

## Garden party

We thought it was about time the Society had a garden party – so do make a date in your diary for the afternoon of Saturday 18 August.

It will be a chance for us to meet each other, talk about the issues that are of concern in today's Horsham, hopefully recruit a few more members – and have a cup of tea. The location will be Arun House in Denne Road, and full details are on the next page. An application form for tickets has also been inserted into this issue. We hope very much you can come!

Party venue.



## Men Behaving Badly

Collyers' can list its fair share of famous ex-students, but a less familiar name – at least to older generations – is that of Simon Nye. But everyone's heard of *Men Behaving Badly*, and Simon's is a major claim to fame in that he wrote the TV scripts. The committee of the Old Collyerians' Association hit upon the idea of asking him to put his name to the Simon Nye Prize, an annual award for creative writing open to students at the College of Richard Collyer.

He was delighted to do so, and in a talented field, the winner of the inaugural 2006 award was Polly Allen, with a short story entitled *Parasites*, about an artistic group in the West Country sponsored by a rich but mediocre artist. Well done Polly. Her story will be published on the new OCA web site, shortly to be launched.



Martin Clunes and Neil Morrissey starring in *Men Behaving Badly*.

## Dorking fowl ... Horsham dragon?

Have you seen that splendid, large scale cockerel, made out of an Aluminium-like material, that stands proudly in the centre of the roundabout leading into Dorking? It's got real style, and echoes the town's historical associations, in that it was once the centre for the famous five-toed Dorking fowls, which claim to be the oldest English breed (going back to Roman times) and were farmed to supply the London market. Horsham badly needs an injection of imagination like this. Apart from the venerable wooden town signs initiated by the Horsham Society, travellers are welcomed by just those new and ugly blue announcement boards, which have been tweaked a little but still look soulless and completely lack style.

So let's take a leaf from Dorking's book. Why not and erect our own equally splendid beast right in the middle of the roundabout by Warnham Pond. It would have to be the dragon, of course, which once lurked in the depths of St Leonard's Forest and was challenged so bravely by the saint. It is said that wherever his blood was spilt, lilies of the valley sprung up; look out for them now. Well, all right: perhaps it's not quite as factually based a story as Dorking's chickens, but it's much more fun.

That's the way to get Horsham noticed, provide a great talking point – and put us well and truly on the map.

## Editor's note

There's a wide selection of letters this month, so thanks to everyone for writing in. Annabelle Hughes also contributes a most interesting article on 16th century decorative wall paintings in a Horsham building, which many locals may be unaware of. She also sets the building and others nearby in their historical context, and tells us something of the several taverns that were at the top of the Causeway in earlier times.

Copy date for the August issue is 6 July.

## From the Committee

### Chris Carey

Chris Carey is the new Head of Property Development at HDC, and we were delighted to welcome him at the start of our June committee meeting. Chris gave us a most helpful overview of various projects that are currently on the Horsham agenda, including the Town Hall, East Street, the future of the King's Head and some Royal and SunAlliance buildings, and the need to regenerate the town's shopping opportunities and attract new names here.

There was a productive exchange of views, and in particular a detailed discussion of plans to 'improve' the area at the top of the Causeway. Members will be pleased to learn that as part of this activity a paved path will be laid down across the grass in front of the Manor House, where the public have sensibly decided the most effective route across to the Town Hall lies. This is something members have been pressing for.

### Planning objections

As part of our plan to keep everyone in touch regarding the detail of our activities, from now on the text of letters to HDC, written by Oliver Palmer and formally objecting to specific planning applications, will be published on our web site. The address can be found in the Directory on the last page of this Newsletter.

### Collyer's

The College of Richard Collyer plans to develop its site in a fairly substantial way, and as part of the briefing process a number of committee members will be given a guided tour and overview as to what the college has in mind. In due course the Newsletter will publish a synopsis of the plans.

### Strada

Strada is yet another new restaurant in Horsham (in East Street), and while the Society is not in the business of publishing restaurant reviews, at the same time we should point out that the work on the building has been executed with care and to a high standard. The restaurant's owners are to be congratulated on the way they have regenerated it.

### Pallant House

In the last issue we noted that Chichester's Pallant House Gallery of British Art was well worth a visit, and thought it was in with a good chance of winning this year's prestigious £100,000 Gulbenkian Prize. And so it did.

### Plastic bags

The world is closing in on plastic bags. I read somewhere that M&S are planning to charge 5p per bag, and the ladies on the Waitrose checkout have stopped dishing them out as if there was no tomorrow. Their 'bags for life', available for a nominal charge and replaceable for free, are also a great idea.

But are plastic bags such a worry? Apparently some 8 billion end up in landfill sites each year, which sounds an awful lot, but Charles Clover, the *Daily Telegraph's* environment correspondent, has discovered that they amount to only 0.3% of domestic waste. He notes that they are light, strong, take up little room and are recyclable; 'it's just that we don't recycle very many'.

And why? Because the only facilities are at supermarkets. Authorities generally have collections for cans, bottles and plastics – but not plastic film. Clover also points a finger at the real supermarket problem, which is food etc sold in unnecessary plastic packaging, and sees the fuss about bags to be no more than a distraction from the larger issue.

### Garden party details

Here are a few background notes: The party will be from 3 – 5 pm on the afternoon of Saturday 18 August, on the lawn of Arun House, Denne Road, Horsham (01403 263870). As you go down Denne Road you pass the junction with the Normandy to your right, and immediately after that, by a green metal gate that leads to St Mary's School playground, is the Arun House drive, running off Denne Road, again to the right. Walk down the drive (sorry, no parking available) and you will arrive at the party!

Entrance will have to be by ticket only, and an application form is enclosed with this Newsletter. Tickets are £3.75 each (children under 14 free), to help cover the catering costs, and are available to members and their partners, together with a

maximum of two other (non-member) friends per party. But do your best to recruit them to the Society!

Could payment please be by cheque, made payable to 'The Horsham Society'. Once application forms and payment have been received at Arun House, Denne Road, Horsham, RH12 1JF, together with a stamped addressed envelope, tickets will be dispatched to your nominated address. The closing date for receipt of applications is 4 August.

Apart from standard garden party fare (cucumber sandwiches, cakes, tea urn etc) we plan to feature elegant classical music in the background, performed by local players, and there will, of course, be a raffle. We look forward to seeing you.

### Sussex Police and the full moon

Did you read that analysts at Sussex Police claim to have identified a direct link between the full moon and violence? Together with pay days, the full moon has been defined as a particular time when aggressive behaviour increases among drinkers in pubs and nightclubs in the Brighton area. Back in the 17th century Sir William Hale, the Chief Justice, declared that 'The Moon has great influence on all diseases of the brain, especially dementia', and everyone knows that the full moon has long been associated with lycanthropy, where men can turn into werewolves.

There's a lot of baying around the Carfax on a Saturday night at the best of times, but take especial care on 30 June, the time of the next full moon. You have been warned.



Take care.

## Wall paintings in a Causeway building

In 1953 the *Sussex County Magazine* recorded an exciting find in Horsham, in what was then the YWCA building down Pump Alley – 16th century wall paintings. Unusually for Horsham at that time, ‘the authorities’ had demonstrated enough interest to seek the advice of Clive Rouse, then the acknowledged expert on such features, and the assistance of the Museum Association to uncover, clean and preserve the room. The building lies to the rear of what is now the AGA shop, long known to older residents as Hoad and Taylor’s.

Both this building and the elegant range which extends across the Town Hall side of Market Square, which now includes the front part of the Thai restaurant and the AGA shop, formed part of a thesis in 1986, and have been the subject of on-going examination and research. The wall paintings were visited again when Country Cousins had their offices in the building in the nineties.

The paintings are a unique survival in Horsham, giving us just a glimpse of contemporary interior decor in the late 1500s, and a review of the history of the area gives us the *raison d’etre* for such detail. The buildings in this part of the town contained a succession of Horsham’s inns: The Star, which occupied the corner site onto East Street, and immediately south The Anchor; The Talbot, which once incorporated both the rear of the Thai restaurant and the building opposite (both dating from from the 1400s, with the ‘yard’ in between); and The White Horse, which came into being when the street range was built at the end of the 1600s.

There is a significant entry in the *Horsham Burgage Book*, prepared in 1797, describing The Talbot or Wonder:

*Part of the Talbot or Wonder being Great Parlour & vaults & cellars under same, part of gate place adjacent and half Great Chamber adjacent of Star Inn (to the north, where Bar Vin now is) half the garret of new buildings adjacent market place....uppermost house of office on South side of buildings in yard.....*

This charts a part of the on-going process whereby new buildings were encroaching on the market area to the east, and being divided between existing businesses, and is still reflected in surviving structures.

In 1701, the tenant of The Star died, and as was the custom, a full inventory was taken for probate, by Francis Stringer and Arthur Waller. Henry Waller was one of an inn-keeping ‘dynasty’ and 70 years later a George Waller tenanted The Blue Anchor, on an adjacent site; look up at the 19th century facade of Bar Vin and you will see the blue anchor still. The record of 1701 lists items in 18 rooms, including a billiards room and chamber above (a billiards table was stored in an ‘old chamber’), a coffee room and a red chamber.

Five years later, Francis Stringer (now described as an ‘innholder’) and Edward Curtis took another inventory on the ‘moveables’ of Thomas Rade. Other records tell us he was the tenant of The White Horse, and had married in 1702. The inventory listed items in 17 rooms and includes rooms and chambers numbered from 10-14 and 18-24, and three garrets. Nos 21-23 were designated as the ‘Clubb roome’.

In 1729 a third inventory was taken, this time by Edward Curtis senior and junior, on the belongings of another ‘innholder’, Henry Groombridge. This listed 20 rooms, cellars and a ‘steer



case’ on which were stacked nine chamber pots. The ‘Clubb room’ and four garrets over it are included, as well as ‘blew’, black, red and second best chambers, the ‘Stone Table room’ and ‘Gunn room’. There were three garrets ‘against the street’, and in the ‘room against the street’ was a ‘boy on the Signepost’ and ‘Roley Poley pins & boule’. For the boy on the signpost you need only visit Ann of Cleves House in Lewes to see a naked boy astride three bunches of grapes, and at this time entertainment at the inn obviously included bowls or nine-pins.

These three inventories all appear to have concerned the complex of buildings on the east side of Market Square, straddling the entrance to Pump Alley, and all are fully transcribed and printed in *Down at the Old Bull and Bush* (1997), of which copies are obtainable from the author.

Why this historical digression? Because the offices down Pump Alley are up for grabs, and there was an opportunity to revisit the paintings, and introduce them to some relative newcomers. Now everyone must keep their eyes peeled for any Listed Building planning application, and leap up and down about the importance of such an asset in the town, and make sure the present authorities are at least as interested and caring as they were over 50 years ago.

**Annabelle F Hughes**



**notes:** this photograph of the wall paintings is by John Steele; the picture of the boy astride three bunches of grapes is from a guide book to Ann of Cleves House; a *talbot* was a type of hunting dog, which tells what the sign for the inn of that name would have been like; copies of *Down at the Old Bull and Bush* can be obtained from Dr Hughes c/o Horsham Museum, Causeway, Horsham RH12 1HE.

## Sir William Stirling Hamilton, the vicar, and a little local difficulty by Brian Slyfield

General Sir William Stirling Hamilton, 10th baronet, was a redoubtable old soldier who came to live at Woodgaters, a house previously occupied by another military man, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Bridger of the Royal Sussex Regiment, and which was located on the outskirts of Southwater. Never the type to run away from a problem, he perceived a major one in the shape of Rev George Edmund Rogers, his local vicar, with the result that they had a major set-to at the vicarage – and he ended up before the Bench on Saturday 2 June 1900. From our perspective this is just a jolly good story, and while there was much bitterness between the protagonists at the time, it has to be said that it caused a great deal of hilarity in the court room as well.



Sir William Stirling Hamilton

So let's tell the tale – but before we do, a little of the general's background. Stirling Hamilton was born on 17 September 1830, the eldest son of Sir William Hamilton and his wife Janet, and from an ancient family with connections to the Dukes of Abercorn. His father was an eminent academic who had been educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and later became Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh; it was said that in his time he was 'the greatest British philosopher of the intuitionist school'.

His son William, who as we will see seems to have missed out on the philosophical front, was educated at Edinburgh Academy and the Military Academy, Addiscombe, and then went into the Army. He joined the Bengal Artillery as a lieutenant in 1848, and later played his part in the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, for which he was awarded a medal and clasp. He succeeded to his father's title in 1856, and between 1881-85 commanded the Royal Artillery in what was known as the Western District. In 1885 and 1889 he was promoted through the subsidiary ranks of general (in the latter year he assumed by deed poll the additional name of Sterling), and eventually became a full general as well as colonel commandant of the Royal Artillery. At the time the local paper called him 'a historic figure in connection with our Indian Army', and told of how, during the Siege of Delhi, he had organised the first company of Sikh Artillery 'which played great havoc on the defences of the city .... and his conduct was the theme of much commendation from his superiors'; he was mentioned in dispatches several times 'during this business'.

On 15 October 1856 he married Eliza Marcia, the eldest daughter of Major General Barr of the Bengal Horse Artillery, and they had two sons (William and John, born in 1869 and 1873) and four surviving daughters (Janet, Elizabeth, Mary and Eliza). William was to marry Mabel Mary, the daughter of Major General Henry Tyndall of Carlton Lawn, Horsham, and like his brother John took a degree at Cambridge; the four girls remained unmarried and Eliza lived on at Woodgaters until her death on 2 June 1932). In his retirement Stirling Hamilton took on a number of local responsibilities: he sat on the Bench, was an 'energetic' member of the Horsham Board of Guardians, a member of Horsham Rural District Council and the County Council, and a churchwarden and local manager of Southwater school until that role was taken over by Horsham. In fact it was the matter of village education which was, partly, to precipitate the row which

led to him appearing before the Bench, and not on it, that Saturday in early June.

The facts of the matter are as follows. He was summoned by Rev Rogers for a claimed assault on 13 January 1900, and for using threats on or about 27 January that same year. Presiding over the case were fellow magistrates RH Hurst (chairman), Captain Rawson, PS Godman, CJ Lucas and H Padwick. Stirling Hamilton pleaded not guilty, and his solicitors were Coole and Haddock (still local), his defence barrister was Mr Boxall, and the prosecuting counsel was Mr R Henwood.

So what was it all about? It appeared that there had been a lot of bad blood between the two men for some time, which seemed to centre on the appointment of a certain teacher to the local school. The vicar, who had been in post for just five years, had not agreed with Stirling Hamilton's choice, but the latter had had his way. So local politics had been at play – and by the way do not assume that the vicar was some shy, retiring and easily crushable violet. It turned out that in a previous life he had been a major in the Queen's Dragoon Guards, 'and still had a military spirit', according to defence counsel. So the dispute wasn't a matter of tough old soldier against feeble man of the cloth – more tough older soldier against tough younger soldier.

Reading the press reports today it is impossible to decide on the rights and wrongs of the case, so we will just tell the story as set out in the local paper. But one thing is clear: the magistrates wished very much this disagreement had been settled out of court; not only were the two adversaries upper-class pillars of the community, but their unseemly falling-out had a destabilising effect across the parish, and it really would not do.

But there was a nasty element as well, to do with the finances of the parish clothing club, which received monies on a regular basis from parishioners. It seemed that at an earlier point Stirling Hamilton had accused the vicar, who was treasurer of the club, of embezzling its funds. Clearly this was a serious matter, about which Sir William had written to the Bishop of Chichester, and as a consequence the Rural Dean had become involved. A formal investigation into accusations of possible fraud, at county court level, had been instigated – but there was judged to be no case to answer.

Nevertheless it all rumbled on. The whole district knew of the business, and in an odd act of provocation the vicar had even gone so far as to stick up unsigned posters around the parish proclaiming 'Sport, Sport, Sport! Parson Baiting at Southwater Schools!' While it is not clear what the spark was that set off Stirling Hamilton's unhappy visit on 13 January, around mid-day, combustible material had been smouldering in the background for some time.

The following account of what happened is the prosecution's version of events, so bear that in mind. Apparently Stirling Hamilton arrived at the vicarage unannounced, 'in a state of high excitement', demanding to see Rev Rogers. Mrs Rogers begged her husband not to receive him, but he did so in the drawing

room, where his visitor accused him of 'having robbed the poor women who subscribed to the clothing club', and 'having got out of it' by lying and committing perjury. Strong stuff. The vicar countered that it was not true, and in a curious twist stated that 'you paid me £10 to prevent the real delinquent from being run in'. 'It's a lie, it's a lie' shouted Stirling Hamilton – but the vicar repeated 'It's the truth. You paid me by cheque, with a note'.

Rogers then attempted to usher him out, at the same time declaring his behaviour to be 'blackguardly, creating a disturbance where there were two sick ladies'. (Apparently his sister and another woman lay ill in the vicarage at the time). But things got even more heated, and when Rogers tried to block Sir William's re-entry by the front door, there was a scuffle and Stirling Hamilton grabbed him by the throat. To defend himself the vicar held on to the flaps of his attacker's coat and managed to keep him at arm's length.

At this point Mrs Rogers, who seems to have played a blinder throughout, rushed between them as Stirling Hamilton 'made desperate efforts to get his fingers round the vicar's windpipe'. But the struggle continued, and apparently Sir William kicked him several times in the leg – not the behaviour of a hero of the Siege of Delhi, surely. The protagonists staggered onto the gravel drive, where the vicar, in a canny move, slipped behind the choleric general and pulled his coat down over his arms, thus rendering him helpless – while at the same time grasping his collar.

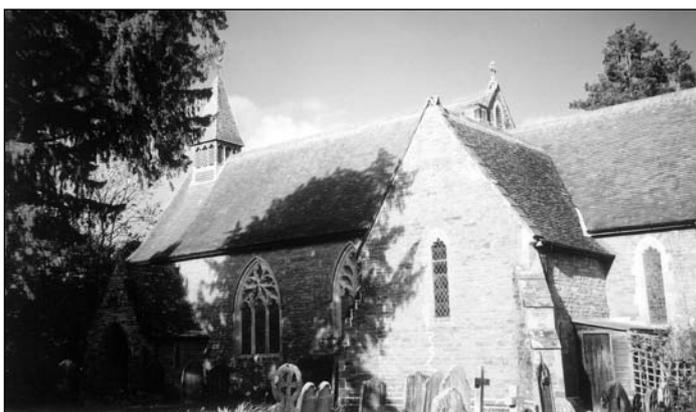
Sir William then suddenly stopped struggling and pleaded with Mrs Rogers to get her husband to release him. This he did – and immediately the 70-year old 'danced away to the corner of the gravel – he was moving very actively' (much laughter in court). Mrs Rogers shouted at him 'Do go away, do go away!', and to her husband 'Do go into the house!' But as the latter turned to do so Stirling Hamilton rushed at him and kicked him again, on the left hip. But it seems that 'the kick was not as violent as it would otherwise have been because Sir William made something of a jump during the performance' (more laughter).

The vicar said that Sir William's head was so swollen that his blood vessels were standing out like cords, so he was afraid to hit him in case he had apoplexy, or he killed him. In the turmoil Sir William's hat had fallen to the ground, and when, in a sudden

moment of calm, the latter asked for it to be picked up, the vicar just kicked it towards him, scared that if he stretched forward the general would have another go. But the hat was in a bit of a mess by now, and Stirling Hamilton declared, grandly, 'If you had a penny piece to your name I would make you pay for this. But as you haven't I must let you off'. He also told the court the vicar 'seemed afraid to touch me, but not the hat' (again, laughter). A bemused member of the vicarage staff passed Sir William his umbrella, and the general then departed down the drive, 'reluctantly'.

Don't forget this version of events is partial, and Stirling Hamilton's was very different. It was clear that the Horsham magistrates found themselves in a quandry. This was a case they really did not want. The trial had lasted until 4.30 pm, at which point they retired – but within 20 minutes they were back, and chairman RH Hurst declared 'the Bench have considered this matter and have come to the conclusion that there is so much cross-swearing that they do not know which to believe and therefore they dismiss the case'. What a strange affair.

The vicar remained in the parish for another five years, but then died in April 1905, at the young age of 57. There is a wall tablet in Southwater church, placed there by his widow, family and friends in his honour. As for Sir William, he lived on until 26 September 1913, when he passed away at his home, aged 83, after a long illness. He was buried, with much ceremony, at Holy Innocents, Southwater, close to the scene of his last engagement.



Southwater Church.

## Smelly old Crown Passage

That cut-through behind the Crown in the Carfax is a pretty smelly place, what with all those industrial-sized rubbish containers that have taken up residence. But it was ever thus. In December 1876 the town's Local Board (precursor to the Council) spent much time deliberating about what to do with the problem of Crown Passage (as it was known then).

An 'alleged nuisance' seemed to be the issue, and it is only by reading between the lines of the coyly-phrased newspaper reports (*The Horsham Advertiser* was conscious of its readers' delicate sensibilities), that the sordid truth begins to emerge: incontinent locals were using the alley way as an open-air urinal. Discussion ranged back and forth. Mr Gatford offered to put up a barrier at one end, and Mr Hurst the other, so as to close the alley off completely. But there was a legal issue at stake, and the former wanted an indemnity from the Board against possible prosecution.

Mr CS Scrace-Dickins, Board chairman, said that this course of action would cost between £25-30 in legal and other expenses, and the end result would be to improve the value of the Crown's property, because of its increased privacy – should the public be expected to pay for that? Another solution, which met with more favour, was to tidy things up by

putting down gravel, repairing the surface of the path and putting a lamp slap-bang in the middle of the alley. This latter seemed an excellent idea.

But remarkably, further discussion was deferred when someone suggested that there might already be a public urinal there, and the Surveyor 'was instructed to report on the matter'. Board members, to a man, were well-established figures from the local gentry (Scrace-Dickins from a wealthy family that owned Coolhurst), and they clearly had patchy knowledge of the town they were supposed to manage. Crown Passage must have been foreign territory.

Was the alleged nuisance sorted? Let's hope so. I do remember that many years ago there was indeed a convenience at the back of the Crown, which was easily accessed from the alley. Now: what about all those unpleasant rubbish containers....





## New Place

I am most grateful to Society member Janice Hinds, now living in New Mexico, for making available this excellent and meticulous drawing of New Place by her father, Basil Herring. A couple of explanations: Firstly: Basil and his wife played an important part in the early history of our Society, as – along with Stan Parsons – they were founding members and part of its original committee. We have much to thank them for.

Secondly: New Place. The house is now long gone, but it stood to the right of Guildford Road as you leave town, by Irwin Drive. In fact Irwin Drive is located where the entrance to New Place once was, and the development was built in the grounds. In the 1920s a Mrs Haden Corser was living there, and it later became a girls' school, run by the Munro-Higgs family, until its pupils were transferred to Springfield Park (see April Newsletter). The school was famous for its high equestrian standards, and had a country-wide reputation. Only the other day I was speaking to someone who, as a young boarder, had travelled all the way from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to benefit from its instruction. **BS**

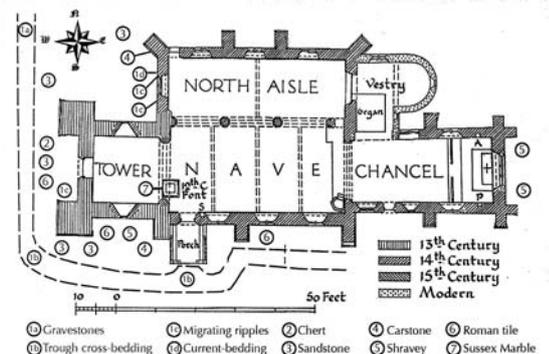
## The Geology of Rudgwick Parish Church by Roger Birch

I have a good few guides to local churches on my shelves, but up to now none that concentrate on their geology. In fact the author tells me that his book on Holy Trinity, Rudgwick, is the first of its kind – anywhere. So congratulations all round. Roger Birch's work will be familiar to many of us, as he has spoken to the Society more than once on the making of our local landscape, and his latest work adds a new dimension to the Rudgwick story.

It is well produced and written, and designed in a lively and accessible style. It's a long way from the dry-as-dust geological texts one is used to, and all the better for it. Roger notes that Holy Trinity is particularly interesting because of the wide range of local material that has been used in its construction since the 12th century, and such evidence can be used by archaeologists to map the economic and social conditions at various periods.

The oldest part of the church is its Sussex Marble base font, which is 12th century, while the tower is 13th century. Its walls are over 1.5 m thick and are mainly composed of Wealden sandstones that show an interesting range of geological features. Red Roman tiles and bricks can be seen scattered all around the walls of the tower and the south wall of the nave and chancel. Clearly they were used during several phases of church building in the Norman and medieval periods. On the south nave windows Roman tiles have been laid on end, radiating around the pointed arch of each window.

*The Geology of Rudgwick Parish Church* contains much information of value, and is well worth the £2.50 cover price. Copies can be obtained from Roger Birch c/o The College of Richard Collyer, Hurst Road, Horsham. **BS**



The geological tour of the church uses location points 1 to 7. Horsham Stone and Wealden sandstones are numbered 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e. These stones have a similar geological age and were deposited as sediment in the Wealden delta. A useful starting point is in the north west side of the tower. Most of the different stones used are found all around the church walls. Each location spot shows a new rock type which can be seen within 2 metres of the ground. When visitors have "got their eye in" it will be straightforward to see similar rocks elsewhere in the building. The tour ends with a study of the Sussex Marble font (7) inside the church.

# Letters to the Editor

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

## Horsham milestones

I have lived in Horsham for over 20 years and through my involvement with Holy Trinity church have turned out of Rushams Road into North Parade very frequently. However, only recently have I noticed the milestone at the junction. ('Westminster Bridge 36 miles'). The information plate looks either new or at least recently cleaned and/or repainted and this may be why, when negotiating the junction, I had not been aware of it. Do members know of any others extant in or around Horsham?

**Michael Jarvis  
Sandeman Way, Horsham**



## Otter sighting

I seem to remember reading in the Newsletter recently a query as to whether or not we now have otters in the Horsham area. Not long ago an otter crossed Warnham Road in front of my car in the vicinity of the bridge where the water flows out of Warnham Mill Pond.

So, yes, there are otters in the area and their survival may well depend on their using the safer water-borne crossing under the Warnham Road!

**John Davies  
Chestnut Lodge, Horsham**

Exciting news! And on the buzzard front, I hear that Mr Gratwicke recently saw one being mobbed by two carrion crows behind the Norfolk Arms: ed.

## Springfield Park

I was intrigued by your article on Springfield Park and its use as a school, not least as the school's architect during the Warwick-James regime. Fine old houses may

provide large amounts of space, but they do not always lend themselves to other uses!

A more pleasant memory from the seventies was the sight of the staff and pupils processing demurely down the Causeway in period costumes en route from the school to the parish church to celebrate its thousand years (well, give or take) of history.

The Causeway itself was closed for the week with farm wagons drawn up at various points. What was amazing was the number of men who knew the merits of the various designs and the purpose of the numerous fittings attached all over them in seemingly quite arbitrary places. Hotly debated was the case for large front wheels which wouldn't easily sink into soft ground and get stuck, but couldn't be turned with the shafts (making steering difficult), versus small wheels which could be turned and steered but *would* get stuck.

**Oliver Palmer  
Causeway, Horsham**

## In defence of balconies

I wonder who has a grudge against King's Gate? This is the second article you have featured on the front of the Newsletter. Although the 'office' feature did not seem relevant to warrant a reply, I do think the May one concerning the 'balconies' needs one. We do not live in a flat, but if ever the time came that we had to we would certainly want one with a balcony. You may deride them, but how would they look with flat fronts and how would the people living in them feel? A lot of elderly people have to move into flats and what nicer than to be able to open a door and feel that you are outside. Lots of them have pots with herbs and flowers to tend, and if they cannot get out it must be heaven.

People who have criticised King's Gate and East Street most probably live in nice houses with a garden and should be happy that at least people in flats have a balcony. I wonder how many of these critical folks have thought of taking a person unable to get out to their garden; some of them cannot get out without help and it would make these people who have time to criticise realise that the 'balcony' is their only means of seeing anything other than four walls with windows that you cannot see out of if you are chair-bound.

A lot of houses are being built on roadsides now – do you suggest that they have no door or window facing the roads? The editor has an address in Denne Road. Perhaps a picture of Denne Road should feature soon, or flats with vast amounts of 'For Sale' signs decorating the fronts. When we joined the Society we assumed you looked after our town, but mean-minded articles about King's Gate when there are so many concerns, seems uncalled for.

**Mrs Sellen  
King's Gate, Horsham**

Mrs Sellen: thank you for your letter. We are a broad church, and there is always room for more than one point of view. Of course I respect the fact that you approve so much of the King's Gate balconies, and for the Newsletter to make (in this case a pretty mild) comment from time to time is not to assume that we do not wish 'to look after our town'. In fact precisely the opposite. Also I have to tell you that Denne Road is no great shakes architecturally; it's very much a mixed bag, and as a resident I don't mind admitting it. ed.

## Horsham Painting Group

Many thanks for including the item on the Horsham Painting Group Spring Exhibition in the May edition of the Newsletter. As I am sure you are aware, retention of the Town Hall for events of this nature is absolutely essential for the cultural well-being of our town. Your support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

**Freda Lambourne  
New Street, Horsham**

## Teenage tobacco ring

A friend forwarded an article, *Horsham's Teenage Tobacco Ring*, from your April Newsletter to me. I'm researching the Charman family so I checked on the notorious John Charman who master-minded the series of crimes mentioned in the article.

It seems likely that he was John Richard Charman, born in Horsham in 1869, the son of John Charman and Rosanna Upfold. His family circumstances in 1884 ring true today; a 15-year old teenager whose father had died two years previously; and his mother was by then pregnant with a baby to be born not long afterwards – the father being unknown. Only a couple of years previously (in 1881) the family was living in a pub – the King's Head Tap in the Carfax, where no doubt they were in contact with the cream of Horsham society.

I suppose today we'd say he was lacking a suitable male role model, in a dysfunctional family, in inappropriate living accommodation, and we would have social services trying to keep him on the straight and narrow.

Have you encountered John James Charman who went down on the Titanic – he's commemorated on his parents' overgrown gravestone at the very back of Denne Road cemetery, if you can hack your way through the undergrowth to see it. John James Charman was (like me) a 5th cousin of the notorious John Richard Charman, criminal mastermind!

**Colin Charman  
Southlands Close, Wokingham**

Colin: thanks for your informative and amusing letter. Yes, we wrote about John James Charman, the Titanic victim, in the April 2006 issue. ed.

## When the Rolling Stones came to town - but the Beatles didn't

There's been a good deal of reminiscence of late in the local paper, prompted by the auction of some Rolling Stones memorabilia by Christie's. Famously, the group came to play at St Leonard's Hall in Cambridge Road on 3 August 1963, just as they were about to become stars, and among the items for sale was a contract between the band and Camida Promotions of 93 Longfield Road. The fee was £50 (while as the *WSCT* pointed out, Mick, Keef and Co earned £87.6 million in 2005).

Let me add my own two-pennyworth. That evening, with a friend, I found myself for some reason at the back of the station, most likely debating whether to patronise the King's Head or The Crown. A concert in Cambridge Road was *not* on the agenda. A couple of scruffy-looking fellows with London accents came up and asked the way to the venue ('Scuse me, mate...'). Little did we know that we were in the presence of future greatness.



But then I was always a Beatles man – and to my horror I have also learnt from the *WSCT* that Camida's Cary Smith tried to book the world's best group – ever – at the Drill Hall for a fee of £250, but the local authorities got cold feet and said 'no'. **BS**

The Rolling Stones in 1963.

## 'Savage jungle rhythm'

Back in 1957 the American rock and roll explosion hit us hard, and although those days now have a sweet innocence, at the time many took the view that the end of the world was nigh. And so Mr PF Lilley, of West Street, writing in the local paper – shall we say forcefully? – was not a lone voice.

'It seems to be a sad thing that the young folk of the country should be beguiled by those gravel-voiced, gum-chewing exponents of a savage jungle rhythm into thinking that the ghastly parody of a dance is the modern way of expressing themselves'. Getting into his stride, he continued 'These parasites who mostly seem to originate from the Bowery of New York and the dives of New Orleans cannot surely be regarded as fitting examples of what is good or what shall be considered a happy means of expression for our vastly superior and cultured youth'. Not a man to beat about the bush, he considered our dress sense to be far better than that of America's youth, but even that was in jeopardy. 'It seems a terrible thing if this is to be corrupted by a dollar-minded group of morons from the USA'. He harked back to a golden age when 'the pre-war beflanneled, sports-coated young men and the delightfully-dressed girls made our village dances a joy to attend, and they must not be allowed to degenerate into the horrible orgies which these 'rock 'n roll' enthusiasts from America would have us put in their place. I am not sure, however, that the good common sense of British teenagers will prevail against the wiles of these phony exponents of American culture'.

But, as we know, Mr Lilley's hopes were not to be fulfilled, and rock and roll swept all before it. One trembles to think what he would have made of today's scene.

## By The Way

### New members

A very warm welcome to our latest group of new members: **Mr and Mrs Purcell, School Hill, Warnham; Mr and Mrs Harlow, Wimblehurst Road, Horsham; Mr and Mrs Hampton, Dickins Way, Horsham.**

### Concert at Nuthurst

Shipley Arts Festival has reached St Andrew's Church, Nuthurst, this year, with a concert of popular classical music, in a delightful setting, to be held on Sunday 15 July at 6.30 pm. Society members are cordially invited to enjoy *Music for a Summer's Evening*, which includes pieces by Elgar, Walton, Bach and McDowall. The internationally-based chamber orchestra will be directed by Andrew Bernardi.

Tickets are £15 each and can be obtained from Eve Mauchell (01403 260335), Derek Bradnum (01403 891181) or The Village Store, Mannings Heath. Places are limited!

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The  
**HORSHAM  
SOCIETY**

FOUNDED 1955

## 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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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

**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.