the 1920s. A life-long resident of Dorking, Mr Bishop died recently at the age of 93.

Offers declined:

A full-size gas cooker and a number of other items offered have been declined, either for lack of display or storage space or because the Museum has similar artefacts.

Exhibition storage

A number of steel cabinets have been brought into use for the safe keeping of artefacts held in store. This has released shelving and made for easier working in the textile preservation and storage room. The ongoing rearrangement of displays and storage will require considerable time-consuming amendment to the computer records.

Publicity:

In connection with the Farm and Village Week, the Museum's Archivist, Mary Turner, assisted by Brian Overell, created a display of prints and graphic material featuring some of the personalities and agricultural methods used in the Dorking area in the past. An article and graphic material provided by the Museum appeared in *The Dorking Advertiser* on 9 September.

Regularly updated news from Dorking Museum may be found on the internet at <www.fredplant.idf50.co.uk/fredplant-info/dkgmuseum/n110museum.html>

Fred Plant
Exhibits Curator

local history group report

After some anxious months, my pleas for new committee members at last bore fruit. We have an able new Secretary (Kathy Atherton), Treasurer (Pat Wilson) and Membership Secretary (Barbara Parnell). Chris Childs has agreed to be Deputy Chairman, and Joyce Mansfield and Pam Whiting have also joined us. Cathy and Tim Stevens will continue to arrange our winter and summer outings. I am grateful to them all. However, we rely on Sue Tombs as Convenor and Bob Miller as Book Salesman, and they are due to retire in April.

We are still lacking an Editor. This year's *Dorking History* has been produced by an ad hoc sub-committee greatly assisted by Pam and John Cuthbert, John Day, Kathy Atherton and Richard Fedrick.

Cathy and Tim Stevens arranged a lovely day out in July which was enjoyed by a group of 35 members. The rain cleared to give a super summer morning in Arundel, where we were free to enjoy the variety of sites that it has to offer. In the afternoon at Parham we had an interesting tour of the Elizabethan House, the beautiful gardens and surrounding parkland. A thoroughly enjoyable day out! However, I feel I must point out that because of

insufficient support, recent outings have been run at a loss. Unless we can fill a coach, we shall have either to increase the charge considerably or to give up the outings, which would be regrettable. Our next proposed

Outings have been running at a loss

outing on Saturday 19 March 2005 will be to Maidstone Museum and Bentliff Art Gallery where we will be guided by Simon Lace, our Dorking Museum Advisor.

Our Convenor, Sue Tombs, continues to arrange an excellent and varied programme. In general, the Group seems to be in good heart and we have enjoyed our Summer programme. Our usual thanks are due to Barbara, Cathy and Tim for refreshments and to Pat Bennett for her excellent reports of our meetings.

Mary Day
Chairman

membership

Private Members:

At the end of August we had 788 members of which 721 were up to date for 2004.

We have recruited 24 new members this year so far, compared with 39 the previous year.

Membership in 2001 was 869
2002 was 827
2003 was 819

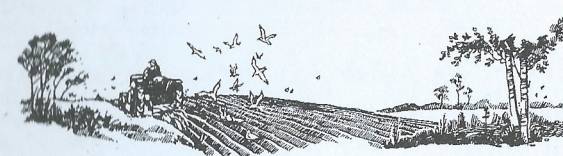
Corporate Members:

37 out of the 47 corporate members have so far paid.

We welcome the following new members:

Mr J Gillard, Box Hill Road, Tadworth
Mr D Murray, Deepdene Ave, Dorking

Peter Parkin
Membership Secretary



OTHER CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIETY

Abinger Parish Council
Amis de Gouvieux, Les
Betchworth Parish Council
Brockham Green Village Society
Buckland Parish Council
Capel Parish Council
Charlwood Parish Council
Coldharbour Sports and Social Club

Friends of Boxhill
Headley Parish Council
Holmwood Parish Council
Mickleham Parish Council
Newdigate Parish Council
Ockley Parish Council
Westcott Village Association
Wotton Parish Council

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