



## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year is the Preservation Society's tenth anniversary. Ironically one of the reasons for setting up the Society was to be able to have an effective voice on the development of the Buckhurst site. Now, in our tenth year, the detailed planning application has been approved and within a month or so we will see building work start. We would hope that our views have helped to make sure that the development of this important site in the centre of our village is in proportion and in keeping and will at the same time provide some much needed parking and play facilities.

In the last newsletter I reported on the progress of our project to publish Diana Chatwin's work on timber framed buildings. I am sorry to say that we were unsuccessful in obtaining a Shell Better Briatin award. However I am very pleased to tell you that Mr Brain Murgatroyd has promised £1,000 provided we can raise the remaining sum, and the Parish Council has offered £250 in part commemoration of their centennial year. We have also just heard that we have been awarded a £250 grant from the Council for British Archaeology. We are extremely grateful to these sponsors for their generous support. As part of our continued fund-raising effort and also to celebrate our tenth anniversary, we are holding a social evening on May 16th. Diana and her husband have produced a video of a number of timber framed houses in the village and this will be on show and available for sale. In addition we will have a variety of old pictures of the village for sale and a host of other fun things and fund raising things to do. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Many people do not realise that we have a village pond, perhaps because it is hidden in Gaskyns Close and unfortunately now also rather overgrown. However it is there and is not only a valuable wild-life habitat but could, if it was opened up and renovated, be an extremely attractive feature. Although there are a few details to be completed we are now nearing an agreement with the West Sussex County Council, who own the pond, for the Preservation Society to take up a licence to restore and maintain it. We will keep you informed of progress.

For many years the Parish Council has lobbied for the introduction of a lower speed limit along Church Street. The Preservation Society has always supported this view. The County has now approved the introduction of a 30m.p.h. limit along Church Street and throughout the village, with the exception of part of Lynwick Street which will have a 40m.p.h. limit. The Parish Council and our District Councillor must be congratulated on their perseverance in persuading the Highway Authority of the need to improve road safety in the village.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM

**Leslie Hawkins**

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## *Planning Matters*

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### Possible Extension of Gatwick Airport

Public concern about the creation of a second runway at Gatwick Airport was shown by the attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting to hear representatives of the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign. They painted a depressing picture of a new Horsham-sized town between there and Billingshurst and the up-grading of local roads to motorway standard to accommodate the extra traffic.

One positive new development is the recent suggestion by the Marinair consortium of a runway on a man-made island in the Thames estuary with north and south terminals on the mainland. Every protest letter counts as the views of 6.3 people. It is therefore important that all who feel strongly on the matter should write to their MP (Sir Peter Horden DL., M.P., House of Commons SW1A 0AA) or the Department of Transport, and make their views known, perhaps supporting the Marinair suggestion.

Write to Gareth Williams, Civil Aviation Directorate, Room S7/23, Department of Transport, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 3EB.

**John Cozens**

### Local Government Review 1994

Apart from the proposed second runway at Gatwick, which if adopted would devastate this part of West Sussex, there is the highly controversial review by the Local Government Commission for England regarding the future structure and management of local authorities.

The Commission was set up to examine the possibility of abolishing the two-tier system of County & District Councils, thereby creating unitary authorities.

The Government's presumption in favour of unitary authorities was challenged in the High Court, which ruled that the Government cannot advise the Commission to opt for unitary authorities. This highly contentious review has aroused strong feelings amongst the Shire Counties, and it is reported in "The Times" (15th Feb. 1994) that Hampshire, Kent, Devon and Cornwall M.P's are to fight the idea of unitary authorities, even though the Commission has not yet put forward proposals.

David Heathcoat-Amory, M.P. for Wells in Somerset, has threatened to resign if his County is divided into unitary authorities. Apart from other compelling arguments in

favour of the two-tier system in local government as a Preservation Society concerned about the protection of our precious countryside, we support the view of the CPRE that the role of the County Council in providing the Strategic framework is essential in providing environmental policies, which are so important in preserving the rural character of the Shire Counties. Strategic plans must be separated from development controls and local plan work.

This follows Central Government's view expressed in the White Paper "This Common Inheritance", and amendments to the planning system in the Planning & Compensation Act. Both documents recognise that the County strategic planning is the centre of the planning system. Notes on clauses prepared for the Planning and Compensation Bill state:

"in particular the Secretary of State's decision to retain County Structure Plans has been widely welcomed."

Paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act places a duty on all local authorities to "seek the achievement of the general objectives of the Structure Plan". The high cost of proposals in favour of unitary authorities in the current dire economic situation must be regarded as irresponsible and imprudent, and is irrelevant to the effective delivery of local services.

In "The Times" (15th Feb. 1994) it is reported:- "The cost to switch to unitary authorities is estimated to be £1.1 billion adding nearly £200 to the average Council Tax bill." For this increased charge there will be no new services for the Council Taxpayer and must be considered unacceptable when Ministers are trying desperately to curb public spending.

Sir John Banham, Director General of the CBI. Chairman of the Commission said his guiding principle will be "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." It is therefore relevant to point out that the W.S.C.C. has been prudent, is free from debt, and levies the lowest Council tax of any County, except for Hampshire.

Horsham District Council is not free from debt: however, if account is taken of the fact that Central Government has "ring-fenced" capital receipts from the sale of council houses amounting to £13 million the District Council would be debt free. A recent independent audit by well known professional accountants, has commended the District Council for its good financial management.

It is impossible to set out in this short article other compelling reasons for the status quo, but in supporting the present structure of local government in West Sussex we should like to make a general observation.

We believe that local government is severely hampered by restrictions placed upon it by Central Government. There has been a growing tendency to diminish the powers of local government, thereby limiting its effectiveness in providing local services.

As an amenity society, viewing with a certain detachment, it is our opinion regarding the structure of local government in West Sussex, that both Councillors and official staff are efficient and often work with dedication to achieve the

statutory duties placed upon them.

We see no good reason for changing the present two-tier system of local government in West Sussex.

Stan Smith.

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## GUIDED WALKS IN RUDGWICK.

### SUMMER 1994

Once again a programme of guided walks has been prepared, which after a depressing winter, will be welcomed by everyone who is looking forward to warm summer evenings (we hope). The walks have been arranged on Tuesdays at 7 pm. (easy to remember):- This year we have produced a cut out programme for you to keep by you during the summer. (see page 3).

It was hoped to fill the calendar from May to August, but we need more leaders please for 1995! The walks are not strenuous and are intended for all the family. Apart from Geoff's morning walk, all walks will finish by 9pm. for well deserved refreshments. These walks are great fun and are very much a social occasion, so do come and enjoy an evening with "good companions". Brochures prepared by the WSCC will be available at our AGM on Monday 25th April.

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## The Best Song in Praise of Cricket

Geoff Ayres has found us this verse by Reynall Cotton. Reynall Cotton, born in Rudgwick in 1717, entered Winchester College in 1730, took orders and became master of Hyde Abbey school in Winchester. He died in 1779. Richard Cotton (his father) was vicar of Rudgwick from 1716 to 1741.

The Wickets are pitch'd now, and measur'd the ground,  
Then they form a large ring, and stand gazing around,  
Since AJAX fought HECTOR, in sight of all TROY,  
No contest was seen with such fear and such joy.

Ye bowlers, take heed, to my precepts attend,  
On you the whole fate of the game must depend;  
Spare your rigour at first, nor exert all your strength,  
But measure each step, and be sure pitch a length.

Ye fieldsmen, look sharp, lest your pains ye beguile;  
Make close, like an army, in rank and in file,  
When the ball is return'd, back it sure, for I trow,  
Whole states have been ruin'd by one overthrow.

Ye strikers, observe when the foe shall draw nigh,  
Mark the bowler advancing with vigilant eye:  
Your skill all depends upon distance and sight,  
Stand firm to your scratch, let your bat be upright.

*Four verses from "The Best Song In Praise of Cricket"  
by Reynall Cotton. (E.V.Lucas 1904.)*

# OBITUARY

## HAROLD FRANCIS - 1903 - 1993

Harold Francis died on 1st October, 1993. He was ninety years old, and survived his wife, Lucy, by one year. They had been married for 52 years. He was born on the Hyes estate, at Smithers Cottages, not the present houses but the original set, long demolished. His grandfather was the bailiff at Hyes, and his family lived on the estate. Harold lived in the village all his life, and saw a great many changes. He had a vivid memory of many aspects of village life.

Harold had a variety of jobs during his long life. He recalled to me his first job on leaving Rudgwick school. It was in the gardens of a large estate at Ewhurst, and he had to cycle there by 6.00a.m. each day. He became a very keen gardener, and for many years won prizes at local flower shows for his flowers and vegetables. His sweet peas usually stole the show. His garden at Hermongers Road always seemed to grow the biggest crops, thanks to many years of farmyard manure.

Harold, as a young man, lost his fiancée, a Miss Newberry from Hope Farm in the Haven. She died of TB, a fatal disease in those days. A couple of years ago I took him back to Hope Farm at the invitation of Mr and Mrs Murgatroyd. It was the first time he had been back there for

50 years, and was a real trip back in time for him.

Music was another of Harold's great interests. He had a fine bass voice, winning several singing competitions, and played in Rudgwick's Silver Band, for whom he acted as a Secretary for many years. I have recalled in previous articles how Rudgwick Band had an outstanding membership under the directorship of Mr. Harold Tate. The Band won many prizes, and took part in the national, as well as local, competitions, usually held at the Crystal Palace. Harold recalled many of those great days for the Band, and the excitement of scoring higher marks than their rivals from around Sussex.

Harold was a committed Christian, and was an organist at Rudgwick Chapel for many years. With his wife he ran the Sunday School that was extremely popular with the children. Sadly Harold and Lucy had none of their own, but always established a rapport with younger generations.

Harold was born in the same year that the Wright brothers took to the air, lived through 2 World Wars, and still, at the age of 90, loved to watch from his garden the 'Jumbos' climbing slowly out of Gatwick. His life had certainly spanned a transport revolution!

On a personal level, he was my favourite uncle, and will be greatly missed.

**Malcolm Francis**



## GUIDED WALKS PROGRAMME 1994

All Walks are on Tuesdays and Start at 7.50pm. *Except* July 20th starts at 10.30 am.

DATE	LEADER	ORGANISATION	MEETING PLACE
MAY 3	Dave Buckley	Rudgwick Parish Council	The Fox
MAY 10	No Walk		
MAY 17	No Walk		
MAY 24	Wendy Bourne	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Kings Head
MAY 31	Paul Frenchum	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Kings Head
JUNE 7	Geoff Ayres	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Pephurst Farm
JUNE 14	Malcolm Francis	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Kings Head
JUNE 21	Stan Smith	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Kings Head
JUNE 28	Dave Buckley	Rudgwick Parish Council	Health Centre
JULY 5	Bridget Pusey	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Kings Head
JULY 12	Brian Murgatroyd	Haven Preservation Society	Blue Ship
JULY 19	Michael and Judy Knights	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Mucky Duck
<i>JULY 20</i>	<i>Geoff Ayres</i>	<i>Rudgwick Preservation Society</i>	<i>Pephurst Farm</i>
JULY 26	Mollie Cheer	Haven Preservation Society	Blue Ship
AUGUST 2	John Parker	Rudgwick Preservation Society	Haven Road, Bucks Green

# ***OBITUARIES***

## **GEOFFREY WYNDHAM**

### **HUMPHREY. 1912 - 1993**

With the passing of Geoff Humphrey, somehow there is a feeling that we have lost, not only a "good man", in the best sense of the word, but an essential link with the past.

Somehow he epitomised the idea of the perfect English Gentleman, and as everyone testifies he was kindly, friendly and helpful - he was a marvellous source of information about the past in Rudgwick.

Although nearly all his life was spent in the village he was not born here. I recall watching a cricket match with him and comparing respective ages, he told me of his earliest recollections of making the journey to Rudgwick, at the age of two, perched on top of a pony and trap, with his father Moses and brother Douglas from Bolney, where he was born. This was the occasion when his father took over the shop at Church Gate House, which was the centre of the village, containing the post office and telephone exchange.

He went to Collyer's School in Horsham catching the train from Rudgwick Station with his brother and sister. He possessed two outstanding attributes, his sporting ability and a pleasing singing voice. The whole family sang in the Church choir and Geoff was chosen to sing solos.

In 1930 he gave up his chosen career to help his father run the shop and post office. In 1940 he married Muriel a partnership that was to last 53 years. During the war he was on a small island near Malta, in the Radar section of the RAF. In 1945 he returned to the shop in Rudgwick to help his father Moses who died in 1946.

Many changes were made to the shop, when the post office was taken over by Cecelia Butcher and the shop was transformed into a delicatessen and wine merchants in addition to the village store. Wine became his hobby as well as his business and as a measure of his expertise he became the first British wholesaler to be made a Compagnon de Bordeaux in 1965.

The next thirty years were devoted to his family and business partnered so devotedly by his wife Muriel. His children were born at Ridge. Although a busy family man he played a full life in the village. Apart from being a member of the Parochial Church Council, he also served as a Parish Councillor.

He was a fine cricketer and for many years was Captain of the Rudgwick Cricket Club. Two years ago he was honoured by a special lunch organised by the Cricket Club to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his Presidency.

In 1979, Geoff closed the shop and retired and he attended nearly all the home games of the Cricket Club. Geoff had a strong sense of loyalty to both family and friends, and was much involved in the life of the community. He will be sorely missed in our village which he had served with such devotion.

**Stan Smith**

## **LESLIE ALBERT TILLEY 1935 - 1994**

Leslie, or Les as he was known to all, was born in Ivy Cottage (now Two Wells) Church Street in January 1935. The Tilley family had moved to Rudgwick from Walliswood in 1933 when Albert Tilley, Les's father obtained employment at the Brickworks in Lynwick Street.

Educated at the local village school Les had short spells of work with the local plumber, Mr Williams; at Fishers grocery and Wine store at Billingshurst and at Dunkerton's civil engineering company at Broadbridge Heath, but most people will relate Les to Rudgwick Garage. Here he spent most of his working life under Mr Field then Mr Smith and 21 years with the present proprietors - the Judd family.

Les was linesman for the village football team in the late 1950's and also enjoyed fishing in the local ponds and river and gave many youngsters their first opportunity to learn the finer points of this sport. He was also the local collector for Littlewoods football pools - always promising a jackpot win was just around the corner. Selling raffle tickets for the village fete was Les's forte and he ran a very successful stall at the annual fete for which all the prizes on the stall were donated.

Les had two elder sisters - Olive who lives in Horsham and Margaret who lives in Wales - and brother Jack who lives in Rudgwick, about 100 yards from the house in which he was born. He is survived by his Wife Ann, daughters Sharon and Linda, and son Adrian.

### **Jack Tilley**

Stan Smith adds his tribute

As a measure of the regard and affection with which Les was held and the part he played in the life of the village, the funeral service at the Parish Church was packed with village people from all walks of life - the choir stalls were used for the many people who otherwise would have had to stand. No less than 341 people attended the service. A fund was set up to his memory as a donation to the intensive care unit of the Royal Surrey County Hospital at Guildford, when the remarkable sum of £2,035 was raised in a short space of time.

Les will long be remembered for his active participation in so many aspects of our community life and we shall all recall his unfailing kindness at the Rudgwick Garage.

## RUDGWICK CHURCH ROOF

By Malcolm Francis

Rudgwick Parish Church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, commands a fine position overlooking the village. I think that it is only when a visitor, arriving to attend a wedding for example, comments on the view that we appreciate it. The view, even from the Church porch, stretches to Midhurst - just imagine the view from the top of the tower.

With this in mind lets look at just one part of this fine old building, which has seen over 800 years of history, the roof.

Rudgwick church was originally roofed with Horsham stone, as seen on many old buildings locally. The weight of such roofing material requires massive supporting timbers. Looking up from the Nave the timbers don't look that big, but on climbing the ladder, to help with changing spotlights, the size is obvious.

The roofs of the Nave and North Aisle were repaired in the 1970's when some of the stone was found to be beyond repair, and thus one of the inner faces of the roof was tiled, to provide enough of the scarce stone to repair the outer, and clearly visible, faces.

The huge rafters of the tower also indicate that it was originally capped with Horsham stone, but in 1887, in honour of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, records state that oak shingles were used on the tower to replace the slates that had only lasted 50 years.

These shingles were replaced again in 1936, by the local builder Mr. Harold Tate. So it seems that oak shingles did no better than slate ones. The very exposed position must, of course, have its effect on any roof covering and in 1973 the tower roof was once again in need of repair.

On this occasion I had the chance to see them, as Mr. Paul Harknett, a steeplejack from Rogate, was commissioned to carry out the repairs and invited anyone with a head for heights to go aloft. On top of the tower you were aware of the wind, even on a beautiful spring morning. The view was

amazing - an uninterrupted vista from North to South Downs.

I took a series of photographs of the work in progress, showing the old shingles curling up like the segments of a pine cone. Meanwhile Paul Harknett and his team manhandled 1cwt. bundles of new cedarwood shingles up the vertical ladders to the top of the tower. I remember the rungs of the ladders bent at each tread, and how securely they had to be lashed.

As a point of interest, the tower survived the 1987 hurricane, a sure indication of a job well done.

## DOWNSLINK

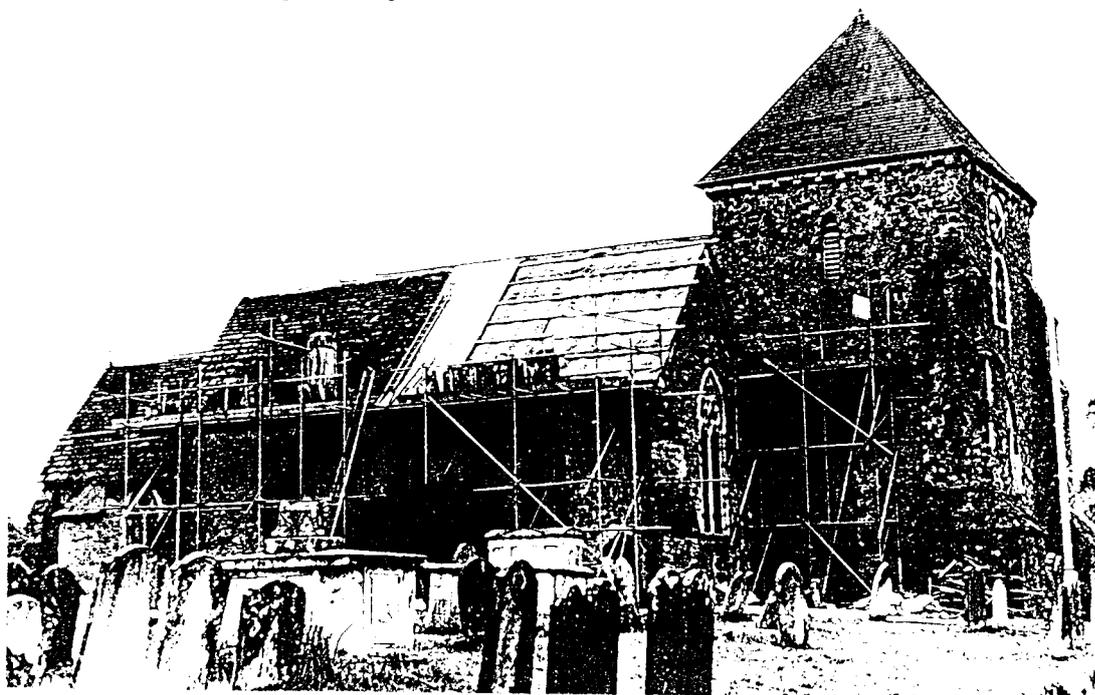
Those of you who use the bridleway, will have noticed the great improvement carried out by the Countryside Ranger, Neill Mitchell, with help from the Cranleigh and District Conservation Volunteers.

The cutting back of intrusive trees and bushes has opened up the lovely views across the fields and it is noticed that primroses are growing in great profusion.

There is a fine amenity area adjacent to Cape Copse, with a gate and seat for those who wish to rest and enjoy the wild flowers that will regenerate. It is noticeable that mountain bikes are being used in increasing numbers and we hope they will politely give way when approaching horse riders. Thanks to Neill we can look forward to the Spring and Summer when the real benefits of his management of the Rudgwick section of Downslink will give so much pleasure to everyone.

There are two bridleways in urgent need of improvement. The Bowcroft Lane bridleway - behind Swaynes - is in poor condition and is dangerous to both riders and walkers.

The other is Pensfold Lane from Downslink (Blue Blob) to Pensfold Farm, for which we fought strenuously to reinstate, but is almost impassable in places. We know that resources are limited, but these two important amenities are denied to riders and walkers since they are unusable.



# CONGRATULATIONS

## ROGER AND LESLEY CATCHPOLE

Many people in the village have for a long time thought that Rudgwick had a good grocer's store but now we know, it's not only good it's the best.

Catchpole's Store has won the prestigious Booker prize for excellence, beating 38 finalists from all over the country to be judged the best independent retailer in the country. At a glittering London awards ceremony, attended by the Minister for Food, the Rt.Hon. Nicholas Soames MP, the Catchpole's received a £5,000 cheque and an engraved silver salver, from the TV personality Lloyd Grossman. We congratulate Lesley and Roger on this marvellous achievement.

However this is one one of those good news bad news stories. The bad news is that after 26 years building up the business to reach this ultimate achievement, Roger and Lesley have decided to retire from running the store. We wish them all the very best for their future.



## CECELIA BUTCHER

Cecelia Butcher has been honoured for almost 50 years service to Rudgwick. Mrs Butcher has been given a place on the Post Office roll of honour for her commitment to the community. She was given her award, along with 14 other winners, at the Post Office headquarters in London by Post Office Managing Director, John Roberts. Mr Roberts said "I salute her selfless attitude and community spirit. She epitomises all that is best in the British way of life".

Mrs Butcher has lived in the village for 50 years and 49 of those have been running the Post Office. Following on from the award of BEM in the 1991 New Years Honours, Mrs Butcher has, deservedly, now been recognised by the Post Office for the tremendous commitment she gives to the village above and beyond her duties as sub-postmistress. The Preservation Society has already expressed it's gratitude for the support she gives us by making her a life member. We add our congratulations to her on her latest honour.

