

Buzzards over Horsham

A Society member rang up recently to say he had seen a Common Buzzard, being mobbed by gulls, over his home in Irwin Drive. I got very excited at the news, as I had never seen one nearer than Petworth, and suggested he rang the County Bird Recorder. But the latter took a very relaxed line, and said that there were over 200 breeding pairs in the county, and that Shipley was a good place locally to find them.



Certainly the heavily wooded countryside round about is ideal territory for this species, and it is good news that they are on the increase. Our local Countryside Warden's Report for 2006 (see page 40) notes that there were 13 sightings at Warnham Pond in the year, including the exciting spectacle in March of a pair attacking the heronry on the far side of the pond. They were possibly looking for a nesting site and tried, unsuccessfully, to turf out the long-standing residents.

So watch out for Buzzards in the sky above. Kestrels hover, Sparrowhawks 'flap flap glide', and Buzzards wheel slowly in the air on broad wings. Unmistakable.

So many balconies

Balconies seem to be all the rage these days. The apartment block on the old King and Barnes site features them, as does that squeezed-in East Street development next to the job bureau. Both have come in for their fair share of criticism, and no-one could claim that they were beacons of style.

But why on earth festoon them with so many balconies? If the buildings had sprung up somewhere on the Costa del Sol, with a view of the glittering Mediterranean, all well and good. But relaxing with a sundowner in the chill of a Horsham evening, contemplating the rush hour traffic along Albion Way, does seem faintly absurd.



Fine view over Albion Road traffic.

The ripple effect

Horsham is distinctive for many things, and has scored well on various life style criteria recently. But who would have guessed that it's got the best ripples in the country? No – not some Charles Atlas-type qualification, but apparently our famous Horsham stone has got better and more interesting ripples in it than any other stone, anywhere. Take a look when you next walk down the Causeway, and you will see several examples. Back in the Cretaceous Period wave patterns in the sand were baked hard by the sun and in due course became fossilised, turning into what is now known as Horsham stone – a prized building material.

Nowhere else is the ripple effect so marked or varied, and this gives us considerable kudos, in geological terms. How do we know? Because Roger Birch told us all about it at the AGM, and if you weren't there you missed a treat.

For more see page 34.

Editor's note

I am most grateful to Society member Martin Andrews for providing the aerial photo of the Dog and Bacon Green/Pondtail Road area in the 1930s (page 36). It will bring back memories for many long-standing Horsham residents, and provides excellent views of Chestnut Lodge and Ashleigh – two fine houses no longer with us. While the green is still there, the land to its right has been built up, April Close and Garden Walk now occupy the once extensive Ashleigh grounds, and Millmeads was then just one house.

Copy date for the June issue is 4 May.

From the Committee

Sandie Brittain

A big welcome to Sandie Brittain, who now takes over from Michael Hall as our Hon Secretary and joins the committee. Michael has done sterling work for some time, and we thank him for all his efforts. Likewise we are most grateful to Sandie for taking up this important role, and look forward to working with her in the future.



Sandie Brittain and Michael Hall.

Rosemary Forrest, Jan Galloway, Michael Jarvis – thanks!

Rosemary, Jan and Michael are three of our distributors, and kindly agreed to take extra copies of the April issue and make them available, with subscription forms enclosed, to a range of non-members in their areas.

This is a most useful sampling scheme, and an excellent way of tempting new members to join us. If anyone else would like to have a go at recruiting new members in this way (with a distribution of perhaps 10 or more copies), do please get in touch with either John Steele or Brian Slyfield. We would be delighted to hear from you.

Causeway Green

The committee expressed concern at the state of the Causeway Green, which is fast degenerating, and there does seem to be a lack of clarity as to what is now happening, following earlier plans for its alteration. The Council is to be asked for an explanation as to what was going on, and the Society would also request that it be involved in consultations at the planning preparation stage.

Swan Walk exhibition

An exhibition to launch a Design Statement for Horsham was mounted in Swan Walk on Friday and Saturday 9-10 March. Although out of necessity it wasn't in the most prominent position, nevertheless it was well designed and attracted much interest. Well done John Steele for all his hard work. Supporting literature explained that 'a Design Statement provides a detailed guide to the character of a town or village, and explains what makes the buildings and landscape distinctive. It suggests how the planning and design of future changes, large or small, can respect and enhance what we value about our buildings, street scenes and open spaces. Once adopted by Horsham District Council it will become part of the planning policy when applications are assessed'.

The exhibition's sponsoring group included Denne Neighbourhood Council, Forest NC, Trafalgar NC, North Horsham Parish Council and The Horsham Society, with support from Horsham District Council. For more information please contact design@horshamsociety.org

In addition a competition was run in conjunction with the *West Sussex County Times* whereby entrants were invited to say, in no more than 50 words, what they thought made Horsham special. A range of prizes and categories of entry were available, and further details regarding the winners will be published in due course.



Swan Walk exhibition. Michael Hall will do anything to promote the Society's work.

Horsham Painting Group's Spring Exhibition

The Group's Spring Exhibition will be held in Horsham Town Hall between Saturday 12 May - Saturday 19 May (10.00 am-4.30 pm daily, but 4.00 pm on the last day). No exhibition on Sunday 13 May. Admission is free, so come and admire local artistic talent – and incidentally isn't it good to see the Town Hall used for such a worthwhile purpose, instead of featuring those tedious tool sales?

AGM



A full house at the AGM.

Another successful AGM was held on Thursday 15 March and there was an excellent turn out, with approaching 100 members present. A big thank you to our hosts, Royal and SunAlliance, who once again generously made their presentation theatre available to us.

We have gained a reputation for excellent speakers of late, and this year was no exception. Roger Birch, geology expert and Collyer's teacher, gave a fascinating talk on the Horsham area, its geological make up, and the importance it holds in the history of dinosaur discovery. His talk was particularly valuable in that its illustrations were all landmarks familiar to the audience; when next driving to the Black Horse at Nuthurst for a quiet pint, for example, the landscape to the right of the road from Monk's Gate should now have significant extra meaning.

But for those who weren't at the AGM, or were but need their memories refreshing (and didn't buy the book), it's all in *Sussex Stones* by Roger Birch – available at bookshops locally.

Dulcima House

Previously much concern had been voiced regarding alterations to the facade of Dulcima House in the Carfax, but it was now reported that further proposals for correcting the earlier work had largely met the Society's objections. However it believed that the current colour choice for the frontage (cream) was inappropriate, and that a muted, earthy tone should be chosen, in order to distinguish the building from its neighbours without at the same time being too strident.

The loss of two local historians

In recent weeks we have learnt of the death of both Cecil Cramp and Tony Wales, two outstanding local historians and each a member of the Horsham Society. Both in their various ways did much to record the story of the town, and they created valuable legacies which will be of enduring benefit. We have much to thank them for.

Cecil Cramp

Cecil Cramp passed away on 16 February, aged 91. Cecil, who attended Collyer's from 1926-1933, was a well-known figure in the town, and was often to be seen in his later years cycling about the place on his bicycle. He was famous for his extensive collection of local postcards and other material recording Horsham's history, and was a mine of information about the home town that he loved so much.

The Cramps had been a leading Horsham family since Victorian times. His father was Walter, and his grandfather, Jury Cramp (son of the 'tee-total poet'), founded the well known jewellery and optical business of that name in 1872. Its West Street shop, established a little later in 1878 and remembered fondly by many, finally closed its doors in 1985.

An important Cramp initiative was the reprinting, in 1973, of the rare *The History and Antiquities of Horsham*, first published by 16 year old Howard Dudley in 1836. This had the great benefit of bringing a scarce item to a much wider audience, but the Cramp facsimile is itself now scarce, and can be found only occasionally in the second-hand book trade.

Through his collection Cecil has left the town a great and valuable visual record, and in due course it can be consulted at Horsham Museum.

Tony Wales



Tributes elsewhere have highlighted Tony's expertise in the world of folklore and music, and the fact that for nearly 20 years he held the important position of press and publications officer for the English Folk Dance and Song Society in London. Here we will concentrate on his role as author, and the equally important work he did in this field.

As a local historian he had the great advantage of being a Horsham man, born and bred, so he really knew what he was talking about. He was born in 1924 in Albion Terrace, and after leaving school at the age of 14 his first job was at Scott and Sergeant's in East Street. During his life he is credited with producing some 26 publications, and I can testify at first hand to the value of many of them. A number are on my shelves and I refer to them often.

Picture books of old Horsham are now two-a-penny, but the first (and the best) are by Tony Wales. His *Horsham in Old Picture Postcards Vols 1 and 2* and *An Album of Old Horsham* set the trend, and provide many insights into what our town was like in the old days.

He also reprinted an important and rare local book, William Albery's *Reminiscences of Horsham*, which recorded the memories of Henry Burstow 'the celebrated bellringer and songsinger'. This was produced in 1975, in collaboration with AE Green, a Leeds academic, and includes a valuable foreword which discusses the social and historical context. Like Cramp's *Dudley*, his *Albery* is now a rare book in its own right.

Tony's extensive folklore collection is to be donated to the West Sussex Record Office.

Brian Slyfield

Setting our priorities for 2007-8

Over the last year or so the Society has been very active in responding to events, and we have shared in a number of successes such as the rejection of planning applications for the Horsham Football Club ground and Ramsey Close, the withdrawal of the proposal to put football pitches on Chesworth Farm, and resisting further incursions into Horsham Park.

While we will remain vigilant and quick to react to events, I want us to begin to set the agenda over the coming year.

We will continue to work with colleagues from the three Neighbourhood Councils and North Horsham Parish Council to produce a Design Statement for the town. This is a critical part of the overall framework of planning control. We also hope to publish our ideas about good modern housing design. There is a growing national recognition that much of what is built is just not good enough. However, all the advice and encouragement will be for nothing unless the Council steadfastly refuses to approve applications for poorly designed developments. So we hope to establish a much closer dialogue with officers and members in the coming year.

There is an urgent need to bring new employers to the town, encourage the growth of independent traders, and attract tourists and shoppers. While the Society cannot do this itself it will encourage the Council to bring forward imaginative schemes.

I detect a widespread feeling that despite Horsham being a fine town with much to offer it is beginning to look uncared for in places. Nowadays there is too much emphasis on tinkering with new initiatives at the expense of caring properly for what we already have.

Too many buildings in the town centre are looking tired and in need of a facelift. Trading difficulties and a rapid turnover of shops certainly do not help, but if we want to provide an attractive shopping experience property owners need to be encouraged to work together to make improvements.

The closure of the King's Head has blighted the south-eastern side of the Carfax, Market Square and the start of East Street. Black Horse Way, the main vehicular access to the town centre, is still an eyesore. The Town Hall remains sad and under-used, and the promised refurbishment has not materialised.

The long awaited improvements in the Causeway have not been implemented either, although there is not much wrong with the present layout that could not be sorted out with proper maintenance.

Landscaping introduced around new developments and on roadsides is not properly maintained. Street clutter is a serious and growing problem.

Horsham is a traditional market town but the present arrangements are far from satisfactory. The success of the market in the Carfax on Saturdays shows that there is a demand for good local produce. But elsewhere stalls seem to come and go with no real strategy or promotion.

So there is much to concern us in the coming year. If there are other issues we should be addressing as well, please let us know.

John Steele

Sir Prescott Hewett leaves Chestnut Lodge

by Brian Slyfield

On a June morning in 1891 a funeral cortège left Chestnut Lodge, by Dog and Bacon Green, proceeded down North Parade, along Hurst Road and up to the station. Apart from the hearse, there were a number of carriages in the procession, and when it arrived at the station a further group of people was there to greet its arrival. It was the day of the funeral of Sir Prescott Gardner Hewett, who, although he had only lived in Horsham for a few years, had become much respected locally. He was taken on the 10.20 am train from Horsham to London, where there was to be a service at St Margaret's, Westminster, followed by the burial at Brompton Cemetery, where he would be laid to rest by the side of his wife.

There was a good turn out on the morning. His neighbour Arthur Oddie from North Lodge was there, as were the Allcards from Wimblehurst, together with Mrs Hurst and other local families – Prewetts, Lampards, Galliers and Bostocks. Among the floral tributes was one from the staff of Horsham station (Hewett had been a regular traveller to London) and a magnificent white wreath from the Society of Painters in Watercolours.

So who was Sir Prescott? A man of rare talent is the answer, who rose to become perhaps the most eminent surgeon of his day ('the most skilful operator in London'), and an outstanding amateur artist, with a talent that he continued to develop during his retirement in Horsham.

He was a son (one of many) of William Hewett, the squire of

Bilham Hall near Doncaster, and was born on 3 July 1812. His father sounds a bit of a character. He was reckoned to be 'an ardent supporter of the turf, much given to heavy betting'. The very year of Prescott's birth he went overboard, and was ruined by a heavy bet on the 1812 Derby that went badly wrong. As a consequence he decamped with all the boys to Paris, perhaps to escape the bookmakers, and later sent young Prescott to school at a seminary five miles south of the city.

As it turns out he may have done his son a great favour, because while there the latter made friends with one particular boy, whose father was a leading French surgeon, and it was this influence that set him on a path that was to lead to such distinction.

He first took up painting in Paris, but abandoned the idea of making it a full time career, and instead studied anatomy and became thoroughly grounded in the principles of French surgery, for which he had the highest regard. He then returned to England, and graduated to become a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1836. He attracted the attention of Sir Benjamin Brodie, president of the college, and when he was on the point of taking up a post with the East India Company Sir Benjamin persuaded him otherwise, and he became demonstrator in anatomy at St George's Hospital, where a relative, Dr Cornwallis Hewett, Downing Professor of Medicine at Cambridge, had also been.



Aerial photo of Chestnut Lodge (to the left) and surrounding area.

Courtesy Martin Andrews.



Chestnut Gardens today.



All that is left of Chestnut Lodge.

Prescott Hewett rose to occupy more senior roles at the hospital, and became a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1843. He was professor of human anatomy between 1854-59, and president of the College in 1876. Many other honours came his way as well. He was president of the Pathological Society in 1863, and of the Clinical Society ten years later. In 1874 he was appointed a fellow of the Royal Society.

In 1867 he became surgeon-extraordinary to Queen Victoria, and in the arcane way of courtly titles, was appointed serjeant-surgeon-extraordinary in 1877 and serjeant-surgeon in 1884. Presumably these were all promotions, steps up the ladder for Her Majesty's personal medical man. He also looked after the Prince of Wales, and it was said that he was highly rated at Windsor Castle. He also had a considerable following among 'aristocratic invalids' such as the Duke of Rutland, and his reported 'refined and courtly manner' must have stood him in good stead. But despite all this success it was held that he only amassed a moderate fortune, because of the 'generous alacrity' with which he tended to the needs of the poor – often refusing all payment.

As a reward for all his achievements he was created a baronet in 1883, and in 1886, at the age of 73, he retired to Chestnut Lodge (*Kelly's Directory* for 1882 records Benjamin Watkins as being the then occupier, and earlier it was the home of Benjamin Fox (1780-1855), who played an active part in local politics as a supporter of the Pink, or Conservative interest).

It was also said that Hewett's hand and eye were as steady and true at the age of 70 as they had been as a 30 year old, and for professional reasons he was careful throughout his career to lead a temperate life. A man with a slim, wiry frame, he had great energy, keen organisational skills and an immense capacity for hard work, and must have found it hard to settle into retirement. On the other hand he was now able to dedicate more time to his other great passion in life, and his 'delicate and refined' landscapes were much admired; among his subjects were the Downs and lanes and cottages of



Chestnut Lodge.

the Weald. His style was held to be after that of George Frupp, who was a leading watercolourist of the day and much patronised by Royalty. Eventually 50 pictures from Hewett's own collection of watercolours were presented to the nation, and there was an exhibition of them at the South Kensington Museum in 1891.

He also played an active part in Horsham's social life, and in early August 1886, his first year here and on a 'delightfully fine' day, assisted by his spinster daughter, he held a garden party at Chestnut Lodge. The company was 'large and distinguished', and 'much enjoyment ensued from playing tennis, strolling through the well-kept grounds and inspecting the host's famous collection of watercolours'. His magnificent display of sunflowers, including some specimen doubles obtained from Holland, was much admired, and the Horsham Town Band 'was stationed on the lawn tennis ground and performed a choice selection of music'. To cap it all, everyone had immense fun participating in a game of Aunt Sally.

In 1849 Hewett had married Sarah, the eldest daughter of Rev Joseph Cowell of Todmorton, Lancashire, and they had one son (who died very shortly after his father) and two daughters, one of whom became a Mrs Hallett. His wife pre-deceased him by a number of years, and his own death, on 21 June 1891 at the age of 78, was brought about by an attack of influenza, a prevailing epidemic locally at the time, which he could not shake off.

There is little now to mark his memory. Chestnut Lodge is no more, and in its place, on the corner of Pondtail Road and North Parade, is a small estate. The big house, like so many in the area, fell to developers in the late 1950s. But if you go a short way down Pondtail Road, on the left you will see the old coach house, which happily still remains.

My thanks to Martin Andrews for the most interesting aerial photograph of the area before it was built up. The picture of Chestnut Lodge has been enlarged from his original.

Mechanical means and impressive machines – or Sisley in Harwood Road

Our great luck in this small town of ours is that it is just the right size and offers a tempting array of possibilities in a very limited space. Such temptations took *Per Say* to Millais school. Many years ago his Italian was a great deal better than it is now. The time had come to do something about it. Off to Millais to a refresher course! Off on a Wednesday evening in the car, or as we could call it *la macchina*.

Macchina is one of those portmanteau words which cover dozens of uses where English employs several labels. As well as the more common uses like washing machine, steam engine and sewing machine, the word can cover a camera or a tour coach. A printing press. A typewriter. A projector. This universal word reminded me that my particular *macchina* was in need of servicing and the next morning my route to the Chrysler garage took me along Harwood Road and past the roundabout.

Many readers will have noticed, I'm sure, that there has recently been a large building site on this road where now a considerable number of flats and houses have been built. A rambling Victorian house of no particular merit, at least insufficient merit to save it, was demolished and the entire site has become home to perhaps a hundred or more. Space has been used in a much more efficient manner, though at a creeping cost – namely the gradual loss of too many 19th century buildings. While not advocating a John Betjeman-style Victorian Society, there may nevertheless be a case for maintaining buildings of less than a hundred years of age simply as examples of their type. They might be preserved by incorporation into the uses of the modern site in some fashion, as has been done at Tanbridge House. We should monitor their threatened loss, or the substance of our town will slowly ebb away. Can we keep a place for the small, the insignificant, as well as the fine – the small cottages, now gone, at the junction with Forest Road near my garage, for instance?

While we so often lament change, it is especially pleasing to be startled by continuity. And the continuity occurs in the *Rue de la Machine*. This is not to be found on a street map of Horsham but in Louveciennes, west of Paris, and a favoured village of the Impressionists. Among those who chose everyday subjects and

landscapes in this pleasing area was Alfred Sisley. His painting style is a source of constant quiet enjoyment and most suitable for those gentle hours early on a Sunday morning when it is salutary to remind oneself of the treasures in our art books. This particular edition has a photo beside the main picture showing what the scene looks like today. There is remarkably little alteration in the *Rue de la Machine*. The trees and houses of 1873 are pretty well still there in 1992, a testament to how some places can escape the hectic changes wrought by large cities. The machine in the street name appears to be the pumping station at nearby Marly, which raised the water for the fountains and parks at Versailles, a mundane reminder of the practicalities behind that most impressive place.

Pumping stations and their often elaborate architecture seem very much of the Victorian Age and a long way from the ingenious gadgetry of our own time. There is an exhilarating aspect to the iron monsters of that past century just as there is to the magical prowess of our information age. Our local museum some time back mounted a small exhibition to illustrate the prodigious capacities of electronics, displaying how our entire collection at the museum has been recorded on computer. At the merest fiddle of a mouse any item can be brought up on the screen and examined in real detail without the tedium and possible danger of damage involved in retrieving it from safe storage.

Impressive though this electronic storage is, the times are moving on apace and digital ink and digital paper await our attention in the near future. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has developed these wonders so that they are able to download entire books from libraries and use the same electronic page again and again to overwrite new books on the old. Will our future libraries become sites of permanent palimpsests? Will there be no more Sunday morning browsing and musing on the machine age of the Impressionists? Perhaps. Yet for all our electronic marvels one feels there will always be a comforting place for those familiar things from the past, like paper, art books and Victorian everyday buildings.

Per Say

HPHA

The Horsham Society's reach, you will not be surprised to hear, is global. Not only do we have a membership list that extends as far as New Zealand and USA, but we also maintain regular links with the Horsham Preservation and Historical Association, our sister organisation in Pennsylvania. A relationship was first forged when I was invited over to talk to local school and historical groups about the founding of their township, and about Samuel Carpenter, a son of Horsham, Sussex, who as a Quaker went out to America via the Caribbean in the late 17th century, joined William Penn and made a substantial name and fortune for himself. On his death he was honoured in the naming of Horsham, Pennsylvania – after the town of his birth here in England.

A recent HPHA newsletter tells of how much good work has been done on the preservation of an important local building of historical interest. (In the absence of an organisation such as The National Trust such work in USA is often taken on by groups such as HPHA). In particular it has 'completed the third year of a 25 year lease with Horsham Township on the Penrose-Strawbridge property. We have completed additional work on the interior and exterior main house. This work (and other) has been funded through a state grant to the township. We raised about \$25,000 through donations, funds raised and membership dues. This year HPHA spent \$46,000 on the restoration and related items'. The Penrose-Strawbridge house (named, as is often the custom, after its principal previous occupants) is an important building, and I can vouch for the fact that it is well worth a visit.

HPHA is very much a 'hands on' organisation and does much volunteer work, both through fund raising and practical repairs and restoration. They are a good crowd, and if any Horsham Society member finds him or herself in Philadelphia, make sure to visit the other Horsham, which is not too far away; you will be assured of a very warm welcome.

BS

Letters to the Editor

Do please write in: letters for publication to Brian Slyfield, Arun House, Denne Road, Horsham RH12 1JF

Sam Davis

I wonder if any reader could help with information about Sam Davis? The library has been most helpful, but unable to give any more details than the following from a museum display: he was the last rope maker in Horsham, and rope making was allied to the saddlery industry, which was an important local trade. The town had a number of rope walks where rope makers walked back and forth, twisting strands of rope together. My main interest is finding out where the rope walks were. Many thanks.

Mrs AG Tope
61 Homesteam House, Mill Bay Lane,
Horsham RH12 1SS

Mrs Tope: thank you for your most interesting query. I have made a quick check and can tell you that in 1895 Samuel Davis lived at 21 Brighton Road (*Kelly's Directory of Sussex*). Perhaps he worked from home and strung his ropes out in his back garden, or maybe he worked under cover in a shed somewhere else. I'm afraid I can't answer that. But if you would like more details about his family etc you could consult, for example, the census returns for perhaps 1891 and 1901 in Horsham library. These will tell you who was in his house at the time, their occupation, age and place of birth. The library also holds street directories for the period, which might give you an idea as to how long he was at Brighton Road. The staff are very helpful and will point you in the right direction. **BS**

Crawley contribution

Please find enclosed a copy of an article in the Spring 2007 issue of the Crawley Museum Society Newsletter. Even though it covers Crawley issues, the general sentiment, we feel, applies to Horsham in equal measure – indeed to many towns and cities.

The curator is quite happy to have this passed on to you, and we think he sums up our own thoughts beautifully.

Renate and Oliver Farley
Denne Road, Horsham

The misguided idea that regeneration requires demolition by Raymond Smith, Curator Crawley Museum.

The urban regeneration of our town, though welcome in many ways, has led to a number of cases where advice and gentle pressure could have made an essential difference. Obvious cases are Ifield Steam Mill and much of the High Street development from the railway line down.

Their value lies in the development potential of the site, the Steam Mill was sold off for

quick money and still stands in a sorry state, and where Vine Cottage stood, a row of medieval/Victorian homes, now stands an ugly eyesore. An apartment block, totally out of place with its surroundings, using the wrong materials and towering over its surrounds. Why are old buildings demolished and not considered for incorporation into new build?

There are less obvious forms of attrition. For example, sub-division of Victorian or Edwardian villas, but this can lead to prestigious entrance halls being partitioned, breaking through decorative plasterwork and obscuring the original plan form of the building. Even putting a lift shaft in. Refurbishment comes in many forms, the external is maintained but the internal is gutted.

Many visitors to Crawley assume that the town's appearance is the result of it being a 'new town'. In fact most damage was wrought to the medieval core since 1947, when 'slum clearance' programmes resulted in demolition of scores of timber-framed buildings. There is a litany of regrettable planning decisions. The threat of demolition hangs over 48 Goffs Park Road, the architecturally beautiful Italianate villa with tower, possibly to be replaced by 27 flats.

What needs to be done is a rapid characterisation study commissioned to consider development in the town, to identify and map historical and architectural features that make an area special. Consultation with the local community and publication of plans. Appraisal includes a report and photo record, a coded map to show positive features as listed/unlisted buildings, architectural characteristics, important trees, monuments, designated landscapes, historic shop fronts, signage, open spaces and views.

A managed plan leads to preserving. Above all, by looking critically and in detail at our town, plot by plot, asking what its history and essential character gives to the town, will enrich the regeneration. This will stop hidden gems from being swept away. It will identify how future buildings should be designed with respect to local building material and pattern of elevation, in order to enhance the sense of Crawley as a historic place rather than an anywhere town.

The Way to School – information needed

Readers may remember the recent book entitled *Schooldays Remembered*, edited by Sue Checkland and reviewed in the Newsletter. I am in the process of writing a 'sister' publication called *The Way to School*. In this book I am writing the historical story of the schools that existed/exist in the catchment areas of the newly amalgamated schools of Chesworth and St Leonard's, which is named Kingslea Primary School, King's Road, Horsham. It can be said that the history

of this school begins from the time of Collyer's Free School, which was situated on the site of St Mary's CE Primary School, Denne Road, Horsham.

It was from the old Collyer's Free School site that other schools were developed, such as Denne Road Junior Girls' and Boys' Schools, Denne Road Infants' School, Chesworth Primary School and St Mary's, which occupies the site today.

Other schools too can be said to be involved in the evolution of schools leading to Kingslea; for example East Parade School, Clarence Road Infants' School, Oxford Road School and St Leonard's Infants' School. My book will trace the development of these schools and some other related ones in Horsham and will also give a flavour of what life was like for children in school, what they learned and their interests on the way to school and in their leisure time.

The book will also include memories from local people who attended these schools. I hope that it will be of great interest to Horsham people and perhaps provide useful information to students studying the development of education.

My aim is to desktop publish the book initially. The reason for producing a desktop first edition is that readers may be interested enough to offer further valuable information/memories that could contribute towards a second, professionally printed edition.

I hope to have the book ready by Christmas 2007, and as there is still time before completion I would be delighted to receive any memories from Society members of their attendance at any of these schools or related stories of their childhood in association with them.

Nicholas Sexton
'Hoads', Chesworth Lane,
Horsham RH13 5AJ
tel: (01403) 265710

New vicar

Following the earlier retirement of Canon Derek Tansill, Rev Guy Bridgewater will be inducted as Horsham's new vicar on Wednesday 18 July.



Rev. Guy Bridgewater.

Countryside Warden's Report 2006

The publication of this report on an annual basis (now in its third year) is an admirable HDC initiative, and Sam Bayley (who compiled and edited it) and his fellow contributors are to be congratulated on the 2006 issue. The booklet reviews the wildlife and management programmes at the five countryside sites run by the Countryside Services Unit, and the production is a thoroughly professional job. It is good to see well documented bird lists, for example, and now that detailed observations are being recorded, the Warnham Local Nature Reserve list in particular includes some very interesting species.

The editor reports that 2006 'saw an amazingly hot dry summer followed by an incredibly mild late winter period which had a large effect on a lot of the flora and fauna. Plants flowering in December, insects and reptiles being seen at unusual times of the year and birds starting breeding rituals early were a few of the signs of the weather disruption'.

The report covers bird ringing activity, together with detailed reviews of wildlife categories: birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, butterflies and moths, dragonflies, other invertebrates, plants and fungi – so it is pretty exhaustive. Species lists for Chesworth Farm, Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods, Sandgate Park, Southwater Country Park and Warnham are included.

I was amazed to learn, for example, that Warnham could boast 33 different types of butterfly (2006 was a very good year nationally), and 23 types of dragonfly. The list of moths is endless, and there are more varieties of spider around the place than I care to think about. Again I can't get too excited about bats, but it is good to know that the reserve supports no less than seven species, including the exotically-named Soprano Pipistrelle Bat), and other mammals include three types of shrew and three of vole. A lot of hard work and knowledge has gone into these lists, and the observers concerned have done a sterling job.

I feel more comfortable with bird life, and note that the Warnham count comes to 116 species, of which four were new this year (Rose-ringed Parakeet – we'll be seeing more of these –, Ring Ouzel, Twite (if accepted) and Raven. Other highlights included a beautiful adult male Firecrest ('the best bird of the year') caught in a mist net with nine Goldcrests, a Barn Owl hunting over the reed beds in late February, breeding Common Terns and an influx of Bramblings which, as I can testify, made a fine sight around the feeding station during the first three months of the year.

The report is indispensable for anyone who is keen on our local wildlife, and with 118 pages and lots of colour illustrations, is well worth a fiver. It can be purchased from the centre at Warnham Nature Reserve.

BS



Directory

The Horsham Society is an independent body supported by members' subscriptions, a registered charity (No.268949), affiliated to the Campaign to Protect Rural England and registered with the Civic Trust. It is a member of the English Historic Towns Forum.

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Individuals: £5 per year **Single Pensioner:** £3.25 per year
Family Membership: £7.50 per year **Family Pensioner:** £5 per year
Businesses: £10 per year **Single Life Membership:** £100

Family Life Membership: £150

£2.50 postage is added to the above rates for out-of-town members

All correspondence should go to the Hon Secretary in the first instance. The Newsletter is published monthly except for August. Letters and articles to be considered for publication should be sent to the Editor, Brian Slyfield, Arun House, Denne Road, Horsham RH12 1JF. Opinions in the Newsletter, whether Editor's or contributors', are not necessarily the policy of the Society.

By The Way

New members

A big welcome to the following: **Father Will-Hay, Springfield Road, Horsham; Mr Gates, West Parade, Horsham; Mr Leason, Hollands Field, Broadbridge Heath; Mrs Fleet, Oaks Road, Tenterden, Kent; Mrs Stanford, Friday Street, Warnham; Mrs Smith, Normandy, Horsham; Mr and Mrs Perkins, Ashleigh Road, Horsham (welcome back!).**

Music Circle

In its 65th anniversary year, Horsham Music Circle features the Armonico Consort on Saturday 12 May (8 pm at The Capitol). This group of young professional singers is among the leading interpreters of Baroque and Renaissance music, and the programme contrasts the sublime sacred music of Byrd and Tallis with a look at the lighter side over the last 500 years. Tickets: adults £15, under 16s £2.50. Enquiries to Miss J Elsworthy on (01403) 252602.



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