

NEWSLETTER

of the Dorking & District Preservation Society

No. 54

Autumn 2009

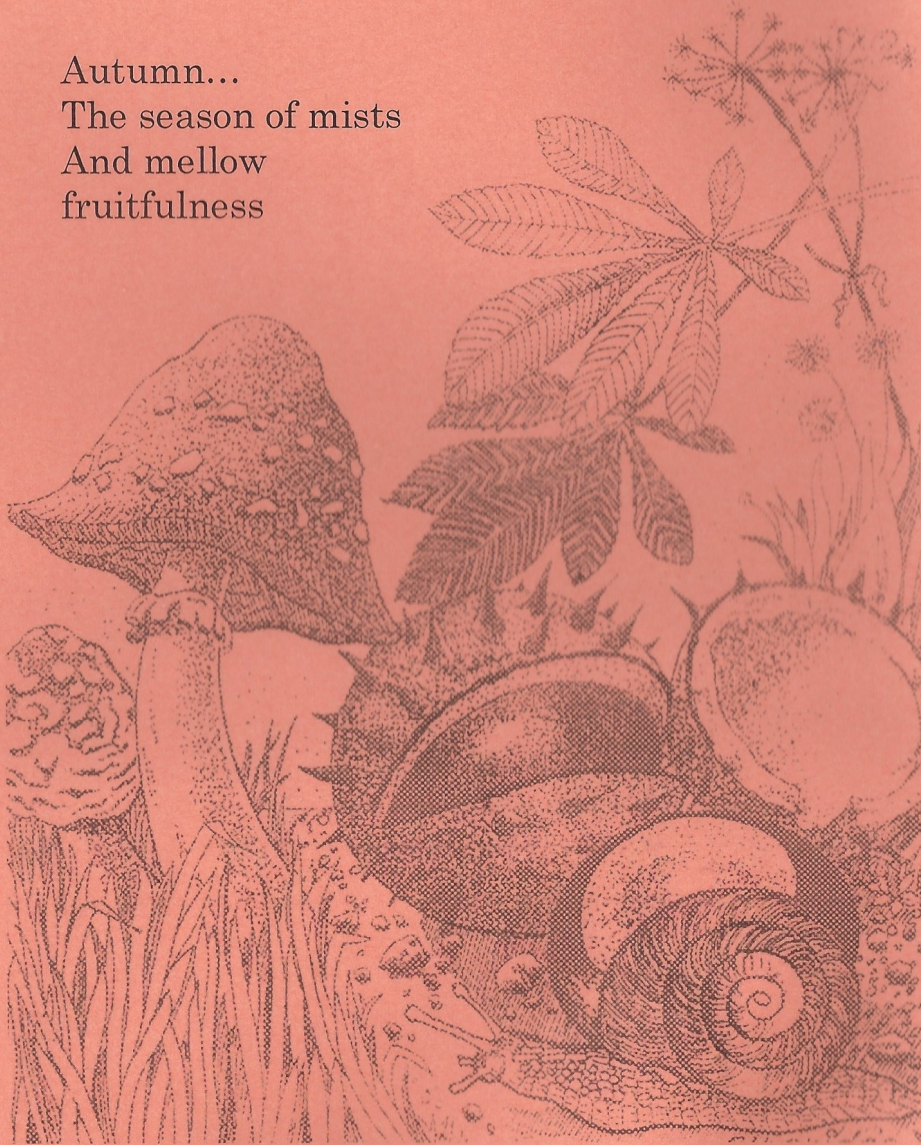
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And mellow
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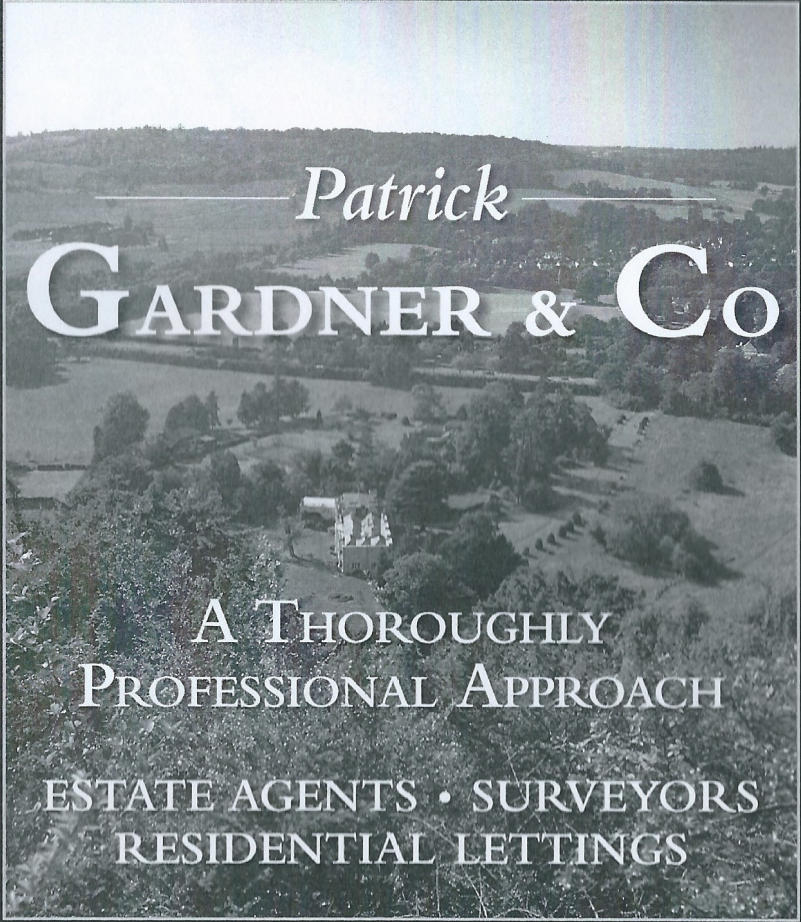
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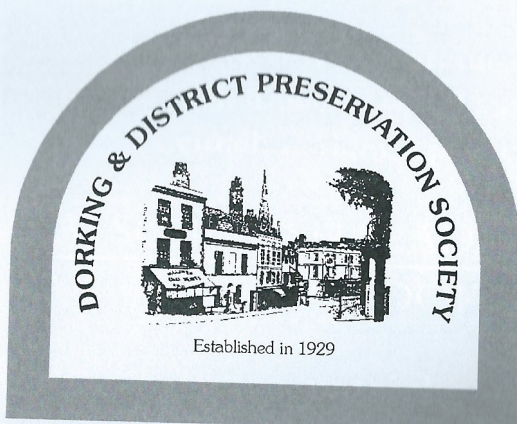
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NEWSLETTER

of the Dorking & District Preservation Society

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NEWSLETTER 54: Autumn 2009
Free to members

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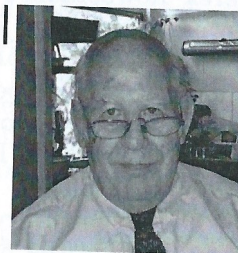
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editorial



Before I start in on the meat of this editorial, thank you to all of you who wrote to me via 'Snail-Mail' and e-mail. As you will see on the Letters page, most start with how much they like the Newsletter, followed by a 'BUT'. The majority of them commented upon my musings about local government. Continuing with that theme, I recently read about things other Councils are doing to help their residents, by being innovative and improving their services and helping their communities in the recession.

Windsor and Maidenhead have increased their recycling scheme by rewarding residents with points for their efforts, which can then be spent with local shops and businesses. The scheme was imported from the US where it has been an outstanding success.

Essex County have spent £1.5m helping small post offices survive, and could set up its own bank to help local businesses.

In Devon County, the leader of the Council and his deputy have cut their pay to that of five years ago. Basic allowances for councillors were also frozen and aides no longer receive 'special payments'.

I could go on, but it is obvious that all over the country, County and District councils are coming up with a range of schemes to not only cut

costs, but also to help their communities.

On a related matter, the impasse about Pump Corner could be resolved if SCC Highways would introduce a 'Naked Streets' scheme. Plans are being drawn up by councils throughout the country to strip roads of traffic lights, kerbs and white lines. The Sunday Times says that the concept works on the basis that motorists are more likely to drive carefully if they use their own judgement. The DfT is to issue planning advice later this year.

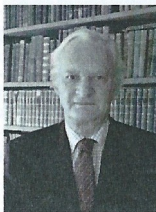
This issue is stuffed full of news, plus articles commemorating centenaries of two famous ex-residents: George Meredith the author, and the organist Dr William Cole. I also have written a piece about 'Words'.

All the latest about the museum rebuild and participation in Heritage Weekend is also included, along with Derek Rowbotham's report on how the Society, in collaboration with CPRE, managed to get the MVDC's Core Strategy amended with regard to the Green Belt.

Although it is still three months away, Happy Yuletide, and let's hope the New Year will bring better news.

Hank Etheridge, Editor

chairman's message



Mole Valley's new Core Strategy

We are currently congratulating ourselves on our successful efforts, jointly with the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, to improve the procedures which were being proposed by the Planning Department of Mole Valley for tackling the possibility that one day soon Green Belt land might have to be declassified in order to allow sufficient houses to be built to meet Government targets for our area. The criteria were wrong, and the potential sites the Council had listed were in no ranking order. 'Windfall sites', the major source both historically and in prospect, i.e. sites that come up for redevelopment, had been disallowed by some bureaucratic fiat in central government. Derek Rowbotham, Hank Etheridge and I worked jointly on the problem, but the bulk of the credit must go to Derek. The government inspector, who sat in judgement having read all the local objections, got the point and re-wrote a section of the Strategy. If land does have to be removed from the Green Belt for housing, the Strategy now lays down sensible criteria and procedures for making decisions and choices properly.

Derek Rowbotham's article in this newsletter explains it all more fully and much more plainly. We are glad that we have been able to help bring about an important change in the rules that the District Council will have to follow.

I find that, in retrospect, much of my time in the past few months has been involved in monitoring the progress of the Museum. An application to demolish the current Museum is at present with the Planning and Development Committee of Mole Valley, which is scheduled to reach a decision in the middle of September. (This is being written on 6 September.) The remaining contents of the Museum will then join all the other items already in storage, and plans for the rebuild we expect will be presented to the planning officers of Mole Valley soon thereafter. We have enough money for the rebuild but need something of the order of £50,000 for refurbishing the interior. We will be starting our fundraising campaign as soon as permission for the rebuild has been granted.

One of the irritants with which Mole Valley people should not need to put up is the frequently unacceptable condition of the district's roads and of their furniture. The culprit is the County Highways Authority, so it is not a complaint of Mole Valley people alone but of everyone in the county. I was reminded of this by a paragraph in the latest newsletter of the Reigate Society, whose Chairman, Colin

Burbidge, an old friend, was drawing the attention of his Society's members to a website which I presume is a new one. He writes: "There is a website which makes complaining about many of these (i.e. highway) issues simple: www.fixmystreet.com. It is much easier to use than the SCC website and I commend its use. The more complaints received by the guilty authority, the more likely it is that some action will be taken. Give it a try".

I have inspected the website myself, and can confirm that it is indeed easy to use. While about it, however, you may like to visit the County Council's own website, www.surreycc.gov.uk, and click on 'Report It' on the home page. The County Council site will ask for more information than does Fix-MyStreet, 'dimensions of pot-hole', for instance, but the receipt of information is no guarantee for action. The reported pot-hole may remain untreated for a month or so, and you hear no more from the Council. Click on 'E-mail me updates' on FixMyStreet, and you will be informed of progress. The more people who complain, the better.

Martin Wedgwood

URGENTLY WANTED

MUSEUM CHAIRMAN

A fascinating opportunity to chair a vibrant committee and oversee the new Museum's revamp. Some experience in management would be an asset.

MINUTE SECRETARY

If you are a retired lady or gentleman or self-employed, with some experience of working with Board Directors or Senior Executives, computer literate and have a desire to help in the work of the DDPS, contact Sir Martin Wedgwood at the number below.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Responsible for subscriptions, compiling lists of members and organising distribution of Newsletter. Some computer skills necessary. This is a senior position reporting directly to the Chairman. Contact: Sir Martin Wedgwood, 01306 889941.

COUNTRYSIDE OFFICER

If you are passionate about the beautiful countryside around Dorking, and would like to make a difference, this is the job for you.

ROADS & TRANSPORT OFFICER

An important part of the Society's remit, attending meetings about Highways, Railroads and Airports, and reporting back to the Council.

For more details, please contact Sir Martin Wedgwood on 01306 889941

Email: martin.wedgwood@ddps.org.uk

planning report

The extensions that we liked so much at Little Abbott's Farm in Betchworth have been approved.

We looked again at the drawings for the Vine Court extensions in Chalkpit Lane which were refused by MVDC. If you remember, I said in the summer issue of the Newsletter that we didn't know why. This time, we visited the site and took photographs and then compared them with the drawings. After a deal of discussion, we came to the conclusion that we had been over-enthusiastic and decided not to support the Appeal. I report this to show that we don't have all the answers when it comes to Planning.

We went to Box Hill and looked at the site of a proposal to enlarge a double garage to include a boat store and a games room on a first floor. It would have overshadowed a neighbouring house and was in conflict with DUP9 of the Local Plan. It was refused but, a week or so later, the applicant reapplied with the same building but moving it away from the neighbour's property. We again wrote saying that it still conflicted with DUP9.

The Old Library/Fire House at the westward end of West Street, about which we wrote approvingly, has been approved.

An application to improve and enlarge a listed Farmhouse at Woodstock Farm in Betchworth landed on our table at Pippbrook, and which, 'like the Curate's egg', was good in parts. We heartily approved the proposal to re-establish a thatched roof on the main building, but meta-

phorically threw up our hands in horror at a proposed modern extension. Now, we do not object to the principle of modern extensions to listed buildings, but they must sit comfortably against the older building and try to reflect some aspect of it. What was proposed was a black slate cube which was in total contrast to the mature building. We conveyed these comments to Mole Valley, and the application was withdrawn. We understand that a new proposal will be with us soon.

While on listed buildings, we also looked at a proposal to replace an existing conservatory on listed Priory Cottage in Mid Holmwood with a 'wood-stained effect' UPVC off-the-shelf structure. We strongly objected and recommended that the new conservatory should be in REAL wood.

We are currently looking at an application in Westcott which proposes to install an extension to the rear of a property, with which we are reasonably happy. However, part of the application is to colour-render the frontage onto the street in a tint of yellow. We have taken photographs of the adjoining houses, all of which have coloured render of different hues. Westcott is not St. Ives, so we think that one of these colours should be used.

There is a new category in some Planning Applications: PLAH. When this is used, only the original letters of comment or complaint will be accepted by the Inspectorate, should the application go to Appeal.

Hank Etheridge
Planning Chairman

Mole Valley Core Development Strategy



by Derek Rowbotham

For at least the last two years, despite our unremitting opposition, the Council has proposed that sites in the Green Belt (GB) be identified to meet the required numbers of dwellings allocated to MV by the South East Plan (SEP). The testing time for this assertion came with the examination in public conducted by the independent Inspector from the Inspectorate Agency in May. She found that although the Strategic Housing Availability Assessment (SHLAA) contained the proposition that some GB land will be needed in the plan period, the critical policy CS1 was too vague and indecisive in positively identifying what parts of the general GB would be needed and when this incursion into the GB would be required in the plan. Consequently, both Policies CS1 and CS2 were amended by the Inspector, to review the GB boundary, but not taking GB land until about 2016-17. Before this date, a Land Allocations Development Plan Document (LADPD) should be adopted before the end of 2011. This will place in the plan a policy mechanism to manage GB land delivery if needed.

The Society, in its evidence, pointed out the failure in the plan to give a clear direction as to which parts of the GB will be subject to review or, indeed, indicate how or when a review of its boundaries would be triggered. We maintained that to justify the special circumstances, underpinning use of the GB for housing, there must be more

precision in policies CS1 and CS2 to accommodate the net 3,760 dwellings imposed on the district by the SEP, amended for completions in Table 1 to provide net 2,743 dwellings, or 161 dwellings per annum. The finding of the Inspector, in relation to the indicative Housing Trajectory for the plan period to 2026, shows that sufficient land is available in built-up areas before this date, to meet the District's 5 year housing requirements for the period to 2014. This means that there is the potential of using previously developed land in built-up areas sufficient for requirements until 2015-2016.

Given our concern about invading the GB, we are delighted that the Inspector found that only after this date, from 2016-2017, should it be necessary to develop land that is in the GB to meet requirements until the end of the plan period to 2026, and this will have to be dealt with, site by site, to satisfy the exceptional criteria needed to ensure that a proper use in an area of the protected GB is acceptable for housing. Any shortfall of housing land before 2011 will be met by using the reserve sites listed under Policy HSG 6 of the MV Local Plan 2000. Again these sites are subject to extensive public concern and will have to be justified by assessments that will support planning permission. So the extensive and well-directed amendments in the contentious area of changing GB boundaries, required by the Inspector, will apply much needed precision to CS policy and will elucidate and achieve the aims we have been advocating.

Finally, the Inspector conceded that it would be justified to include in the plan's Core Strategy an allowance for housing development which will be built before 2019 on sites that have not been identified in the SHLAA. Along with the Surrey Branch of the CPRE we

insisted that it would be reasonable to count such an allowance to meet the housing requirement to 2026, given the history of contributions to housing delivery in regard to the supply of sites covering 1-4 and 5-9 dwellings. The Inspector said that this contribution from 'windfall sites' will reduce the residual housing land requirement over the period to 2026. In turn, this would determine how much, and precisely when, land taken from the GB in the Land Allocations DPD will need to be developed.

Since the Inspector's Report was issued, we have submitted the Society's comments on the suggested contents and scope of two important documents issued by MV in July, namely the Land Allocations Development Plan Document (LADPD) and the Dorking Town Centre Area Action Plan. In relation to the LADPD the Society will reconfirm our view that the use of land for housing in the Green Belt detracts from an essential element of planning policy that has permanence and which, in controlling the spread of development in areas that should be kept open, must be maintained as far as can be seen in the future. We do not accept that individual and separated sites in the GB can be brought forward for development without this process being subject to the most detailed examination to determine its acceptability.



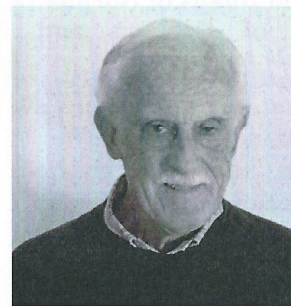
Established in 1929

NEWS & VIEWS

New Officers join Council

In response to our appeal for new people to take over vacant offices on our Council, we welcome Sandra Grant and Francis Bennett.

Sandra Grant, who is Dorking's Town Manager, becomes our Publicity Officer. She has a wide background of knowledge and experience in marketing and advertising. She also organises exhibitions and has many contacts in newspapers, local radio and TV.



Francis Bennett, a keen walker of the high-ways, by-ways, foot-paths and bridleways of our area, hit the ground

running – or should I say 'Fast Walking', and had a report ready for our last Council meeting. He told members that he had met with Claire Saunders, Rights of Way Officer at SCC, to discuss relevant points about our footpaths, etc., and how the Society can help.

Below, he outlines the actions that he and members of the Society can take.

To report any dangerous or broken styles. These are currently being replaced by gates as they fall into disrepair.

Report any paths obstructed by fallen trees, that are overgrown, obscured by crops or any other obstructions.

Report broken or missing or facing the wrong way fingerposts or way-marks.

Report anything that prevents free access to Footpaths, Bridleways or Byways.

If you come across any of the above, telephone Francis on 01306 884152 or e-mail: henry.bennett3@btinternet.com.

Best Development Competition

The Judges for the Competition, our Peter Mills and Mole Valley's Peter Mills, along with Beryl Higgins, Cllr Malcolm Johnson and Cllr Caroline Salmon have completed their inspection of the candidate properties and made their decision in late September.

Awards will be made at the Society's Autumn Meeting on October 22.

continued overleaf

More on 'Naked Streets'

Stripping out safety features on roads was pioneered in Holland and has since been tested with pilot schemes in London, Brighton and Ashford in Kent. Removing some road markings and railings in Kensington High Street, west London, led to accidents falling by 44% over two years. Tony Vanderbilt, author of the book 'Traffic', said: "By taking away the assumption that one has nothing to fear, or look for, at an intersection, and replacing it with a system that requires active vigilance, one can arguably reduce the most serious crashes".

NUM3ERS

13,000 Small rural settlements to be designated 'Protected Areas' across England.

49% of children between ages 5 and 10 never play outside in their streets.
Source: Charity, Living Street

60% increase in discount retailers on UK High Streets in past two years.
Source: British Property Federation

335 is the number of Councils that have seen emissions fall in their area, according to latest government climate change figures. These calculate the impact of energy used by homes, businesses and road transport.

MICKLEHAM PARISH MAGAZINE

Celebrates its 25th Birthday this year.

Winter programme of the Local History Group

Dec. 1 Thomas Cubitt – Master Builder *Mike Hallett*

Jan. 5 The archaeological dig at High Ashurst *Abby Guinness
Community archaeologist*

Feb. 2 Witches, Warlocks and Wellingtons: ritual protection of the home *Dr. Janet Pennington
ex-archivist, Lancing College*

**Sat. March 20 2010
Winter Outing to Down House (Home of Charles Darwin)**
Meet at MVDC at 8.45am

March 3 The Dukes of Norfolk, the Manor of Dorking and Arundel castle archives
Heather Warne, Arundel Castle archives

April 6 Lucy, her worms, Charles Darwin & Russell Wallace. *Professor Richard Selley*

Note that this meeting commences at 7.45. It will be preceded by a short AGM commencing at 7.30

Meetings are held at the Friend's Meeting House, Butter Hill, Dorking on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. Non-members welcome: £1 at the door



New Dorking Museum and Heritage Centre

By Sue Tombs

Dorking Museum closed at Christmas 2008, and is now nearly empty. This is thanks to a lot of hard work by volunteers and to Adrian White, the President of the Dorking & District Preservation Society, who has allowed us to store the artefacts in two of his buildings.

The next step is to demolish the existing museum building and rebuild with a steel-framed shell (we purchased the freehold of the site in 2007). This has all been made possible by the use of a generous bequest of £500,000 from Owen Russ, a long-standing member of DDPS, who died in 2003. Out of this money we were able to buy the freehold of the Museum.

But to proceed to the final stage we will require additional funds.

We are going to establish a new Dorking Museum and Heritage Centre. This will be designed to appeal to people of all ages and interests, and will celebrate the rich history of the town and local villages. It is our aim to bring the past up to date and to make our new Museum an important focus for both the local population and visitors.

We plan to introduce more contemporary and inviting displays and exhibits and make the extensive archives more accessible, by moving them over into the new

building. But we need your help. We need to raise funds for the displays themselves, to make them bright, modern and fun for children as well as adults, and for the fitting out of the building with shelving, storage areas, exhibition boards, retail shop fittings, etc.

Unlike many local Museums, we receive little direct support from our Council, so we look to members of the local community, both businesses and individuals, to help us to develop and maintain a wonderful new Museum and Heritage Centre for the area of which we can all be proud.

We hope you will be able to help us to bring our plans to life, and make a real difference to the town.

A Fund Raising Appeal will be launched in the late autumn. Below is a donation form, should you be able to support the Appeal now.

Yes, I would like to be a benefactor of the new DDPS Dorking Museum & Heritage Centre.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

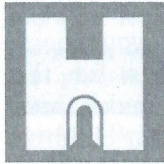
I enclose a cheque for £.....
Payable to DDPS Museum Reconstruction A/C
address to The Treasurer, DDPS, 82 Ashcombe Rd, Dorking RH4 1LX

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GIFT AID! I would like the Dorking & District Preservation Society to reclaim the Tax on my donation, that I make having paid an amount of UK income tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax reclaimed.

SIGNED.....

DATE.....



Keeping The Museum Flag flying

By Fred Plant

Because of the ongoing preparations for rebuilding, it was the first time for many years that the Museum was unable to welcome visitors to the West Street premises during Heritage Weekend. However, off-site displays within the theme *Memories and Mysteries* were mounted in St Martin's Walk and MVDC offices at Pippbrook.

In a St Martin's Walk shop window, Museum Education Officer, Bette Phillips, arranged a quiz for children aged from about eight to eighty! Questions related to the advances in word processing from the era of early typewriters to modern computers. The answers were displayed in the week following Heritage Weekend.

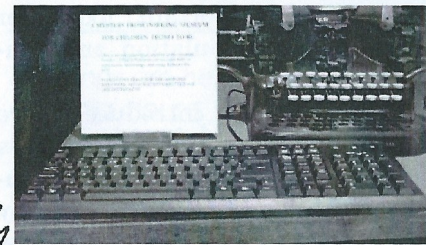
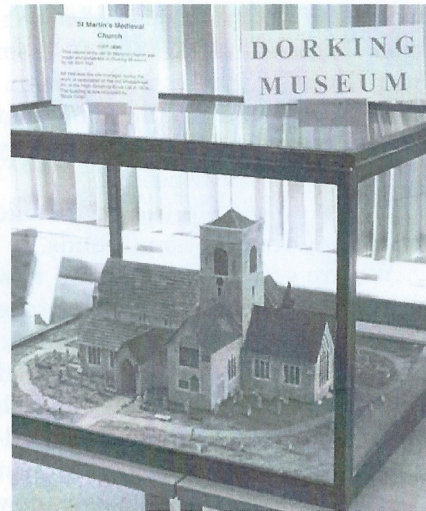
At Pippbrook, the emphasis was more on memories rather than mysteries, as artefacts selected for display illustrated episodes from Dorking's past.



(Below) A close-up of the model to the Medieval St Martin's Church, one of the many exhibits at MVDC.

(Bottom left) Also displayed at MVDC, the 'golden' sculpture of a Bull and a Calf.

(Bottom right) The contrast of yesteryear and today's word processing and the subject of a children's competition.



Models of St Martin's medieval Church and the Old Market House were shown, together with a sign bearing the Coat of Arms of the Dorking Urban District Council which was absorbed, along with other local authorities, into Mole Valley District Council in 1974. Gift Aid donation forms were available for visitors who wished to contribute to the *Fitting Out* Fund.

Museum Sales Manager, Mollie Jenson, is also keeping the flag flying by ensuring that Museum publications are always available for purchase from Fothergill's Coffee Shop in St Martin's Walk, and at other venues as and when opportunities occur.

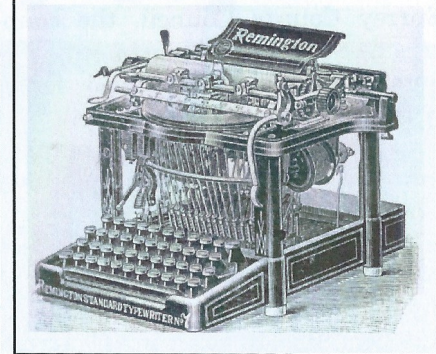
(Below) A display of museum photo's and literature in a shop window in St Martin's Walk. Publications can be bought in nearby Fothergill's Coffee Shop.



PICTURES BY FRED PLANT

The income generated is a welcome addition to Museum funds.

The Oliver typewriter, pictured below, was 'State-of-the-Art' word processing way back in 1904. Under it is an illustration of the Remington Typewriter of 1870, designed by C.L. Sholes in the USA, and the precursor of every other typewriter until the 1970's when Word Processors arrived on the scene.



Surrey Wildlife Trust Norbury Park Update



Graham Manning
Area Manager East Surrey

In 2009, Surrey Wildlife Trust celebrates its 50th anniversary, and I personally achieved the milestone of 20 years as a Ranger for Norbury Park, not bad for someone who first envisaged five years maximum. However, it has taken this long to achieve some of those large and long-term projects, and to see the Park's management come together for the benefit of wildlife, the public who use the site, and for the three tenant farmers who have to make a living. This challenge is what still excites me, and the many facets connected with the Park keep my enthusiasm undiminished.

On the subject of change, my role over the years has altered from Ranger to Area Ranger, and then, two years ago, to Area Manager East Surrey. Having started with Surrey County Council, the countryside services department was outsourced, and we joined forces with Surrey Wildlife Trust.

In East Surrey, we manage land on behalf of Surrey County Council, Mole Valley District Council and the Surrey Wildlife Trust's Nature Reserves. There are 40 sites, ranging from 4 hectares to 160 hectares (10 acres to 400 acres).

I have a team of four Rangers for the management of these varied sites. Some sites are high-profile, public, open spaces, and others are nature reserves with limited public access. All are managed with the aim of enhancing the habitats and increasing biodiversity, whilst maintaining public access and interpretation.

My role as Manager is to overview this management and ensure it is consistent within Health and Safety policies. This central overview is critical, especially when dealing with outside grant aid and matching resources available to best suit the job in hand.

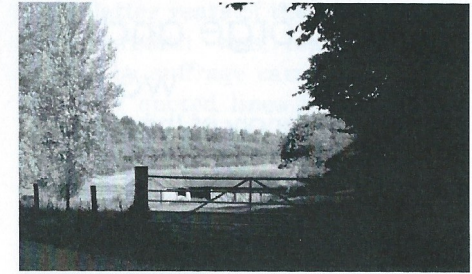
Nocturnal badgers coming out to forage in Norbury Park



Anyway, back to Norbury. The next 'ten year management plan' is just being finalised, and continues in similar vein to previous ones. The main difference is a greater emphasis on the SSSI (*Site of Special Scientific Interest*) compartments. Natural England, the government body which designates these SSSI's, needs to get 80% of the sites in favourable condition by 2010.

Grassland areas have all been extended to their practical limits, and require scrub management more than removal. Forage harvesting and mowing are taking place, but long term grazing with cattle is the aim eventually. Surrey Wildlife Trust has set up its own grazing project, building up stock numbers so we can more effectively graze our land holdings in the future.

Norbury Park has a lot of woodland in various states of management, and it is in these areas that we are currently concentrating our efforts. Projects include coppicing, ride management, thinning operations, felling of economic softwood and replanting with deciduous trees. Monitoring and survey work is also undertaken to provide valuable information as to the condition of various species and habitats, to ensure their long term survival.



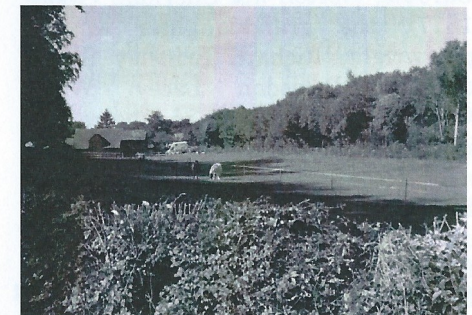
In all this work, we are indebted to the input and efforts of volunteers, and hold regular events at Norbury.

If you would like to get involved, please contact Anna Fosbury, Volunteer Development Officer, on 01483 395464. As I hope you can appreciate, all this work is long term but invaluable in terms of biodiversity, and will keep some of us, and the organisations for whom we work, busy for many more years to come.

Scenes from Norbury Park, and an illustration of Brer Fox going out for his lunch.



Working steam engine at the Mill, Norbury Park.



George and the women

The Centenary of the death of George Meredith of Box Hill



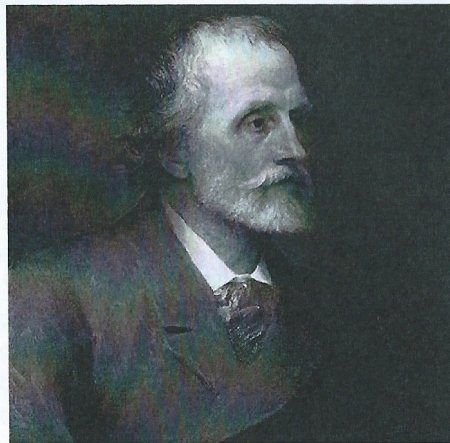
by Kathy Atherton

The poet, playwright, prolific novelist and public intellectual, George Meredith (1828-1909), of Flint Cottage at the base of Box Hill, died in May 1909. Once an esteemed literary figure, his reputation has suffered somewhat in the intervening hundred years. Yet, though his fiction may strike readers as dated in style, his themes were ahead of their time: it has been surmised that it was his advocacy of women's rights in particular that deprived him of a permanent place in the nation's memory via a burial in Poets' Corner.

Meredith came to Box Hill on his marriage to his second wife, Marie Vulliamy of Mickleham, and it was there that he wrote his best-known work, *Diana of the Crossways*. The novel is based on the life of his friend Caroline Norton *nee* Sheridan (1808-1877), the granddaughter of the playwright, Richard Brinsley Sheridan of Polesdon Lacey. When Caroline married in 1835, she ceased in law, as a married woman, to have a separate legal identity to that of her husband. When her marriage broke down and she was barred from the family home she was, therefore, unable to take legal action against

her husband, either for money or access to her children. Her campaign for the right of separated and divorced women to have access to their children resulted in the Custody of Infants Act 1839, which gave custody of children under seven to the mother and access rights thereafter. Further battles over her husband's responsibility for her debts and her entitlement to her own earnings resulted in the Matrimonial Causes Act 1857, which gave separated women access to a financial settlement. (The issue was taken to its logical conclusion with the Married Woman's Property Act 1882.) Such legislation represented the first assaults on the patriarchal legal system.

Working from a chalet in the garden of Flint Cottage, at the foot of Box Hill, Meredith based *Diana of the Crossways* (1885) on the events of Norton's life, setting it at Crossways Farm in Abinger. Sexual politics were a staple feature of his literary works, where strong female characters like *Diana* operated as advocates for women's rights.



Norton was not Meredith's only formidable female friend. He was also close to *The Times* newspaper's first female permanent member of staff, Flora Shaw (later Lady Lugard, 1852-1929). Living at Parkhurst Cottages (later Little Parkhurst) in Abinger, Shaw was appointed *The Times*' first female colonial editor in 1893. The highest paid female journalist of her day, she was one of the greatest journalists of her time.

Meredith was also responsible for introducing the formidable 'Brackenbury trio' – Hilda (1832-1918), Georgina (1865-1949) and Marie (1886-1946) – to Peaslake where they set up home. Hilda's husband (and father of her nine children), Major-General Sir Charles Brackenbury, had been a war correspondent for *The Times* during the Franco-Prussian war, and was a close friend of Meredith's. Flora Shaw, a close relative, had worked for the family as a governess/housekeeper, and the Major-General had encouraged her writing. This prompted her to send her first novel to Meredith for comment. It was these local connections that saw the widowed Hilda and her daughters move to Brackenside in Peaslake. Georgina and Marie Brackenbury, both of whom were artists, were militant members of Mrs Pankhurst's Women's Social and Political Union and were protagonists in some of the movement's most daring and celebrated stunts. In 1912, they were joined in prison by their mother, Hilda, who, at the age of seventy-nine, threw a stone at a public building.

With property rights achieved, the vote was the great women's issue

of the latter years of the 19th century, and Meredith was regarded with respect by suffrage campaigners who regularly quoted lines from his novels. A column in the *Dorking Advertiser* in 1912 – probably by Isabel Hecht of the Redhill and Reigate WSPU – references his 'Ballad of Fair Ladies in Revolt', claiming that his every novel preached emancipation.

Although the elderly Meredith had sent a letter of support about the imprisonment of a suffragette from South Holmwood, he was no militant. As suffragette tactics grew more violent, he asserted that militant demonstrations were a flawed tactic, and that women should concentrate instead on the proving of their intellect.

On Meredith's death in 1909, at the height of suffragette campaigning, a burial in Westminster Abbey might have been expected. Many believe that it was espousal of the women's cause – despite his opposition to militancy – as much as his religious unorthodoxy that prejudiced his chances. Instead, he was buried in nearby Dorking Cemetery. He was not forgotten by those who cause he had championed, however. According to reports in the local papers, numerous suffrage groups, both militant and non-militant, attended his funeral and laid wreaths in commemoration of his life. Nor, whilst the recognition of women's common humanity remains a contentious issue in some parts of the world, should we forget the part his novels played in the fight against injustice.

Dr William Cole

By Martin Ellis

When *Cyril Knight* left St Martin's Church, Dorking, in 1930 to become Organist at St Mary's Primrose Hill in London, the Vicar and PCC of St Martin's Church, in its wisdom, appointed William Cole, a young musician, aged 21, who had just left the Royal Academy of Music. The foresight of those good people bore fruit tenfold in not twenty. Although Dr Cole moved on twenty four years later, in 1954, to the *Chapel of the Royal Victorian Order, the Queen's Chapel Savoy*, his musical influence was to be felt in Dorking to the day he died in 1997. In 1931, William Cole was appointed the Music Master at Dorking Grammar School, a post he retained until he returned to his alma mater, the *Royal Academy of Music*, in the 1940's as a much respected member of the professional staff.

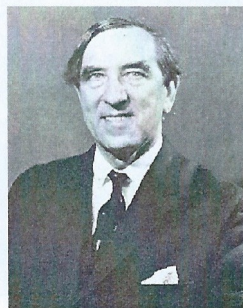
He conducted a number of the choral societies who participated in the Leith Hill Musical Festival, including Epsom and the forerunner of the present Dorking Choral. Over the years, he became a close friend of Ralph Vaughan Williams, which led to Dr Cole being appointed Assistant Conductor of the LHMF in 1948, succeeding the great man as Conductor in 1954, a post he then held for over a decade.

In 1962, the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music appointed Dr Cole as the Secretary. In this post, he revolutionised the well-known Theory examinations, producing the little red book which all aspiring instrumentalists must have used

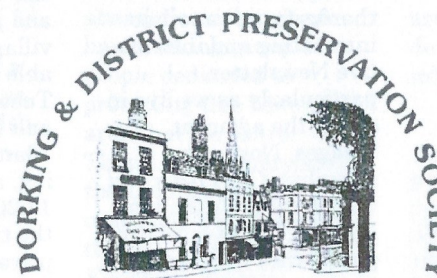
when preparing for that all-important Grade 5 Theory exam, the gate through which all have to pass to arrive at the Grade 6, Practical examination.

Much else could be said about Dr William Cole, but this can be left until Sunday, October 11, when his Centenary will be celebrated at a special service of Choral Evensong in St Martin's Church, commencing at 3pm. Various tributes will be paid to this very special man, who worked tirelessly to achieve high standards of performance, both in St Martin's Church and within the LHMF. *Dr Harry Bramma* has composed an anthem for the occasion which will receive its first performance, and the choir of St Martin's will sing the anthem Dr Cole wrote for the rededication of the organ in 1933 – *Awake my Lute*.

It is hoped that the church will be filled for this very special occasion. A plaque in memory of Dr Cole will be dedicated, and a collection taken for the *William Cole Church Music Trust*, established two years ago with the aim of helping young organists and singers to further their careers within the orbit of St Martin's Church. The Trust has appointed its 2nd Organ Scholar, *Hugo Bell*, who is in the second year at the age of 17. Recently, it appointed a Choral Scholar, *Stephen Fort*, who is 16 years old.



Dr William Cole



Established in 1929

Autumn Meeting

Thursday, October 22, 2009

At 7.30pm

In the Christian Centre, Dorking

The meeting will start with the presentation by our President Mr Adrian White CBE. DL of the awards for

THE BEST DEVELOPMENT COMPETITION

There will then be an interval for refreshments

Followed by an illustrated talk by

Sandra Grant

Dorking Town Centre Manager

On the subject

A day in the life of the Dorking Town Centre Manager

Members of the Society are welcome to bring their own guests

Dear Sir,
 Firstly, our sincere thanks for yet another interesting and informative Newsletter, particularly as we live in one of the adjacent villages. Now, some thoughts: *Car Parks and Car Parking*. Although Dorking has several car parks, they are clearly inadequate to the needs of the town, so may I suggest two extensions to existing parks which would not spoil the look of the town. Firstly, Dorking Halls car park, which backs onto a steep slope that would screen what I am about to suggest to some extent. A two or three storey building over the whole site would provide a large number of parking spaces. The car park entered from Wathen Road could also have a one, possibly two, storey car park built upon it. This, I hope, would make life a bit easier for the residents of Hart, Rothes and Ansell Roads, for whom I have great sympathy. Their homes were built when few people had cars, and so did not require garages. Now, many of these people own cars but cannot park outside their homes because of interlopers. Could not the residents be rented cones to put in the road outside their properties to restrict unwanted parking? It would also make Hart and Rothes Roads safer. *Public Transport*. Can

some thought be given to this matter? Newdigate, and probably some other villages, have no reasonable public transport. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Friday, a bus at 10am takes us to Dorking, and brings us back at 12.20pm. For the rest of the time, there is only private hire, which is expensive for those on low incomes. Because my wife and I are over ninety, I have ceased to drive, and possibly can afford to hire taxis; but, for many, entertainments in Dorking cannot be thought of. Mr Prescott, of our present government, encouraged the population to get rid of their cars, but did not create an adequate public transport system. We, of an older generation, have not, and are too old to learn these new tricks, so please be patient with us who prefer 'old-fashioned' methods.

Colin P. Hales

You are never too old to learn, Mr Hales, but I know what you mean. *Ed.*

Dear Editor,
 I was interested to read your article 'Facing some Facts' in the Summer '09 DDPS Newsletter. I broadly agree with all of it, especially with the suggestions for the type of shop that would be welcome. However, I must point out that

LETTERS CONTINUED

Dorking does not need a wet fish shop on Fridays. There is an excellent fish stall in the Friday Market, which has been coming for many years from Littlehampton, bringing us the local catch, and also a good selection from Billingsgate. We also have a very good wet fish counter in Waitrose, with a wonderful selection every day. We don't need a 'one-day' shop.

Ann Wade

I have to get out more! *Ed.*

Dear Editor,
 I have just finished reading the latest Newsletter and would like to endorse Neil Riley's comments regarding both the enjoyment and interest obtained from the magazine, and also his comments regarding communicating by e-mail, which I too use for most correspondence. I have enjoyed all the articles in the Newsletter, although the word 'gotten' in one did grate slightly. It is archaic and these days used mainly by the Americans, although I have seen it in other Papers and Journals recently. What is wrong with our more usual 'got'? A minor complaint – I'm

nit-picking. We are so lucky to have such a go-ahead, flourishing and hardworking group of people dedicated to protecting this beautiful area that we share. Thank you to everyone on the Committee and connected with running the DDPS.
Elizabeth Holmes

See my article 'A word's worth' on page 26. *Ed.*

Dear Editor,
 I have been reading your article 'facing some facts'. The penultimate paragraph refers to suggestions for stores which would be welcome in Dorking, one being 'a small car accessory shop'. There were a number of letters written to the Dorking Advertiser when the Dorking Tyre shop was threatened with closure. Subsequently, the shop was closed and planning permission given to redevelop the area at the rear of the very useful shop. The letters were ones of objection, both to the closing of the business, and the kind of development. Obviously, these plans have fallen foul of the credit crunch, and the property stands empty instead of continuing with a healthy car accessory business. Where was the DDPS when planning permis-

sion was given, especially as it is a Conservation area. Could it be that the developers had undue influence?

Ruth Hughes

The area in back of this shop is a mess. The houses planned are well designed and enhance what was an industrial slum. My committee, in concert with the conservation officer, recommended acceptance of the first application. We have done the same with the latest application that has now been withdrawn. Incidentally, Halfords have returned to selling car accessories along with their bicycles. *Ed.*

Dear Sir,
 You asked for letters and mine is in complete contrast to that of your previous correspondent. I write lots of letters, believing that the recipients of the personal ones like a letter dropping through their letterbox. I also like to hand-write these even though, I understand, some people find it difficult to decipher my writing. I am old-fashioned, and do not have a computer with the e-mail facility, but I do possess a word processor on which I write formal letters where copies can be made if necessary. I abhor the abuse of our beautiful English language in e-mails: 'ka' for

LETTERS CONTINUED

car, for example. I appreciate Mr Riley's difficulties with stamps and posting. E-mails may be fast and simple but for me, the whole exercise of communicating with friends is a pleasure from start to finish. Secondly, I disagree wholly with those people who don't want the prospective oil drilling in the Coldharbour area. As I understand it, everything possible will be done to keep inconvenience to a minimum during the drilling. Memories are short, but the road from Coldharbour had to be closed for a time after the landslip a few years ago. Oil resources worldwide are dwindling, and it takes millions of years for oil to form. How will these objectors get from their homes to wherever without petrol or diesel if and when oil becomes scarce? Perhaps this letter will provoke further correspondence.

Muriel Woolven

As a calligrapher, I also like writing letters by hand. My daughter, aged sixty, but still calling me 'papa', and I still correspond this way. Regarding your last paragraph, talk about 'cats among pigeons'. But, it's a free world, and I will fight to

the death to preserve everyone's right to express their opinions. *Ed.*

Dear Sir,
Firstly, may I say how much I enjoy your articles in the Society's Newsletter. And now, a local development, causing me some concern, would seem to warrant your attention. I refer to the proposed redevelopment of the Clubhouse on Brockham Big Field. I attended a public meeting there in November last. The Hall was packed, but I soon realised that the majority present were Club members. Invitations to local residents had been kept to a minimum. The presentation was very slick. Concerns raised by residents were passed over. The main concern expressed was that the Big Field was a Brockham facility, but was in danger of being turned into a S.E. England Sports venue. The plans for rebuilding the Clubhouse included a Banqueting Room – which could be hired out for functions. This could cause noise and disturbance after midnight. Another concern raised was that the Dorking Rugby Club now controls the Big Field and, I assume, will have the biggest 'say' in Brockham Big Field Community

Sports Ltd. After the meeting, I picked up two 'Brief Histories' of the DRFC and Big Field (that I enclose). I wondered why someone made the alterations (highlighted in ink) when reprinting. Over to you Sir.

James Fuller

It is my understanding that someone will contact you in the near future. Please let me know what transpires. *Ed.*

Dear Sir,
How can Dorking town look so decrepit? I always receive and read the Newsletter with some excitement; interesting articles about what's going on relating to Planning, and a feeling that, at least, our committee are doing some good on our behalf etc. For most of the membership, it's probably our only insight into the workings of the town. I start by thinking I'll write a response but, like all of us, get caught up in the process of managing two kids and a small business. So it's not surprising that those running the DDPS are generally of more mature years, and the only realisation is that I'm also reaching that stage. Dorking has a very active and interventionist population, but the

LETTERS CONTINUED

membership of the Society seems to remain relatively small yet highly active in the town's affairs. I've now lived here for 15 years, and my parent for nearly 30, and in that time have seen the general decline in the town that is reflected in the deprived look of our High Street in spite of unemployment is low and relative income very high. Dorking was a market town – in the old sense of the word – and therefore the centre of the surrounding area, and it seems that we haven't yet realised that things have changed from those gentler times, and will never go back. Many of these changes may take many years to impact, for example, changes in planning, commercial leases, buying behaviour and consolidation of retailers. The impact of internet retailing is still in its early stages so we have no idea of what will result. So, what's the relevance of Hank's excellent article on the town centre manager? Yes, it's important, but the more major issues are never resolved. The car still dominates

the High Street, there are no significant focal points in the town centre (and I don't mean a large supermarket, that only transfers retail spend to a single operator). As a cyclist, I still take my life in my hands when venturing out, and fundamentally I'm not convinced that any of the town planning seriously addresses where Dorking is going next. We will never get the same type of retail footfall back that we once had. The amount of major retail planning approvals in the surrounding areas has increased the total, non town retail space dramatically. We may all be shopping more, but not enough to justify the extra retail space. The Society needs to be more relevant to the population, and take on major issues. The St Martin's Walk and its relationship to the surrounding streets, including the church, needs reconstruction. Pavements, parking and cycle ways need radical overhaul. Towns don't change by minor improvements. We need a more radical approach that attracts people back for other purposes than the weekly shop. But, we all live here because we like 'slow change', and

that doesn't sit well with radical improvement.
Richard Adey

Now that's something to think about, and no doubt raise some hackles. Responses welcome. *Ed.*

Please send your letters addressed to me via:
www.ddps.org.uk
Editor



"Just thought I'd chill out before the season starts"

A word's worth

By Hank Etheridge

I had intended to just do an 'editor's comment' to the letter from Elizabeth Holmes. However, upon reflection, I thought her comment about my use of the word 'gotten' demanded some elaboration, hence this article.

As you may be already aware, I am a Wessex man, born, raised and educated there. The word 'gotten' was widely used among the rural community before WW2, as was the word 'Fall' for Autumn. (See *An Atlas of English dialects* by Upton & Widdowson OUP.)

Here, I must relate an incident in my scholastic life to explain more. In 1940, after my father had chosen all of the three legged horses to bet upon, I had to leave my Prep school in Winchester and go to a boarding school outside of Salisbury. Most of the masters at that school had been drafted or volunteered for the armed services, and replaced by retired masters, some of whom had taught at Oxford and other famous schools. Our English (and History) master was Mr Somers who, rumour had it, had been at Oxford. We lads were taught as if we were undergraduates, which meant that a lot of the syllabus went straight over our heads and had us struggling to keep pace. When it came to our writing essays, Mr Somers laid down some ground rules. Among these were: 'Got and Lot, use them not' and 'A bit is more than an horse can eat or chew all day'. So 'Got, Lot and Bit' were banned from our writing.

Throughout my long life, I have been prone to 'going where angels

fear to tread'. At age thirteen, I had just started out on this risky career so, because I was used to the word 'gotten', I included it in one of my essays. It was, of course, stupid bravado on my part, and I must admit to having some trepidation until the next English lesson, when 'The Beak', Mr Somers, would have read them all and delivered his verdict on our talents – or lack of them. He ruthlessly dissected my classmate's essays, but left mine until last. I awaited for the sky to fall in but, to my astonishment – and heartfelt relief – he praised me "for using the classical, English word 'gotten'. If it was good enough for Shakespeare", he went on to say, "it is good enough for you young gentlemen". I must admit, this didn't exactly endear me to my chums.

The English language has more words than any other – Shakespeare invented 1,770 of them. English is a Germanic language, but only fifty percent is Anglo Saxon, Scandinavian or Norman. It is a conglomeration of words from all over the world: words like *shampoo* and *bungalow* from India; *hurricane* from the Spanish and Portuguese; *ketchup* from China and *potato* from Haiti. English takes foreign words and anglicises them, often taking a noun and adding an English suffix or prefix to them. Sometimes it merely spells it phonetically, e.g. the distress signal 'Mayday' from the French *m'aider*. It is an insatiable language and is rapidly becoming the universal language on the planet. In around one hundred years time, it will have ousted most languages but, if we could listen to it at that time, it will

be as difficult to understand as listening to Chaucer.

One of the problems with words in the past is that they have been used to indicate a person's 'position' among his or hers fellows. The so-called 'Oxford' accent, for instance, attempted to set the speakers apart from the rest of the population ... 'Hise' for house, and 'Rind' for round, and so on.

Words should have one function: to impart information and emotions to someone else, be it with speech or the written word. Words are classless, no matter in what accent they are spoken. As long as they are understood by anyone with the same language, they have done their job.

Although words are classless, they can be highly emotive; *love...hate...kill* and so on. They can also be very irritating. For instance, the 'innit' at the end of sentences, originally used by Asians, but now spreading into the argot of 'Yoof'; the interspersing of *Y'know* into sentences spoken by all sorts of people being interviewed. What ever happened to *um* and *er*? Another thing that offends my ears is the upward inflection at the end of sentences spoken by Australians, no doubt my equivalent of Mrs Holmes 'gotten'. Words! Classless but not neutral.

I am presuming that 'Americanisms' are infuriating to some people in the same way that 'Frenchisms' are to me. Of course, there are words used in North America that are different to those used in the UK: *Faucet* for tap; *Sidewalk* for pavement, etc. However, initially due to the Movies, then TV and Satellite TV plus the Internet, most of us under-

stand American words whether we want to or not. We all use the globally recognised Americanism, 'OK' since the 1920's.

Words in grammatically structured languages have been in development for about 35,000 years, from the giving of personal names to naming natural features and phenomena early hominids experienced.

After hundreds of thousands of years of evolution, fifty thousand years ago the larynx finally arrived at its present position in the throat, allowing proper speech. According to some scientists, this coincided with evolution of a gene they have called 'FoxP2'. For the first time, early homo sapiens could coin words to describe their surroundings, but it took another fifteen thousand years before homo sapiens sapiens – modern man – devised proper languages. Around four thousand years ago, the first major language grouping evolved to an ethnically mixed group of peoples somewhere around the Caspian Sea. The language they spoke is termed 'Proto Indo European'. From it came all of the European languages (except Basque and Finnish), Hittite, Persian – Iran is a modern pronunciation of *Aryan* – Armenian and Bengali. There was even an Indo European language spoken in western China by a people who have been named 'the Tocharians': a tall, red-haired people who wore tartan. Remind you of anybody?

The mercian hoard

By Aethelric

In light of the recently discovered Anglo Saxon hoard in a field in Staffordshire, in the old Kingdom of Mercia, I decided to write this short article.

As an (amateur) Anglo Saxon historian, over the past forty years I have concentrated my main study on Wessex, the home of my ancestors. However, Mercia has impinged on those studies to a considerable degree because of the almost constant conflict between the two Kingdoms before Aelfred. His daughter Aethelflaed (the Lady of the Mercians) was married to Aethelred of Mercia who, after his demise, controlled what was, by this time, a sort of under-kingdom of Wessex. Aelfred's son Edward (the elder) and his son, Athelstan, who were the real creators of England as a single political unit, were both intimately connected to Mercia.

The discovery of the hoard, originally dated in the 7th century, has been made uncertain because of the inclusion in the hoard of items from the 8th. The Christian elements further confuse the picture because Mercia did not start converting to that religion until after the death of Penda in 655. One of the items in the hoard is a strip of gold which once graced the hilt of a sword, and upon which is a badly spelled Latin Christian inscription. It is more than likely that this was part of 'War-booty' from one of the frequent clashes with Kingdoms already Christianised, such as Kent, which was invaded by the Mercians two or three times. The

items from Constantinople were probably gifts to the emerging religion upon conversion. Who knows?

Mercia was named after the major Anglian Tribe that conquered it. The other was the Hwicce, who have left their name in the many towns and villages that include 'Wich'. It was after the death of Penda that Peada, his son, started the process of persuading the Mercians to convert by giving land for the building of an Abbey. Unfortunately, Peada was killed one year afterwards and was succeeded by his brother Wulfhere, who carried on his brother's work. He reigned for nineteen years, fighting most of the time to extend Mercian territory. It was one year after one of these battles that he died, no doubt from wounds. He was succeeded by Aethelred, who immediately set out on a programme of conquest to the south and east but, all the time, keeping an eye on the raiding British (Waelsc) on his western flank; a situation that remained until Offa built his 'dyke' and, later, Aethelflaed's suppression of them.

The Mercians, throughout the 7th and 8th centuries, were constantly trying to expand, at one time controllers of most of the southern kingdoms, Essex and Lindsey, and ending up ruling London as well.

The probability is that the hoard was the spoils of conquests and invasions of other kingdoms that, in turn, was at risk when Mercia itself was under threat.



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Take a trip into history deep underground!

The Dorking Caves are one of Surrey's best kept secrets. Carved out of the Lower Greensand, these hidden galleries have been in use for hundreds of years and are the last remaining set of the town's network of caves open to the public. A visit to Dorking Caves is one you will not forget!

Enjoy a guided walk through the streets of this historic market town

Learn about the fascinating people and interesting events that make up its past with our resident Blue Badge Guide. Explore the streets where markets have stood since medieval times, imagine the noise and colour of the annual fairs, picture the hustle and bustle of the 18th Century coaching inns



To book both Caves and Guided Walks please visit or contact Visitor Information.

Dorking Halls, Reigate Road, Dorking
next to the box office Tel: 01306 879327
Email: visitor.information@molevalley.gov.uk

Discover
Dorking
Heart of the Surrey Hills