

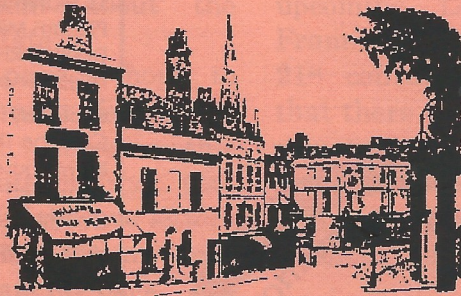
NEWSLETTER

of the Dorking & District Preservation Society

No. 47

Summer 2007

DORKING & DISTRICT PRESERVATION SOCIETY



Established in 1929

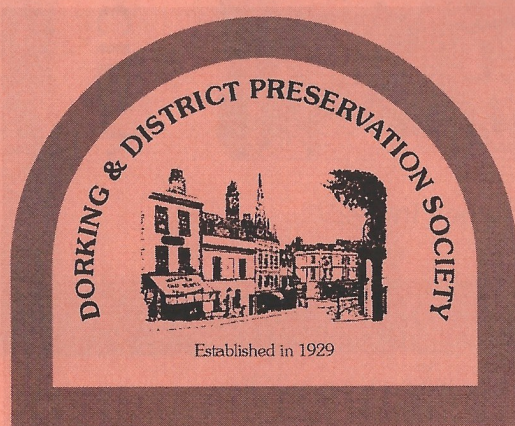
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Free to members

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editorial

A while ago, a friend of mine
called me “an aged, young Turk”
– a sort of tautology but, none-
theless, somewhat flattering. I
lead a very busy life with lots of
deadlines to keep, and seem to
have very little time to spare.
This is why we are still looking
for a permanent editor; someone
who has been in publishing, an
ex-copywriter or, indeed, a past
editor of any magazine.

I have commissioned a wide
mix of subjects for this issue,
covering some of the areas the
Society is involved in. I am
especially pleased with Beryl
Higgin's piece on looking above
the shop fronts in the High
Street and with Lucy Quinnell's
design statement about the
Grant Adam's Gate.

A 'letters' page I hope to
make a permanent feature of
the Newsletter. However, this
does require letters from you,
the members. Of the two letters
in this issue, one slaps my wrist
and the other pats my back.

Apart from the nightmare
that is Pump Corner, I have
little to write about Dorking or
the villages in News and Views
this time. If you have any nig-
gles or songs of praise about
aspects of our area, let me have

them before September 25th so
that I can include them in the
autumn issue.

Why did you join the Soci-
ety? Was it to make sure noth-
ing changes in Dorking or, ac-
cepting that some changes are
inevitable, trust that the Society
would influence change? Dork-
ing has had to accept change
throughout its long history. The
Tudors built houses that were
added to in the Jacobean and
Georgian periods, followed by
the ever-busy Victorians. All
these varying styles meld to-
gether to make Dorking what it
is. It is the Society's task to
make sure that any additions to
the town also meld in with its
present historic architecture.
We have expressed these aspira-
tions in our submission to the
upcoming Local Development
Framework. But, we live in the
21st century and must accept
that there will be more 'modern'
structures erected. While the
Society's aim is to preserve the
best of the past, we also want to
promote the best of the new.

*Hank Etheridge
Editor locum*

chairman's report

More on the Museum

My contribution to the last newsletter was exclusively about the Museum and I must ask readers for their forbearance in that I am doing the same again. It reflects how much of my time is being taken up by it, I hope not to the detriment of everything else.

Subsequent to the distribution of the last newsletter, but before the Annual General Meeting, Bette Phillips decided that she should resign from the post of Chairman of the Museum, which we all accepted with much regret. I would like to pay tribute here to how much she achieved during her tenure as Museum Chairman, first of all in relation to the preparation of our Heritage Lottery grant application and, secondly, to the success of her programme to introduce the Museum to local schools. I am glad to say that she is continuing her good work as Education Officer. Martin Cole, her predecessor as Museum Chairman, has stepped into the breach as Acting Chairman until a permanent successor to Bette can be found.

In the end, documents were exchanged and the purchase of the Museum buildings and site completed on the eve of our Annual General Meeting itself, at which our architect, Richard Nightingale, gave a really excellent presentation of his firm's preliminary designs. Alas, over the three weeks that led up to the AGM it had become clear that, because of upward revisions of the cost of the Olympics in 2012, our expectation of what would be a sensible level at which to pitch our grant application would have to be much reduced. So all our plans have to be revised.

We decided that we should first of all ask Beryl Higgins, who is an architect, to look closely at the present museum building and tell us what she thought about it. The minute arising from this inspection is, she assures me, an accurate record of her opinion, and is shown below.

I am also glad to report that our new President, Adrian White, to whom I reported our problem, has been most supportive and has proved to be a great source of ideas for reducing both the cost of construction and the eventual running costs of the proposed new building. The present argument goes like this:

First, at the very least, the main building needs a new roof in order to keep the rain out and, in some parts, new walls are needed as well if we are to control the temperature and humidity inside. This is necessary if we are properly to protect the contents of the museum. A new roof will almost certainly need stronger supports anyway. As Beryl Higgins has pointed out, there is little to be saved in not including a full upper storey. In other words, we regard as a minimum the complete reconstruction of the main building with two full levels, a ground floor and one upper storey. Allowing for the life and staircase that then become necessary, plus somewhat larger service areas, this would approximately double the floor space available for display of the museum contents.

We then need to go through the same process with the current library building. How much would it cost to make good to the minimum acceptable standard? Beryl Higgins would like it to be retained in its entirety. What would it cost to connect it with the main building?

At every stage we need to be aware of the effect on running costs. For instance, our plan so

far has been to keep the library building in its existing place and accept that, if the two buildings are joined, this can only be on the first floor, in order to maintain a passageway through the site for the other tenants of the Old Foundry site, as we have agreed to do as a condition of the purchase. Our President has pointed out that if the passageway were to be moved to the western edge of the site, and the library building shifted slightly to the east, the result would be a single, integral building on both floors, cheaper to heat and easier to administer. Could the façade that faces West Street be retained under these circumstances. Beryl feels strongly that the result of moving the façade of the library building (i.e. carefully dismantling it and reassembling it on a slightly different site) would result in a sham. We are the Preservation Society and we ought to preserve it. Can we afford it?

These are all things that will have to be worked out in the next few months. Look forward to the Autumn newsletter for our next report.

continued overleaf

Beryl Higgins' Views on the Museum

1. The Main Building

The walls at the front of the main building are rubbish, one brick thick, and must come down. Some walls at the back are ancient and might be retained. There is doubt, however, whether they are in every case load-bearing, and there must be serious doubt whether they will be able to support the greater load resulting from the addition of a full upper storey and a wider truss on the northern section of the building.

The roof needs to be entirely replaced, with the ridges of the northern and southern sections meeting at the same level – which will require them to have different pitches, as they do currently.

As the front walls must at the same time be replaced, and those at the back, if retained, must be effectively replaced by a steel frame, there is little to be saved by not including a full upper storey. The positions of the steel load-bearing pillars were noted, but BH was not sure that the connecting horizontal members were necessarily all on the same level throughout the building. If it was decided to retain them, there might be some surprises.

2. The Library Building

BH was surprised to learn that this building was considered to be in bad condition. She would like it to be retained in entirety. If it were linked to the main building at upper floor level, the link should be wholly of glass. The north and east walls are not one brick thick as we had believed.

The 19th century Museum Library building that, if structurally sound, the Society would like to preserve alongside whatever new museum building is decided upon



news&views

Follow the white, green, black & tan Road

The new road layout and traffic lights are causing a certain amount of chaos and road rage, not toward other drivers but with Surrey County Council.

The Society's Strategic Planning Group Chairman has often stated to the Town Forum that Mole Valley should be responsible for Dorking's roads, not SCC.

Apart from all the frustrating traffic hold-ups at Pump corner, the garish nature of the different coloured surfaces seems decidedly out of place in Dorking.

Sir Martin has written a letter to Richard Shaw, CEO of Surrey County Council, expressing the Society's disquiet over the logistical failure of the traffic lights at Pump Corner and the disruption to the shops in the area. His main point, however, was about the 'citification' of the road surfaces along the High Street to the junction of London Road. As the Chairman of a Preservation Society, and after discussions with the Executive, the Society felt that the various-coloured road surfaces spoil the ambience of the town, turning it into something re-

sembling a London suburb rather than the old market town that is Dorking.

Back in the late fifties, *Architectural Review* (AR) dedicated a whole issue to the growing opposition toward the amount of signage and 'street furniture' – traffic lights, Pelican crossings, etc. that was, even then, starting to clutter our roads and streets.

Dorking, as an old Market Town, deserves better, in order to maintain some semblance of its past history. All this plethora of signage and different road colours doesn't help.

There's no gold in them thar landfills

There is, however, a lot of money in recycled garbage. Many County and District Councils have signed contracts with multi-national Waste Companies who collect the garbage and recyclable materials. At the moment, general garbage goes to a landfill and the recyclable stuff is sorted, the waste paper and glass going to UK paper mills and glass foundries respectively. The real money spinner, though, is plastic. China pays Top Dollar for it. It is shipped to them in the container ships that have brought in manufactured

goods, many of them using recycled UK plastic previously shipped. It is, if you will, perpetual recycling on a global scale.

The dichotomy in the waste situation is that government wants to convert everything into heat and electrical energy via incinerators, whilst environmentalists want to recycle as much as possible. In Sheffield, they are thinking of doing the latter, but the cost of issuing separate baskets for paper, cans and plastic, as well as compartmentalising their collection vehicles and enlarging their recycling facility would have to be passed on to residents via the Council tax. A dilemma that's not going to go away.

HIPS Hiccup

The postponement of the House Information Pack scheme until August 1st, and then only applying to four-plus bedroom dwellings, is quite likely to attract some creative copywriting to a lot of future house sales details. One of my 'moles' tells me that four-bedroom houses will be described as having three bedrooms and a 'study' to circumvent the rules. What the real estate people will do with six or eight bedrooms is anyone's

guess. How many Studies, Dressing Rooms, Dens, Galleries, Libraries, Boot-rooms and Playrooms can you have?

The Numbers Game

- **1.6m** people on Council waiting lists because of lack of Social Housing.
- **11 billion** is the cost of solving the UK's housing crisis.
- **83%** the proportion of the population who can be regarded as 'Nimbies', according to latest research by Saint Consulting Group.
- **4.6m** the number of people in England and Wales whose homes are at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea.
- **£230** the money that could be saved each year on a typical household energy bill if insulation and misco-generation is installed.
- **10,000** is the number of conservation areas in England.

Source: Planning Magazine

Footpaths

My bit about untidy footpaths prompted a member to write to me about a messy one running between Longfield Road, West

Bank and Nower Roads. I identified it as FP105, and on the 'Cleanaway' contract. I telephoned my contact at Mole Valley and organised its cleaning. Until we appoint a new Footpaths Officer – David Read has resigned because of ill-health – I guess you'll have to contact me.

Editor

"Dorking became my Home Town" says Sandi Toksvig

Sandi Toksvig, one of my favourite radio presenters, bought her first flat in Church Street after leaving university in 1982. A year later she sold it for £2,000 more than she had paid for it, and moved to Betchworth. Later, when her parents also bought a house near Dorking, she came to look upon Dorking as her "Home Town". She still lives only 20 miles from the town.

Ed

Love Mobile phones Hate the masts

The Society has a policy about mobile phone masts. If they intrude upon the landscape or spoil the rural setting in which they are planned, we make an objection.

What we can't do is to raise health issues. Each server has

to have a certificate that says the emissions from their masts fall within government guidelines.

Years ago, when I was the marketing guy for a national TV Rental company, we decided to open a shop to only sell microwaves when they first came on the market. The product moved fast, we were having difficulty in meeting demand. Then came a TV programme that basically said that microwaves emitted radiation and were a danger to health. The next day, we had a queue of customers wanting to return the machines they had purchased from us.

To assure them that they were safe, we used a meter that detected harmful radiation, and proved them safe to their satisfaction. The clincher in our method of reassurance was to take the meter out into the street. Immediately, it recorded high levels of radiation, and when we pointed it at the sky, the needle went crazy.

We are constantly surrounded by radio frequency radiation from a plethora of sources, not just mobile phone masts. If it is proved that they are indeed dangerous, we shall include this in our objections.

planning report

Before bringing you up-to-date on the Planning situation, I must admit to walking around under a large black cloud of guilt. Back when the St. Paul's proposal was being considered, I received four letters from members that I did not respond to. As I mentioned in my editorial, I lead an unbelievably busy life. At the time the letters arrived I was up against deadlines for a watercolour, some calligraphy and an article for a magazine, all roughly at the same time. I can now apologise unreservedly to those members and try to be more responsive if there is a next time. As it turned out, the St. Paul's extension that both the LPA and ourselves were in favour of was refused by just one vote. We still feel that the contemporary architectural design of the extension melded in perfectly with the Victorian building to which it was to be attached, and that it was a much-needed extra space in which the church (i.e. the congregation) could extend its good works.

While I am in this *mea culpa* mode, my committee – which includes an ex-airline pilot and myself an RAF veteran – and so should be able to navigate the

points of the compass – identified the South East of the Royal College of Church Music in Westhumble as being the location of the Recital room which we wanted retained. It wasn't, and it took the full force of the wrecking ball, as indeed was, without permission, the whole 18th century building that will now have to be restored.

Greystones in Deepdene Park Road, which you will remember had two lots of Appeals dismissed, made a new application for two houses on this much-disputed site. We wrote saying that the architectural designs were quite good and more in-keeping with their surroundings, but pointed out that by splitting the site into two separate plots they were in fact in-filling, something that the Society is against on the sensitive fringes of Dorking. It has been refused.

The proposed retirement home to replace three buildings on Westcott Road was refused, but has now gone to appeal. We shall be writing to the Inspectorate reinforcing our objections.

The proposal to convert Little Dudley House in South Street into an up-market restaurant has been approved.

A proposed new build in the overflow car park at the Abinger Arms prompted our saying that

we thought it too big and not in-keeping with its surroundings. It has since been withdrawn.

In Deepdene again: we commented on an extension at #18 Deepdene Drive, suggesting various alterations to the plan to calm the fears of their next door neighbour. They took our own and the LPA's suggestions on-board with good heart and revised their plans accordingly – it has now been approved. Everyone is happy. Another application across the road from #18 was for a new build in part of the garden of a house in Deepdene Park Road. We weren't happy about this as, once again, it was an infill situation. In addition, mature native trees would have to be felled and a large chunk taken out of an equally mature hedge to accommodate a new driveway which, in our opinion, would be hazardous. It has been withdrawn.

We loved a proposal to build a German, *Hof Haus*, 'Kit' building in Furzen Lane, Abinger Common. These are superbly designed, contemporary buildings which, once all the services are in-place and the foundation laid, can be erected in fifteen days. We recommended that it be approved.

A proposal to build a combination of semi-detached dwell-

ings and terrace houses – 13 in all – received short shrift from my committee. The proposed site for these is at the end of Leslie Road at Mole Hill. We liked the design of the buildings, but were certain that their construction would further exacerbate the traffic situation in Leslie Road, which is already a problem.

We really went overboard about the outstanding architectural design of a new build proposed at Vann Lake, Weare Street. Incorporated into this dwelling will be every environmental feature available today. We wrote saying that it would be a feather in the cap of Mole Valley if they approved it because it was almost certain to be featured in *Architecture Today* and similar journals. It would certainly rate highly in the Society's 'Best Development' Competition. We also suggested, in all seriousness, that to refuse it would be tantamount to 'Architectural vandalism'. Mind you, it is in Weare Street where our batting average for approvals is pretty low. We can only hope.

Hank Etheridge
Chairman of the Planning Committee



Campaign to Protect Rural England

News update

We recently welcomed Richard Bass as our new Chairman. He moved here one year ago from Cheshire where he served as CPRE Chairman for that county. He intends to organise meetings and seminars, promote activities and recruit new members.

Our most recent seminar was held at Norwood Hill Farm, Leigh, the speakers being Nigel Davenport, CEO of Surrey Wildlife Trust and Tom Oliver, Head of Rural Policy at our national office.

Nationally, Bill Bryson will succeed Sir Max Hastings as our new President; he has been an active and enthusiastic supporter of our campaigns, and is particularly concerned about the vital importance of the future of the countryside and its farming community.

In the latest edition of the Surrey Voice, the Surrey CPRE Chairman, Tim Harrold, comments that the draft South East Plan has stood up well to examination during the period 28th

November 2006 until 30th March 2007, involving many sessions. A report is now being drawn up by a Panel and this will be submitted to the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) by the end of July, and the recommendations will form the basis for a decision by the Secretary of State on the final form of the South East Plan. Following the issue of the Plan in its final form, there will be consultations starting in Autumn 2007.

The Surrey Waste Plan hearings are now scheduled for 7 weeks commencing 22nd May until 5th July, and Surrey CPRE is due to participate in all the sessions. There are three concurrent planning inquiries, namely:

- *The Waste Core Strategy;*
- *The Waste Development Policies;*
- *The Waste Control Policies.*

As far as Mole Valley is concerned, the session on the Clockhouse brickworks at Capel, Surrey County Council's preferred site for an incinerator, is of the utmost interest and CPRE will be represented at this hearing.

Surrey Hills AONB's & AGLV's. There is a genuine threat that Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV's) may lose its status,

and could affect Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's). We commissioned Chris Burnett Associates to report on the situation. It confirmed that AGLV's are of equal quality to AONB's, and should be retained. The report has been sent to all Surrey Planning Officers and, hopefully, will result in a countywide strategy.

The Tranquillity Campaign

"Tranquillity is the perfect antidote to the hectic pace of everyday life". In the light of the lack of progress of the government in measuring tranquillity since its promise to do so in 2000, National CPRE commissioned Northumbria and Newcastle Universities to develop a systematic approach to this complex task. In October 2006, the

results of this study were unveiled in the form of a map detailing the relative level of tranquillity, or lack of it, likely to be found at any point in the country. Not surprisingly, the results show that the South East is the least tranquil area and Surrey is the most overflown county in the country. All residents in the county who value tranquillity are encouraged to add to the research work already undertaken by participating in a competition to find the most tranquil spot in the county. For further details please contact the CPRE Office at: Room I, The Institute, 67 High Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8AH, telephone: 01372 362720, Email: cpre.surrey@btconnect.com, Website: www.cpresurrey.org.uk.

Barry Collins



*The entrance to one of my Tranquil places. Send me pictures of yours.
Ed.*



Dorking Museum

We are working on a more modest museum rebuilding plan, in case the difficulties we are having preparing the HLF grant application from the building designed by Richard Nightingale turn out to be insurmountable. This fall-back plan could involve a new building on the ground currently occupied by the museum exhibition rooms. If such a building had a ground and 1st floor we could increase the available space by over 50%, and more if we could design the loft for storage; a stair lift could give access to the first floor. Using a steel frame structure with brick or tile-hung walls and tiled roof, it could be economic to build and, with high load-bearing floors, be suitable for the heavy objects and archive material that we possess. The space we have acquired between the library and museum buildings could be used to construct an entrance vestibule while still leaving the 2m passageway

required by MVDC.

Although it may look a rather functional building, with small, Docklands Museum warehouse-style windows, to keep light levels down inside, it would nevertheless be rainproof and better insulated than the one we have at present. Our library could go on the first floor in such a building, and release the current library building, after strengthening and refurbishment, for storage and a separate education/meeting room. We will be consulting the professionals on such a scheme and getting an idea of the cost.



Prof. Richard Selley with geologists

Our collections of fossils and minerals are of great interest to geologists. Recently, Prof. Richard Selley brought two groups of geology students to inspect them and to look around the museum as part of a tour which included a visit to the South Street caves. Our visitors much appreciated the chance to see this collection,

including the iguanodon tail bones found when a well was dug at Broomells Farm, Beare Green, and which was presented to the museum by Lord Ashcombe's family many years ago. It would be nice to think that one day we might have room to have a small display of the various types of local minerals and the products made from them.

Martin Cole
Chairman

62 West Street, RH4 1BS
www.dorkingmuseum.co.uk

Milton Court Reception for museum Volunteers

When Paul Cattermole, Head of Group Product Profitability for Unum Provident, and John Hutson, Head of Public Relations, came to the Museum Archives to find out more about the history of Milton Court, we were able to add to their already extensive knowledge and archive collection. They showed their appreciation by inviting our museum volunteers to a reception at Milton Court.

On a rather damp May evening, 24 volunteers were warmly welcomed and shown to a large reception room, where we enjoyed a delicious buffet supper and had a chance to see some of

the Archives. Later, Bill Mansfield gave a very entertaining and informative illustrated talk about the history of Milton Court, and then took us on a guided tour from attic to basement. When we all came together again in the hall one more surprise was in store for us as Paul presented us with a generous donation towards museum funds.

The visit brought back happy memories for some of our members who had worked for Henleys during its occupation of the house. Nora Simpson's memories went back even further, to the 1920s, when she and her mother had tea with Alice Rate whose home it then was. We all enjoyed the visit immensely and thank UNUM and all our hosts for a very pleasant evening.



Museum volunteers outside Milton Court with Paul Cattermole (3rd from right).

Photo by UNUM

Mary Turner
Curator of Archives

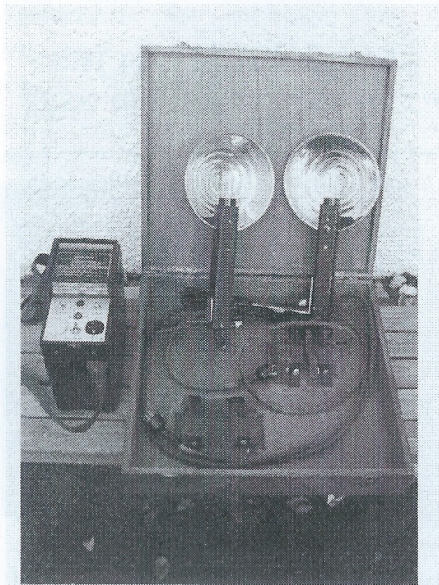
Artefacts

Owing to the severe limitations of both display and storage space, very few artefacts have been accepted during the past year. However, a couple of items are worthy of mention.

The first is a 12", 78rpm record made in the early post-war years by the late Michael Gilliam, featuring the Dorking County Grammar School Choir singing excerpts from Handel's Messiah. This is not yet on display but, to preserve the record, I have transcribed the content onto CD. I hope to place an item in the Dorking Advertiser asking whether any reader took part in the recording, or knows of anyone who did. Should any member have knowledge of the recording I will be pleased to hear from them.

The second item is a very early example of photographic electronic-flash equipment. This was manufactured when incandescent "Photoflood" lamps and flash bulbs were in common use. This cumbersome equipment, carried in a heavy wooden case, consists of two electronic flash guns and a power supply unit incorporating a rechargeable lead-acid accumulator similar to those used with early wireless sets. On leaving the RAF, where he had worked on RADAR, Clive

Lacey and a partner set up Clive Courtney & Co. Ltd. in the premises of the former Tollgate Garage in Horsham Road. Here they pioneered the development of the flash units and were also involved with early work on lasers and fibre optics. Because of its development in Dorking, I believe that the unit is worthy of inclusion in the Museum's collection of industrial artefacts. The firm closed in 1983.



Clive Courtney & Co. Ltd.
"Photoflash"

Those of you who use modern digital cameras which incorporate miniature flash units will be thankful for the inventive genius of this pioneer who chose Dorking for his laboratory and factory.

The Museum is keen to attract more young visitors, so I welcomed the offer from local businessman, Matt Parish, to lend for temporary display his collection of 'Dr Who' memorabilia from the first-broadcast series. This will be installed, in time for the Autumn half-term, in the case currently showing the Home Guard and Air Raid Warden figures, as well as that containing the Hats, Caps, and Tops display. It will run until the February half-term.

I am anxious to maintain a programme of temporary displays, so I will welcome any suggestions you may have for future subjects.

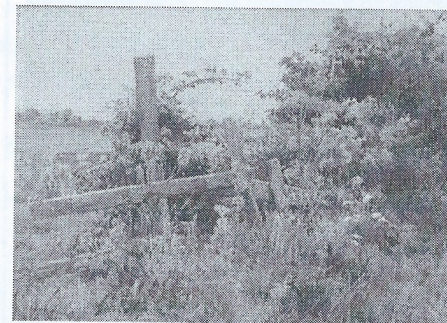
Fred Plant
Exhibits Curator

The items on show are:



The Tandem

Helen Collins 1921-1990



The Stile

George Edward Collins 1880-1968



Swallows

George Edward Collins 1880-1968

In her Will the late Joan Collins, granddaughter of Charles Collins, bequeathed a total of seventeen paintings, etchings and prints to the Museum. Four are watercolours by George Edward Collins who, for a time, lived at Peaselake. These are now on show, as is a watercolour by George Gardiner, having replaced others which are now in store. Display space has also been found for an oil painting by Helen Collins, daughter of George Edward Collins.



Mallards

George Edward Collins 1880-1968



Entrance to Church Schools, West Street

George Gardiner 1851-1930

*Barbara Turnbull
Curator Art and Textiles*

Dorking Museum: Plan B



Plan A having had to be jettisoned, Plan B would be embarked upon. That was the upbeat message that emerged from the Annual Stewards' Meeting on May 9th at the Friends' Meeting House. Stewards were invited to submit their suggestions for increased opening hours which it is thought would be looked on more favourably by any body from whom we sought funds.

The difficulties of trying to squeeze the ever-brimming quart of accessions into the pint pot of our present building were emphasised by the Curators of Exhibits and Paintings and Textiles, and our Archivist.

As Education Officer, I was able to show that though we had succeeded in placing our Loan Boxes in 14 schools, we had not tempted the schools to visit us – a trend noted throughout the country, and attributed to the demands on staffing for the necessary ratio of student to teacher for visits, and our particular difficulty in accommodating groups during normal opening hours. That said, we continue to be visited by U3A groups, Brownies, Scouts and students of Geology. We are also hoping to take the Museum

to the schools in the Autumn. We are devising two 'lessons' – for Primary and for Secondary schools in the area.



We are offering the younger children a Victorian Washing Day with the opportunity to try their hand at using a washboard, bar soap, a washing 'dolly', Reckitt's 'Blue', mixing starch, wooden pegs and flat irons. In the course of this demonstration all kinds of interesting topics should crop up: water supply, sanitation, pollution, rubbish collection, hygiene, how hard women worked in service and in laundries, etc.

The topic we are offering the secondary schools will be a study of Dorking through its history (and geology) as a market town – and a discussion on the place of the market town in future in a world of globalisation, supermarkets, the Internet, transport problems, housing shortages and the decline of agriculture.

The local schools may not take up this opportunity, but we have offered it, and are thus trying to fulfil our role and justify our existence. Watch this space!

Bette Phillips

Education Officer for Dorking Museum

Local History Group Dorking, New Zealand and 'Food for Britain'

At the end of the Second World War Britain was bankrupt and food scarce. Rather than coming to an end, rationing grew more stringent. Newspaper reports show the people of Dorking taking to the woods and verges in search of fruit, herbs and mushrooms, whilst local school logs record fruit bottling and foraging expeditions.

Recently, as the result of a chance query to our website, the Local History Group was provided with the opportunity to conduct research into this sub-

ject about which little, if anything, has been written locally and to see something of the history of Dorking from another perspective.

Wendy du Toit, a teacher living in Rangiora, New Zealand, contacted the Group for help with a research project on the subject of rationing, for which she is funded by a New Zealand Sciences, Mathematics and Technology Teacher Fellowship. Her particular interest is in the collection and shipping of food parcels from the small community of Rangiora (which then had a population of 2,500) to Dorking as part of the 'Food for Britain' campaign of 1948-1951. Having begun work utilising archives in New Zealand, Wendy arrived in Dorking at the end of May to continue her research.



Wendy du Toit

In conjunction with the Museum the Group was able to find somewhere for Wendy to

stay with her young family. An appeal was made at meetings, via the website, by Email and a letter to the local newspaper for anyone who had been involved in the distribution process or had memories of having received parcels to come forward, so that they could meet Wendy. Mary Turner trawled the Museum for archive material and Coffey Holland ploughed through the records of local Women's Institutes.

Initial research revealed that the people of Rangiora were themselves subject to (limited) rationing and so were making some sacrifice in order to provide aid. However, there was a great personal element to the Rangiora scheme, in contrast with other similar operations, in that it was decided that individual parcels would be sent (even though postage costs were higher), rather than large-volume supplies for local distribution.

A link was therefore established between individual suppliers and recipients whose identities were known to one another. Lists of worthy recipients were compiled by churches and civic organisations but, sadly, the first cable from New Zealand, asking for a hundred names, was misdirected to Bark-

ing where the Chairman of the Council surely couldn't believe his luck and duly posted off a list, causing questions to be asked in the House of Commons. After this hiccup, it was discovered that shipping shortages would result in a transit period of six months, the first parcels not arriving until September 1948. Once the system was up and running, however, lists of names were being sent to Rangiora every two weeks.



The first parcels arrive from New Zealand

A number of people came forward with memories, often not of parcels from New Zealand but from other parts of the Empire and, as a result of the inter-

est shown, it was decided to devote part of our June Members' Evening (Tuesday 5th) to the subject, at which Wendy presented some of her findings. Hopefully, we will be able to work some of these into a display for Heritage Open Days or to use the less visual material for an article in Dorking History.

Inevitably there has been some disappointment. It has not been possible to discover as much as we would have liked. However, the exercise has been of value, for we in Dorking have undoubtedly learned something of our history. Wendy will be writing up her findings on her return home, but if there is anyone out there who has not been involved and who might have something to contribute, please get in touch with Kathy Atherton or Coffey Holland and we can pass any comments on to Wendy. Hopefully, with the ease of communication not available in the 1940s, we will be able to continue the Rangiora/Dorking connection and so ensure that the aid given by a small community whose members could have known little of the town they were helping in 1948 is not forgotten.

The Forts of the Mole Gap

In 1890, the Mole Gap from Ranmore (Denbies), Box Hill and above Betchworth (in fact, on Box Hill, at the end of Fort Road), was thought to be especially vulnerable to attack from the French. These Forts were just three of a dozen defence works to the south and east of London. Although they had a fort-like appearance, they were designed as mobilisation centres and armouries with a self-defence capability.

In the 1880's, warship production in France and Russia had the British government worried. In some quarters, senior ministers doubted the ability of the Royal Navy to protect our shores. This question was taken up by Col. Edward Hamley, MP for Birkenhead, who campaigned for building a defence line to secure London, which would be an essential target for any would-be invaders.

The idea for this defence line was first mooted in 1859 when there was a real fear of a French invasion. The French had just beaten the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino, and were feeling pretty cocky. There was a genuine fear that the balance of power in Europe was getting

out of kilter because, apart from the French, Germany was aiming to unify under Prussia and, in the years up to 1890, Europe was in turmoil with wars in Italy and Greece. Britain herself was tied up in Colonial skirmishes, and was stretched to the limit.

Eventually, the British government decided to establish a 72-mile long defence line divided into 10 tactical sectors, with supporting artillery batteries on the forward parts of the North Downs, stretching from Guildford through to Halstead in Kent, up the Darent Valley to Dartford, and over the Thames to Vange and Epping in Essex. Each Fort was looked after by a caretaker and the Forts themselves had loopholes in the walls and thick, metal doors. Interestingly, some of the loopholes were facing toward London.

The Fort at Ranmore was demolished; the Box Hill Fort is now a bat sanctuary, and the Betchworth Fort just stores equipment.

The Forts were the result of a short-term panic and never used. Not long afterwards, confidence was restored in the Navy, and in 1905 the Forts were stood down.

Hank Etheridge



Established in 1929

Autumn Meeting Thursday October 18, 2007 at 7.30 United Reformed Church, West Street Dorking

The meeting will start with the presentation of the awards and certificates of

THE BEST DEVELOPMENT COMPETITION

Followed by

Jeremy Knight
Curator of the Horsham Museum
And our new Museum Advisor

He will give an illustrated talk on

The Life of a Museum Curator, Or Learning from Experience

**Lift up your eyes! –
Above the shop fronts in the
High Street**

With the busy lives we lead, we rarely stop to smell the roses or, indeed, just stand and stare. Dorking is a town where just stopping for a moment and casting your eyes above the fascia boards of the shops can give you an insight into Dorking's past history as you spot architectural features which have survived. Walk with me, starting at the crossroads at the eastern end of the town.

Until the late 19th century, entering Dorking led you past grand houses standing in extensive grounds. In Pippbrook there is the library building, rebuilt in 1856, which was designed by the famous architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. When you are in it, look up and admire the ceilings.

Over the road from Pippbrook was the enormous estate of Shrub Hill, which extended out beyond Pixham Lane, and was mentioned by Daniel Defoe who, in his youth, spent some years in Dorking. When it was sold, all the new roads built through it were named after members of the family: Wathen, Rothes and Leslie. The eastern part of the original house remains above

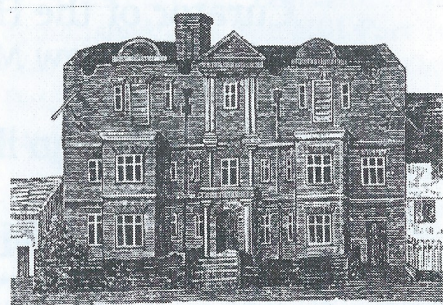
'Dominoes'.

Between Shrub Hill House and the 'Surrey Yeoman' some confident Victorian and Edwardian buildings sprung up, including the Oddfellows Hall, built in 1894 by local architect William Shearburn.



The Oddfellow's Hall

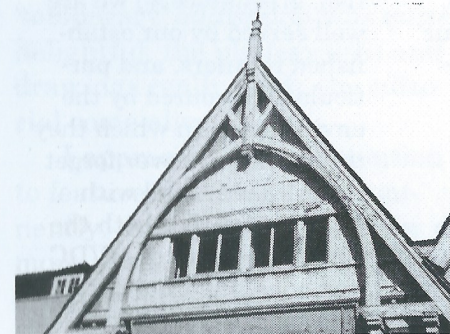
The 'Surrey Yeoman' was renamed in honour of the Earl of Rothes, Colonel of the regiment. If you look closely at the building you can still see the 17th century timber-framed structure.



An early reproduction of the Dutch House

The 'Dutch House', in the middle of what was once the

Market Place building, is still there, but its original, flamboyant front was replaced with a Georgian façade. However, if you stand well back on the pavement opposite Woodcocks, the three gables of the dormer windows are still just visible.



W.H. Smith's curved 'Whalebone' Gable

Smith's has a splendid 'curved Whalebone' feature on its gable. This was obviously a fashionable feature in the 1880's, since there are similar examples at the western end of the town – for example, at Cliftonville.

Terracotta and coloured brickwork have a field day above Boots; the fine proportions of the windows, over which the bas relief legend of "Let there be Light" commemorates a former Lending Library. Standing on the raised pavement opposite, you can identify the three different façades. A 1640 Survey of Dorking shows three tenements on this site.



'Let there be Light' atop of Boot's Pharmacy

Bookends retains its 17th century appearance. Previously, it was the Wheatsheaf public house, under which were extensive cellars – one of which was reputed to be the site of a 'Cock-pit'.



The Wheatsheaf, now 'Bookends'

*Beryl Higgins
Photographs by Beryl Higgins*

Dear Sir,
 Everyone is entitled to their opinion, but I think you should be aware that there are many in Dorking, and no doubt in the Society as well, who are unimpressed by the cockerel statue erected at the eastern entrance to our town. "Naff" is how someone of my acquaintance described it and I don't think I could improve on that. So hopefully any features on Dorking in the media will pass swiftly by and concentrate on its many other attributes, not least its most attractive shopping centre. In this regard, and in your pieces about the failure of the Sainsbury/Thornfield project, I fail totally to understand the basis for the assertion that "*Dorking desperately needs something to attract more visitors and shoppers to combat the growing popularity of Reigate and Leatherhead*". In the 30 years I have lived in Dorking, and essentially for those living in its nearby villages, its shops have always been in competition with adjacent towns – neither more nor less so today than in the past. The vast majority of town residents have breathed a huge sigh of relief at the news of the

demise of the superstore project in view of the damage this could have done to the fabric of our town. Apart from the regrettable absence of some good small food outlets (e.g. bread, fish, greengrocery) we are well served by our established retailers, and particularly favoured by the environment in which they trade. Let us never forget this. I have noted with great regret that both the Chief Executive of MVDC and a leading Councillor also seem to regard the development of the area north of St Martin's as unfinished business. I can only assume that these voices are unhealthily susceptible to commercial forces operating below the radar of public awareness. I would find it deeply regrettable if our Society displayed any formal policy of sympathy towards any renewal of trading interest in this site. And for the record, I find it totally inaccurate to suggest that any housing development in that location would bring with it "*the same logistical problem of traffic*". Yours faithfully

Michael Benoy

LETTERS

The Editor

Although I have always read the smaller sized Newsletter with interest, I must admit that the Spring edition under your 'temporary' editorship was quite delightful, the photographs and drawings really made the editorial come alive.

I appreciated your intention to feature the museum prominently. It will be nice to know more about the exhibits and the people who look after them.

I look forward with anticipation to the Summer edition.
 Sincerely

Ann Champion

**The Executive and Council of
 The Society are genuinely
 interested in your views.**

**Are there areas where you
 think your input could help us
 formulate our strategy toward
 protecting Dorking, and its
 presentation in the Newsletter?**

Write and let us know

The Editor

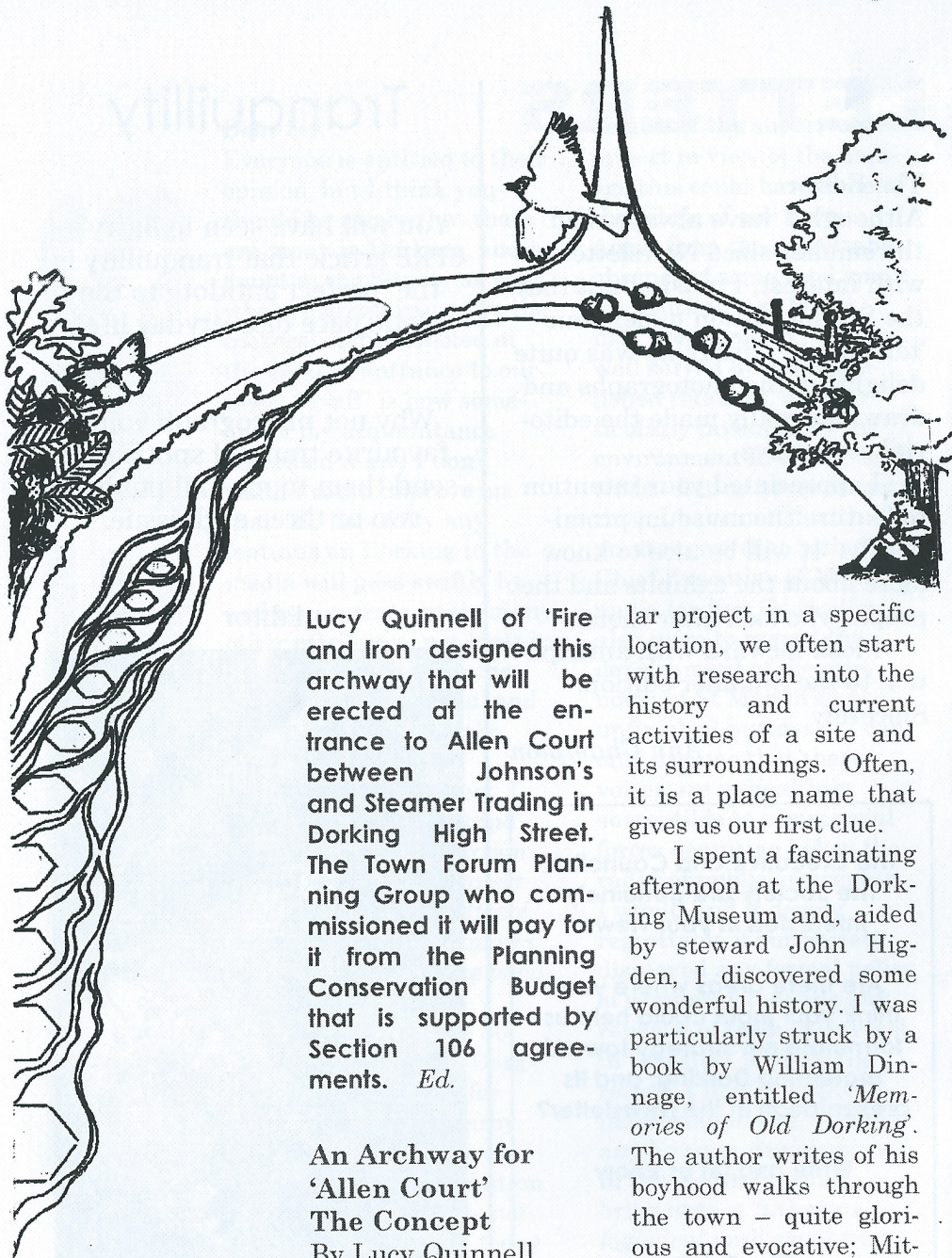
Tranquillity

You will have seen in Barry's CPRE article that tranquillity is the 'perfect antidote to the hectic pace of everyday life'.

Why not photograph your favourite tranquil spots and send them to me. I'll publish two or three each issue.

Editor





Lucy Quinnell of 'Fire and Iron' designed this archway that will be erected at the entrance to Allen Court between Johnson's and Steamer Trading in Dorking High Street. The Town Forum Planning Group who commissioned it will pay for it from the Planning Conservation Budget that is supported by Section 106 agreements. Ed.

An Archway for 'Allen Court' The Concept By Lucy Quinnell

When looking for design inspiration for a particu-

lar project in a specific location, we often start with research into the history and current activities of a site and its surroundings. Often, it is a place name that gives us our first clue.

I spent a fascinating afternoon at the Dorking Museum and, aided by steward John Higden, I discovered some wonderful history. I was particularly struck by a book by William Dinnage, entitled 'Memories of Old Dorking'. The author writes of his boyhood walks through the town - quite glorious and evocative; Mitcham Shag tobacco selling for 2d., Mat Napper's daughter tear-

ing up and down in her pony four-wheel chaise, gingerbread in shop windows, the pieman collecting a bucket of stones and flints a day with a view to, one day, building his own house (and he did...), cornfields, cowsheds, blackberry-picking, paupers AND "Grant Allen, who I recognised by his walk".

I very much hoped that Allen Court might be named after this 'Grant Allen', a fascinating man who lived in Dorking at 'The Nook' for twelve years. It isn't, but it seemed a good idea to adopt it to commemorate Grant Allen.

"He could be described with more 'ists' than anyone else I ever saw. He was an atheist and pacifist and socialist, a botanist and zoologist and optimist, a chemist and physicist, a scientist, a monist, meliorist and hedonist. A walk with him was an education in botany and zoology, and he had no whimsies or quirks; he was always reasonable, good tempered, vivacious, bright and interested in every human

interest." These are just a few of the descriptions of Grant Allen by Frank Harris, author of biographies of Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw.

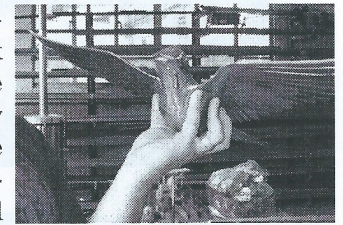
That the name 'Allen Court' led me to

Grant Allen 1848-1899



1. The Skylark
2. The Chalk Blue butterfly on the oak leaves

Grant Allen is, perhaps, sufficient to link it to him. It would be rather nice if a new association for the passageway is established, it would remind



1



2

Continued overleaf

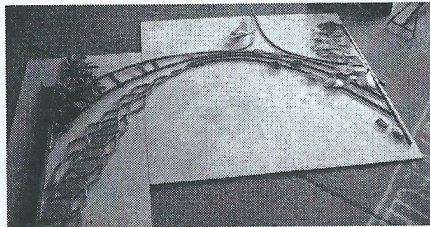
local people about Dorking's history and teach them about an important local character who has been rather neglected. (His house is currently standing derelict). It could reflect Grant Allen's literary associations and his love of local flora and fauna, thus celebrating two of Dorking's great strengths.

We have created a loose, flowing archway that does not compete with the existing iron-work all around, or

with the character buildings either side that have curved with age.

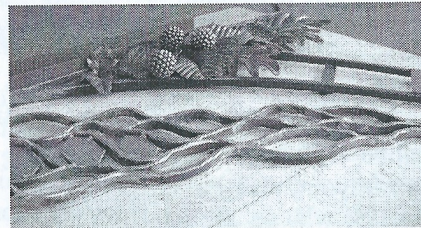
It is full of interest, strongly featuring local landmarks (e.g. the Stepping Stones), local flora and fauna, plus the figure of Grant Allen.

The archway is in graphite-finished steel with stainless steel detail. We have also incorporated flint at the top, wrapped in steel.



3.

3. An overhead picture of the partly completed arch



4.

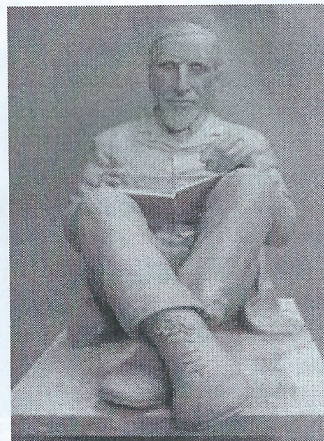
4. A detail of the 'water' around the Stepping Stones

5. The beech leaves on the right hand side of the arch



5.

6. The clay model of the Grant Allen figure that will sit below the beech leaves



6.

Lieutenant L. Olivier, Fleet Air Arm (FAA)

What did you do in the War, Larry?

Early in WW2, a young film actor, famous both in England and the United States, joined the Fleet Air Arm, now the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). He was Laurence Olivier, who had already appeared in ten films in London and Hollywood.

Olivier had taken flying lessons in 1935 when he was 28. As with all beginners in those days, he trained on Tiger Moths, and after some hairy-scary moments – he made at least six bad landings – he soloed in June 1936. His reason for doing this was that it, he felt, fitted in with the swashbuckling roles he had starred in on the screen. It was also partly to do with his rivalry with Ralph Richardson on the stage and in films. He was 'Macho' before that term was coined.

Olivier really wanted to be a Spitfire pilot in the RAF, but was rejected as being 'too old'. With some juggling behind the scenes by Ralph Richardson, already a Navy pilot, he was accepted into the FAA.

Before WW2 started, Olivier, who was starring in Hollywood in 'Wuthering Heights', started

flying again, this time on float planes out of Dobb's Ferry on the Hudson and, later, with Faichild 24's at Clover Field in California. After putting in 246 flying hours, he gained his pilot's licence in July 1940.

He was commissioned a lieutenant and posted to '755 Squadron' stationed near Winchester. He never saw any action; most of his time was spent towing targets for trainee gunners in a range of antique, wood and fabric planes, one of them dating back to 1929. He also flew Swordfish, Lysanders – a high-wing monoplane similar to the German 'Storch' – and the American 'Stinson'. The most up-to-date aircraft he flew was the Fairy 'Fulmer' fighter, rejected by the RAF as 'too slow'.

He made his last flight in October with 456 hours in his log book. After this, he was seconded to the Ministry of Information to make, and star in, Henry V.

Up to his death in 1989, he continued to list his recreations in 'Who's Who' as "tennis; swimming; motoring and flying".

With acknowledgement to Terry Coleman, Olivier's official biographer, and 'In Flight USA' magazine

An Inspector is called

The work of the Planning Inspectorate

I have been asked to write a layman's account of the role of a Planning Inspector in adjudicating appeals under the Town & Country Planning Legislation in England and Wales. I was appointed to the Planning Executive Agency in 1986 (retiring in December 2000), at a time when the number of appeals had risen drastically, requiring many more Inspectors.

Potential Inspectors are submitted to a rigorous period of training which ensures their work has the acknowledged stamp of quality for the decisions made. Absolute independence in decision-making is 'Holy Writ', and the Inspectorate Agency Command structure never deviates from this founding principle.

An individual Inspector operates from his or her home, and has to fit into the programme directed by a small management team in Bristol. The programme is exceptionally varied. Inspectors can be given relatively uncomplicated appeal cases to be dealt with by written

representation, or assigned to conduct a formal inquiry where evidence is presented under strict rules governing the presentation of an appeal case which required the appellant's and the local Authority's evidence to be cross-examined by each side's barristers. The allocation of cases to individual Inspectors is on the 'Taxi-rank' principle – the next case in line goes to the first available Inspector.

It is for the Inspector to ensure that he or she has heard all the relevant evidence and, in writing the decision, has drawn on the material planning facts and explained the basis of the decision to allow – or not allow – the appeal. It is very important to be simple and wholly clear in the explanation, and to ensure that it does not breach the law or render previous judgements of similar cases irreconcilable. Decisions have also to be 'Iron-clad' in making sure that conditions recommended in the judgement can be effectively carried out both in practice and in law.

The Inspectorate is keen to find a process of appeal that is thorough, fair and reliable, but which will expedite the clearing of large numbers of appeals. It tries out many types of procedures. Hearings, for example,

are designed to reduce formality, leaving the Inspector to conduct a round-table examination of a case. It is the important principles of impartiality, openness and fairness that underpins the process. All appeals and assessments have to be carried out with the Inspector having been seen to inspect any site or sites that are involved in the inquiry. Parties to the case have to be informed when and where the Inspector will carry out the site inspection. Discussion of the case is not allowed on these occasions, but it is in the interest of all parties to ensure that the Inspector views all aspects of the site that are relevant to the inquiry.

Allocation of cases to Inspectors draws on the special experience that they have developed. For example, some Inspectors specialise in enforcement cases, their experience matching the judicial bias of them. In other fields, where special aptitude is required, Inspectors are recruited into a group assigned to conduct Development Plan inquiries where the evidence to support these heavyweight Policy Documents requires months spent listening to evidence and then further months in writing a comprehensive report, advising the Local Au-

thority whether their planning policies in the Plan are acceptable as written, or acceptable with alterations suggested in the report. An assignment to a Local Authority can last for months, often with breaks to hear specific evidence, and with a final reassembly of parties to hear closing statements.

Today the Inspector's assessment of the soundness of proposal policies in the new-style LDF has to be followed by the LPA. Examination clearly shows that the supporting evidence demonstrating the local relevance of policies and its clear focus on an appropriate spatial strategy is being very carefully tested.

The semi-judicial aspect of the powers of an Inspector is not always appreciated. He or she has powers requiring witnesses to appear at an inquiry and powers to remove a person or persons from an inquiry. It is down to the Inspector to manage the examination of the evidence to achieve clarity. The rule is, that only evidence material to the case in terms of spatial and land use is relevant. Every assignment has to produce a decision that is self-contained in terms of the evidence given on the day(s). An Inspector cannot allow *ad hoc*, unpredicted evi-

dence to be introduced outside of the agreed programme.

It is also an absolute that no private contact with an Inspector is allowed. It is not unknown, for example, for an Inspector to accidentally overhear a discussion between participants at the adjournment of an appeal, leading to a justification for it to be quashed by the High Court. It is the responsibility of the Inspector to make sure at all times that matters are only discussed in the presence of both parties to the appeal.

I particularly enjoyed dealing with Development Plans, visiting different parts of the country and hearing the different ways in which Local Authorities deal with planning issues. It gave me the opportunity to be inventive in challenging the facts presented and discovering the ones they had deliberately left out. I also found community presentations interesting and rewarding, especially when I could persuade weighty groups of residents to be less repetitious and present their evidence in a shorter, simpler form. Similarly, when hard-nosed professional teams had been particularly insistent to an unacceptable degree, by being encouraging and tolerant I

could get them to agree to a resolution of the differences.

Meeting both sides on site and listening to both their points of view was always rewarding.

Appeal provisions from decisions ensure that Inspectors have not exceeded their powers when a case is reviewed in the High Court. A judge will determine whether or not a decision has infringed matters of law. However, the court will not interfere in any way if matters under dispute relate to purely planning judgements and not an interpretation of law. Around ten of my decisions were referred to the High Court on appeal – none of them upheld, because I had made sure that the legal framework of the decisions was not flawed.

Rigorous and reliable approaches in all appeals ensure that all participants receive fair and balanced hearings. All Inspectors have confidence in this procedure and are painstaking in their clarification of all the issues at stake. A high standard is aimed for and, over a long time, continues to be achieved.

Derek Rowbottom

CORPORATE MEMBERS SUPPORTING THE SOCIETY

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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Tel.</u>	<u>Business type</u>
ADV (UK) Ltd	The Old Crummet Factory, 16 Brockham Lane, Betchworth, RH3 7EL		
Antony Wakefield & Co Ltd.	Suite C, South House, South St RH4 2JZ	740 555	Fine Art & general insurance brokers
Betchworth Park Golf Club	Reigate Road, RH4 1NZ	882 052	Golf club
Bray Estates	278/280 High Street, RH4 1QT	740 837	Professional property consultants
Browns of Dorking	182 High Street, RH4		
Bullmores	Old Printers Yard, 156 South Street, RH4 2HF	880 880	Chartered accountants
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David Cowan	114 South Street, RH4 1AW	886 622	Solicitors
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Downsman Ltd	156 High Street, RH4 1BQ	880 110	Solicitors and notaries
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Woolcock Partnership Ltd, The	Hulsta Studios, 120 South Street, RH4 2EU	880 330	Furniture retailer and installation
Wyevale Country Gardens	Reigate Road, RH5 1NP	884 845	Garden centre

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Amis de Gouvieux, Les	Friends of Boxhill	Ockley Parish Council
Ashcombe School	Friends of Gouvieux	Sir Paul Beresford MP & Lady Beresford
Betchworth Parish Council	Friends of Holmwood	The Dorking Advertiser
Brockham Green Village Society	Headley Parish Council	The Guildford Society
Brockham Parish Council	Holmwood Parish Council	The Reigate Society
Buckland Parish Council	Leigh Parish Council	The Surrey Advertiser
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Charlwood Parish Council	Mole Valley District Council	Wotton Parish Council
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