



Rudgwick Preservation Society Newsletter

Chairman's Report

PLANNING MATTERS - VIGILANCE REQUIRED

Pressures for development in the countryside are increasing, and even greater vigilance is needed to protect the rural character of Rudgwick and its surroundings.

Structure Plan - 37 000 New Dwellings

The Structure Plan, which has been painstakingly prepared by West Sussex County Council over several years, has been submitted for approval, and we are reliably informed that this document has been accepted in principle by the Secretary of State. Inter alia, it provides for some 37 000 additional dwellings in the next decade.

North Horsham District Local Plan - 1 300 New Dwellings

The North Horsham District Local Plan has been presented by the District Council for consultation to some 12 parishes of which Rudgwick is one. This is being prepared in anticipation of the development strategy laid down by the Structure Plan. The Plan claims that some 1 300 dwellings will need to be accommodated on previously undeveloped land, and this will absorb approximately 110 acres of land.

Land Lost Forever

Further development of Rudgwick will inevitably destroy its attractiveness, and land lost to building will be lost forever. Our response to the consultative document has been to reserve our position and await further consultation in the autumn. The support of members is essential if the Parish Council and the Preservation Society are to protect the interests of the village.



Autumn Meeting:

Any Questions: All You
Wanted To Ask About Rudgwick
Last Time But Couldn't.....

Monday, 3 November 1986;
Rudgwick Village Hall,
Bucks Green, 7.30pm

Followed by:

Slides of Old Rudgwick

by Malcolm Francis

All are welcome

DANGEROUS PRECEDENT AT FIR TREE FARM - EXPLOITATION OF LOOPHOLE IN THE LAW

A prefabricated bungalow used for breeding rabbits is giving us much cause for concern. Following the erection of the building, without planning permission, in Baynards Lane (an area of 'great landscape value', and therefore strictly controlled against development), an enforcement notice was issued by Waverley Borough Council for its removal. The occupier subsequently appealed against the enforcement order, and to our surprise, the inspector upheld the appeal. Meanwhile, two mobile homes have been placed on the site, for which another enforcement order has been issued. Also on site are a caravan, two derelict cars, chickens, goats and geese. A generator is now causing a disturbance at night, and we fully appreciate the alarm expressed by the residents.

There is no way in which this can be regarded as a viable farm, and we are concerned about the implications of this decision, which if taken as a precedent, could lead to further undesirable developments of this kind.

ACHIEVEMENT BY NEGOTIATION -RUDGWICK BRICKWORKS

Rudgwick Brickworks has been the subject of many complaints from residents regarding fumes and noise. A meeting was eventually arranged at the Brickworks with Brenda Dick (our County Councillor), Peter Marshall Brown (Planning Officer from the County), Nigel Haverson (Environmental Health Officer) and Chris Griffin (Parish Councillor). Spokesmen for the residents were also present, together with the Preservation Society. Pat Laker, Managing Director of the Brickworks, explained how the company hoped to ameliorate these problems, and

announced that a sound-control system was shortly to be introduced. When reconstruction of the working arrangements was completed, it was anticipated that most problems would be resolved. This proved to be a most helpful meeting, and it is hoped that further meetings will be arranged. Clearly, the Company is anxious to remedy the cause for complaint.

DEMOLISHED POST BOX TO BE REPLACED

Thanks to the assistance of the Post Office, we have succeeded in obtaining a traditional post box inscribed 'Edward VII' to replace the modern post box that was installed at Tismans Common when the traditional box there was demolished by a lorry in an accident. Although we were quite prepared to meet the cost of installing the new box, the Post Office standards are most exacting, and we were surprised at the overall cost. Fortunately, Rudgwick Brickworks have generously agreed to help with materials, and thanks to the efforts of John Grant, we have obtained the services of a bricklayer.

BEER GARDEN AT THE KINGS HEAD

The Kings Head has applied for permission to alter the interior of the building and to construct a car park and beer garden, the latter being on land at the side and rear of the Post Office. This is in our conservation area, and although not opposed to the interior alteration and car park, we are concerned about the possible noise and disturbance to residents adjacent to the beer garden. Permission has been granted for the whole application, and while we regard this old inn as an important part of our village life, we have reservations about the effect of the beer garden.

MEDIAEVAL HALL HOUSE - OAK COTTAGE, ELLENS GREEN

Oak Cottage at Ellens Green is one of only three small mediaeval hall houses found in Surrey, dated circa 1400. This exciting discovery is owed to the work of the Domestic Buildings Research Group; a short report of their work appears elsewhere in the Newsletter.

LAND AT REAR OF LITTLE HAVEN

We opposed the proposal to build a bungalow and garage on land at the rear of Little Haven, as this would not only constitute 'black land' development, but would seriously affect the amenities of residents in Woodfield Road. This was refused by the planning authority and has gone to appeal, the outcome of which is awaited.

FORMER PRIMARY SCHOOL

The County Council has submitted a plan to convert the old building into two dwellings and to erect one new dwelling. Rudgwick Chapel has also submitted a plan to convert the school to a building for religious worship and for much

needed social and youth activities. The building itself must be preserved, but it is on a difficult site situated on a hazardous part of the A 281. Conversion to a chapel is an attractive possibility, and we support their endeavours.

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS IN RUDGWICK CHURCHYARD

Acting on behalf of the Sussex Family History Group, Ray and Barbara Fautley undertook the task of recording all the monumetal inscriptions in the churchyard. This extraordinary piece of research involved recording more than 700 inscriptions, often under the most difficult conditions. Contending with the weather, clearing overgrown plots and carefully cleaning the stones must indeed have been a daunting task. In all, Ray and Barbara spent three years completing this project, and we are indebted to them for their magnificent effort; we are sorry to report that they are leaving the village to live in Suffolk and wish them hapiness in their new surroundings. Their report appears elsewhere in the Newsletter. (Stan Smith)

Holy Trinity Church, Rudgwick Monumental Inscriptions in the Church and Churchyard

Ray and Barbara Fautley

We undertook the task of recording the monumental inscriptions in the church and churchyard at Rudgwick for the Sussex Family History Group (based at Brighton), as part of their project to record such inscriptions in every Sussex

parish. (The monumental inscriptions in a churchyard are the inscriptions that appear on the gravestones erected in the ground surrounding the church, and also any similar information on wall plaques and windows within the church itself.)

Before starting the work of recording at Rudgwick, it was of course first necessary to obtain the permission of the present incumbent, Reverend T A B Charles, to enter the churchyard, record the inscriptions, plot the approximate position of each gravestone on a plan of the churchyard, and, in some places, to clear long grass, stinging nettles, brambles and other foliage to enable the stones to be seen at all. Contact with Reverend Charles was initiated by the Sussex Family History Group, after which he very kindly provided a print of a plan view of the church and surrounding churchyard. As this dye-line print was the only copy available, we traced it on to a transparency in black ink, thus making a master from which further copies could easily be obtained.

So, armed with several sharpened pencils, A5 writing pads and admittedly a rather limited amount of enthusiasm, we started work at the south-west corner of the churchyard on the south-east side of the path leading from Church Street to the southern

entrance to the church. In this area, we found one of the oldest surviving stones to be that in memory of John Hoad, who died 5 February 1750, aged 78 years. John was therefore born in 1672 - more than 300 years ago!

Essential Wire Brush and Wellies

The path leading from the north-western extremity of the churchyard at Church Street is of interest, as in the 1950s it was paved with stones that had been removed from their burial plots. Fortunately, they had been laid with their inscriptions uppermost, but unfortunately this then exposed them to a worse form of erosion than older stones still erect - human feet! As work progressed from the comparatively easy-to-get-at stones, we soon found that other tools were necessary - wellies (long, wet grass, ants and nettles very soon became our enemies!), waterproof kneeling pads, gloves, shears, secateurs, scrubbing brush and, most important of all, a wire brush. This last item is not recommended by the experts, as its use is said to upset the ecology of an environment where lichens and ivys flourish, but without its use, we found it often very difficult to determine even which side of a stone bore the sought-after inscription.

Problems

Relating the position of a stone in the churchyard to its place on the plan was, we found, far from easy. It seemed that trees and shrubs used as reference points to position gravestones on the plan at one time, had somehow, in a triffid-like mode, moved to quite different places some six months and perhaps 100 inscriptions later!

The minimum number in a team was found empirically to be two - one member to get filthy clearing



Holy Trinity Church, Rudgwick

grass, and even soil, from sinking stones and to clean the inscriptions, while the other kept clean hands to record the information on the pad and the position of the gravestone on the plan.

Examples

A little more than just a name can be attached to some of Rudgwick's inhabitants, for example, Hugh Napper who died in 1892 aged 78 was 'for many years a well-known sportsman in the locality with horn and hounds'. Alfred, fourth son of John and Elizabeth Botting of Wanford Mill 'accidentally killed in Mr Simmond's flour mills, Aldershot, 7 August 1906 aged 19 years'. Edward Teshmaker Busk, Lieutenant, London Electrical Eng. R E 'who died by fire in the air while doing experimental work in aeronautics in the service of his country'.

The inscriptions also record connections of families with particular houses in the area, for example, the Butcher family was living at Red House, Rudgwick, back in the 17th century, and later at Gravats and Eames House. The Churchman family was at Mabings (also Maybings and Maybanks), Ewhurst, during the 18th century, and at Berry House, Rudgwick, from 1655 to 1738 at least.

It is hoped that this work, which has taken on and off (more off than on!) about three years to complete, involving recording more than 700 inscriptions, will help to provide some background to the work of the Rudgwick Preservation Society. To this end, a copy of the completed project has been presented to the Society and can be examined by anyone wishing to do so. (Copies of the report are also held by Reverend Charles and the Sussex Family History Group.)

Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey)

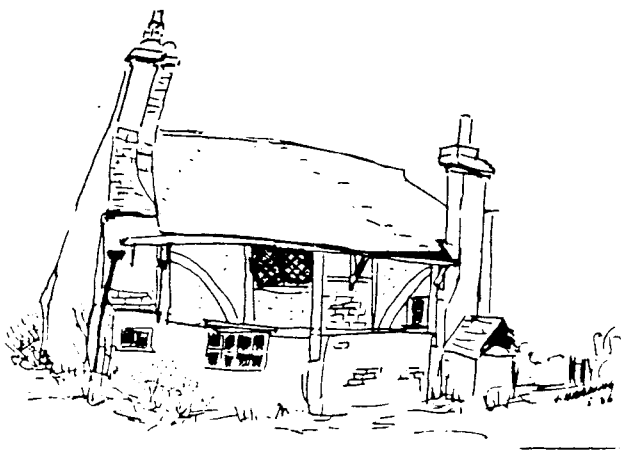
Joan Harding, Chairman

Through much of history, British royalty have been interested in buildings. Queen Elizabeth I was interested in castles and palaces, whereas Queen Victoria was happier in stately homes. It was in the reign of Queen Victoria that the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) was formed to collect records of these larger country houses. During the reign of our present Queen Elizabeth, there has been an Architectural Heritage Year when we have been encouraged to look at, and appreciate, the older and smaller farmhouses and cottages, some of which have survived since before the first Queen Elizabeth. These have managed to keep up to date,

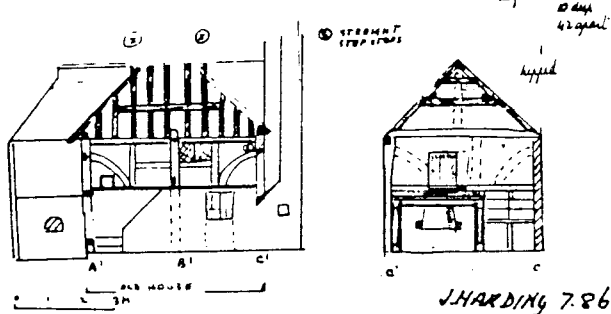
and have been built so well that they have survived.

The Domestic Buildings Research Group of Surrey (DBRG) was formed in 1970 to study these older farmhouses and cottages in the county, and to record their features and development. A copy of the report is given to the owner; another copy is accepted by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England); a third copy is sent to the County Archivist, on closed access; the DBRG holds the fourth copy, which is often recopied for a new owner.

Made up entirely of volunteers, the Group records only on the



LONG DIAGRAM INSIDE BACK WALL



Oak Cottage, Ellens Green
(by permission of Mr and Mrs Howard)

invitation of the owners, the aim being to interest the owner in his house so that he will appreciate and understand it. The reports are attractively presented - with illustrations - and it is hoped that the owner will show the report to his

friends, thereby spreading understanding of the craftsmanship of old carpenters. Assistance is also given to local societies to record their houses. To date, the DBRG has recorded more than 2 500 buildings and this includes farm buildings.

The DBRG has nothing to do with listing, although several house owners, when they realize the importance of their homes do ask how these may be considered for listing.

Oak Cottage, Ellens Green

Members of the Rudgwick Preservation Society will be intested to learn that the DBRG was recently invited to visit a cottage at Ellens Green with a prospective buyer. Unfortunately, however, we were not permitted to record it. Subsequently, though, we received a telephone call from the new owner with an invitation to record it. Oak Cottage is one of the three smallest mediaeval hall houses yet found in Surrey, and we are delighted that Mr and Mrs Howard are going to refurbish it carefully; the final word in the sale catalogue had been most disturbing - the catalogue read 'for renovation or demolition'.

Feeding Birds in Winter

Chris Griffin

As winter approaches, many people start to put out food for wild birds - this can vary from a few kitchen scraps thrown on to the lawn, to an elaborate feeding station as part of a wildlife garden. The entertainment provided by the wildlife garden can equal that provided by the television as the blue tits try, with their fierce poses, to drive away the much larger great tits from the

peanuts, meanwhile letting in the more timid marsh and coal tits. This situation soon changes with the arrival of the nuthatch, which stands no nonsense from any member of the tit family. The great spotted woodpecker, top of the peanut feeder pecking order, sends all others flying for cover as does the sparrowhawk, which visits many bird gardens for an easy meal.

Water Antics

Those who have a pond may have the added bonus of the pied wagtail or even the grey wagtail, which occasionally visit mine. Water antics can be most amusing when a bathing blue tit is joined by a blackbird, which while bathing itself nearly drowns its bath mate. Ponds and bird baths should always be thawed during freezing weather because water is essential for drinking as well as bathing. For my pond, I use a gallon plastic container filled each morning with hot water, anchored in the birds' favourite corner.

Night-Time Viewing

The interest need not end at dusk. I have been in the garden on a winter's night listening to owls calling and have spotted both little and tawny owls sitting in my trees. They don't seem to mind a torch beam for a short time, but it is important to keep any disturbance to a minimum. If being outside at night does not appeal to you, then time could still be well spent planning new bird feeding ideas, or writing to tell me of any methods that you have been using that I haven't mentioned here!

Limitations of Bird Tables

Bird tables have their limitations because sparrows and starlings can monopolize them, whereas ground feeding has the advantage that many birds, large and small, can feed together. Corn, bird seed and kitchen scraps will feed many of the tit family, also chaffinch, blackbird, robin, thrushes, dunnock, collared dove, jackdaw, jay, magpie and of course sparrows and starlings. One winter, I also attracted eight pheasants. Apples feed not only resident blackbirds, song and mistle thrushes, but also



Tawny owl
(sketch by Lesley Catchpole)

redwings and fieldfares from Scandinavia. Blackcaps, which normally feed in Africa, occasionally stay, and I have had one feeding on apples in January. It is important not to put more food on the ground that the birds can eat in one day, or rats and mice may be attracted - unless, of course, you want to feed the owls and kestrels!

Thwarting Squirrels

Peanuts are excellent nutritionally and are very popular with birds. Last winter, for the first time, long tailed tits were feeding on my hanging feeders along with great, blue, coal, marsh and willow tits. Nuthatch, greenfinch and great spotted woodpecker are also regulars. Occasionally, siskins, migrant finches from Scandinavia, may appear. Fat is popular with many birds and can be hung from feeders or tables. Squirrels can be kept off feeders and tables by fixing a 15 inch diameter plastic disc on to the support pole. The disc should tilt when touched, ensuring that no firm foothold can be gained.

Warning

All feeding should be stopped by early April. Peanuts and fat can be particularly harmful to young birds, and in any case natural food is becoming plentiful. The birds will repay you for their winter feeding by eating vast numbers of caterpillars, aphids, slugs and other garden 'pests'.

Use of Plants

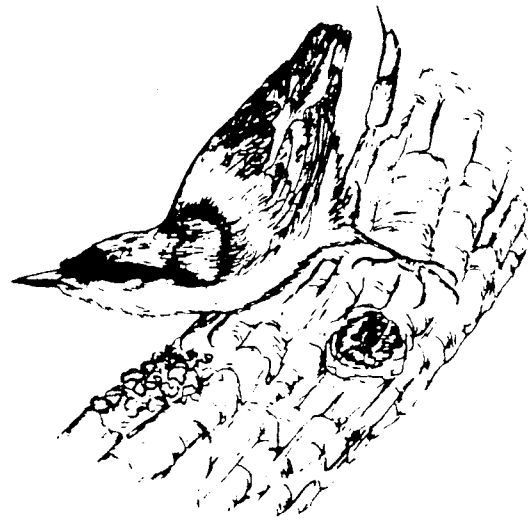
Many plants, both wild and cultivated, provide good bird food. I have never seen goldfinches taking food put out for birds, but they quickly find ripe teasel, selfheal, knapweed and thistle seeds. Bullfinches will eat ash keys and seeds of dock and hypericum in preference to fruit buds. Berried shrubs provide food for the thrush family and other birds. Cotoneaster and pyracantha are well known, but rose hips, honeysuckle and hawthorn are also good. Hedges left uncut until late winter and ivy-covered trees also provide essential food and shelter.

Trees

Conifers provide hours of feeding for goldcrests, while the rockery is often thoroughly searched by wrens who also spend much time feeding on compost heaps, which don't freeze so readily because



Blue tit
(sketch by Lesley Catchpole)



Nuthatch
(sketch by Lesley Catchpole)

of internal heat. Dead branches are rich in food: I have seen large pieces of bark flying around as a great spotted woodpecker hunts for food. The much smaller tree creeper seems to prefer oak or apple trees, where it uses its long beak to probe for food in the rough bark. Log stacks and fallen leaves which are teeming with wildlife are also good feeding grounds for various birds.

Ant Hills

If you have any ant hills in your garden, you may be visited by a green woodpecker in search of its favourite food. I have heard that you can attract them with grated cheese, but in my feeding patch it would be eaten by the tits before my back was turned.

A Challenge!

Garden bird feeding presents many challenges: after you have kept the birds through the winter, you then have to keep them off your seed rows in spring, fruit bushes in summer and cabbages in winter! But if you take up the challenge, it can be more rewarding than sport and more entertaining than television - at least that is what I think, but then I don't have time for either of those!