

# RPS NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2015

## Chairman's Report

### Newsletters

This is the second Newsletter to be mainly distributed by email. It seems to have been a successful transition, saving us on printing costs (though the small run we now do is expensive per copy!). My main fear is that some of you won't remember to read it right through on your screens, and won't necessarily pass it on to family and visitors. May I suggest you print it off and put it out for later scrutiny?

Have you looked at the RPS website recently? You will find all the Newsletters from Spring 1986 to 2013 online, and now content-listed. We are justifiably proud of our contribution to Rudgwick's history, planning, wildlife and people in this treasure trove of an archive. Please enjoy dipping in from time to time. If you want to find a particular topic, go to the page, and click on the Edit tab, then click Find in the drop down box. Use the search box, now in the bottom left of the screen, to type in a search term. The word will be highlighted on the page if in text. Open the relevant Newsletter. If you still need help, repeat the process, but this time the search box appears top right.

### **WANTED!** A Newsletter Editor

**Please let us know as soon as possible if you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer for this twice yearly task. It will interest anyone with a little time to spare, moderate facility with a computer, and willingness to learn to use a straight forward desktop publishing package.**

**We do the writing, you do the layout.**

## Verrio Tour of Christ's Hospital

**Rudgwick Preservation Society have arranged an unmissable tour of Christ's Hospital School, Horsham.  
Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, from 12.45 to 4.45.**

All are invited. Visitors will arrive by car, ample parking. Please send a cheque for £25 pp to Roger Nash as soon as possible.

- A walk round the grounds and principal buildings with a chance to view the artwork they contain
- Learn from pupil guides about this unique and historic school
- See the famous daily Band Parade when pupils march to dinner
- Visit the school museum

Full afternoon tea in the Dining Hall

### Further information:

<http://www.christs-hospital.org.uk/home/community/verrio-tours>

### Address for payment:

Rudgwick Preservation Society, Weyhurst Copse, Tismans Common, Rudgwick, RH12 3BJ. Be sure to include name and address and contact email and telephone numbers.

*Cheques to be made payable to Rudgwick Preservation Society*

**Enquiries:** via RPS website Contact page:  
[www.rps-rudgwick.org.uk](http://www.rps-rudgwick.org.uk)

## Dr Leslie Hawkins, RPS president

This issue of the Newsletter is the first of our 29th year of publication! Sadly, it is also the last to be edited by our indefatigable editor and President. Leslie has decided to hang up his desktop publishing program in order to spend more time with his family, to use two clichés in one sentence. We shall miss his wise council and cheery face as well as his care and time producing a Newsletter which has settled down into a well-worn but effective colour format since first adopted in Autumn 2007.

Leslie was our Chairman in my early days on the committee, and the continuity from those days now remains with others, but his voice of reason and common sense will be missed. I hope we can arrange a fuller appreciation in the next issue, and of course a send off at the AGM. Leslie hopes to move from Watersfield to Ferring, so we wish him and Maureen the best of luck.

### **Visit to Christ's Hospital**

Please read the advertisement for the visit on page 1. The support for this was good at the autumn meeting, following the talk on the school, so there is much to recommend a follow up visit. Please get your name down as soon as possible as we need to know numbers.

### **Planning**

There has been no decision yet on the possible development at Loxwood Road. RPS is concerned that when sites come up they are so often in the wrong place! What constitutes the right place is equally hard to say, but with no plans by the Parish Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan, we have no sites. Sites with permission at Windacres Farm and Summerfold remain just that. So far, too, there is no sign of traveller occupation at Tisman's Common. The enquiry into the site in Naldretts Lane awaits the Inspector's decision. We are not hopeful.

### **Broadbridge Heath**

A little further away, the developments at 'Broadbridge City' seem to be going up fast. Is it my frustration or is traffic on our side of Horsham already excessive? Billingshurst's development has of course contributed. Next, the road layout will change, and that will be something to raise our stress levels, I am sure. I may be a geographer, but maps I have seen have just left me scratching my head. Please take care. You have to admire the foresight of Nigel Wait, of our very own Barnsfold Nurseries, in developing his excellent garden centre and restaurant at Newbridge, now at the epicentre of roads and new houses/gardens. It is sad that he has now sold on to a national company, for a well earned retirement. May the quality be maintained, not least by Barnsfold as main supplier.

### **North Horsham**

This is still just so much hot air, but now that it has the stamp of approval from the Inspector of the Horsham Plan, may indeed go ahead. There is much to disappoint Horsham watchers these days with political and professional issues in the

planning department. Will it be any better after the May elections? We shall see. We need the houses, but we seem to have lost the plot as to where to put them. None of us should complain though if we do not vote in May, with elections on so many levels. However difficult the choices this time, democracy was never in greater need of preservation.

### **Walks**

Did you know we now make it policy to vary the walks as much as possible, to keep the evenings a fresh experience? Come along, and find out. This year, we are aiming to highlight sections of several walks on the Downs Link in honour of the anniversaries of opening and closing the railway line in 1865 and 1965 respectively.

One walk is from the Kings Head to Baynards Station by kind permission of Fraser and Linda Clayton. Another is from the Milk Churn and will include the site of Rudgwick station. **By kind agreement of RPS member Rob Bookham, this walk also ends with a special opening of the Café on our return 8.45 - 9.00pm. If you would care to join us, please do.** If it is wet, and you do not walk, please come along as we do not want to embarrass ourselves as wimps! Better still, walk in the rain. Walks always go ahead, whatever the weather. **See page 12 for details of all the walks.**

### **Great War Project**

Finally, a big thank you to all those who have contributed to this. I think we all agree it has been a humbling experience learning what men endured 100 years ago. In Rudgwick, the school and other activities for the most part carried on as normally as they could. The second of the two articles on the school in the war exemplifies this well. (see page 4). In the series of articles appearing in the Rudgwick Magazine there have only been a handful of deaths to record so far. It is the case that Rudgwick got off lightly in 1914-15, but once into 1916-17, the casualties mounted dramatically. The stoicism of those at home must be saluted as well as the bravery of those who served.

**I appeal to those who have not found us a relative's service to explore to do so if you can. The more the better, no matter where they lived at the time. I also appeal to those who have shared details, not to leave it there: we need a story on a page to go with it. Soonest done, soonest my nagging finishes!**

# Planning Matters

Vanessa Sanderson

## Horsham District Planning Framework

In January 2015 the HDC set out a timetable for the work it will be doing to accommodate a higher level of new housing required by the government inspector following his examination of the soundness of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

The Council submitted the HDPF to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination in the Summer of 2014. Hearings took place in November and the Planning Inspector appointed by the Government to examine the Plan, published a letter on 19<sup>th</sup> December with his initial findings. The Planning Inspector's only area of major concern with the HDPF is with the proposed level of housing provision. The Inspector believes that HDC should accommodate **more new housing** than in the Plan and he states that he favours concentration of growth around Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst along with some development in other villages in accordance with **Neighbourhood Plans** that are currently being produced in many parishes.

As a result the council must now look at options for increasing its assessed number of 650 new homes per year to meet the Inspectors requirement of at least 750 homes per year. The Council will begin by looking at the allocations of homes that have already been made within existing planned development to re-assess capacity at these sites. It will then need to look at the shortfall and look at where, within the criteria laid down by the Inspector, it can find further site allocations.

A report with recommendations on where the additional new homes will be accommodated will go to a council meeting on **18<sup>th</sup> March**. Subject to Council approval, consultation on the amendments to the strategy will take place between **23<sup>rd</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> May**. Detailed consultation on individual proposals will also take place with any communities directly affected by the proposals. The Council are disappointed that the Inspector has forced this extra housing requirement on it as it had always sought to allocate the minimum amount of housing across the District to meet NPPF requirements. However the Council have long made clear that the reality of the situation is that either the HDC goes along with the government requirements and tries to extract the best deal for the district or remains in a position where it is

unable to stop developers from putting in applications for many more houses without any certainty of being able to extract the best community benefits. The Council remain confident that given the number of applications that are already agreed and in the pipeline that they can address a significant proportion of this higher number required by the Inspector with the minimum further impact.

## Affordable Housing

The CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England) have recently highlighted that due to the Government's Planning reforms, local Councils ability to require developers to provide a certain proportion of affordable (social) housing in new developments has been undermined. Developers can get round the need to provide even a relatively small proportion of affordable homes by arguing that doing so is not viable – in other words it would not give them or the landowner what they regard as an acceptable level of return on investment. In addition the Government now proposes to allow the requirement for affordable housing on developments of less than 10 dwellings to be waived in certain circumstances. This will have serious consequences for rural communities like Rudgwick.

To meet the needs of society, and not just the demands of the market, the CPRE is calling for these policies to be fundamentally rethought. The country needs more, not fewer, affordable homes.

## AGM

The AGM and Spring Meeting is on 27<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm Rudgwick Hall, Bucks Green

Our Speaker at the Spring meeting, which follows the AGM, is David Bonner from the Environment Agency who will talk on

## Floods in Sussex

Please see page 13 of the emailed version of the newsletter or the inserted page of the printed version for further details.

Look forward to seeing you there

# Rudgwick at School in the First World War - part 2

## Roger Nash

### Introduction

Mr Watton, headmaster since 1912, decided to leave to take up a post in Roffey, a larger school, at the end of the summer term in 1917. Interviews for a new Headmaster took place in the harvest holiday. Alfred Douglas Bacon was appointed on a salary of £120, but was not to take over until 5 November. Mr Ernest Thomas from Worthing came as Interim Head. He had also done this duty when Mr Woods left in 1912.

First, a correction: Mr Watton's Teacher Registration (1920) has come to light, giving clear evidence of his service before 1912. His career began in South Bersted, from 1895-1900, a short foray to a Kent school, followed by further 5 years at Sussex Road School in Worthing, then 3 years in Portishead, before moving back to Sussex as Head at Lurgashall in 1908. It was when he was in Worthing that he joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Volunteer Battalion, Royal Sussex, part time, as a signaller. There was therefore no gap in his teaching. The document also shows he was well qualified, with additional certificates in gardening, drawing (two) and hygiene, all of which he put to good use in Rudgwick.



*Marguerite Bacon, nee Smith, 1946*

Mr Bacon was Rudgwick's third Head Teacher, and longest serving. He held the post for nearly 30 years, 1917-1946, retiring aged 60. He lived with his family all those years in the School

House, Bucks Green. He was born in Shoreham-by-Sea, son of John Bacon, a ship's carpenter/joiner, and Rhoda Cordelia, née Winton. The family lived in May Cottages, 44 West Street. By 1901, he was a pupil teacher, aged 15, at the

Board School, Shoreham. He remained there until 1912 as Assistant Teacher (confirmed by his Teacher Registration document). In 1911, he married local girl Marguerite Smith (see picture in left column), in Shoreham. In 1912 he was appointed Head at Lurgashall School (in succession to Mr Watton!), where they made their



*Acting Cpl. Alfred Douglas Bacon in uniform at Warminster before posting overseas.*

home, and where their only child, also Marguerite, known as Rita, was born in 1913. To go to war must have been a wrench, especially when one realises his predecessor at Lurgashall and Rudgwick Schools was granted a teacher's exemption from conscription in 1916.

Nevertheless, he volunteered

for the army on 21 October 1914, and was posted to the Royal Army Medical Corps as Private 43003. After training, he was posted with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to Egypt, where he arrived on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1915. Nothing is known of his service there, but eventually either a bullet, or more likely illness, caught up with him, and he was sent home, to be discharged on 25 July 1917. Illness was common among forces in North Africa and Palestine. On joining the expeditionary force in Egypt he was promoted to Acting Corporal, (picture above) but his discharge was as a Private. He qualified for the Silver War Badge, given to those invalided out, on 4<sup>th</sup> July. For his service overseas he received the 15 Star

as well as the British and Victory Medals. He had a small army pension, and was classed in Reserve 'P'. This means, 'whose services are deemed to be temporarily of more value to the country in civil life rather than in the Army' - and who were not lower than medical grade C iii - and as a result of having served in the Army would, if discharged, be eligible for a pension on the grounds of disability or length of service. This is actually not very helpful! If it were only the first mentioned reason, he would not have been granted a badge. Immediately on his return, he must have begun to look for a teaching post, and considered himself fit to go back to being in charge of a village school.



*Alfred and friend in the School House garden, 1920's*

**1917-18.** A feature of Rudgwick's wartime school history is excessive staff turnover, as detailed in the headmaster's log book and the managers' minutes. A teacher was appointed in Summer 1917 to replace Mrs Heasman, but she declined to accept. Eventually, Miss C Roe started at Rudgwick, at the same time as Mr Bacon, but she only lasted until February. Miss Branch came in place of Miss Stoner in December. Then, Mrs Heasman was persuaded to return in April 1918. It had been a baptism of fire for Mr Bacon. In March he had been reduced to closing the school for lack of staff following Miss Roe's departure. Only the Infants had stability as Miss Terry was still in charge. However the new Head was getting to grips with attendance, crowing of the best ever, at 96% one day in November 1917, and 5<sup>th</sup> best in the county at the height of the staffing problems in March 1918, and following snow, rain and floods in the late winter. By 1918, the school nurse was able to declare Rudgwick heads the cleanest she had ever seen! The gardening boys were encouraged with prizes on their allotment for the 1918 season. Even the Boot Club was able to pay a 2/- bonus to member families. The managers were persuaded to buy a new curtain which was all that separated the classes in the main room. Bacon also restocked much of the school book collection, but with a distinct bias to geography, perhaps influenced by the conflict in many parts of the world.

Then in 1918, illness began to plague the school community. Mumps was followed by measles, then chicken pox. At this point, infants teacher, Lilian Terry resigned for the unrelated reason of her marriage to her fiancé, who she had been popping off to visit whenever she could. She left on 28 June, clutching a silver teapot. Miss Terry married Cpl Harold Double in Newhaven. He survived the war, and they had a daughter

Margaret in Sevenoaks in 1926. But he had been wounded by a gunshot to the neck on 23 April 1917 in France, and was hospitalised. His army pension records survive, and confirm his identity, born in Newhaven, employed before the war as a clerk at a cement company in London. He served in the Honourable Artillery Company No 5183, then transferred to the Army Pay Corps, No 19551, and was discharged May 1919. He was awarded the British and Victory Medals.

At Rudgwick meanwhile a succession of supply teachers carried the school through to the Summer, and Miss Branch was assigned to the Infants. Mrs Heasman, however, took leave for much of July as her husband was back from the front. At first, I thought she must have married one of Rudgwick's fallen, George Henry Heasman, a much younger man who died in France in 1917. Records show she did marry a George H Heasman in Kent in 1915, just before coming to teach in Rudgwick, but this note of her leave makes the Rudgwick connection impossible. She continued to teach at Rudgwick for many years after the war, a mature presence into the 1930s.

One interesting development, as the war ground on to its bitter end, was an instruction from County to stop fraternisation with German prisoners. Mr Bacon wrote that he spoke to the children of the seriousness of supplying food, carrying communications, etc. But as far as is known there was no prison camp in or near Rudgwick. Transit by road or rail, or work parties, are possible. Norman Hedger wrote that he remembered prisoners marched along the main road, blue patches on their grey uniforms to aim at in the event of escape. Privations continued with short afternoons, shortages of coal (on ration from

October 1918). Mr Francis's horse and coal cart knocked down the girls' gate down one February day! The school had to send to the Food Control Office in Horsham just to get sugar for the children's cocoa. The navy was of abiding interest and was the subject of a talk to the school on Trafalgar Day 1918, which was called 'Nelson's Day'.

A clue to pupils staying on for an extra year (whilst others were leaving early for work) is that for the new school financial year, 1 June 1918, there were for the first time 3 pupils listed as "Standard VII\*", only 8 in St VII, 12 in St VI and 12 in St V. These are all lower numbers than before. School roll was shrinking, now only 124, with 144 allowed. The Infants only numbered 22 (in two year groups). The birth rate had fallen sharply everywhere, and maybe some families had moved away to war work in towns. The Fisher Education Act of 1918 proposed raising the school leaving age to 14 and was given Royal Assent in August. However, its implementation was delayed until a further Act in 1921. These three children in VII\* had "jumped the gun", one assumes with agreement of County, to stay to 14. There would be no secondary school in Billingshurst until the 1950s. Among those who left early as a result of passing the Labour Exam were Frederick Francis (Malcolm's father) and Arthur Woodhatch, both gardener's sons, 1911 addresses King's Road and Alablasters respectively. Arthur was a star: he had completed 5 years of perfect attendance to receive his silver watch in June 1918.

1917-18 were years of contradiction. On the one hand there was hunger, illness and school closure, and on the other hand there were desperate measures to supply the needs of the country with, of all things, conkers and blackberries, both part of our national culture in their own way. The managers agreed to a conker collection August 1917. Incidentally, however, at about the same time, they roundly rejected the opportunity to provide children with hot meals – "not entertained", and indeed not introduced at Rudgwick until 1938. This is in marked contrast to an article written in 1891 by Stanley Little, the novelist, a member of Rudgwick's old School Board at the time, proposing that School Boards should not only provide children with hot soup at lunch, but also boots and a macintosh. His concerns (obvious enough today) were mainly with the plight of poverty stricken children of farm workers, many of whom walked up to 2 miles to school, and with these children sitting wet

through, all day in the classroom, having eaten their crust on the way to school.

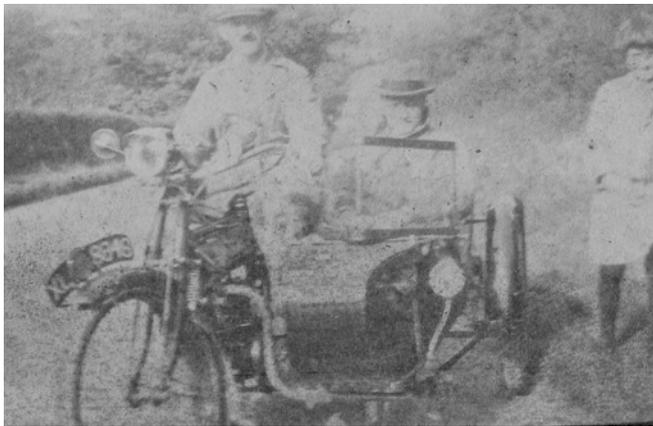
"The Ministry of Munitions collected the 1917 horse chestnut 'harvest', and enlisted the help of schoolchildren. Vast quantities were collected, but only 3,000 tons reached the factory - collection was hampered by transport difficulties, and piles of conkers rotted at railway stations. Nobody really knew why they were collecting horse chestnuts - the government was secretive about its motive because the Germans could easily copy this novel form of acetone production. A question was asked in the House of Commons, but it was simply stated that they were required for "certain purposes". This veil of secrecy even brought accusations that voluntary effort was being used to provide personal profit. After initial difficulties, acetone production began at King's Lynn in April 1918, but the horse chestnuts were of poor quality and production stopped again three months later." (source: IWM)

On 12 September 1918, there was an afternoon holiday for blackberry picking, 74 lbs recorded. Astonishingly, this was repeated on five more afternoons up to 22 September, which is quite a lot of missed lessons. A monthly return card was duly filled, recording 822 lbs picked. One source suggests the juice was provided for troops in the field. The Imperial War Museum has an entertaining film of another village school and boy scouts picking berries; find it at: <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1060022793>.

Flu had struck hard by the end of October 1918. Schools (and the night school) were closed by order of the Board of Education from 29 October until 18 November (there were no half-term breaks then), and on the day pupils returned there were cases of whooping cough too. The Armistice on 11 November, as with the declaration of war in 1914, was thus unremarked as an event at school. On 13 December, the Head remarked, "Flu and whooping cough still seriously affecting attendance and the working of the school". The pandemic had begun back in January, but it did not affect children as seriously as young adults. Known as Spanish flu because it was hushed up by the authorities, and reported occurring in neutral Spain, there is no previous mention of it in the Log Book.

**1919 and after.** When school resumed in January 1919, only 93 turned up. Whooping cough was still prevalent. Then another lengthy

closure followed, 21 February – 10 March. On 30 March: "The last year has been disappointing: 1. only 30 weeks' tuition; 2. staffing difficulties; 3. illness of children; 4. closed for 3 weeks." That said, an initiative to set up a teachers' library was under way (the parish library had moved from the Infants room to the Jubilee Hall, April 1915). But staffing was still an issue going into 1919. Several supply teachers had enabled the school to get to the end of the Summer of 1918 in the absence of two key members of staff. In 1919, Mrs Luxford took on the Infants, but she was only a Supplementary teacher and only pro tem. Miss Branch also resigned in February 1919, and so it continued. After the signing of the peace treaty at Versailles in June, on Friday 18 July, all schools were closed for national peace celebrations, including a victory parade of 15,000 troops in London the next day.



*Alfred on his motorcycle and side car at the school, Rita right, 1920's*

Norman Hedger, who started at school in 1913, when he was 5, was one of the older boys at the end of the war. He remembers the separate playgrounds for boys and girls, and the meadow and stream beyond, where older boys were sometimes allowed to do what boys do in streams, the gardening lessons (as befits a Hedger!), and taking turns to pump from the well. He went to school in shorts and lace up boots, no uniform, of course. He took a sandwich and cold tea for lunch. Hot cocoa was the highlight of his school day, as was an occasional yellow gas balloon overhead! Cigarette cards were swapped, tops whipped, cricket played on the tiny flat area of 'The Dell' (more serious sport required a walk to the field behind the Queen's Head). Mr Bacon, inevitably, was known as "Rashers"! Norman was one of the few who obtained a place at Collyer's, leaving at about 12 or 13, catching the train daily. Norman who was born in 1909 lived to be over 100.

The future in 1919 was uncertain, but Alfred Bacon stayed for the remainder of his career, not retiring until 1946, having seen the school through another war. He is thus remembered by some older Rudgwickians. His wife Marguerite, provided the meals when Rudgwick eventually got some catering, and was secretary of Rudgwick W.I., 1927-31. Alfred was a keen motorcyclist. He started a lawn tennis club in the village in 1920. He organised the village sports for George VI's coronation celebration. RPS is fortunate to have an archive of photographs of the Bacon family scanned from those of his grandson, Paul Leaney, of Billingshurst, who has been written about in the Rudgwick Magazine as the baby (with his mother, Rita, Alfred's daughter) who survived the strafing of a train at Bramley in the 2<sup>nd</sup> War, and who was brought up in the school house whilst his mother was hospitalised.



*Three generations, 1940's: Alfred, son-in-law Trevor, also a teacher at Christ's Hospital, and Paul Leaney*

*Alfred and Marguerite retired to Worthing in 1946. After just three years, he died in 1949 aged only 63, Marguerite surviving him until 1973. Paul is a Parish Councillor in Billingshurst, after working for many years at Dunsfold Aerodrome and therefore known to a number of Rudgwick former employees there. It is good to have a local link back to 1917, and to have the old schoolroom and some outbuildings (including the old toilets first installed in 1913 after Mr Watton arrived, and the old canteen where Mrs Bacon served up meals) still preserved more or less intact by the current owners.*

# Malcolm's Miscellany

## A collection of short stories by Malcolm Francis

### American Cousins

Here are a couple of incidents that happened in Rudgwick some years ago. My wife and I used to live in Hermongers road when we were first married. One evening we were entertaining some friends and were still chatting away at midnight when there was a knock on our front door. Somewhat surprised, I answered it to find an American lady standing there. She wanted directions to the local Youth Hostel at Ewhurst and I then realised that she was not alone but was accompanied by a group of very tired teenagers all on bicycles. (In fact one of the group had a puncture.) I found out that they had been travelling for many miles from East Sussex and were completely lost.

I gave the leader precise instructions on how to find the hostel but volunteered to take them, three at a time, up to the hostel, in the back of my old Morris Traveller. Infuriatingly she would not take us up on our hospitality at all, and they all disappeared into the night. A couple of days later I actually phoned the hostel to find out what had happened to the lost Americans and recounted the midnight incident, to be told that a member of staff found them all asleep on the entrance of the hostel at 6 am. My opinion and that of the staff was unprintable.

We are sometimes guilty of saying that the Americans don't have the historical knowledge of Europe, are not well informed ,etc, but I have found the reverse. Some of you may remember a lady called Betsy Hailey who lived in Ames House in Rudgwick. I understand that she was a well known and successful American authoress and had properties in America plus Ames House. She loved Rudgwick and especially our Sussex countryside and I had the pleasure of accompanying her to a couple of the local gardens. One of these was Nymans and one of her American guests on that little excursion was very well informed on all the flora and fauna of "our" gardens. She would have certainly put a lot of us English people to shame with her knowledge. There were a whole procession of guests who came to stay in Rudgwick at Betsy's house and they all grew to love our village. Quite a few, especially those from California, that does become rather baked in the summertime, made the comment that Sussex is so fresh and green.....

I will now turn the clock back to the 1970's. My wife and I were in the King's Head after singing in the choir at evensong. The pub in those days did not do any food, it was still a drinking pub only. The landlord was not the friendliest of people and whilst we were at the bar two Americans called in looking for accommodation. I realised that they were not getting too far with the landlord so I volunteered to help. It transpired that they were doing a tour of Prince Regent's "progress" from

Windsor to Brighton, their knowledge of that era was extensive and they savoured standing in the King's Head with its royal connections. I took them to the phone box that used to stand outside the Post Office on the opposite side of the road (this was years before the advent of mobile phones) and I managed to get them into the hotel in Slinfold (now called the Random Hall but in those days it was known as the Bob Inn.) I drew them a little map and sent them on their way. Their plan was to stay one night before heading down to Brighton to carry on their pilgrimage.

My curiosity got the better of me and a couple of days later I called the Bob Inn and spoke to the owner to enquire about his American guests. He told me that they had made it safely to Slinfold and were still there! I felt that we had done our duty and I hoped that those Americans went home with good memories of Rudgwick and some of the friendly natives.....

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### Missing Aromas

It is said that as you get older one loses one's sense of smell. I understand that may be the case but in the present day there are not so many things that emit aromas, good or bad. If one thinks back to life in Rudgwick in the Fifties there were a lot more aromas around. One of the very pleasant aromas that now is lacking from the present day supermarkets is the smell of bacon. In those days the sides of smoked bacon were delivered from the wholesaler and sliced up at the shop to the customer's wishes. Humphrey's grocery store (which was next to the King's Head until its closure in the 1980's) had a hand driven bacon slicer that always fascinated me as a child. A large bacon joint was fed carefully in by hand producing wafer thin slices of bacon whilst emitting a beautiful aroma. I understand that the machine carried on giving good service at Catchpole's store (now Loco) for many years after Humphrey's store was closed, though it would have failed miserably today's Health and Safety regulations.

If one walked down Church Street the next shop was the butcher's shop at Southdown house. The shop was owned for many years by a Mr Billy Butcher, how apt! The shop was very traditional even for those years; it had a very large tree trunk as a chopping block and the floor was covered in sawdust; and there was a very strong smell of meat. The next shop down Church Street was Fleming's Stores which was a general grocery stores and newsagents. The shop also sold paraffin, the life blood of the village, before the advent of modern oil fired (or coal fired ) central heating. The shop always had a rather pleasant smell of paraffin along with a smell of newsprint.

The next grocery shop and bakers was located, as mentioned at Catchpoles, but in those days the owner was a Mr Birchmore. Baker's shops always have a beautiful aroma of fresh bread, even in present times when so much foods is packaged. Mr Birchmore delivered bread to many customers in the village and I remember the aroma of bread that emitted

from the large bread basket that the baker carried door to door.

Station road had a marvellous mixture of aromas; there was a row of lime trees that marked the border with the station coal yard, which was run for many years by a Mr Hempstead. The lime trees gave off a very distinctive smell that mixed well with the aroma of coal. Large heaps of coal could be seen in the yard, frequently topped up by arrival of more coal trucks in the sidings. (Rudgwick's station yard even had a little turntable to increase the yard's capacity for goods trucks). When a train arrived one was also treated to that lovely mixture of smoke and steam, and hot oil. These days one has to go to a preserved steam railway line to get that cocktail of aromas. I am sure that is one reason why steam railways are so popular, it is the nostalgia trip.

I have not mentioned the various garages and filling stations that used to be in Rudgwick; there were Talon garage, formerly Talbot Motors, and Station Garage in Church Street, and Rudgwick Garage and Regent Garage in Bucks Green. All the garage premises smelt of petrol and rubber tyres. In those days there were not the pollution controls that are now mandatory as far as petrol and oil spillage, so naturally waste oil and petrol often permeated the floors and fabric of the buildings. The worst garage was Regent Garage in Bucks Green where its back yard was awash with waste oil.

I have mentioned in a previous article how, here in Sussex, we are not really aware how much wood smoke pervades the atmosphere on a winter's evening. This fact was pointed out to me in the Fifties by a teacher at Collyer's school in Horsham; he was from Newcastle. That is one very pleasant aroma that we can still savour.

Another smell that has now vanished from Rudgwick is the sulphur smell that used to emit from Rudgwick Brickworks. The fumes of the bricks burning in their clamps was not always a nuisance as it was dependent upon wind direction but the prevailing westerly winds did drive those fumes towards the upper part of the village.

A very pleasant aroma that we can savour is that of freshly cut grass; in fact with the increased mechanisation of domestic gardens I am sure we have more cut grass than we ever did years ago. Long gone is the sight of an old gentleman using a scythe to cut long grass, or the labour of using a push mower to cut a well manicured but very small lawn.

These days a lot of traditional haymaking has been superseded by other ways of preserving grass for animal feed, but the very evocative aroma of freshly turned hay is still with us. Once a hayfield has been cut the crop has to dry before one gets the full aroma.

On a personal note, I used to drive, quite often, large combine harvesters for one of my farming relations. The smell of a combine harvester as it cuts a large swathe through a field of standing wheat, is one of the best. It is caused by the threshing process, and often combined with the perfume of the common weed, Corn Chamomile crushed by the wheels of the heavy combine harvester. Those evocative smells from a harvest field were enhanced on a long summer's evening when a dew was starting to form...and it was time to stop for the night.

## Taxi!

These days it is a very expensive business to run a taxi company.. The costs of running the taxis themselves run into the many hundreds of pounds. The insurance charges are very high, cars registered as taxis have to have a very stringent council inspection twice a year. Horsham District council are very strict on their checks and issuing of taxi licences, even down to the state of the car's internal carpets. A taxi driver has also to have a Criminal Records check, every three years, and if the driver is over a certain age he has to have an annual medical examination to maintain his taxi licence.

In the 1970's the taxi service in Rudgwick was run by "Teddy" Ireland, who lived in Lynwick Street. When Mr Ireland retired in October 1984, the business was taken over by Colin Tilley. Jack, Colin's father, joined the business a little later as the business expanded. (Jack has now been retired for many years). The company, which is called Rudgwick Cars, has given many years of good service to the village. I worked for them on a part time basis, often on a Saturday evening. Naturally a private hire taxi service in a middle class area such as Rudgwick is a long way from driving a taxi in an urban environment, since "Private Hire" means that all journeys have to be pre booked.

Over the years I can recall some very amusing incidents that I hope will show the problems associated with running such a business. It always surprised me how long some of the journeys were that were booked by local customers; up to Leeds for an important meeting, a grandparent taken to Cornwall rather than going by train, children from a prep school taken to their grandparents that lived a hundred miles away on exeat weekends, and of course countless runs to Gatwick and Heathrow airports. One annual journey that Colin did was to drive the late Norman Basset, which many older readers may remember, in his own car to Aberystwyth; Colin would return by train and then collect Norman a fortnight later. I understand that the train journey was challenging.

When children are flying alone they have to be handed over to a member of staff from the airline concerned after check in, (most airlines have dedicated staff to carry out that duty) and the taxi driver must ensure that the child is signed over before leaving the airport. Some years ago, at the end of the term, Jack Tilley took a pupil to Gatwick airport from a local preparatory school (**not** located in or near this village). Unfortunately the flight was delayed, due to fog in Newcastle, and in the end was cancelled. This meant Jack was unable to sign over his juvenile passenger and so took the pupil back to the school. Here they found the school was in darkness and all the staff had left. There was no other option for Jack but to bring the lad back to Rudgwick and give him a bed for the night, once they had contacted his father in Newcastle. One can imagine the father's opinion of that prep school.

A school that is very well organised and efficient is our local Rikkyo Japanese boarding school, they have used Rudgwick Cars for many years. The planning of the collection of the pupils or despatching them, to and from various airports is planned with military precision. It always amused me just how much luggage the students had for their term at the school. I always felt sorry for the young students who really struggled with the bulk and weight of

their luggage. I always wondered how much had to be paid in excess baggage charges. I can remember Colin Tilley taking a student to Gatwick for his flight back to South America. The student had been sent his airline ticket at the school but on closer inspection, when the pupil was being checked in at Gatwick, it transpired that his parents had sent him the return ticket from Rio de Janeiro instead of the outbound section. Colin had to pay about £500 on his credit card so that the lad could get his flight home that night.

I can recall one amusing job that I did for Colin; he had acquired some new account customers when the owner of a small taxi company in Wisborough Green retired. I had to meet a new customer from a club in Berkley Square, an easy job of just driving up to London at the appointed time. When I arrived at the destination I contacted the reception desk; a message was sent out asking me to wait another half an hour. Eventually the very drunk customer appeared and he had a colleague with him, who was not quite so drunk and who wanted to be dropped off in Woking. I asked the slightly more sober gentlemen for his friend's address in Wisborough Green but he had no idea.... a lot of help.

The Wisborough Green resident was unconscious all the way back home but came round just enough to point at a house on the outskirts of the village where I dropped him. It took him about ten minutes, all the time leaning against the front door of the house at about 45 degrees as he tried all of his keys, to get inside ....I saw the customer a few weeks later and he confided that he was so drunk he couldn't speak having been plied with drinks by a group of friends he hadn't seen for years.....

One Sunday evening I can remember having to drive a brand new Range Rover from the Mucky Duck to Sunningdale. The Landlord had persuaded the driver that he was too drunk to drive. It transpired that the party of people had come back to Rudgwick after a very good day at Goodwood. I drove the car while Brian Marshall, who also worked for Colin, rode shotgun in another taxi. All the way to Sunningdale the owner of the Range Rover sat in the front using his new mobile phone (the latest status symbol) ringing a whole lot of wrong numbers...while the person in the back kept saying " I have lost all my money" and when we arrived I found that the back of the Range Rover was carpeted in rolls of cash that had fallen out of his anorak pocket, I thought the chap had been referring to his day at Goodwood. The Range Rover owner was actually a landlord of a pub, and as I arrived his wife came out to meet him. We were well imbursed for our services and left him facing the wrath of his wife.

One Saturday evening after taking a customer back from Rudgwick to Wisborough Green I saw a camper van parked by the side of the road near to the centre of the village, with its internal lights on and the driver looking at a map (before Sat Navs were a common item). I pulled over and asked if he was lost. He was a German tourist and had driven from Yorkshire. He and his wife were looking for Bedham and thought that it was a village, not a series of cottages that are all set in deep woodland that stretches from Wisborough Green nearly to Fittleworth. I gave him a little sketch to help his search and he disappeared into the night. I often wondered if he ever found the address.

One of Colin's customer's booked a taxi from Kirdford to Guildford where he was meeting up with friends having won a lot of money on a horse. It seems that it was a good night but unfortunately on his return the Guildford taxi driver misheard his requested destination and took him to Cufford in Essex; he had to return the next morning on the first train....

These days the drink drive laws are very strict, quite rightly so. Most responsible people book a taxi if there is a risk of consuming too much alcohol. My father recalled, in the 1930's that on a Sunday afternoon you would always see one of the locals who frequented the Kings Head and lived in Ellens Green, asleep in the ditch on the sharp corner before you reach Ellens Green. He never could make it around the last corner on his bicycle...at least he was only a hazard to himself.....

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## Get me to the Church on time

Weddings these days seem to have become much more complicated, and expensive, than they were even a generation ago. These days there seems to be a fashion for having some type of special transport to take the bride to the church, or venue, for the ceremony.

I have been in the local church choir for many years and it is interesting to see the various forms of transport that the wedding couples choose. Classic cars are the most popular form of transport, old British cars from a vintage Rolls Royce to what were everyday cars in their time, such as an old pre-war Riley, and even the humble VW camper van. Earlier this year my son Richard had three classic minis, with echoes of the "Italian Job", for his wedding, (the main car attained its MOT two days before the wedding!).

A classic car is not without risk of breakdown, which is the owner's worst nightmare, and can make them a risky choice for weddings. These days there are specialist companies that have a small fleet of wedding cars, so at least they have some back up if a car fails.

Some years ago the local garage owner, Alex Haynes owned a model T Ford car which was very popular for Rudgwick weddings. I was walking up to the church one Saturday afternoon when I was ringing at a wedding and watched as the bride arrived, rather late, outside the King's Head, climbing out of a very small Nissan car. I thought it was an odd choice of a bridal car and, about ten minutes later, Alex Haynes arrived at the church with his Model T Ford, with the engine running very roughly. It transpired that the car had blown its head gasket and had very little power. Alex was concerned about transporting the wedding couple to the reception later on so we came up with a plan: I ran home and collected my car, which at the time was quite presentable and Alex luckily had some spare wedding ribbons, with which he quickly adorned my car.

The wedding went off without any other hitches; the happy couple climbed aboard the Model T Ford and coasted down church hill without its engine running, to where my car was parked and were taken to the reception. It's a good job that the church is at the top of a hill.

Another form of transport that has been used for weddings is a pony and trap. One would think that is a guaranteed

way of getting to the church but I can remember one Rudgwick winter wedding when the bride's pony and trap got stuck in Bridge Road as there was so much ice on the road there!

A novel form of transport that was used a few years ago as a "wedding car" was a vintage 1930's coach, which belongs to the owner of Baynards Station. The coach is now in superb condition, after a massive renovation by the owner, and sometimes appears in such TV productions as Foyle's War.

One final anecdote on wedding transport; I was helping Colin Tilley of Rudgwick Cars one Saturday by using his taxi to transport some wedding guests from a wedding at Rudgwick to a reception in Ewhurst. The whole wedding was running late, partly due to a very zealous wedding photographer who was taking endless photos. I delivered my guests to the reception and came back to find the wedding photographer still taking shots of the wedding couple posing alongside the wedding car, which was a beautiful old Rolls Royce. The owner of the Rolls confided to me that he was really in a panic as he should already have been at Barns Green for another wedding. The moral of the story for the owner must have been "never book your car for two weddings on the same afternoon"....

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## Blackdown

The main part of Rudgwick village gently slopes in a southerly direction. This topographical feature gives one beautiful views towards the South Downs as immortalised by Hilaire Belloc in his poem "The South Country". The Downs often appear higher and closer than at other times due to different weather conditions. I used to tease my daughter, when she was quite young, that the Downs went up and down! If one looks towards the west from vantage points within the parish, you will see a large hill called Blackdown. The hill is about fourteen miles from Rudgwick but again often looks closer. There is a good view of the hill, especially in winter, close to Rudgwick's church tower, especially when it is silhouetted against the setting sun.

This imposing feature is actually an outcrop from the Lower Greensand hills that form the North Downs and include Leith, Pitch, Winterfold and Hascombe Hills. Leith Hill always seems to have more visitors than Blackdown, perhaps because it is closer to the London suburbs. Leith Hill is nearly one thousand feet high but Blackdown is not far behind with a height of over 900 feet and I think that Blackdown is much more imposing because of its position and shape. It has the ability to appear in the most unexpected places within the local Wealden area. If one drives on the A264 past Faygate towards the west you can see the hill quite clearly; the same thing happens when driving along the A272 towards Billingshurst from the Coolham direction, the hill suddenly appears! When one is driving through the Haven if you look towards the west not long before the turning to the Blue Ship pub you will see Blackdown as the main feature. Blackdown Hill looks like an escarpment from vantage points in Rudgwick but if one looks towards it when you are on the

South Downs its shape becomes so different that it could be a completely different hill. The best position to see this illusion is on Bignor Down, just west of Bury Hill (there is a narrow road track from Bignor village to an ample car park).

Blackdown had various owners until it was donated to the National Trust by the last landowner, a W E Hunter, as a memorial to his wife in 1944. There is evidence that the hill was lived on during the Mesolithic period, about 8000 years ago. In more recent times, there was a shutter telegraph station sited on its summit by the Admiralty in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was part of an optical chain of telegraph stations between London and Portsmouth.

Blackdown Hill was in the right place during the latter part of the Second World War according to a farmer I knew, who lived in the Northchapel area. He recalled that V1 flying bombs, often called Doodle bugs, that had been aimed at Aldershot, were regularly stopped by the massive escarpment. The V1's were an early form of cruise missile and were lethal, as they carried a one ton warhead. The farmer said that the Doodle bugs would cause an eruption of pine trees as the high explosive was dissipated.

There was a terrible tragedy on November 4<sup>th</sup> 1967 on Blackdown. A Caravelle airliner flew into the west side of the hill and thirty seven people were killed. The weather was very bad with rain and low cloud and the aircraft was descending into Heathrow airport under radar control. It had been cleared to descend to 6000 feet by Air Traffic Control, but was actually flying at a much lower altitude. The poor visibility created by the horrendous weather conditions meant that the crew would have not had any visual reference to the actual height at which they were flying. The air crash investigation found no problems with the aircraft and that it was in level flight and at cruising speed when it impacted on to Blackdown. There was a suspicion that the type of altimeter that was fitted to that aircraft may have been misread; it had three needles to display different sectors of the indicated height. It was possible to read a 6000ft altitude as 16000ft. The accident report played down this theory as the crew had appeared to be aware of their height when passing through 14,000ft. Airliners in those days did not always carry what is known as an ATC transponder, that has the ability to automatically transmit the actual height, in coded form, to the Air Traffic controller. These days all aircraft are fitted with such systems.

Blackdown is a beautiful location for a leisurely walk and is surprisingly close to Rudgwick; just head for Haslemere via Plaistow and Shillinglee. There are a series of narrow lanes just west of the A283 that will lead you up to a public car park. The footpaths find their way south to a viewing point which includes a glimpse of the English Channel. If one wants some peace and quiet Blackdown is the place.

Blackdown has now one more accolade; it is now part of the South Downs National Park and is its highest point.

# Walks Programme

## Spring / Summer 2015

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](http://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 to our excellent local pubs: please support them with your custom.

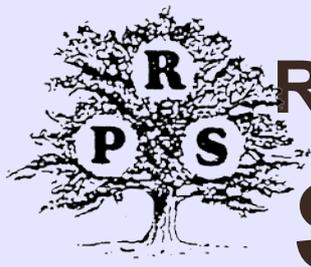
Sunsets: May 5<sup>th</sup> 20.29; June 23<sup>rd</sup> 21.20; Aug 4<sup>th</sup> 20.43.

Bank Holiday: Mon 4<sup>th</sup> May.

Tuesday	Leaders(s)	Starting at	Grid Ref TQ-
May 5 <sup>th</sup>	David Buckley	The Fox (Bucks Green)	O78330
May 12 <sup>th</sup>	Keith Linscott	Mucky Duck (Tismans Common)	O67323
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Malcolm Francis	Kings Head (Church Street) to Baynards Stn	O90343
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	Helen Leech	The Churn CP (Lynwick Street)	O83342
June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Roger Nash	The Bat and Ball (Newpound)	O60269
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Clive and Nicky Bush	The Red Lyon (Slinfold)	118315
June 16 <sup>th</sup>	John Connold	The Sussex Oak (Warnham)	158337
June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Geoff Ayres	The Blue Ship (The Haven)	O84305
June 30 <sup>th</sup>	John Connold	Whitehall lay-by (Cranleigh)	O78380
July 7 <sup>th</sup>	Bridget Cozens	Recreation ground CP (Ewhurst)	O90402
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Roger Nash	Mucky Duck (Tismans Common)	O67323
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	Geoff Ayres	Pephurst lay-by (Loxwood Road)	O56318
July 28 <sup>th</sup>	Roger Nash	Dedisham Farm (Roman Gate)	109329
Aug 4 <sup>th</sup>	Keith Linscott	The Blue Ship (The Haven)	O84305

Please park considerately. At the Blue Ship & the Mucky Duck, park in the lane beyond the pub. At the King's Head use the **far corner** of the car park. The Ewhurst recreation ground CP is up Broomer's Lane, nearly opposite the garage, **not** next to the village hall. Although Ewhurst PC asked us to use this CP, it is quite small, and residents park their cars and vans in it. You may choose to park in the main CP on the other side of the street. The Whitehall lay-by is at the bottom of the dip before Cranleigh, on the east side of the B2128. The Churn car park is at the old brickworks, refreshments will be available at the coffee shop at the end of this walk. The Bat and Ball (near Fisher's Farm) at Newpound is undergoing refurbishment at the time of writing this, however we are assured that a new car park will be completed in time. Dedisham Farm entrance is on the south side of the A281, ½ mile west of Roman Gate roundabout, take extreme care turning in, and park as directed.

**Geoff Ayres**



Rudgwick Preservation Society

# SPRING MEETING and AGM

**Monday April 27th 2015**

**At 7.30pm Rudgwick Hall, Bucks Green**

**Floods in Sussex**  
**How are we going to manage them?**

**David Bonner**

The Arun Valley at Amberly, Spring 2014

The Environment Agency works to create better places for people and wildlife, and to support sustainable development. As category 1 responder it is dedicated in dealing with the many challenges the UK faces due to climate change. One of the biggest threats the UK will face will be from flooding. Our talk will give an overview of the diverse work the Agency undertake in tackling this issue and also focus on their role managing flood risk on the upper Arun Catchment, which includes Rudgwick.

David Bonner is a Flood Resilience Advisor for the Environment Agency and has 24 years experience in flood risk management.

**ALL WELCOME**

Members free - Non-members £2

(Only members are eligible to vote at the AGM)