RPS NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2008

Financial Outlook

RPS currently holds the funds raised by the Biodiversity Group that has worked so hard in the woods around the playing fields in Bucks Green. None of these funds have been raised by Rudgwick Preservation Society itself except in the form of grant applications. Discussions are going on which we expect to lead to the independence of the Biodiversity Group by April 2009. By that time (RPS's AGM) we intend that these funds, held under a separate heading in our accounts, will be transferred to the new properly constituted Group. As there are no provisions in our own constitution for this to happen, the Committee have agreed that we should consult the membership about this, and seek your agreement to proceed at the end of our financial year. Any representation about this must be raised in writing to me or any officer of the Society as soon as possible, and no later than 7 days before the AGM (mid April 2009, to be announced) when a vote will be taken to approve a resolution announced in the notice of the AGM .

A new Treasurer is required in April, when Judy intends to step down from the position she took on temporarily after Don Muir retired from the Committee. The work will be reduced when we no longer handle the funds referred to above, so this could be a congenial way of joining in the meetings we hold and participating in the valuable work of your Committee. There must be a volunteer out there, either currently a member or someone who could become one. Even if you do not want to be Treasurer, but would like to join the friendly Committee we would welcome offers, so how about it?

Roger Nash

Judy Knights, Treasurer, Springside, Tisman's Common, Rudgwick, RH12 3DU

Planning Matters

Vanessa Sanderson

Horsham District

The Secretary of State's proposed changes to the South East Plan are out for consultation until 24th October. The provisions for the Horsham District are as expected with the relatively small increase recommended by the Examination in Public Panel from 620 to 650 per annum. However the Secretary of State's wording of provision being 'at least' to this level is causing some concern especially as the figures are now seen as minimum figures with the need to seek to increase them and drive up the housing trajectory. The Council are currently preparing their response.

In view of the above there is now pressure to get the Local Development Framework Core Strategy revised and cover the full period to 2026. So far only 625 new homes have been completed in the District compared to the expected 1300. The Council are expecting to consult on initial options/proposals in May/June/July next year but there is much work to be completed first including the Council's **Sustainable Community Strategy** which they expect to be consulting on at the end of this year.

In the meantime the Council are concentrating on trying to deliver quality development west of Horsham and west of Bewbush. They also have to prepare proposals for gypsy and traveller sites in the District to meet needs for new pitches identified by SEERA (South East England Regional Assembly) in the near future.

Rudgwick

At the time of writing the **Draft Rudgwick Parish Design Statement** has been delivered to every household for consultation culminating in a public meeting on 3rd November. A Parish Design

Statement sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all new development in a parish based on its character. It is an advisory document produced by the local community not by the Council that will eventually be adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SDP). It will not stop change from happening but it can help affect how any new buildings fit into the Parish. Design Statements are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment.

Generally any new development in Rudgwick will be of a limited nature given the Category 2 status of the Parish. The proposed development of **Windacres** has been agreed in principle in the Site Specific Allocations of Land with the details of the development still to be agreed. Horsham District Council has received an initial draft 'masterplan'/prospective layout for both the business and housing elements for comment.

This will be an opportunity for the proposed policies of the Rudgwick Parish Design Statement to be discussed & potentially integrated into the new development as the scheme evolves. The Council are keen to involve the community in the development of this scheme and will be working with the Parish Council and local people such as the Steering Group of the Parish Design Statement to achieve an attractive and sustainable development.

RUDGWICK'S FIRST FATAL ROAD ACCIDENT?

AND THE FIRST LOCAL SHOOTING ACCIDENT

BY ALAN SINEY

By the late Victorian era, road accidents were becoming more common on the busy streets of city centres, as old photographs show, with main street junctions becoming a strangled mass of carts, cabs, vans, and omnibuses all jostling to cross each other's path amongst the snorting horses and cursing drivers with no road discipline. Even the most physically and mentally alert pedestrian had to carefully consider his chances of crossing without falling beneath hooves and wheels. But it was not these factors that caused the death of Charles Strudwick on Church Hill on the evening of September 10th 1891 and caused him to die without recovering consciousness some 30 hours later: he was knocked down by a bicycle.

The inquest was held at the Kings Head Rudgwick, four days later on September 14th. Mary Ann Strudwick, deceased's daughter, said her father, who lived at Webbs, was 50 years of age and was unconscious from the time of the accident until he died at 3.15 am on Saturday morning. Elizabeth Ellen King stated that she was going down Church Hill at about five minutes to eight o'clock on Thursday evening in company with her sister. It was a dark night (this was before BST) and there was a light on the bicycle. She had almost reached her father's house when she heard the cyclist shouting as he came down the hill, and almost immediately the light disappeared with the sound of a crash. She ran in to fetch her father, who went to the scene and found the deceased lying in the road and a doctor was sent for. Edward Rowles, a gentleman living in Rudgwick, said he heard someone shouting up the hill, and without any interval of time heard a crash. Joseph King, a carpenter, said the cyclist told him he shouted at the deceased who seemed to step right in front of the machine. Dr Boxall attributed death due to haemorrhage of the brain substance due in the first instance to the fall.

The cyclist was Arthur Woodhouse, living at Brighton but spending a holiday in Rudgwick, staying next door to the deceased. (There were families of that name in Rudgwick at the time). In his summing up, the coroner, Mr A.W. Rawlinson, addressed the jury at length, weighing up the facts for them to decide as to whether Woodhouse should be charged with manslaughter, or if death was accidental. He seemed to be biased against the cyclist and cycling in general in a manner which I think would be regarded as prejudicial to the case today. Eventually the public was allowed to re-enter the room for the jury to deliver their verdict. They concluded that there was insufficient evidence to warrant a charge of manslaughter, but added that Woodhouse did not shout his warning soon enough to warn the deceased and therefore did not keep such a good look out as he should have done considering it was night and he was going downhill, and they hoped that this would be a warning to the youth in future. If

he rode in such a manner as to get into another case of this kind he might not get off so fortunately as he had done now. A verdict of "Accidental Death' was returned.

So what were conditions like in 1891 that could have been contributory factors leading to the accident? Church Street, or Rudgwick Street as it was then called, was much narrower than today and necessarily little more than two carts' width with verges on both sides, and a footpath along the north-eastern side of Church Hill, some flat stones of which can still be seen set along the edge of the bank. It was to be nearly another three decades before the road was tarmacadamised, and it consisted of stones rammed down in the clay and impounded in mud and manure with smooth patches that formed a slippery slurry on the surface when wet.

Roads were subject to potholes and grooves from heavy carts and particularly by the iron skids dragging the wagon wheels down Church Hill. Rural roads were usually in a bad state of repair as the lately formed Local Highways Committees, paid for by a collective share of the parish rates, could be as tight on expenditure as the Parish Vestry had been. Cycling on rural roads and byways was very much like cycling along Downs Link today, where one weaves from side to side to wherever the way is best and only occasionally moving to the side on the approach of traffic.

What sort of machine was Woodhouse riding? It was possibly one of the newly developed models of the 'safety bicycle', which essentially consisted of wheels of equal size with a diamond shaped frame and driven by pedal cranks and chain to the rear wheel, but not necessarily with brakes to both. It was this concept of the bicycle which remains today, and it instantly popularised cycling and the formation of cycling clubs, as those fit persons used to walking long distances found it a pleasurable novelty to travel at four times the speed with independence. If he was riding an 'ordinary' or 'penny-farthing' as it was popularly called, he would almost certainly have been thrown over the top of the high machine and suffered injury. The oil cycle lamps then in use would have cast a soft glow for several yards.

Could the unfortunate Strudwick had been held partially to blame for walking in the road? Certainly not, as it was the only place that one could have walked safely at night without a lantern and a good pavement, and was therefore the normal thing to do. I am reminded of this when, for about two years, I walked home along a rural road after my evening bakehouse job during the blackout, when it could be so pitch black that one could not discern the outline of hedgerows and had to judge the centre of the road. Such conditions could have prevailed that night.

It does appear that the inquest was hastily convened on the Monday with death having taken place at the weekend. The village constable had not been called to investigate the accident and there was no inquiry made as to whether either party had been drinking at the Kings Head. Mr Woodhouse was not called to give evidence but Mr Coole, the Horsham solicitor, was there to watch the proceedings on his behalf. With the only evidence being impromptu verbal statements given to the inquest, we can see how differently the proceedings would be today.

Given the type of road surface down the hill it was unlikely that the cyclist could have effectively checked his momentum even with modern brakes, so it could be argued that he was riding too fast. It could also be argued that the pedestrian should have been aware of the light's glow from some way up the hill and had failed to react to it and the warning shout. So on balance I think the verdict was a fair one.

Footnote: The report was given in the West Sussex County Times and Sussex Standard, September 19th 1891, and copied at Horsham Library. My thanks to Mr David Haynes of Horsham, whose wife is a great-granddaughter of Charles Strudwick, for bringing this story to my attention.

THE FIRST LOCAL SHOOTING ACCIDENT

The following brief transcription appears in Sussex Fines and Inquisitions para 1009, published by the Sussex Record Society.

William Standege (Possibly a mis-transcription for Standing) of Rudgwick, labourer indicted for homicide by an inquisition held at Loxwood 28th May 1585 before Richard Lane coroner, on body of Thomas Rudge labourer. Jury found that on the 27th May at Loxwood, whilst standing talking in a friendly fashion, Standege accidentally discharged his gun loaded with hailshot and

killed Rudge. Jury finds this accidental killing. Bailed for next assizes.

We can conclude that the two men were well acquainted and the incident had occurred on the Loxwood side of the parish boundary, so possibly in the Drungewick/Barnsfold area. It is a wonder that the coroner and twelve jurymen could be summoned to convene the following day whilst the body was still fresh when the only means of communication had to be physical.

The jury was drawn from a list of ratepayers in this instance paying a poor rate to the Parish of Wisborough Green of which Loxwood was a part. Later, at trial courts, the jury was drawn up of men from outside of the parish of the accused to reduce the chance of partiality. One might also wonder how it was that a man described as a labourer was carrying a gun at this time: a simple explanation could be that anyone who was not a tradesman or artisan was generally classed as a labourer, so he could have been a gamekeeper for the Manor of Drungewick who then held all the land throughout this area. Use of firearms for hunting in the 16th century and later was a privilege vested in rank and landownership, in this case with the Onslows, Knights of the Realm and Lords of the Manor, and not to the various tenants occupying his land, who were strictly controlled by manorial laws and customs and had to attend its courts, so the men could only have carried the gun if authorised by the lord's steward. It is unlikely that they were poaching, because the rare report of a gun would have drawn attention and certainly a hanging.

So why was the perpetrator indicted for homicide when the jury decided it was accidental killing? There was clearly no intention of harming the victim, but two cardinal sins had been committed; firstly, the smouldering cord was allowed to remain gripped in the serpentine hovering over the powder pan ready for firing the matchlock, when it should have been unhitched and allowed to hang harmlessly, and secondly, the gun must have been pointing directly at the victim at the point of discharge. It was the failure to observe these two basic common sense rules that today would be given the term 'criminal negligence', and therefore the jury's verdict does appear to have been justly given. The law may have been an ass at times, but this is an early example of British justice based on sound reasoning by common citizens.

SUMMER WALKS PROGRAMME 2008

As usual Dave Buckley led the first of the Summer Walks, starting from The Fox, Bucks Green, on Tuesday the 6th of May. The first of three rather wet walks was led by Roger Nash from the Mucky Duck on the following Tuesday, Bridget & David Cozens had another on the 3rd of June, and I led the third on the 5th of August. I am indebted to Vanessa Lowndes, who kept notes of both the attendances and the rain. Unsurprisingly, our lowest attendances were on those wet days, with 18 on Roger's walk and 17 on both of the others. The highest turnout was on the 17th of June for the walk to Baynards Station, led by Malcolm Francis. Unfortunately the West Sussex Summer Walks booklet had wrongly printed the start point as the Red Lyon at Slinfold. Now usually, only a minority of people attending the Rudgwick walks have found them in this booklet. But I put up notices at Slinfold explaining the error, and told the staff in the Red Lyon. Murphy's Law (polite version) applied on this occasion and 23 people turned up at Slinfold. It wasn't until after the walk failed to start, that one of them read my notice. Meanwhile another 27 of us had left the King's Head and, when we arrived at Baynards Station, the Slinfold group were waiting, having driven there. After visiting the station, they walked with us to Lynwick Street and returned to their cars via the Downslink. Steve & Barbara Kenwood had the second highest turnout of 37, from the King's Head on the 15th of July. To put these figures in context, I believe that the average attendance on the West Sussex Booklet walks is less than 10 (including ours!). Our average this year was about 28.

I would like to thank the Claytons, for allowing us to visit Baynards Station, which is their home. They restored this wonderful Victorian railway station themselves. It is in its original LB&SCR colours, and it is very easy for those of us old enough, to remember waiting on the platform of one of these peaceful rural stations. Thanks to the publicans for allowing us to park. Please support the pubs in return. Thanks also to all the leaders who make it possible. We are always in need of leaders. Please let me know if you might lead a walk. We need to get our walk details to VLA publishing by about Christmas to be included in the Summer Walks Booklet. These are available in libraries in West Sussex, and Billingshurst is our nearest.

Contact me, Geoff Ayres, on 822668 or geoff.ayres@tesco.net for information.

Farming near Rudgwick's Historic Mill on the Arun

Antony Adorian

Gibbons Mill Farm is a family farming business based in The Haven. We farm an area of just under 600 acres. Many of you in Rudgwick will be familiar with the farm as there is approx 3 kilometres of public footpath / bridleway criss-crossing the ground we farm. We milk 260 cows that produce approximately 1.8 million litres of milk a year. All of this is processed and sold through a co-operative called "Milk Link" owned by ourselves and 1400 other like-minded farmers. Nearly half of the co-operative's milk is made into cheese; one of our primary customers is Sainsbury's – you don't have to shop at farmers markets to support local farmers!

Flooding at Gibbons Mill

Why should you care whether there's a dairy farm in your parish, or come to that whether there is a dairying industry in the UK? Firstly you should care as a consumer. British dairy products are produced to world-leading standards of animal health, welfare and food safety. The number of independent inspections our business alone is subject to will lay witness to that. The second reason for supporting our dairy industry is for the economic contribution it makes. UK dairy farms employ 50000 people; a further 34000 are employed in dairy processing and distribution. Beyond this is a much bigger economic multiplier effect providing work to local contractors, vets, mechanics, feed suppliers and a whole range of affiliated industries.

Enough of the national picture; my final reason for urging you to support British dairy products is a local one - to support our efforts to protect your local environment. Over the last decade we have undertaken a number of initiatives to protect and improve the habitats we have. Here are just some examples of what's been done in this little corner of Rudgwick. In the last four years alone the barn owl boxes we erected have provided the starting point for 21 fully fledged barn owls. We now have two pairs of resident buzzards. In an attempt to provide a suitable habitat for otters we have fenced off all our river boundaries from grazing livestock and have established three artificial otter holts – yet to be inhabited. In the last five years we have planted nearly a kilometre of new hedging. We have planted up three sections of river bank to the native black poplar – thought to be Britain's most endangered native tree. Last summer the farm acted as a feeding ground to a pair of hobby hawks and a red kite. We have planted two acres of ground to winter bird feed crops-last summer this crop became a lapwing nesting area. We have at least two pairs of nesting kingfishers. The farm also provides a much broader wildlife habitat in its 50 acres of woodland and seven kilometres of carefully managed hedges.

Our farm is no exception. Our story is typical of many other farms across the UK. So if you enjoy your local countryside and you want it to be maintained for future generations it is important that you realize that its destiny lies with you as much as with farmers. Next time you go shopping make sure that it's British cheese, British butter and British meat that are in your trolley.

Shortloes Farm, The Haven

James Childs

My father and his brother moved to Shortloes Farm from Plaistow in 1934, with my grandparents, taking a tenancy from the Okehurst Estate. This also included Bignor Farm and Muttons Farm (part of Fold Farm, Ingfield) which totalled approximately 195 acres. Soon after my grandfather's death, a large part of the Okehurst estate was put up for sale so the tenancy was taken away. Father and uncle bought the 90 acre Shortloes Farm after the auction as it was not sold.

Shortloes was mixed - dairy, beef and arable, with occasional pigs as well. Dairy cows were hand milked but when the dairy needed updating the milking cows went. Beef and arable continued. Later my father and uncle started doing contract work for local people, and this continued to grow. Looking after stock when not on farm proved to be difficult, so keeping stock at Shortloes ended. What was 9 fields in 85 acres, were made into 3 fields in the 1970's, mainly due to Dutch elm disease, and the grass that was grown in the arable rotation was sold as hay for race horses and cattle. The contracting side consisted of a large whole 350 acre arable and stud farm contract at Kirdford, as well as other general farm contract work.

Not much changed until after I started working in 1986, until the early 1990's, when the Estate at Kirdford was sold by its owners, thus losing some of the work, although we still combined part for one of the new owners. After a couple of years doing more odd job contract work, and the semi-retirement of my father and uncle, in 1997 I took a 200 acre whole arable farm contract at Newbridge Farm, Billingshurst, which we still do now. We later contract farmed 200+ acres at Havenhurst, The Haven, recently entering a share farm agreement. Also we contract arable land at Bury St Austin's, Rudgwick, and land between Slinfold and Billingshurst. Currently we are involved in around 1100 acres of arable land under different agreements plus other general agricultural contracting.

Main crops are wheat, over 50% of the acreage, with oilseed rape. Dry peas, oats, field beans and forage maize are break crops between wheat crops. Forage maize is grown for a dairy farmer in The Haven; wheat we grow mostly for bread; peas are usually dried and micronised (split peas) for human consumption; oats also for human consumption; beans for animal feed.

We grow a small portion of organic feed barley for an organic beef farm (50 acres). Otherwise we grow everything conventionally, i.e., sprays and fertilisers are used but only when necessary and as environmentally as we can, leaving unplanted, unsprayed and fertilized margins by hedgerows and ditches.

Although organic farming has a place, if the world does not want to starve, chemicals need to be used. We have not entered environmental stewardship schemes, although we are involved on farms that have, because unfortunately they cause us to be controlled too much in how we manage our farm. Without flexibility in a constantly changing industry, you need to sign up for minimum of 5 or 10 years, depending on the scheme and with the government moving the goalposts, you sign up for a period longer than you can plan for. It suits some farmers, but not all. Many that have entered these schemes have left or want to, as the requirements have been changed half way through. Farming is a business and as much we like to do what we can, we still need to make a living; for many years that has been a small one.

We have done coppicing and are to plant native hardwood trees. When this is done, we also plant wild bird seed mixtures on set-aside land, but these are things done on our own without grants or money from stewardship. This lets us do what we can, when we can and if we can., not when we are made to and at our cost.

Farming gets blamed for a lot of damage to wildlife and the environment; a lot in the past was probably justified but a lot is not and the general public has as much to do with this as the farmers. When the previous foot and mouth disease closed the South Downs for the summer farmers from the downs reported that the nesting birds had a "very good year". The farmers were still there but the walkers etc. were not!

No one is saying the countryside should be closed to the general public but it does mean everyone has a part to play in looking after it. And we all need food!

A PENNY BAZAAR.

MALCOLM FRANCIS

Roger Nash has recently acquired a copy of an old postcard of some children, two girls and a boy, posing outside the "Penny Bazaar, Rudgwick" I have managed to shed some light on thestory surrounding this odd photograph. My mother in law, Mrs McWilliam, has a newspaper cutting of the original item that appeared in the Daily Mirror. It reported the opening of a Penny Bazaar in Rudgwick that was run by an Olive Tidy aged 10. Here is a précis of that article; "Olive Tidy, a pretty little girl (10 years old) living at Little Kings is the smallest shopkeeper in the world. In order to do this a shed adjoining her father's cycle shop(at Little Kings) has been converted into a business premises. A counter, shelves, till and all the fixtures were put up in a fortnight. The stock consists of at present Postcards, Dolls, Pencils, Milk Strainers, Cream jugs, Sugar basins, Toy pistols, Matches and Penny Magazines. Hours of business; one hour before school, one hour dinner interval, two hours after school. Her takings average 1 shilling and sixpence per day. She said she hoped to become the largest shop in the village."

Mrs McWilliam thinks that the shop was opened in about 1914, four years before she was born, and remembers the other girl in the photograph named Daisy Marden, who was a relation, when she was a married woman. The site of this little bazaar later became a small green grocery run by a Mr Starkey, who also had a fish and chip shop behind the Queens Head in Bucks Green. That business survived into the Second World War as Mrs McWilliam recalls buying fish and chips there to take to the search light crews stationed locally on cold winter's nights. The greengrocer's was lost when the adjoining barn that can be seen in the postcard was burnt to the ground by a local lad.

LOST LANDMARKS

MALCOLM FRANCIS

A village naturally changes over the years, as houses and other buildings change their appearance or disappear. Here is a tour of some of the buildings and landmarks that have disappeared in the parish.

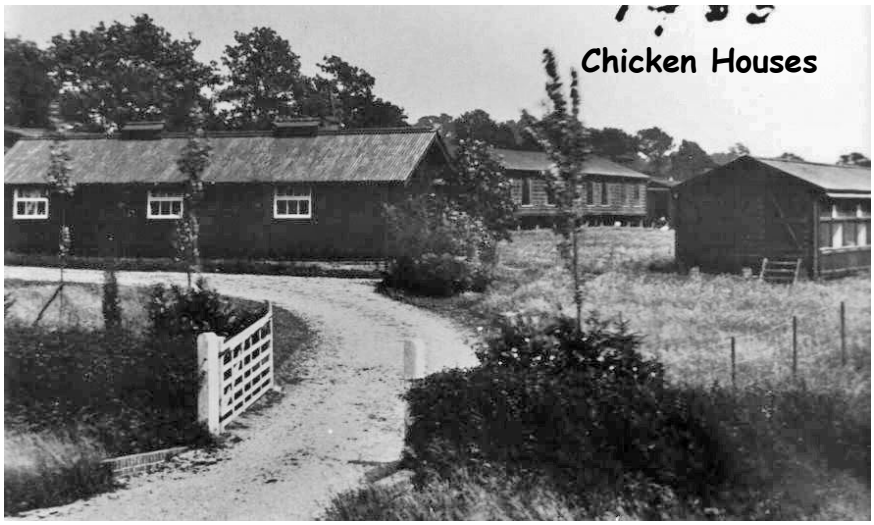
Hidden by the ever encroaching woodland, there is a small pump house in the corner of the field close to Lower Hill house (adjacent to the Surrey border along side the A281).The small octagonal building housed the pump that lifted water to the main house on the Pallinghurst Estate that is now owned by Rikkyo School. I hear that the building has now lost its roof. Once the building and its important water pump would have been carefully maintained by the estate. My father was apprenticed to a Mr Stemp, in Bucks Green, whose business included maintaining such pumps throughout the parish. One pump that my father maintained was a wind-pump that was sited at Hornshill farm, again close to the A281. Such wind-pumps used to be a common sight throughout the land; there are still a few about, usually with the blades missing. They often suffered from wind damage as the tail, usually triangular in shape with the manufacturer's name printed on the metal work, had to be locked into a safe mode when high winds were forecast. This action deliberately positioned the blades to miss the full force of the wind. I believe that the one at Hornshill was not scrapped but dismantled and taken to the West Country to be used again.

Another landmark that disappeared about fifty years ago was the small transport café and greengrocers that stood in the grounds of the Fox Inn. The front of the building faced onto the little link road by the BMW garage in Bucks Green; it was shed-like in construction with a canopy over the produce for sale.

Inside was a tiny café basically furnished with small tea stained oil cloths adorning each table. School children often liked to buy " penny buns" from a little glass cabinet on the serving counter with their last remaining pocket money, when they were walking to the Recreation Grounds at lunch time. After the closure of the cafe Mr Botting then went mobile; he was a familiar sight driving a large dark red van full of green grocery around the village. He announced his arrival in each road in the village by repeated blasts on his horn ; these days one would assume that it was a car alarm!

If one puts the clock back to pre war times of course the village looked rather different, especially in Church Street; where there were considerably more buildings on the west side of the road. If one walked past the Martlett Hotel at the top of station road you would see Buckhurst farm house on the left, with the old farm buildings housing a small garage; in its earlier days know as Talbot motors. All was swept away when Foxholes was built.

Next was the first small row of council houses (Furze Road was built in the late 1940s). Most of the rest of the buildings, except for a couple of in-fills, have not changed a lot. The east side had a mixture of houses, most of which had been built at the turn of the last century; with a few more appearing past Jubilee road in the 1930s.



Just past these houses was the site of large poultry farm. It had the grand title of the Scientific Poultry Breeders Association (always known as the SPBA).The fields were full of very large chicken-houses, big enough to live in. The substantial bungalow known as Freshwoods, which was demolished in the 90s to make way for the small group of houses bearing that name, started life as the offices for that chicken farm. Church street on its eastern side, except for a couple of bungalows, was devoid of houses until nearly the entrance to Windacres Farm. The first development was in part of the orchard belonging to the property called Summerfold and comprised the 4 houses built in the 1970s. One of the bungalows, named 'The Ridge', was demolished and its name is now given to the new development, which was built in the early 1990s. Summerfold was adjacent to 'The Ridge' and was a substantial 1930s house, which was demolished to make way for the development of the same name.

I was talking to an old gentleman, then in his nineties, several years ago who grew up in Rudgwick. His mother, Kate May, had been the licensee of the Kings Head in the early years of the last century. He said that his father had died before he was born and so his mother took over the licence. He recalled that when he was a child he used to play in a large barn that stood in the field opposite; where the pub car park is now situated. This barn was used to stable horses belonging to customers staying at the pub. One can imagine the barn full of horses when the Prince Regent stopped at the Kings Head en route to Brighton. There is one photograph in existence that shows this missing barn; its position was quite a long way back from the road.

To the north of the church there was Hawkridge Barn, which was quite a small construction in a small paddock adjacent to the main Hawkridge building. There were plans to try to salvage it, during the construction of the flats in the 1970s but to no avail.

Just opposite to Hawkridge was the site of Rudgwick's Upper Smithy; adjacent to the present footpath. This was quite a small barn and was demolished about 20 years ago. There had been an old timber-framed house alongside and quite close to the substantial house called Cousens, which I assumed was the blacksmith's dwelling. The blacksmith's house was lost to the village well before the second World War; and an old photograph shows that it was in a bad state of repair.

The road to Cranleigh from Rudgwick passes the Wheatsheaf pub and then turns sharp left by the turning to Ewhurst. The road from that junction was built in Regency times; the straightness of it is a good indication of it being a new road. This new road ran through the land of the Baynards and Coxlands estates, which were greatly altered in the 50's and 60's. A lot of the woods were cleared to make the large fields that now adjoin the road to Cranleigh

About 300 yards from the junction there used to be a farm building adjacent to the road; which was at least 50 yards long and was always called by the locals "Long Hovel". It comprised black creosoted timbers with a long tiled roof and the lee side of it was open to shelter livestock. It survived until a massive storm in September 1958, which demolished it completely. I presume that Long Hovel must have been the remnants of a traditional farmstead .When buildings, even farm buildings, are lost, it is always sad.

Wartime Rudgwick: Roger Moulds' childhood memories at Eames House

Roger Nash

These extracts are from the BBC archive on the Second World War. They were written in 2005, and can be found in full in the BBC WW2 People's War pages on the internet. Roger now lives in Wales. Born in 1936, he was a police officer in the Met and then Findon for many years. During much of the war his family rented Eames House from Billy Butcher, who lived at Southdown House next door, the butcher's shop. Roger lived at Eames with his parents and two brothers. The two properties were legally separated in 1948. The camp referred to was located where Queen Elizabeth Road is now.

L to R: Christopher Moulds, John Kemp, Brian Moulds.
Inset Roger Moulds (the writer)

"My father left Worthing Town Council and went to work for an organization called the C.R.E, which was based at Horsham. My understanding is that the C.R.E was a civilian engineering establishment run by the government, and I know that my father was initially involved in setting up defences — airfields, pill boxes, gun emplacements, tank traps etc. Later he became involved in the building of army camps ready for the D-Day landings, especially one at Rudgwick. We moved into rented accommodation at Eames House, Church Hill, Rudgwick. Even though we lived in the country and did not have to suffer the horrors of the Blitz, everyone's life was centered around, and directed by, the war. My grandfather, Ernest Moulds, who had fought all through the First World war arrived one day. He was a gardener by trade, and had come to help my parents dig the garden up. 'Dig for Victory' was the slogan, and dig for victory we did. All the grass went, so therefore, did our football and cricket. As compensation my father found us a little cycle from somewhere — a child's cycle which was described as a 'Fairy Cycle'. We learned to ride by climbing on and falling off, with a competition to see how far one could go before falling off. In less than half a day we were competent cyclists who could even ride with no hands.

"As the days went on, convoys of lorries and other army vehicles started to arrive in the village. There were a lot of Americans and Canadians. My two elder brothers had been sent to school at Cranleigh to a school called Carn Brea which I believe to have been evacuated from Bromley 'for the Duration'. They came out of school one day to be met by my uncle, John Wakefield. He was my mother's elder brother and we called him Uncle Jack. He was a sergeant in the 17th-21st Lancers and had an army scout car. My two brothers rode home with him in the scout car. You can imagine the envy of their school mates as they climbed in and were driven off! I was attending Mrs Aspley's kindergarten school in Rudgwick so I did not get a ride, but when they arrived home I was lifted in and allowed to look round. I could not keep my eyes off the bullets that were lying around. Uncle Jack stayed the night and then we did not see him again until after the war was over. He was later mentioned in Dispatches during the fighting on the Dutch/German border.

"During this time, an aunt came to stay for a few days. I knew her as Aunty Edie. She had come to try and see her soldier fiancé, who was based at the Rudgwick army camp. We took her to show her where the soldiers trained to see if she could spot him. Eventually he came marching along in a squad of soldiers and she saw him and waved to him and called his name, and then she just stood there crying. I suppose it was about May of 1944, and there I was, eight years old, holding her hand and saying 'Don't cry, aunty, grown-ups don't cry'.

"More and more soldiers and vehicles were pouring into the village. We would sit on the edge of the road and count the transports to see which would be the biggest convoy. I went with my mother on the bus to Guildford one day — (single decker, no. 33) and suddenly there was a big thud and the bus braked to a halt. My mother told me that a motor cycle dispatch rider had collided with the bus. I asked if he was dead, and she said no, he just had a broken leg. I stood on the seat and saw the motor cyclist lying at the side of

the road. I looked everywhere, but I couldn't see his leg lying anywhere. I thought if you had a broken leg it would be broken right off from your body!

"At breakfast one morning, my mother and father started arguing. It seems that late the night before there had been a loud knocking on our front door. When my father opened it, he found a Canadian soldier standing there, the worse for drink. He was clutching an onion, and demanding some bread and cheese to go with it. Father let him in and found him something to eat, and made some tea (no coffee in the house, not even Camp Coffee made from chicory). When my father thought the man was sober enough to return to camp, he sent him on his way. Mother thought drunken soldiers were a disgrace, and it was dangerous to let such men into the house. Father just said, 'Not as dangerous as where he is going,' and that was the end of the argument.

"Soon after that the village became very quiet. We heard on the radio that the D-Day landings had taken place. My brothers and I went down to the Camp where most of us youngsters used to wait for soldiers to come out. We would shout out 'Got any gum, chum?' As often as not, chewing gum and pennies would be thrown at us, and there would be a scramble for the pickings. However, on this day the place was deserted. Life went on. We searched the fields looking for Radio Location Paper. These days it is called 'Window', or 'Chaff'. It consisted of lengths of tinfoil, copious amounts of which were thrown out of aircraft to try and deceive the new radar systems. We were forbidden to pick it up in case the Germans had poisoned it, but we tested it first by getting our mongrel dog Mike to sniff at it and hopefully lick it, first. It was about this time that Brian and I thought we had discovered a German Spy. In a field behind the village we discovered that someone was living in a tent. So we let the tent down and threw it and all the associated belongings over the hedge. Unfortunately we were spotted by the local post woman, whose tent it was, who reported it to our father. Good hidings were duly dished out and we were paraded before the post lady and ordered to apologise.

"By this time I had become a good cyclist, and one day the village postmaster, Mr Humphries, phoned my mother and asked if I could take a telegram out as he had no one else to take it. I collected the telegram. 'There won't be an answer', he said. (In those days a telegraph boy would deliver a telegram and wait to collect an answer if one was required). I took it to a house where a lady answered the door. She gave me a strange look, but said 'do you want an apple?' I said I would. She went away and read the telegram. When she came back she handed me the apple and shut the door quickly. I felt guilty, but I did not know why. A few weeks later I delivered another telegram under similar circumstances. It was only a few years ago that it suddenly struck me that I had probably been delivering casualty telegrams, but was too young to realize what I was doing.

"Flying bombs, or 'Doodlebugs', started coming over. The locals reckoned that they came in from the south, veered right over the church and headed for London. Very little notice was taken of them as we did not consider ourselves to be a target. Then one day, at lunchtime one came over, the engine stopped, and the bomb crashed into a field opposite the house of one of our friends and exploded. Our friend John Kemp had just been made to leave the table to wash his hands when the bomb struck. All the dining room windows were blown in, and if he had been still sitting at table he would have been seriously, perhaps mortally, wounded.

"Not far from us there was an airfield at a place called Dunsfold. The US air force were sending out bombers every day over Germany. Although it was several miles away, we could always hear the engines starting and warming up. Then they would fly off and gradually the noise would fade into the distance. One morning there was an almighty explosion, followed by a series of smaller explosions which I was told was ammunition going off. Two of the aircraft, with full bomb loads, had collided just after take off.
My best day was Sunday. We lived next door to the village butcher. His name was Mr Butcher. On Sunday mornings he made sausage meat in a great machine which was turned by an enormous handle. I was allowed to turn the handle while he fed the ingredients in. A great deal of herbs and other fillings went in to compensate for the lack of meat. Then we went off in his old brown Ford van, round the village. The broken horn on his van was replaced by him putting his arm out of the window, banging on the body work and shouting 'get out the bloody way'. When we returned from the round he would present me with a parcel to take home, and then we would all breakfast on his truly delicious sausage meat."

The Moulds boys sang in the church choir. The photo shows Chris and Brian, with John Kemp in the middle (Inset Roger himself). The family returned to Worthing for a time, and during that time two wartime correspondents stayed in Eames House. Garry Wilmott was a Canadian. He was the London Correspondent with CBC and before the war had been the fastest sports commentator in the world. He was awarded the MBE for his wartime broadcasts. Capt Brian Meredith was broadcasting liaison officer at Canadian Military HQ in London.

Eames House is in Church Street at the bottom of Church Hill, a lovely old house, timber-framed with a Horsham stone roof. The story of its butcher past will be the subject of a future article. As far as I know, the butcher had always lived in Eames itself, using the attached Southdown House for the shop and ancillary activities. At some point, perhaps as late as the start of the war, Billy Butcher moved in next door probably to make an income from letting his main house.

The Rudgwick Times

Roger Nash

Over several weeks this Summer it was possible to access the new Times Archive on the newspaper's website without having to pay a subscription. Rudgwick Preservation Society could not overlook an opportunity like that. Unfortunately it is now a subscription site, but we have managed to find 150 years of Rudgwick history, albeit rather an eclectic, hit and miss collection of items. The word 'Rudgwick' gives an astonishing 1,135 hits over the entire lifespan of the newspaper, 1785 to 1985. In the time available the list has now been checked up to 1935.

The very first mention of our village is 1st April 1786 when there was an announcement of a Meeting of Creditors the following Monday at Guildhall, London. It was a curt statement. "William Agate, late of Rudgwick, Sussex, shopkeeper, final dividend, 10 o'clock".

This may be William Agate who was baptised in Rudgwick in 1752. was he 'late' in the sense of deceased, or a Londoner who came from Rudgwick? the Agate family originated in Sussex, and many will remember the Agate timber business in Warnham and Horsham.

Many property sales were advertised in The Times over the entire period researched, and these will be of huge benefit in tracking house histories, and indirectly the families who lived in them (though they are seldom mentioned by name). Fortunately in all but a handful of instances the names of houses and estates are mentioned, often with fascinating descriptions (in estate-agentese of course) of the situation, acreage, virtues and details of the house and land, later sometimes with a photograph. Most of the houses that have been gentrified can be tracked through several sales. As a newspaper of record, The Times was exclusively of record for the wealthy landowner.

This means there are also many announcements of births, marriages, deaths and a few wills, even a small handful of obituaries. Perhaps the one man who comes most alive (and one we previously knew little about) in this record is John Aungier (Lynwick Estate) who owned many properties in the parish and a huge acreage. This will be the subject of another article.

The possibilities for using items for further research are endless, and there lurks a lot of recent history post-1935. Here is one final early mystery. If anyone can find out about it before me I will be delighted!

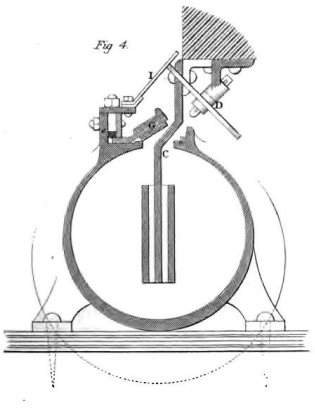
25 March 1818
"James Nye, the elder, aged 48, for being an accessory in the Rudgwick felony, after the fact". "*The* Rudgwick felony"? The scandal of it! This was at the Sussex Assizes, by the way, and although 20 capital convictions took place, no executions took place. Well, that's all right, then.

And here is another snippet from the Times of 1845

The Brighton Junction Railway

Geoff Ayres

There appeared in the Times of 20th Oct 1845, an advertisement for the proposed Brighton Junction Railway, connecting Brighton to the North and West of England…
"*It will commence at the Guilford terminus of the South-Western railway, communicating thereby, and by means of various projected lines, with Reading and the Great Western Railway, and will proceed through or near the large and populous villages of Shalford, Bramley, Wonersh, Cranley, Alfold, Rudgwick and Slinfold to Horsham, there uniting with the proposed Dorking Brighton and Arundel Railway, and communicating with the branch of the Brighton Railway to Horsham.*"(This really was all in one sentence).



The capital to be raised was £300,000 by issuing 15,000 £20 shares, and indeed there was an application form at the bottom of the page. This was not a large sum for a railway, but the surveyed route was only some 20 miles long and the actual cost was expected to come in below this figure. Most of the major land owners on the route had been consulted and were in favour. The leading proponent was Walter Wyndham Burrell of Knepp Castle, and he was already chairman of the Management Committee. A few of our own local landowners were also involved- John Braby of Maybanks was on the Management Committee, also Thomas Elliott of Hornshill, John Laker Napper of Tismans and James Waller of Slinfold were serving on the basic Committee.
The remarkable thing about this proposal is that it was to be an Atmospheric Railway. Only railway buffs will recognise this description. Atmospheric Railways were the cutting edge of technology in 1845. In theory they were a great idea, indeed Isambard Kingdom Brunel himself was convinced, and built one from Exeter to Newton Abbot. Another ran from New Cross to Croydon. The train had no locomotive, and a large tube ran down the middle of the track. The train was pulled by a Piston Coach. This coach was connected to a piston running along inside the tube, which was propelled by atmospheric pressure. A partial vacuum ahead of the train was created by steam driven pumps, at 3 mile intervals along the track. Hill climbing performance was greatly superior because the wheels were not required to grip the rail, and the reduced weight gave speeds of up to 70 mph. on the test track. There was no smoke, noise or fire risk from the locomotive. However there were some serious problems inherent in the system; firstly, connecting the coach to the piston through the wall of the tube, without letting air leak in. This required a flap valve running the entire length of the line. In 1845 the only material available was leather and this had to be regularly greased with tallow, but it still leaked badly.

All the pumping stations on the line had to keep a full head of steam waiting for the next train, and, together with the leakage, this pushed the cost per mile to almost three times that of a conventional locomotive hauled train. Worse, after a few months, the suburban rats of New Cross developed a taste for the tallow-soaked leather. Level crossings presented a real problem. The 15 inch iron pipe had to run the length of the line without interruption, going straight across the path of any crossing traffic. Shunting the piston carriages at the terminus was also a problem. The system was soon abandoned and it was another 20 years before our line was completed.

RUDGWICK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

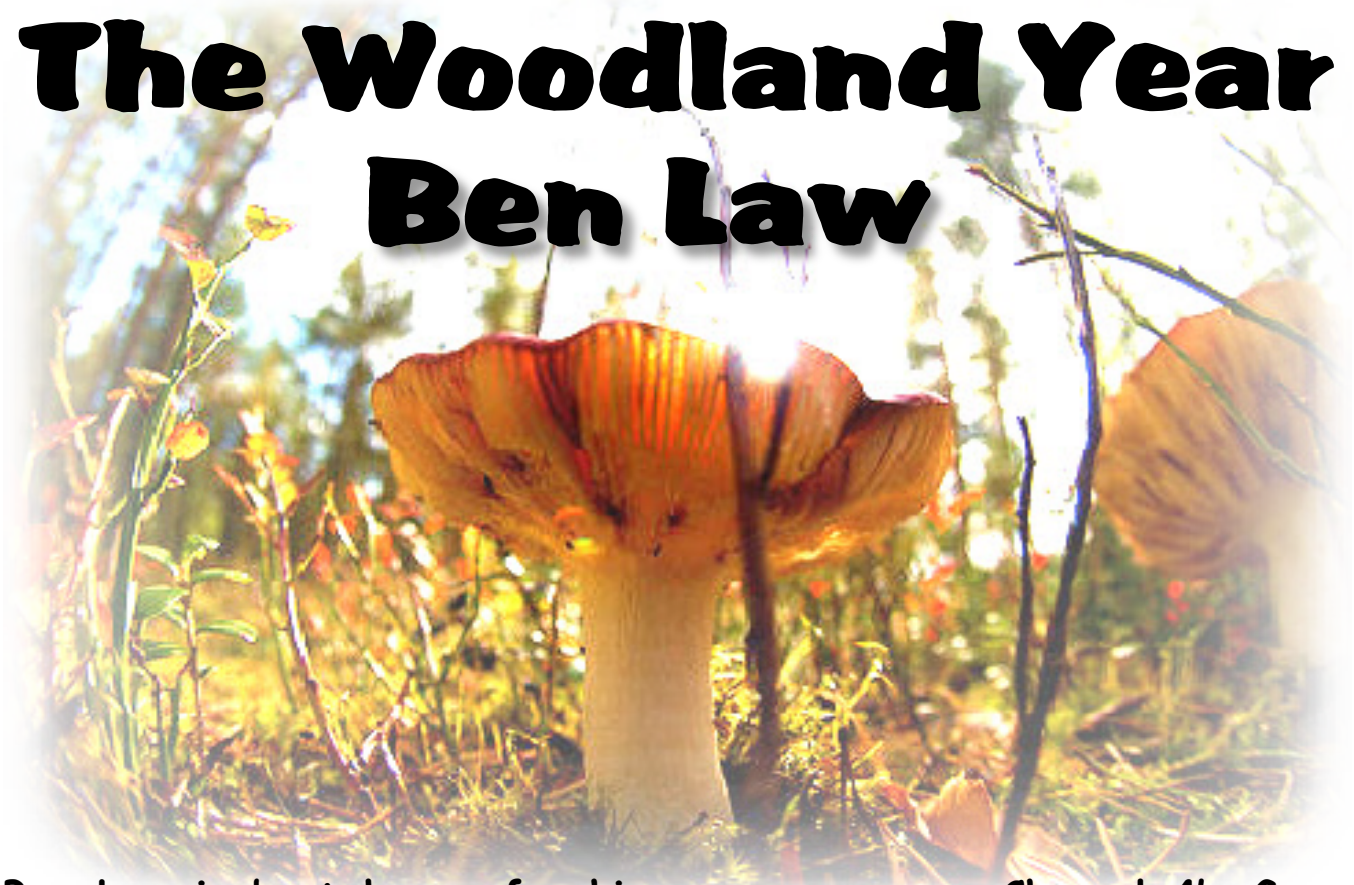
AUTUMN MEETING

AT 7.30PM RUDGWICK HALL, BUCKS GREEN

MONDAY DECEMBER 1ST 2008

The Woodland Year

Ben Law



Ben Law is best known for his appearances on Channel 4's Grand Designs, which featured the "Woodman's Cottage" which he designed and built himself from wood coppiced from own woodland. Ben is also a respected author and has published three books on his woodland house and the woodland way of life. Ben's talk provides a fascinating insight into every aspect of sustainable woodland management and the cycles of nature that make the woods a living and working environment.

All Welcome

Mulled wine and mince pies in the interval