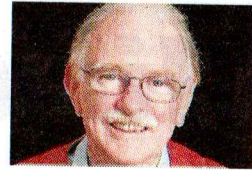


# Horsham Society

with Oliver Farley



## A word about the latest things

**T**his week you've all seen a murder. Many of you may have witnessed a charm or marvelled at a pitying. It's less likely you've seen an unkindness and only if you've been very lucky have you observed a seasonal crowd. May you never get close to an ambush and a whoop will be dangerous though not as much as a crash.

Does this make any sense? Perhaps you've twigged. Yes, they are the collective nouns for various birds and animals. Some of them are in common usage though quite a few are very seldom used at all. A murder is a flock of crows, a charm is goldfinches, a pitying is doves and an unkindness is ravens.

A crowd is redwings. Now the animals: an ambush is tigers, a whoop is gorillas and a crash is rhinoceroses. Many of these titles are based upon the animals' behaviour eg a cloud of grasshoppers, and others imply some judgement, such as a chattering of choughs. An exaltation of larks is irresistible as is a richness of martens.

These terms have prompted us to consider a sore lack here in Horsham. We all have seen how the town's shops are



Horsham Post Office has moved from the Carfax.

changing by the week and old familiar places are vanishing to be replaced by the up and coming latest thing. The Post Office's has moved to the Swan Walk and the baker next door has gone to be replaced by a hairdressers.

Horsham has many hairdressers, several nail bars, lots of restaurants and innumerable estate agents. Isn't it about time we had collective nouns for these employments? If birds and animals have a handy collective why not the retail sector?

If it already exists I've yet to hear it so here's a few suggestions.

Let's start with the hairdressers. A lot of them could be a 'comb' or a 'brush' or perhaps a 'capillary', much like the well known capillary attraction implying they creep everywhere.

I'm more in favour of the improvement a good hair-do produces so I'm inclined to call them collectively an enhancement of hairdressers.

On the same principle, nail bars might be a 'varnish' or an 'emery' but I think that something more indulgent is required: so how about a refinement of nail Bars? Restaurants and eateries are not so obvious though a 'napkin' sounds quite good as might a 'setting' after a place setting.

We need some suggestion of food and taste so let's try a gustation of restaurants.

*The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 259038.*