Chairman’s Report

That was the year, that was! Remember last Spring’s drought? The rest is best forgotten, but not so easily if you are a farmer or a gardener, trying to preserve our landscape or, more so, make a living. The rain and deep mud have played havoc with our cropping and with our livestock, such that farmers reckon it will be another year before even the farming calendar is normal, let alone incomes – only a few crops sown in Autumn, fertilisers leached away, smaller and fewer lambs, potentially fewer bees this summer,. Those of us with solar power on our roof will have noticed the difference too. And still few signs of improvement as I write, with the rain lashing down outside.

Fortunately, RPS is not vulnerable to a summer washout such as the Gardening Association, and Cranleigh Show, experienced, but we were unable to attend the former as all we had to offer was on paper…! We did however have some very successful opportunities to show our Coronation and Royal Jubilee exhibits at the Golden Jubilee event in Bucks Green in June, and put it up again for the Friendly Club and for our Autumn Meeting. Incidentally, we were very pleased with the feedback on the excellent talk at this meeting from John Manley on the Archaeology of the South Downs.

Please, therefore come to support your Preservation Society at the AGM, details on the back cover. You can get a preview of Francis Frith at the website: http://www.francisfrith.com/rudgwick/photos. Here, there are 23 photos of Rudwick and Illens Green from their huge collection. Most of us like to see old photos with their nostalgia for an older simpler world in black and white. Frith was a truly great name in photography, the alliteration a great marketing tool.

The year has also been one of frustrating lack of progress both with the pig farm and the Windacres Farm development. Nevertheless, there will be no traveller site, and no development at Summerfold (for the time being anyway). Ideas once in the public domain have a habit of regenerating themselves in new guises.

The future of our brickworks is one such. There will be no more bricks made, and planning has been approved for limited development of the brick buildings by the Harrison family business, a venture in which we wish them well. The partial infilling and restitution of the clay pits, which has begun, is a little more questionable as no environmental appraisal of the existing water
bodies and cliffs was undertaken (as far as we know). RPS made representations about this to WSCC, English Nature, and the Environment Agency, but in these days of cutbacks this site was simply too unimportant – never mind the finding of Polacanthus rudgwickensis there in 1996. One thing I believe we can be sure of is that the Harrisons will do as good a job as possible, but it will be years before the land fully supports intensive agriculture. In case you are wondering, the new owners have a legal responsibility to return it to use, but we will never see the return of historic woodland or Hobbs Barn. UK PLC has considerable experience of the restitution of open-cast coal mine workings.

This has been a year, too, of loss in Rudgwick. Several members of RPS who had made names for themselves locally or nationally have been taken from us. We remember Jim Harrison, Anneke Adorian and Peter Bargman from the farming community, and Christopher Martin-Jenkins, who undoubtedly did so much for cricket that he richly deserved the explosion of column inches in the newspapers for which he wrote. We send their families our sincere condolences.

Rudgwick walks? – Oh, no they didn’t! Oh yes they will! No one can remember a season like it for walks, and so last year our numbers were often down on the usual, so well done to those who braved the frequently wet and muddy evenings, especially the leaders, but this year we hope to see you back, enjoying the better weather and the lovely local scenery, and of course getting to know each other a little better. See Geoff’s programme on page 11 or check the website.

Our website could be better. Do you know anyone who might be able to assist us in replacing and improving our website? We are searching for a willing volunteer with some experience and enthusiasm.

We know what we want, but lack the right combination of time and expertise to make it happen. We have now begun to upload our historic newsletters, back to the 1980s. This has been a bumper winter for outsiders contacting me from the website to discuss local history. We have gained more than we have given, as we add photos and information to our archives. Keep the comments and questions coming!

We have purchased a gazebo! With this, we can now attend outdoor events in the dry. It has optional walls and is supposed to be waterproof. If you would like to hire it for your garden event, for a voluntary contribution to our funds, to help offset its cost, we would be pleased to arrange this with you. Please contact us through the website, or contact the chairman direct.

Roger Nash

It is time to pay your subscription! No increases are proposed, so we remain a bargain. The trouble is, some good folk of Rudgwick give us a low priority as a result, and forget to pay (or think they have when they haven’t). We respectfully ask that you pay, or our simple response will be to stop delivery of your Newsletter. Many of you paid on being reminded in the Autumn, but some of you did not! If you did not pay last year, or this, then membership ceases. Two misses and you are out! It is only fair.

The number of subscriptions paid by Standing Order has grown steadily and we are very grateful to members who now use this method of payment. If you are not one of this number, please do consider it. Those who have an existing SO will have the letters “SO” written on the front of your Newsletter – no further action required.

Here are the details you need to send to your bank to set up this Standing Order:

Name of payee: Rudgwick Preservation Society

Bank branch sort code: 40-18-50

Account No: 01406884

Reference your full name as the payer

Subscriptions: Family - £5; Single - £3; Retired (over 60) - £2 per person.

Payment date: as soon as possible, and annually thereafter on 1st April.

If unable to attend the AGM, you may pay by BACS, details above, or send your remittance as soon as possible to Mr D Rigby, Buttonwood, Church St, Rudgwick, RH12 3EB (Tel 822522).
Horsham District Council will publish its Draft Housing Strategy 2013 – 2015 in April. This describes how the Council intends to meet the housing needs of its residents making the best use of their resources whilst achieving the priority identified in the Horsham District Plan. It is a long document so I have only summarised those parts that are relevant to this Parish

Horsham has commissioned a Strategic Market Assessment in partnership with Mid Sussex DC and Crawley Borough Council. This provides an evidence base for a mix of all kinds of housing – market and affordable – based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The Council has set out a clear vision of housing need against the numerous challenges to be overcome. It predicts the number of affordable homes needed across the District is 240 per annum broken down into a mix of rented, shared ownership and retirement homes for the elderly.

HDC has an empty property strategy which aims to bring long term empty properties back into use and in the past year have persuaded 20 home owners to participate. Over 300 homes are known to be long term empties and there is a corporate group within HDC working together to find solutions.

Current planning policy sets a target of 40% of affordable homes on all new developments of 15 units and over. This target is split 25% rented housing and 15% shared ownership. Between now and 2015 new planning policies will be implemented in the HDC Planning Framework to secure appropriate levels of affordable housing. It is likely that proposals will be drafted to retain 40% affordable housing on sites providing 15 or more dwellings or on sites of over 0.5 hectares. On sites providing between 9 – 14 dwellings the proposal may be for a requirement of 30% affordable housing and 5 – 8 dwellings may require 20% affordable housing

HDC makes reference to the Government’s Growth and Infrastructure Bill currently going through Parliament and the right of developers to appeal directly claiming that the numbers of affordable housing requirement makes a site unviable. The Planning Inspector will then review the application to determine the number of affordable homes that need to be removed to make the development viable and the original Section 106 agreement will be set aside for 3 years.

For planning agreements made before 2010 the Government is already consulting on legislation that will allow developers to renegotiate S106 agreements for a temporary period so they do not have to deliver affordable homes on new sites where they can prove that the project is commercially unviable. The Government hope that this will unlock 75,000 new starts which have stalled. HDC takes a realistic and pragmatic view and fortunately there do not appear to be any sites that have stalled because of prohibitive provision of affordable housing.

Thriving rural communities

The provision of affordable housing has a significant role in supporting rural communities. The lack of affordable housing means that rural communities become socially exclusive and households on low to average incomes have to move away. This has an impact on the Council’s aim to promote balanced and sustainable communities and it has severe consequences for the social and economic well being of rural areas.

The key challenges are
- Identification and procurement of suitable sites – landowners unwilling to release land due to an expectation of a higher return
- Misconception of affordable rural housing and who is qualified to occupy the homes
- Anxiety that an affordable housing scheme is the thin end of the wedge and will lead to increasing development.

HDC are working in partnership with Parish Councils and Action in Rural Sussex to raise awareness of affordable housing in rural communities. There is a continuing programme of updating Housing Needs Surveys where villages have not been surveyed within the last 3 years and this could include Rudgwick. The Housing Strategy & Development Manager at HDC is currently discussing carrying out a new housing needs survey for Rudgwick and he spoke about this at a recent Rudgwick Parish Council Meeting. He confirmed that priority in the allocation of any new affordable scheme would go to Rudgwick people in housing need enshrined in a S106 legal agreement.

HDC are currently exploring with their Housing Association partners a mixed tenure model for local connection schemes (such as Rudgwick) but the identified risk is local opposition to development in small villages which can be very well organised and effective in delaying or even stopping affordable housing development.

HDC have achieved recent success in delivering rural housing schemes to meet local need in Amberley, Lower Beeding and Ashington. Hopefully Rudgwick will not be too far behind.
Head for Heights
Malcolm Francis

Rudgwick’s parish church, Holy Trinity, stands on a prominent position overlooking the village. There is a spot height marker carved into the stonework near the west door, which I understand is two hundred and fifty feet above sea level. I have heard that the top of the steeple of Wisborough Green’s church has been calculated to be also two hundred and fifty feet above sea level. This difference in height of the two parish churches is really in evidence when one looks at the view south west across the Arun valley from Holy Trinity.

Rudgwick’s distinctive church tower has seen various alterations through the centuries. There is evidence within the stone work of the building that it once had a castellated tower before the steeple was added. The exposed position of the tower and its roof means that it has had to stand the worst of the westerly winds for many centuries. The support timbers of the tower are of immense proportions which is evidence that the roof was originally made of Horsham stone, which is extremely heavy, the same material as the rest of the church roof. I must point out that at present the Horsham stone roof is now only placed on the outer visible sections of the roof, the rest is now covered with normal tiles. This was the only answer some years ago to the problems of roof repairs when there was no source of replacement of Horsham stone roofing; the best of the stone roofing relocated to the outer roof. Since then quarrying of this rare stone has started again near to Broadbridge Heath. It was in Victorian times that the tower’s stone roof was replaced with slates. It seems that this was not successful as records show that those slates only lasted for fifty years before oak shingles were then fitted. The following excerpt from a letter from Rev Wynn, who was Rudgwick’s vicar at the time, to the parishioners dated 15th June 1936 shows there were problems again before the second World War; “The Church council last year started a Repair and Maintenance Fund, the first charge on this was the repair of the shingles on the Tower roof. We have raised nearly enough for the roof but nothing towards the cost of the Electric Lighting. We want to do Electric Light this summer, to do this and the roof we want to raise another £120”

In those days the church’s repairs were done by the local builder Harold Tate. The roof repairs that were carried out in 1936 were successful as those oak shingles lasted until the 1970’s. On a personal note my father worked for Harold Tate and on the day of my parent’s wedding, which was on a Wednesday 7th October in 1936, my father needed to speak to Harold Tate, who was working on the tower roof. My father recalled that he climbed Rudgwick church tower roof in the morning and then was married at Dunsfold church in the afternoon. The specialist company that repaired the roof in 1972 fitted cedarwood shingles. The company was based in Midhurst and I struck up a friendship with the owner Paul Harknett. One Sunday evening a friend and myself managed to climb the ladders to the top of the weather cock, as a practice, as I wanted to film the steeplejacks at work on my 8 mm cine camera. There was a small platform just below the weather cock so that the steeplejacks could abseil onto the roof to do their work; it was an ideal viewing platform. When I arrived a couple of days later, with my cameras, I asked whether I was allowed up and they said “come on up” (I am glad I had practiced the rather scary ascent beforehand).

The old oak shingles had done quite well but a lot of them were curling up in the same way as an old pine cone. It was interesting filming the men at work and realising how securely their ladders had to be attached to the walls and roof of the tower. Paul Harknett carried large bundles of the new cedar shingles on his shoulder and as he climbed the series of ladders I noticed that each rung of the long ladders bent under the extreme weight that he was carrying. I commented on their weight and he told me that each bundle was over one hundred weight as they were soaked in preservative. At a later date I visited Paul Harknett at his home in Midhurst to give him copies of the photographs I had taken and show him the cine film. His house was very interesting, being full of steeplejack memorabilia; various weathercocks, ornate tiles, etc. even the TV was positioned on top of a small stand that had started life as a weathercock.

The vicar at that time at Rudgwick was the Rev John Hart and he had been forbidden by his wife to even think of climbing the scaffolding on the tower. He confided in me that his wife asked him one evening why he seemed to be very pleased with himself, and she then retorted “you’ve been up that tower”

John Hart had been a pupil at St Paul’s Cathedral school in London and recalled that one of the choir boys’ games was to run in and out of the recesses in the stonework high up on the outside of the church, a very illegal game of dare. He was running along a narrow ledge high above the ground when he missed his footing as a startled pigeon flew out of one of the hidden recesses, in front of him; luckily he managed to hang on ….he had a head for heights!...

The cedar wood shingles stood the 1987 hurricane very well but in later years there have been some problems with some of the nails that were used to secure them. It is only in the last ten years that the church has been fitted with a lightning conductor; it is rather puzzling that one had not been fitted in earlier years. I think it is now a requirement under new fire insurance regulations. The small church at Abinger Common had a lightning strike back in the 1960’s and its small wooden bell tower was completely destroyed by fire.

Paul Harknett at work on the roof
This is the third and final article on the Braby family. In the first two, *(Newsletter, Aut 2010 and Aut 2011)* the family was traced through to James Braby of Maybanks, who was a significant member of the Rudgwick community in the second half of the nineteenth century, and his children. This article will go back to James’s grandfather in Lambeth to follow the life and times of his second son, John (who has surprising connections with Rudgwick himself), together with his son Frederick, before finishing with some 20th century Brabys in Rudgwick.

John Braby [1799-1881], was the second child of James and Hannah Braby of Ockley, and the first of their children to be born in Lambeth. He married Maria Churchman at Rudgwick in 1829, coincidentally the same year her sister, Mary Ann, who had married his brother James, died in childbirth. Also that year Caroline Churchman married Thomas Child of Slinfold. The Braby-Churchman-Child connection was a strong one. It created a bond which cemented business and financial affairs, among a class which was relatively thin on the ground in rural districts. John’s son Frederick (above) would later marry a daughter of Thomas and Caroline Child, further cementing these relationships.

John’s career began in the family wheelwright partnership of ‘Braby & Sons’. In 1839, when their father retired, the brothers John and James continued in partnership until about 1850. John and Maria lived at 22, Duke Street, Lambeth, but by 1835 had obtained a house at Mottingham, near Eltham, Kent, listed among the gentry there in Pigot’s Directory in 1840. His town address changed to 23 Upper Stamford St, Lambeth. By 1841, John is described as Independent (capable of living on his own means). Perhaps he was not as involved in the wheelwright’s. Mary Luff (a Rudgwick surname) a servant girl of 25 years was living in, a sign of Maria and John’s local connections.

In 1842, he purchased 170 acres at Lynwick and Canfields, with Wellgrove (Cooks), Rudgwick, and part of Broomhall, Cranleigh, 15 years before his brother James had any land in the area. He had gained this property at the expense of some loss of face by the Butchers (who had lived there for centuries). James Butcher had died at Lynwick with considerable debts to the Tickner family, farmers of Milford, Surrey. John’s purchase paid off the debt, leaving Philip Butcher and his widowed mother as his tenants. But the Brabys never lived at Lynwick. The deeds  recite the change in ownership in detail. The land was sold to John Braby, in trust to Thomas Child (a mortgage from his brother in law). John paid £4200, of which £1000 went directly to the Tickners.

John and Maria will have stayed at Maybanks with her parents, and in May 1841 “Mrs Braby” advertised in The Times for a cook. Maria was at the time the only Mrs Braby to whom the advert could apply. Furthermore, in 1845, “John Braby, of Rudgwick, & 23 U Stamford St” supported the proposed (but never built) Brighton Junction Railway to Horsham & Guildford. One interpretation might be that he played up his land ownership in Rudgwick as he hoped the railway would cross his land giving him (and Thomas Child) financial benefit; it was not to be. Using Maybanks as a base, he attended Vestry meetings in Rudgwick (entitled as a landowner), in 1844 agreeing to write to the secretary of the Camden Society for them to send an architect to make plans and estimates for the improvement of Rudgwick church (with an endowment from Richard Burchatt). His brother did not attend until 1855.

In 1851, John Braby and his family were in Upper Stanford St, affording two servant girls, both from Rudgwick: Rhoda Dinnage, 27, and Maria Butcher, 19. But he was no longer working with his brother and had made an abrupt career change to “slate
merchant and slater, slate worker employing 30 men”, in business with his sons, Frederick and Alfred at Bangor Wharf, the source of Welsh slate, just south of Hungerford Bridge, close to where the London Eye is today.

In 1856, John’s eldest son Frederick married Jane Child in Slinfold. She was a daughter of the afore mentioned Thomas Child, who had land in both Slinfold and Rudgwick, and was a successful timber merchant. Frederick’s marriage was to a cousin. He went on to become a wealthy industrialist. John and Maria rented Holmbush in Slinfold for the marriage.

John was thinking of his retirement, so purchased 25 acres from Mr Edward Tredcroft of Horsham’s Hewells Manor (in the Causeway) in 1856 to build the house called Wimblehurst, between North Heath Lane and Parsonage Road (confusingly then called Wimblehurst Road). Frederick later wrote, "Mr. John Braby, for a long time a wheelwright at Duke St., Stamford St., and afterwards a slate merchant in Belvedere Rd, Lambeth has now retired from business and is residing at Horsham in a large house built by himself upon an estate of which he purchased the freehold from Mr Tredcroft.” This was the first great Victorian mansion house to be built in Horsham. Frederick mentioned family gatherings there each Christmas. In the mid 1860s John was church warden of St Mark’s church in Horsham. In the 1861 Horsham census, John, Maria and daughter Alice were at Wimblehurst. Kelly’s P.O. Directory 1867 gives: “about a mile out of town, on the London Rd., is Wimblehurst, the residence of John Braby Esq.; it is a handsome mansion, in the pure Italian style of architecture. Has a commanding view, and is surrounded by stately oak trees.” Brian Slyfield wrote, “the house had an elaborate design and was of a substantial size. It had a grand conservatory and an equally grand ballroom, and boasted a stylish Italianate tower. But surrounded by many trees, it was one of Horsham’s less well known houses”.

In an early draft will, written in 1865 and kept in Horsham Museum, Braby offers fascinating glimpses into both his family and his assets. At this time they had anticipated being in Horsham for the rest of their lives as he specified their burial in Horsham cemetery. The most interesting facts to emerge are firstly that he retained an extensive portfolio of leasehold property in or near Lambeth and secondly that he was very strongly associated with railways, as was his brother James, owning large portfolios of stock in both SER (lines to Waterloo) and LB&SCR. The development of Waterloo Station must have given investment opportunities and/or land sale opportunities, as would have the just completed LB&SCR Horsham to Guildford line through Slinfold and Rudgwick, with which his brother and Thomas Child had both been strongly associated.

In 1866, John Braby, of Wimblehurst, Horsham, Sussex, Esq, agreed and declared “in front of two credible witnesses” to grant his farms at Lynwick to the use of James Braby, his brother, of Maybanks, Ewhurst, Surrey, Esq, and his assigns, during his life, without impeachment of waste (i.e., as tenant for life, not subject to the laws of waste - damage or destruction of the property). James now farmed an extensive acreage in the locality, including Greathouse Farm, nearly adjoining. There is no evidence that John was an active farmer. It was whilst James was tenant that the lag at Bucks Green was available for the new school, for which he took the credit, not John.

In 1871, John (71) and Maria (68) were renting an apartment in Gower St, Bloomsbury, close to his son’s business, leaving his coachman, James Buck in charge at Wimblehurst. Wimblehurst was sold in about 1874 to the Horsham photographer Henry Padwick jun, whose father had forced the sale of the Tredcroft estates. The Horsham connection was not quite over, as their daughter Emily had married widower John Stileman Bostock, a Horsham GP, in 1866, and lived at 9 North Street. They now had a permanent London address, in Cambridge Square, Bayswater. But Maria died in 1877. John lived on to 1881, following an illness in which he was looked after by two nurses and a housekeeper. In his will he left £90,234 (Benjamin Disraeli died the same year, leaving only £76,687!). In 1882, Wimblehurst passed to Henry Allcard, whose family owned the property until 1972, after which it was sold partly for housing, partly for the car park and playing fields of Novartis (land currently for sale). The house was demolished in the 1960s, and Allcard Close built over the site.

On John’s death in 1881, James inherited title to Lynwick, which he sold in 1888 to Charles Anderson Timms, a man of independent means. It was Timms who gentrified Lynwick House, adding to the size of
the property, and adding the ‘y’ to the name (and indirectly to the modern street name!).

**Frederick Braby [1829-1911]** was John’s eldest son, and the most successful Braby entrepreneur of them all. His professional life also began in the family wheelwright’s in Lambeth in 1846, transferring with his father to set up the slate business. He set up in business on his own account in 1854, when aged 25, and with a temporary loan from his father, he took over the business of Charles Jack, an Irish-born zinc merchant, whom he had joined as an apprentice. Jack’s firm was started in 1839 in a small shop on Euston Road. The company always dated its foundation from this year.

Zinc was first used in buildings in the early 19th century. The duty charged on zinc in Britain was at first so high as to make it prohibitively expensive for building purposes, but it was reduced in 1832 to £2 per ton, and in 1842 to one shilling, and then in 1845 it was abolished. Thus there were great opportunities trading in a commodity now much cheaper. Already, in 1839, Australian colonists were being told that: “In consequence of the great improvement recently introduced in the manufacture of Zink [sic] it is at this time in very extensive use, and in many instances most advantageously employed, and is particularly recommended to Emigrants to South Australia, Sydney, and other British Colonies, combining the important requisites of economy, efficiency, and durability”. At the 1851 Great Exhibition, Charles Jack of London showed perforated zinc, mouldings, sash bars and other articles, all of zinc supplied by the Vieille Montagne company of Belgium, the pre-eminent European provider.

As befitted his business interests Frederick later became a Fellow of the Geological Society and of the Chemical Society. Now sole owner, he moved the office and part of the business from Deptford to Fitzroy Works, Euston Road, in 1855, and in 1861 employed 250 men and 36 boys. The waterside Victoria Works at Deptford continued in use. Edith’s Streets, the London local history blog, gave this in 2010: “Ida Wharf later called Ocean Wharf was used by Frederick Braby in 1859. They made galvanised iron and zinc. Deliveries from Birmingham by canal. Braby were to become a major industry in the field in Glasgow and elsewhere”. The canal referred to was The Grand Surrey Canal. Ocean Wharf was on the road now called Canal Approach. The slate business in Lambeth was left to his brother Alfred to continue.

In 1865, Frederick Braby & Co came into existence. He turned the 352-364 Euston Rd firm into a public company the next year, raising £200,000 capital, half of which was by public subscription, A stream of patents followed; expansion too: Liverpool (1871), Glasgow (1875), Bristol (1896), and Falkirk (1899). An advertisement from 1876 trumpeted their expertise in iron houses (“packed ready for exportation to all parts of the world”), in addition to galvanised sheets and tanks, wire netting, corrugated iron chapels (known as tin tabernacles) etc. By the 1870s, the company had the ability to deliver a number of complete railway stations designed by the architect of the Crystal Palace to Queensland. By 1883, their catalogue illustrated many forms of perforated zinc friezes and frets as use of zinc became more sophisticated. Later records make clear that the firm also dealt in aluminium, as well as galvanised (zinc-coated) iron.

In the 1920s Thames barges were being built at Deptford. The National Archives which hold the records of the company from 1865-1976, describe the company as “constructional engineers, hollow-ware and sheet metal manufacturers and galvanisers”.

Frederick, married in Slinfold, retained strong connections there, not with Rudgwick. In the same year that his father died, 1881, the children of Thomas and Caroline Child (Frederick and Jane, her sisters and brother, together with twelve grandchildren of whom half were Brabys) provided Slinfold with a village hall next to the parish church. Frederick’s last address was in Teddington, where Jane “his twin soul” died in 1909. He died in 1911, the funeral being at Slinfold where they were both buried. The funeral announcement described the need for special trains from London owing to the large number expected. His brief obituary in The Times remarked on his generous treatment of his employees and his local benefactions. Frederick left £184,494.

Of six children, Flora and Ida, who never married, became known as the two virgins of Slinfold! They lived at Windalls, The Street, their mother’s

Herbert Wilson Braby and Sidney Gerald Braby were joint principals of the strongly Christian Penthorpe School in Church Street, Rudgwick. Their school had evacuated from Mead Road, Chislehurst, Kent to The Mill House at Gibbons Mill, in Rudgwick in 1939, then relocated to Gaskyns, purchased from David Jamilly, and recently vacated by the Canadians forces, in 1948. Founded by the Braby brothers in 1930, one of its young staff in Chislehurst was Preb. Kennedy-Bell, later a well known broadcaster. The brothers ran the school until 1955-6. Compared to its current success, Penthorpe was then very small, mostly boarding, very male, and very traditional.

Herbert’s wife, Mary died in 1948, Herbert in 1964; both were buried in Rudgwick, although he had retired to Haywards Heath. Sidney retired to Brighton, and died in 1969, his wife, Alexandrina, having long pre-deceased him in 1940. Both brothers had been conscientious objectors in World War 1, and had served in the RAMC.

Rev Roland Braby was Herbert and Sidney’s brother. He was educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, entered the church, and after spells in London and Exeter, he came to Loxwood in about 1935, where he spent 20 years as Vicar. He left for a short ministry in Trotton, before he too retired to Haywards Heath. Roland Braby died in Brighton in 1969, the same year as Sidney. He and his wife Kathleen are buried in Loxwood churchyard.

The site of the old Fitzroy buildings is now part of British Land’s flagship 13 acre Regent’s Place development. Over the years, Westminster University and Thames Television have come and gone. The land use is now mixed commercial, retail, leisure and residential, occupied by Santander Bank, and Hodder Education among others. In short, regeneration has removed all trace of the history of the area, its community and Victorian heritage, and will be complete in 2013.
Memories of Steam
Malcolm Francis

I am always slightly amused when people that have lived in Rudgwick for quite a few years are surprised when Rudgwick Station is mentioned; the usual comment is that they were unaware that Rudgwick ever had a station. In our parish we still have Station road, the Sidings and some rather beautifully constructed bridges and the tunnel north west of Rudgwick. The line was a victim of the Beeching Axe and it finally closed in the summer of 1965. The passenger numbers increased towards the end of its life but its fate was sealed. The line connected to the main line through Horsham at Christ's Hospital and to the Waterloo line north of Wonersh at Peasmarsh.

The line was the epitome of a rural line; sleepy stations, occasional goods trains, some weekend excursions, all hauled in those days by steam locomotives. When I was a teenager we often frequented the woods and banks close to the line, as there was no danger of an electrified rail. One would always hear the train coming as it often whistled when close to Baynards Tunnel. A Sunday evening treat was to watch the cross country excursions travelling from the coast towards Guildford and Reading.

The incline from the station towards the tunnel was very steep, (1 in 90). The normal passenger trains, with just a few coaches were hauled by smaller locomotives usually referred to as tank engines, i.e they didn’t have a separate tender for the coal and water. The long excursion trains could not stop at Rudgwick as they would never get enough traction to restart. (the service trains had a struggle on a frosty morning) The weight of a long excursion train could be up to 500 tons, so that powerful locomotives would be needed. Sometimes there would be two locomotives coupled to the carriages to give more power (called a double header). There was some limitation on locomotive size that could travel up the line towards Guildford because of platform clearances at Christ Hospital station. All I know is that driving such a train would be a very skilled job.

Some years ago I had a lot of contact with a company called Oakwood video who produced a history of the Horsham Guildford line. (I contributed some unique 8 mm film footage). One of the train drivers on the Rudgwick line recalled an incident, on a normal service train, that indicated the steepness of the line towards the tunnel and the problems with traction. The usual procedure on approaching the tunnel entrance was to put a handkerchief over ones mouth and lay down on the footplate, because of the steam and smoke blasting down from the roof of the tunnel. A few moments later they realised that the train had lost its grip on the very wet rails within the tunnel and they re emerged at the south end of the tunnel, with the locomotive still attempting to pull them forwards!

This brings me to the present time. Often people that have a serious interest in a subject, that doesn’t interest other people, are dubbed with the defamatory term of Anorak. Unfortunately this is often used about people who have a burning interest in Heritage Steam. Personally I think this is very unfair when one sees at close hand the work and dedication that thousands of volunteers give to maintain this country’s steam heritage.

I was given recently a “Footplate experience” as a birthday present from my generous daughter, on the Watercress line in Hampshire. One is allowed to be in the cab of the steam train whilst travelling up and down their line from end to end. I had to have the correct safety boots and clothing as it is quite a dangerous environment, even just as an observer. The Watercress line has to run large locomotives to pull the passenger trains as there are some very steep inclines to overcome.
I understand that Medstead station, on that line, is the highest station in the south of England. The large locomotive, named the Lord Nelson, has a separate coal tender coupled to the engine, in between there are two steel platforms sliding over each other, to give a flexible floor coupling. The fireman stood on this moving platform as he fed the firebox at very regular intervals. I think he must have shovelled in a barrow load of steam coal every two minutes, while the engine and tender are rocking around relative to each other. The tender has several tons of coal heaped up and is inclined so that the coal slides towards the fireman. The motion of the locomotive causes regular avalanches of coal towards the cab. When the train was climbing out of Alton station towards Medstead the incline was even greater than Rudgwick’s climb (1 in 60), so that the aim was to produce as much steam as possible for the long ascent; by that time the firebox was running white hot, the flames were so bright, when the firebox doors were snapped open, that it was as bright as looking at the sun. The fireman had to shield his vision with a shovel to inspect the position of the burning coal, and the heat is nearly unbearable. The firebox is twelve feet deep so that the coal has to be thrown quite a long way on each swing of the shovel. All the time these actions are taking place the fireman is working with the driver cross checking pressures, water levels and looking at the approaching signals. The water level in the boiler has to be monitored continually, using glass sight tubes, because as an engine is climbing or descending a gradient the water sloshes back and forth; imagine trying to drive a van with a bath full of water as a load. Just for interest the water has to be forced in continuously at high pressure, using steam to overcome the internal pressure of the boiler, which runs at about 200 pounds per square inch, if the pressure exceeds that figure the safety valve blows (it is very loud!). The maximum speed attained on the Watercress line was 30 mph, but can you imagine being on the footplate on the main line when they are travelling up to about 70 mph. The engine that I was riding has in the past been used on main line excursions, that have become very popular in this country. The engine has additional braking systems and warning equipment that is mandatory on main line working. The driver was under instruction by a senior driver, as was the fireman; they were only in their early twenties, one was a software engineer, the other a signalling systems design engineer, driving trains is their hobby. One final note, the engine was built at Eastleigh in 1926 and therefore is 87 years old. It was rebuilt some years ago but is in fine form. There has always been rivalry in the steam world about northern engineering being better than southern engineering, but in recent years the northern train drivers have admitted that this southern engine performed very well on their steep gradients. Perhaps this engine did in the past pull one of those weekend excursions up Rudgwick’s steep gradients.

I looked up the performance of the engine that I rode and its consumption of water is 44 gallons per mile, and 66 pounds of coal per mile. On a typical 100 mile journey on a main line the fireman would shovel well over three tons of coal and the engine would use over 4000 gallons of water!

One final note; the day that I rode the steam engine was the last day of the half term holiday, so that there were many young children absolutely entranced by the sight of a large railway engine puffing past, as the engine was uncoupled to be reconnected at the other end of the train.

The fireman said to me “wave and smile, it will make their day”……….
All walks are on Tuesday evenings, are open to all and start at 7-00pm. This year we are running a programme of 14 walks. The late Stan Smith started these walks to be included in the WSCC booklet, which was an early casualty of the now ubiquitous budget cuts. But the Preservation Society is continuing our walks, which are on our website (see rudgwick-rps.org.uk), and in the Parish Magazine.

The average walk is 4 miles in 2 hours. These walks are fun, and often end in the pub. Our thanks go yet again to the Claytons for their kind permission for our annual pilgrimage to Baynards Station. If you take any photographs of the station, please do not post them on the Internet. Thanks also to our excellent local pubs: please support them with your custom. The weather last summer was the worst we have endured, but this year will be glorious.


Bank Holiday: Mon 6th May.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Leader(s)</th>
<th>Starting at</th>
<th>Grid Ref</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 7th</td>
<td>David Buckley</td>
<td>The Fox (Bucks Green)</td>
<td>TQ-078330</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14th</td>
<td>Keith Linscott</td>
<td>Mucky Duck (Tismans Common)</td>
<td>067323</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 21st</td>
<td>Roger Nash</td>
<td>The Limeburners’ Arms (Newbridge)</td>
<td>073255</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 28th</td>
<td>Geoff Ayres</td>
<td>The Blue Ship (The Haven)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 4th</td>
<td>Clive &amp; Nicky Bush</td>
<td>The Red Lyon (Slindolf)</td>
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<td>June 11th</td>
<td>Roger Nash</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18th</td>
<td>Bridget &amp; David Cozens</td>
<td>Chequers (Rowhook)</td>
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<td>June 25th</td>
<td>Malcolm Francis</td>
<td>King’s Head (to Baynards stn.)</td>
<td>090343</td>
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<td>July 2nd</td>
<td>Roger Nash</td>
<td>Onslow Arms (Loxwood)</td>
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<td>Pephurst lay-by (Loxwood Rd.)</td>
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<td>July 16th</td>
<td>Bridget &amp; David Cozens</td>
<td>Recreation ground CP (Ewhurst)</td>
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<td>July 23rd</td>
<td>John Connold</td>
<td>The Sussex Oak (Warnham)</td>
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<td>July 30th</td>
<td>John Connold</td>
<td>Whitehall lay-by (Cranleigh)</td>
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<td>Aug 6th</td>
<td>Keith Linscott</td>
<td>The Blue Ship (The Haven)</td>
<td>084305</td>
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Please park considerately. At the Blue Ship & the Mucky Duck, park in the lane beyond the pub. At Rowhook the parking is up the lane next to the pub not at the front. At the King’s Head use the far end of the car park. The Ewhurst recreation ground CP is up Broomer’s Lane, nearly opposite the garage, not next to the village hall. The Whitehall lay-by is at the bottom of the dip before Cranleigh, on the east side of the B2128. At the Onslow Arms, park in the canal car park behind the pub. The Limeburners’ Arms is west of Billingshurst, and parking is restricted, so you may need to park along the LHS of the road. Dogs will not be allowed onto Baynards Station.

Geoff Ayres
Rudgwick Preservation Society

SPRING MEETING
and AGM

Monday April 22nd 2013
At 7.30pm Rudgwick Hall, Bucks Green

Francis Frith
A Victorian Photographer
Inventor of the picture postcard

David Edney

Francis Frith (1822 - 1898) was an extraordinary Victorian photographer who travelled and photographed extensively in Egypt and the Middle East at a time when photography and photographic equipment was in its infancy. In 1859 he set up his photographic business in Reigate and began taking and collecting images of towns and villages throughout Britain. The Francis Frith Collection is a remarkable record of life in Victorian Britain. With later additions the collection now has around 129,000 historic photos including 23 of Rudgwick.

David is an accredited speaker with the Francis Frith organisation and will talk about Francis Frith the traveller and photographer and include historical pictures of local interest.

ALL WELCOME
(Only members are eligible to vote at the AGM)

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