



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

Four years have rushed by since I was elected Chairman of the Preservation Society. This will be my last Chairman's Report. Planning applications have reached record levels. We have noticed a trend in applications to demolish a small house and replace it with a much larger one. An example is the proposed Woodfalls Lodge in the Loxwood Road which was once a modest home soon to be a large five bedroomed house to be placed on the market with a price tag of nearly £500,000! Also there have been several applications to demolish one and replace with two or more, as at Freshwoods in Church Street, Mavis in Cox Green and a bungalow, Badgers Copse, on the Loxwood Road, a very narrow site with permission for two dwellings in place of one. These create very cramped developments. The area in Bucks Green around the Queens Head is a prime example of cramped planning where houses are squashed in at any opportunity spoiling the surroundings of historic listed timber-framed buildings. We will continue to monitor and comment on all planning applications. My thanks go to Judy Knights who does the lion's share of this work ably assisted by Don Muir.

It is now nearly four years since an Inspector recommended permission to build 35 houses on Churchmans Meadow. Four acres to be built on and the other three to be used for recreational purposes. The developers have experienced great difficulties in dealing satisfactorily with surface water and sewage disposal. Access is another serious problem. Traffic calming measures are coming to the lower half of Church Street in an attempt to slow down the increased volume of traffic using our Village Street. Kilnfield Road will be widened and there is to be a roundabout at the junction of it and Church Street. However, this will seriously affect the amenities of the residents of Kilnfield and Pondfield Roads. Our part of West Sussex has to take its share of the huge amount of new houses to be built and we hope that the increased amount of new dwellings in our Village will enable us to resist any further development.

The Committee is to be reshuffled. Leslie Hawkins has agreed to take on the Chairmanship again for a year. John Cozens becomes Hon. Secretary, Don Muir will be our new Treasurer and Judy Buckley will be Membership Secretary. We lose Keith Niven who is stepping down from the Committee after many years of sterling service as Treasurer. He kept a very keen eye on our finances and was instrumental in enabling the Society to publish Diana Chatwin's book. We are grateful to him for his time and effort on our behalf. Eric Slade has recently joined our Committee and we are glad to have his knowledge and enthusiasm. I am particularly grateful to our President, Stan Smith, who has helped me so much during the last four years. He works so hard for our Village and his knowledge is invaluable. Geoff Ayres runs our guided walks and would like to hear from anyone prepared to lead a walk next year. The Committee is a cohesive unit, everyone contributes and has a part to play and I greatly appreciate all their efforts.

Our A. G. M. takes place on Monday 26th April, 1999, in the Rudgwick Hall, Bucks Green, at 7.30.p.m. Our Speaker will be John Wood, a Vice-President of the Wey & Arun Canal Trust,

who will give an illustrated update on the Canal and tell us about the Drungewick Aqueduct, an ambitious project. Some of you will remember his talk in 1992 and everyone will be welcome.

Vanessa Lowndes.

PLANNING MATTERS.

by Stan Smith

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

is described in a publication produced by Serplan in December, 1998, as development "to bring about a better, more prosperous region, with a higher quality of environment." The weakness of this imprecise concept is that it can mean one thing to those attempting to protect the countryside, and another to the developer.

Government plans require councils to consider developing brownfield sites and reusing existing empty property. The principle of predict and provide has been abandoned for the plan, monitor and manage process. Net additional dwelling units 1991 - 2016 are set out in the following table:-

Bedfordshire	54,000
Berkshire	67,000
Buckinghamshire	80,600
East Sussex	49,200
Essex	111,900
Hampshire	130,300
Hertfordshire	69,900
Isle of Wight	12,000
Kent	125,000
Oxfordshire	55,000
Surrey	48,300
West Sussex	58,500.

Total for Rest of South East 861,700.

In the same publication (SERP 500) - a Table on Housing Provision, implementing the new plan; monitor and manage approach states:- "All Serplan/Rose member authorities should begin work immediately on urban capacity studies, with a view to bringing forward the optimum number of additional dwelling units in urban areas." Which leads us on to:-

URBAN RENAISSANCE

Central Government has slightly moved its stance, requiring at least 60% of new housing to be planned in urban development.

We were invited on two occasions to comment upon the Draft Regional Planning Guidance Public Examination. Lord Rogers of Riverside, Chairman of the Urban Task Force, has the unenviable task of deciding how to provide 3.8 million households by the year 2021. This is the difficult problem of balancing the quality of life in our towns, whilst protecting our precious countryside. We anxiously await the report of the Urban Task Force and the Government's urban and rural White Paper.

CITIZENS JURY

The District Council invited a number of local people to recommend how to accommodate the future housing requirements in the Horsham District. This was largely an exercise in balancing the 60% to be found on brownfield sites, and whether the balance should be new settlements or dispersed in existing towns and villages.

We were invited to comment on these proposals. Existing settlements will naturally oppose any attempt to impose additional dwellings on them. Here in Rudgwick we have recently had 40 houses built on a greenfield site at Foxholes, and a number of infills in Bucks Green, Cox Green and Ridge. Another is pending at Freshwoods and also 35 houses on a greenfield site at Churchmans Meadow. We believe that we have reached our capacity to accommodate further development if the principle "Sustainable Development" is to have any meaning.

These consultations give the impression that future planning is conducted in a highly democratic way, but the reality is that perhaps the planners are not sure how to proceed.

At the time of writing, the good news is that John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, has cut the target for new homes by 1.2 million. The bad news is that the predicted rate of household growth in London and the South East is unchanged. We await further announcements.

THE DOWNS LINK LAID BARE - THE FACTS!

Any local resident who has ventured further than the local shop over the past six months can hardly have failed to notice changes afoot along the old railway line - the Downs Link - running south-east from Rudgwick towards Slinfold. Trees between the two villages have been adopting a horizontal posture in increasing numbers throughout the winter, not as a result of the vagaries of the British weather and the battering which West Sussex has received at times, but in the name of nature conservation! "But surely trees are good for wildlife?" you might, quite rightly, point out. Indeed they are, and for those who haven't walked, cycled or rode the Downs Link in a while, don't worry, there are still plenty of trees! But there are fewer trees and this means more light.

The Downs Link, running 59 kms between Guildford and Shoreham-by-sea, is based upon two former branch lines closed under the 1966 Beeching closures. In the days of the railway the embankments and cuttings were kept largely clear, either by a gang of railway workers or accidental fires started by embers from the trains. However, since the lines' closure trees and scrub have regenerated naturally and largely been left untouched. Until now that is! Since the trees all established themselves at the same time they have grown up very close together and haven't had the room to spread. The thinning operation will allow the remaining trees to attain a fuller shape and will give younger trees a chance to develop so widening the age range and ultimately the wildlife interest. Many of the stools of hazel coppice along the Link are now over 30 years old and many are dying. Cutting these at the same time as the thinning operation will give them more light promoting healthy regrowth which, over the course of a few years, should form a dense

understorey in places, excellent for breeding birds such as warblers and nightingales. This extra light will also bring a flush of new growth to the ground flora which will be only too evident if you take a walk along the Link at this time of year. This new growth will boost numbers of insects, for example giving feeding opportunities to butterflies, which in turn improve feeding the birds and bats. So fewer trees can be good for wildlife, and if we're lucky with a decent spring and summer, the benefits should be immediately apparent.

The section of the Downs Link between Baynards Tunnel and Slinfold is still in the ownership of West Sussex County Council and the felling work is a joint venture with the Forestry Authority. This means we have attracted some grant funding towards the work and contractors are carrying out some of the work, taking the pressure off myself and my volunteers! We are selling some of the wood to help fund further work, and leaving some as habitat piles for insects, while the brash from the felling should make into a dead hedge a time consuming job which looks set to stretch well into the summer. We will be felling again next winter south of the A281 and subsequently managing areas on a longer rotation. I'm currently helped out by students from Brinsbury College and occasional work parties with Cranleigh and District Conservation Volunteers, but additional help is always welcome and if you're interested you can contact me on 0831 632497.

On a different subject, a number of you may have noticed path improvements being carried out along the Rudgwick section of the Link. The surface has deteriorated steadily over the past few years, compounded by a number of particularly wet winters (and last 'summer'). As this section is the focus for a lot of run-off. Reprofiting and surfacing of the track over the past couple of months have made a vast improvement, perhaps most notably on the slope adjacent to the Baynards Tunnel entrance. So, for those who may have been put off by the typical Low Weald conditions, it's now safe to venture back to the Link, always keeping an eye out for trains of course!

John Kirkman, Countryside Ranger.

SUNDAY POST

An interesting memory from one of Mr. Charley Tate's notebooks about Rudgwick:

"The Railway was opened in 1865, which changed the whole outlook of the community. People were now able to get to Guildford, Horsham and London easily. My father (Mr. William Tate) rode the line on its opening day as rides were free. The railway enabled the post to be brought up to date, dog carts were used to bring letters. I remember that before the 1914-18 war there were three postal deliveries a day, early morning, midday and at about 6.00 pm. Telephones were unheard of. There was one delivery on a Sunday. The postman used to take the train to Baynards, deliver the letters there, walk to Rudgwick and then on to Slinfold, walking through Rudgwick Churchyard, around Great Church Croft, along Godleys Lane, through Godleys Wood and past Hyes House, Furnace House and through Dedisham delivering as he went. I was a choirboy (about 1905) and Sunday after Sunday on summer mornings, I saw him go past the open Chancel door."

(I wonder if the Postman caught the train back to Rudgwick?)

Malcolm Francis

SCIENTIFIC POULTRY BREEDERS ASSOCIATION LTD.

by Stan Smith

Tom Newman arrived in Rudgwick in 1921 and founded this experimental poultry farm. This is a brief but extraordinary account of an enterprise which prospered between the two world wars.

At the beginning Tom lived in "The Beeches" opposite Alldays in Church Street. The son of a veterinary surgeon, he was born in 1871 and was always interested in poultry.

The first office of the S.P.B.A. was over the shop at Yaffords (formerly Clarkes newsagents shop). His sisters Alice and Norah followed, living at Yaffords - Alice supervised the secretarial work whilst Norah was housekeeper. In 1927 Pitfield was built for Tom and his family - now Summerfold.

Setting up the S.P.B.A. he acquired the land that extended from Wyndhams to Farn Brakes, and to the east Churchmans Meadow (Row Field). As the enterprise prospered, Tom built the executive offices in 1930, subsequently converted to a bungalow named Freshwoods. This can be seen in the diagram on the headed paper.

A plan of this extensive site shows that there were many hen houses, producing large quantities of eggs, chicken prepared for the table, but his speciality was Tom Newman's Formula Poultry Food. The feed was the basis of his relative prosperity.

From information obtained, it is believed that about 100 people were employed at the farm. Some lodged in the Village, others arrived by train from Horsham and Guildford. Tom also edited a magazine called "Eggs", gave lectures on poultry breeding and took part in BBC radio farming programmes.

Recently, before Freshwoods was demolished, Berkeley Homes gave consent for a search to be made in the loft for papers that might throw light on the workings of the S.P.B.A. Invoices and letters were discovered dated 1931 which showed that his famous poultry feed was distributed widely throughout the country. Also headed paper dated 1932 was found in the cavity wall giving an excellent idea of the scope of this enterprise. The diagram reproduced above illustrates the hen houses; in the centre is the registered office. This tells its own story.

Two ladies who worked at S.P.B.A. still live in the Village - Mrs. Hedger was secretary, whilst Mrs. Hill was directed to the farm as a land army girl.

This remarkable story brought prosperity to Rudgwick between the two world wars, at a time of great economic hardship with over 4 million unemployed nationally.

Our thanks are due to Babs McWilliams whose help was invaluable in providing much of the information. It is appropriate that the history of the S.P.B.A. should be recorded now that the former registered offices are demolished.

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Entrance to registered Office & Experimental Farm.



TN/LR/EB

30th June, 1932.

A letter-head in use by the S.P.B.A. in 1932



Freshwoods in Church Street at the start of its demolition at the end of March. The site is being developed with four new houses.

OBITUARY

PAMELA HENDERSON

One would have to be a very recent newcomer to Rudgwick to be unaware of Pam Henderson and of the esteem in which she was held by all sections of the community. Recent generations of her family had been involved in women's suffrage, medicine and the academic life and all these strands revealed themselves in the life that she lived in the village and the district, including her interest in the Preservation Society, of which she was a member from the beginning.

Pam was born in 1920 and was brought up in Bampton, in Cumbria. She trained as a nurse at the Middlesex Hospital during the war. She married Dr. Peter Henderson in 1946 and moved to Rudgwick, where she helped to run the medical practice from The Red House and then from Oakdene until the opening of the Health Centre. In this capacity, she was concerned with many of the village children and swelled their numbers by producing three sons of her own, Simon, Jan and Alistair.

Pam entered local politics as an independent voice and her concern was with individuals and individual issues rather than with politics and policies. She lobbied hard to persuade the Health Authority to build the Health Centre and became heavily involved with the Save the Children Fund and, from its inception in 1963, the Friendly Club.

More formally, Pam was a member of the Parish Council for about 30 years, 26 of them as Chairman or Vice-Chairman, and a member of Horsham District Council and its predecessor for about 21 years. In both capacities she was particularly interested in housing and planning. She was concerned to keep the right balance between needed development in Rudgwick and maintaining its character while the success of her time as Chairman of the Horsham D. C. Housing Committee may be judged from the fact that Henderson Way in Horsham is named after her.

Additionally, Pam was for 15 years a member of the Mid-Downs Community Health Council and for some time Chairman of the David Bryce Club. She was a Governor of The Weald School as well as of Rudgwick County Primary School, where she was Chairman at the time of planning and building the existing premises. The length of her contribution to the local community is indicated by the fact that she knew Graham Wright, her successor as Chairman as well as a fellow Governor, when he was in short trousers.

Famously interested in cricket, Pam put her interest in people before all others and people appreciated her. She was described by a long-standing Council colleague as someone who smoked a lot, swore a little and was a quality person - so much so that in spite of so many years in public service and therefore the public eye no one said a bad word about her.

When Sally and I first came to the village and joined the tennis club we were playing alone one morning when we were accosted by a lady with a cigarette in one hand and a dog lead in the other. She said something like, 'I don't recognise you. What are you doing on these courts?' Fortunately, we were able to justify our presence. Rudgwick was fortunate to be the place where Pam justified hers and she is missed.

John Cozens.

RPS NEWSLETTER

A TALE WITH A STING

by Eric Slade

I have been an apiarist or beekeeper for 30 years. It all started when my wife bought a colony of bees from Mr. Dugdale, a teacher at the Weald School, Billingshurst where she was working, as she knew I had always wanted to keep bees.

On arriving home one Friday afternoon, a few weeks later, my daughter greeted me with the words You have a problem!. Oh yes! I said and what's that! She took me down the garden and pointed to the top of a massive hornbeam tree outside my back fence.

There at the very top of the

tree was a colossal swarm of bees - yes, you've guessed - my new colony of bees had swarmed.



What are you going to do, Daddy? she said. I didn't know but I thought I'm definitely not going up there. Well, being a little impetuous and a little stupid, I walked to the base of the tree and wondered how close I could get to the swarm. I started to climb, up and up I went until there on the end of a branch, a few feet away was the swarm. The problem then was how was I going to gather those bees and get them into a spare empty hive which I had. I climbed back down the tree, collected a large round cardboard drum from a neighbour and together with a length of rope and bow saw, made my way back up the tree.

By this time I had an audience. My neighbours from nearby houses had ventured into their gardens to watch me. With the adrenaline pumping round my body and the large audience below, my confidence grew. I had gone from layman to expert in just a few minutes.

I tied a rope around the branch, hitched it back and started to saw. It was at this moment that the swarm on the branch started to shake about. I heard one of my neighbours call to his daughter Come away, Hilary, you might get stung. It's alright Sam, they're always good tempered at swarming time I responded. At least that's what I had been told. I had only just spoken these words when Buzzzz! One of the friendly bees-stung me right on the tip of my nose. My eyes started to water and I chuckled to myself. Serve you damn well right, that will teach you to be so complacent.

I finally cut through the branch and gently lowered it through the other branches but with hundreds of bees dropping off on the way down. I tied off the rope with the branch just touching the ground. I felt very excited; I had never achieved anything like this before. I climbed down the tree with neighbours asking me questions on beekeeping all the while. The swarm was about 70,000 strong, 3ft long, 18" wide and about 8" thick. I cut back the branch as close to the swarm as I could and put it in the top of the spare hive and left them to take up residence in their new home.

This was my first swarm and a prime swarm at that. I have taken dozens of swarms since in many different situations but none of them have given me such a long lasting memory.

Wedding Bells

by Malcolm Francis

Rudgwick Church, over the centuries, must have witnessed thousands of marriages of all kinds from a simple ceremony for a handful of close friends to a very grand occasion when the church is packed to the West Door.

My family have been singing in the church choir for many years and one wonders, as we slip out past the wedding guests thronging the church path as the official photographer continues his business, just how many marriages have taken place since Norman times. The old tower witnessing each couple's first steps down the path as husband and wife.

If one looks at very old wedding photographs at Rudgwick church the passage of time seems very evident; a happy couple and all guests, in the fashion of the time, backed by the west wall of the church tower that appears unchanged throughout a century. If only we had photographic records for the last nine hundred years.

It is always fascinating to read the accounts of large weddings in pre-war local newspapers and parish magazines; the amount of detail (or trivia) that was faithfully reported and printed. One can imagine a junior reporter having the chore, not daring to make a mistake in the long list of guests and their respective presents.

Rudgwick church is still popular for large weddings, with morning suits in abundance, the congregation a sea of wedding hats and sometimes even an awning and red carpet have appeared on the bridal route to the West Door.

A wedding in 1988 attracted the news media en masse and caused a lot of excitement in the village, due to the presence of Royal guests, the Duke of York and his fiancée. There was a high level of security on that day and in previous weeks. Police officers had to map the churchyard and note all trees that could be potential hiding places for a sniper. (I actually saw the map being finalised, as the officers were keen for local knowledge.) The time was not long after the bombing of the Grand Hotel at Brighton, so no risks were being taken.

The traditional church wedding takes a lot of organisation and many books have been written on the subject. The vicar, being authorised to officiate at the wedding as a religious and legal ceremony, has everything organised with the wedding couple in the preceding weeks. I am always impressed by the voluntary, behind the scenes, effort and organisation carried out by people who may not know the wedding couple at all, to make sure that their day goes without a hitch; it must be the same in churches all over the country.

The wedding music chosen may require practising by the choir, if they are required, at a preceding choir practice. A check has to be made on the availability of choir members. If there is a visiting organist playing there might be a need to liaise on music scores, etc. Order of service sheets often have printing errors, more so since the use of wordprocessors!

The bell captain, if the bells are required, has to organise a band of ringers (sometimes, if numbers are low, ringers are borrowed from another parish, if they don't have a wedding.)

The bells are rung to the "up" position a few hours before the wedding; it requires volunteers as it is hard work to set eight bells with a gross weight of 4 tons. The bells have to be set "up" so that they can be rung as soon as the wedding couple passes under the bells and out of the West Door. Choir members try to arrive early for a wedding. One is often met by ushers, who are confused by an influx of people who may not be in their best

clothes, one feels like saying "staff" as we slip into the vestry.

The vestry is not very large, and has an air of urgency just before a wedding. Often a member of the wedding party will appear, looking worried, the problem is smoothed by the vicar's calm approach. The organist may already be at the console making final preparations; organists have to be right on the cue throughout the marriage service.

"Are the Altar candles lit?" If there has been a request for all the candles in the nave to be lit, youngsters are dispatched with tapers, but not too early, as the church's draughts cause some candles to burn down to the brass holder, with a risk of molten wax dripping onto a guest. If the weather forecast has been disappointing, it's a nice sight to see the chancel floor illuminated by the glow of a stained glass window.

The vestry is hurriedly tidied so that it will look presentable for the photographs of the signing of the registers, cardboard boxes love to be in the picture.

The organ starts, it's time for the choir to slip into their pews. Watches are checked, no sign of the bride. How late will she be? The congregation looks for signs of her arrival, children fidget and relations nod to forgotten cousins.

The organist is on his fourth voluntary, as the bride is met by the vicar at the West Door. A bridesmaid makes final adjustments to the bride's wedding dress and her father whispers words of reassurance.

When all is ready the organist, seeing his cue light flash, hurriedly swaps music scores and breaks into the chosen arrival music.

One sees, at close hand, the tensions of the last few minutes before the start of a wedding. The sudden filling up of pews, the best man giving the nervous bridegroom support, the bridegroom's backward glance as the bride appears in the West Door, the happiness, usually mixed with nerves, of the bride.

The moment, at the start of the marriage service, when the question is asked "Is there any cause or just impediment why this couple should not marry" (or the more modern equivalent) still causes listeners to wonder if there will be an objection one day.

There is a sense of relief near the end of the wedding service, as the couple head for the sanctuary of the vestry to sign the Registers, followed by the wedding party. I am always amused to see young bridesmaids or pageboys staring in awe at the organ as they walk by, though often by this time they are bored by the whole proceedings. The choir then usually sings a short anthem, followed by the organist quietly improvising as all wait the couple's reappearance. Nobody notices the bell ringers materialize in the church tower during the singing of the last hymn ready to do their duty.

The fashion for Widor's Toccato as music to go out to doesn't fade. (It is a difficult piece to play and requires an instrument that can handle it.) The congregation flows out after the couple, whose progress is punctuated by the ever-present photographer. The choir returns to the vestry as the organ clashes with the bells. It's time to tidy the hassocks and collect all the service sheets, often strewn under the pews; "Why are wedding guests so untidy? When the church is tidy the children get their wedding pay (adults sing for love!)"

The bell ringers keep ringing until the bridal car moves off, they certainly earn their fee if there is a zealous official photographer.

Meanwhile the organist shuts down, tidies his music and takes a well earned rest as the choir melts away to carry on gardening?..



TREES OF TIME AND PLACE

- make your
contribution to the new
Millenium

Trees of Time and Place is all about growing your own tree from seed. It's a simple way for you, your family and friends to do something personal and practical that will help to improve our environment in Rudgwick.

First of all you need to find a tree that is really special to you - it may be a tree from your past, a tree with history, or it may be a tree that gives you pleasure now. Gather ripe seeds from your chosen tree. Sow them, grow them, and take care of the seedlings, and when the young trees are big enough, in a year or two, plant this next generation of Trees of Time and Place back into the same familiar landscape.

To help you chose your special tree you could take part in one of the thousands of "Esso Walk in the Woods" events taking place this May. Learn more about a wood with a guide who knows it well. You may see the past come alive before your eyes. Contact The Tree Council hotline on 0171 828 9928 from 6th April.

For more information about this national initiative involving over 40 environmental organisations please contact the Trees of Time and Place hotline on 0345 078 139. If you think you may be able to provide some land for Trees of Time and Place planting sites please contact Kate Lowndes on 01372 222528.

Rudgwick Preservation Society Walks Programme Summer 99

All walks are on Tuesday evenings and start at 7-00pm. Approximately 4 miles in 2 hours.

We thank particularly the Frazer-Claytons for allowing us to visit Baynards station, and all the publicans for their co-operation.

So by dropping in for the odd draught after the walk we can show our appreciation.

Date	Leader	Start Point
May 4 th	Dave Buckley	The Fox , Bucks Green
May 11 th	Geoff Ayres	The Thurlow Arms, Baynards
May 18 th	Malcolm Francis	The Kings Head , Rudgwick (to Baynards Stn.)
May 25 th	John Parker	Haven Road, Bucks Green
June 1 st	Andrew & Joan Pye	Pephurst
June 8 th	Peter Kachel	Village Hall, Bucks Green
June 15 th	Chris Jones	The Mucky Duck, Tismans Common
June 22 nd	Malcolm Francis	The Kings Head , Rudgwick
June 29 th	Josephine Slade	The Chequers, Rowhook
July 6 th	Eric Slade	The Kings Head , Rudgwick
July 13 th	David & Bridget Cozens	The Kings Head , <i>Slinfold</i>
July 20 th	Geoff Ayres	The Kings Head , Rudgwick (to the Ironworks)
July 27 th	Peter Kachel	The Blue Ship, The Haven
Aug 3 rd	Susan Bostock	The Limeburners Arms, Newbridge

Geoff Ayres