



# RPS NEWSLETTER

RUDGWICK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

AUTUMN 1989

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

During the past six months the work of the society has continued in the usual unobtrusive and, we hope, efficient manner. I am grateful to all members of the society and, in particular those serving on the committee, for making this possible. Since the Annual General Meeting Beryl Davies has joined the committee by co-option and Audrey Trafford, whose help during the last couple of years has been valued, has resigned from it.

Our public meetings have several times been enhanced by displays by the Cranleigh Conservation Volunteers, who have been involved in work on Downlink and in the Fox Green and Baynards areas during village clean-ups. These have invariably been fronted by the secretary John Hill and members will be saddened by his recent sudden death. Thanks should also be extended to the 'Any Questions?' panel at the A.G.M. - Brenda Dick, Neil Mitchell, Keith Lawrence and Stan Smith - for their major part in a highly successful evening and to Malcolm Francis for organising the Society's stall at the Village fete and, together with Pat Reading, running it.

The Society's involvement in what have become traditional activities like the guided walks under the auspices of West Sussex County Council, has continued apace and we have continued to comment in a rational and responsive way upon planning applications and other matters affecting the Village and the surrounding area.

Many members will be aware that outline planning permission has been granted, on appeal, for the building of five houses on the long-deserted Buckhurst site in Church Street. While it will be pleasant to have the site tidied up in due course it is perhaps regrettable that there is no provision for inexpensive property for the first-time buyer in the scheme, as was at one time hoped.

The public inquiry into the finalization of the North Horsham District Local plan starts in Horsham on November 11th. The Society is combining with the Broadbridge Heath, Rudgwick and Warnham Parish Councils to object to the plans to fund repairs to Field Place, near Horsham, by allowing limited development in the countryside. Field Place is a listed building and it seems to us that the plan would be contrary to all established countryside policies and the Local District Council's own recently established planning principles.

We hope that the Inspector will follow the example of the Secretary of State for the Environment at Foxley Wood and turn down what would be a very unfortunate precedent if accepted.

Finally, please encourage your friends, whether members or not, to support our open meeting on November 6th.

**JOHN COZENS**

## PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWS

### The North Horsham District Local Plan

The Deposit Draft of the North Horsham District Local Plan, which will become the Statutory Plan for new development up to 1996, has been published. This document will be the subject of a public inquiry by an inspector appointed by the Department of the Environment commencing in November and probably lasting for three months. In general the Plan has the merit of leaving the villages free from development, but contains one highly contentious paragraph concerning Field Place in Warnham.

**Field Place**, is a Grade I Listed Building, privately owned by Mr Pritchard-Jones. It is situated in 200 acres and was once the home of the poet Shelley. The plan states that in order to restore and maintain the building, a limited amount of development would be *Acceptable in Principle*.

A number of issues have been strongly criticised by interested parties such as Broadbridge Heath, Warnham and Rudgwick Parish Councils, The Warnham Society, Rudgwick Preservation Society, The Council for the Protection of Rural England and the Federation of Sussex Amenity Societies.

1. The plan for development has been promoted by the planning authority (Horsham District Council) although no planning application has been received.
2. Wates the builders are being represented at an inquiry on the 13th December by Mr Pritchard-Jones, who, although a solicitor, can hardly be said to be independent.
3. The Planning Authority appears to be in conflict with its own policies for the countryside, *inter alia* development to be limited to the needs of agriculture, and the protection of local gaps to prevent the coalescence of villages.
4. The plan is contrary to the county structure plan and is being contested by the County Council

Various meetings are now being held, culminating in an inquiry to be held on the 13th December, at which Dr. Peter Brandon of the Council for the Protection of Rural England will represent the views of the principle objectors, including our own Society. We will keep you informed of developments, if that is the right phrase to use.

### Renovation of traditional signposts.

Following the removal of a traditional signpost at Watts Corner and its replacement by ugly plastic ones, we have been granted permission to carry our renovation work on a voluntary basis. Mr Noakes, the Area Highways Engineer, has welcomed our offer, and will meet the cost of paint

and timber for new finger posts. When we have made a survey and identified the signposts which need renovating it would be ideal to allocate one to a group of say three, who would then take the responsibility for its renovation.

Peter Adorian of the The Haven Society has already completed the restoration of a signpost adjacent to the Blue Ship.

These old signposts, mostly Victorian, are part of our rural scene, and we must assure their continuing existence.

### **Letter Boxes and Telephone Kiosks.**

These too are a necessary part of the countryside setting, and we have been assured by British Telecom that existing kiosks will remain in Rudgwick.

There exists a Letter-Box Study Group who gather information about letter boxes. There are 382 different models, but the Group is particularly interested in traditional models. As you know, we organised and paid for the restoration of the Edward VIII post box at Tismans Common. There is also a Victorian model at the Mucky Duck. Would some kind enthusiasts volunteer to record and photograph all these important structures. We must not take them for granted, as they provide a vital service and can be made to blend in with the countryside.

Recently Waverley has produced a heritage guide listing the locations of these important wall boxes. Replacements are pretty hideous.

**Guided walks in Rudgwick** are sponsored by the County and this parish had a record year. No less than eight consecutive walks were organised in Rudgwick from 8th May to 29th June, and, of course, we were blessed with perfect weather. Our thanks are due to the leaders who organised each week. (Chris Griffin, Joe Griffin, Brian Murgatroyd, Dave Buckley, Paul Frenchum, Malcolm Francis, Stan Smith, and Geoff Ayres.)

Dave Buckley held the record with 82 walkers. However, Brian Murgatroyd must be congratulated for taking the trouble to arrange for Peter Adorian to give us a short history of Gibbons Mill, and John Rollings, who restrained the bull of a herd of 60 Limousine cattle whilst we inspected these fine beasts. Much of the walk was over Hope Farm, not accessible by public footpath.

**Cox Green.** For some time Cox Green has been under threat from harmful development. Having succeeded on appeal to demolish Broom Cottage, a modest bungalow, and build two mock-Tudor residences, a developer has attempted to repeat this obtrusive and inappropriate development by applying to demolish Pantiles and build two large replacement houses. Refused by the planning authority, this has gone to appeal, but meanwhile application has been made to develop the existing bungalow, greatly extending and enlarging it to a four bedroom house with double garage. Furthermore, an unsuccessful application was made to build a bungalow at Fishers. This could go to appeal. Congratulations to Jill Hodson for setting up the Cox Green Residents Association to protect from further undesirable encroachment in this attractive hamlet; and to Councillor Tony Forster for

supporting their efforts and ensuring that Waverley Council viewed the area and are sympathetic to the aims of the Association.

### **English Heritage and Listed Buildings.**

Horsham District Council has received a request from English Heritage that systematic surveys of historic buildings and conservation areas be undertaken; but existing resources within the planning department make such comprehensive surveys impossible. In a report by the Director of Planning and Law, it has been suggested that local amenity groups might be prepared to help in monitoring listed buildings and identifying those at risk, with a view to informing both owners and the planning department regarding advice on emergency repairs and the possible availability of grants.

This Society has taken a special interest in our listed buildings, and currently Diana Chatwin of the Wealden Buildings Study Group, has undertaken a survey of all timber-framed buildings in the Parish of Rudgwick. There are some 60 timber-framed buildings, and already 19 buildings have been studied and recorded. It will take more than two years to complete this survey. For further information contact Stan Smith, Rudgwick 2723. Some members of our committee have the Statutory List of protected buildings in Rudgwick. We have written to Tony Curtis to assure him of our co-operation. At the time of writing we are unaware of any listed building in Rudgwick in disrepair, and perhaps members will draw our attention to any protected buildings at risk.

We pride ourselves on being able to identify every listed building in the parish, but to our shame we have discovered three timber-framed buildings not on the Statutory list. One day we may reach the magic number of 100!

**Land at Cousin's Cope,** The Haven. For nearly two years mobile homes have occupied this parcel of land without planning permission. Fairground equipment has been stored there and now permission is sought for the temporary storage of building materials. Although in the parish of Slinfold, geographically Cousin's Cope must be seen as part of the Haven in Rudgwick.

Central government are presently reviewing the scope and effectiveness of the enforcement of planning control, and examining recommendations for improvements to present alternative provisions. The existing system of Enforcement Notices is subject to all kind of abuse, by delaying tactics and legal argument. In our view such breaches of planning control should be illegal and subject to criminal proceedings. There may be an argument for Enforcement Notices in simple cases, but in Cousin's Cope there have been so many unauthorised activities, that the continuing saga of abuse of planning control could have been resolved if it were made a criminal offence.

We have written to our M.P., Sir Peter Hordern, who has kindly presented our views to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

*The news report was contributed by Stan Smith*

## CONSERVATION MEANS WHAT ?

By Geoff Ayres

We know that conservation is not just protecting a wood or a piece of downland against development or agriculture. Over the years many valuable sites have been acquired by County Trusts and, despite jealous protection, have lost some of their most valuable species.

Leaving aside such natural disasters as Dutch Elm disease or hurricanes, the critical factor is management. The British Countryside is almost entirely man-made. Without man the Downs would be woodland not grassland. The Downs were created by more than 3000 years of continuous grazing by domestic herds. Now, suddenly, the grazing has ceased.

For several hundred years the woodlands of Rudgwick were coppiced. That means that parts of the wood were cut to the ground on a rotational basis. This management ceased between the two world wars. Every cottage used faggots as fuel for heating and cooking. The high proportion of Hornbeam in our woods is a remnant of the iron industry. Hornbeam, it appears, makes good charcoal which was needed in huge quantities for smelting iron ore. The charcoal burners or 'collers' lived in the woods tending their 'hearths', smouldering stacks of wood covered in clay domes, and cutting the wood. Behind them they left not devastation but clearings full of primroses, bluebells, violets and a wealth of wild flowers and butterflies. Because the whole process was a cycle, the same area would be cut at intervals of about 8 to 12 years. So at any one time there were sections of the wood at different stages of regrowth. This supports a huge diversity of wild life. Many wild flower seeds remain dormant during the cycle, germinating when the area is clear again.

These coppice clearings are warm. Recent research has shown that the ground temperature can be several degrees higher than that in adjacent woodland. Two butterflies, now very rare, depend upon this temperature in order to survive in Britain, the northern limit of their range.

The Heath Fritillary was just rescued from extinction by coppicing one of its last haunts, Blean Woods, near Canterbury.

The Pearl Bordered Fritillary is disappearing fast but is still just hanging on in a wood near Rudgwick. These butterflies do not move through the woods to a suitable clearing. If such a clearing does not appear in the immediate vicinity they slowly die out. The critical condition of the Pearl Bordered Fritillary has only recently been appreciated. The offspring of two laying females caught in Rudgwick may be used to recolonise coppice in other parts of Sussex and possibly Hampshire.

Neil Mitchell is the 'Downslink Ranger' responsible for the management of the whole of the Downslink long distance path (the old railway) right down to Shoreham. We are very lucky to have him. He has already carried out work on our section of the line, I have even met him working on the South Downs at Shoreham.

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

*(continued from the last issue)*

By Ivy Port

Then of course there were the postmen. There were two deliveries a day, morning and afternoon. In those days they were smartly dressed in uniform - with a peak cap and navy blue suits piped with red. The postman would never dream of leaving off his peak cap or of slopping around without a coat, even in the hottest weather. Correct uniform it had to be and their manner was just as precise and correct.

You could get your shoes mended in the village. I think most villages had a shoemaker. Mr. William Tate was ours and with our large family we were frequently going to his shop. It was a galvanised tin shed with a door like a stable door. When I was a child I was a bit frightened to find the door shut because which part of the door did you knock !? Mr. Tate seemed an elderly man and he would be sitting on a stool there with a shoe last between his legs driving brads into the sole of a shoe. He was surrounded by boots and shoes of all shapes and sizes and there was a strong smell of leather. He was a nice jolly man and would tell you to sit on a very high stool. I had to heave myself up and sometimes missed my footing and Mr. Tate had to come to the rescue and lift me on it. It was all part of a day's fun and we looked forward to going there again in a day or two to fetch the repaired shoes.

I cannot pass on without mentioning that Mr. Tate was also the church verger. He was constant and true to the Church and attended every service including christenings, weddings and funerals. He would join in all the Responses with a very loud AMEN at the end. He wore a long black velvet robe which was so old I thought it was green. To me it was great to see him walk majestically up the aisle with this wonderful cloak flowing out behind him.

We were entertained by yearly visits from the scissor grinder. He sat on a thing rather like a bicycle turned upside down and pedalled a sort of miniature grindstone. Mother always gave him scissors to sharpen but they were usually more blunt afterwards than before. Then there was the man with a hurdy gurdy and a monkey. The monkey sat on the hurdy gurdy while it played mother's favourite tune 'Home Sweet Home'. The same tune year after year. For this we gave him sixpence, quite a large sum in those days. Mother would sometimes send me out with the money and I was a little frightened of the monkey.

Then there was the barrel organ man who would pull up his machine close to the wall and grind out several old favourite song tunes. There was something so joyful about it all and I was thrilled to bits. It was always a day to remember - the day when the organ grinder came. Of course there were occasional visits from gypsies selling pegs and lace and shoe laces and for a piece of silver they would tell you your fortune. Then there were the regular tramps who called once or twice a year perhaps wanting rabbit skins and it was usually hot water in an old tin. Mother never sent any of them away empty handed - she always gave them hot water and when she went to get

it they would bawl out "perhaps you could put some tea in it." Having obliged them thus far they would then say "Perhaps you could spare a little milk and sugar". The same old men turned up year after year and we gave them names like Ruffy Tufty or Long Jack.

I am afraid I've deviated from what I set out to write but what I hoped to convey that round about seventy years ago the aforesaid was all part of our life and entertainment. Every day had a purpose and every purpose a task. We had a deep sense of family life. We learned public and private discipline, manners and self reliance and respect for others less fortunate than ourselves. Father was really at the helm but mother usually gave the helpful advice. Looking back to my early days perhaps they weren't ideal. Life was a struggle for many families - for we did not have much in material terms by today's standards. I suppose some of us were poor but we thought we were rich. That was I think because we had happiness which was a great treasure.

Every day was a thrill - even going to school was good fun. The village school was a REAL part of the place. Walking to and fro to school was great - playing games on the way home - picking wild flowers making daisy chains, sitting in the ditch looking for wild strawberries, playing 'mothers and fathers', climbing trees or controlling hoops along the road. Teachers were held in high regard by parents. Much of what we were taught was by whole class recitation which would be derided now. Even so I can recall most of it. I don't think any children left school who could not read, write and do simple sums. Idleness nor untidiness was not tolerated. There were occasional inspections of finger nails and shoes had to be clean and polished. Woe betide you if you were sent to school with dirty shoes!

## DOES ANYONE KNOW THE TYLERS ?

Mrs Phyllis Miller from San Jose in California has been in touch with us to see if we can help trace her family who have their roots here in Rudgwick.

Mabel Annie Tyler, Mrs Miller's mother, was born in Rudgwick in 1886. Her brothers and sisters were:

Nellie Jane (Born Roffey 1882)

Mary Elizabeth (Born Roffey 1884)

(Mable Annie, Born Rudgwick 1886)

Herbert (Born Rudgwick 1889)

Winifred Lucy (Born Rudgwick 1890) Harold Graham (Born Rudgwick 1892) Alice Kathleen (Born Rudgwick 1895)

The only other clue we have is that the family seems to have lived, at one time, at Exfold "Cottage" (could that be Exfold Farm?). The Labour certificate illustrated here was given to Mabel Tyler when she left Rudgwick Board School in 1898.

If anyone has any knowledge of the Tylers please contact the Editor (Leslie Hawkins on R 2967). We will pass any information we collect on to Mrs Miller and also report on our success in the next issue of the Newsletter

Forgetting the vandalism, the muggers, the rapists, the hooligans, the fears, the uncertainties, the television which has hypnotised most of us, perhaps one could consider that these days in 1986 are the 'good old modern days!?' Well, it is a point of view - but at least some of us in our eighties had standards and a religious background on which to base our lives - a treasure indeed.

**Rudgwick Venture Scouts.** This year the village tidy-up is being organised by the Rudgwick Venture Scouts on 4th and 5th November. The Venture Scouts are a group of young people aged 15 to 20, whose aims are to help others whilst enjoying themselves. The team will consist of:

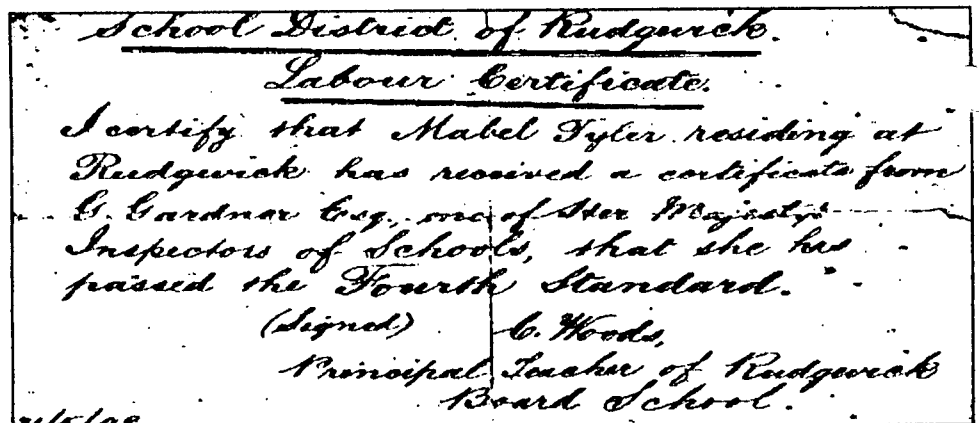
Graham Tarrant (unit leader), Jayne Griffin, Hazell Powell, Chris Dalton, Mark Greenwood, Matthew Clark, Andrew Bullen, Zoe Griggs, Sarah Griffin, Zoe McLachlan, James Pusey and Sandy Sharp.

Amongst recent activities we have taken part in are: a two week camping/hiking holiday in Sweden, orienteering, cooking and a weekend canoeing course. We have also helped to raise money for a new scout minibus by directing traffic at the Rudgwick Steam Rally, helping at Scout jumble sales and by helping at various other scouting events.

If you would like any more information about the Venture Scouts, please ring one of the following:

Jayne Griffin, Rudgwick 2533

Hazel Powell, Rudgwick 2275



LABOUR CERTIFICATE ISSUED TO MABEL TYLER 31/5/1898