

# Rudgwick Parish Council Minutes (selected items)

## 1938-1948

### 1938

Playing Fields - £ 700 was offered to David Jamilly, owner of Gaskyns, for the field previously used by the cricket club for its home ground from 1900. Compulsory purchase was discussed.

Jubilee Hall – front wall damaged by Dr Frank Boxall's car. Paving was laid for parking at the front.

Chair – Spencer Secretan handed over to Capt Joseph Brutton.

Air Raid Precautions – began in September.

### 1939

Playing Field - H Laurence Ireland was approached with a view to obtain the land behind the Bucks Green houses as a playing field. David Jamilly offered his land (the cricket field 4 acres + another field 4 acres for £1,650. RPC offered him £1,000 for only the cricket field. A Playing Field Sub-Committee was set up. In March Jamilly withdrew his offer. Ireland was offered £900 for his 12 acres. RPC was now working with the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) to draw up a specification and layout. They considered water supply (see 1948), and tendered for a Children's Corner. HRDC valued the land at £60 per acre (£720). In August the King George's Fields Association (KGFA) gave a grant of £1,000 to capital costs. An Appeal was launched in September, just as war broke out. Ireland's field, Little Rascalls, was purchased for £875. A future pavilion was discussed. A parish meeting to discuss the future field was cancelled owing to the "crisis". The Children's Corner was to go ahead. Entrance gates, to spec provided by KGFA, proposed, estimated cost £300, to request Neil Gossage (Windacres, architect) to design.

Members of Council on outbreak of war – Capt Joseph Brutton (Weyhurst Copse, chairman), William Ingle (Saxes Plat, vice-chairman), Spencer Secretan (Swaynes), Edward (Teddy) Ireland (Old School Cottage), Milward Burge (Cousens), Albert Fisher (Ulmara, now Bridge House), H Laurence Ireland (Exfold Farm).

### 1940

Playing Field – conveyed to RPC 24 May. Children's Corner, agreed to accept cost, £260. Agreed that Ireland can graze sheep on the field at £9 pa. He agreed to mole drain the field. Litter was becoming a problem; a receptacle was to be provided (indicates the field is being used, probably for Children's Corner). In October military vehicles parking in the field had broken fencing at the entrance. It was decided it would be ill-advised to build the new gates at this time. A ditch was to be built at the back of the Bucks Green cottages owned by Mr Secretan. It was proposed that Mr Ireland should plough and cultivate the field for arable crops. His grazing rights were terminated.

Jubilee Hall – Miss Boxall was allowed to set up a first aid point in a cupboard in the hall. In August, two tables were lent to the military at Hermongers for 2/6 per month.

The 'emergency' – a small sub-committee was set up to deal with such matters as might arise – Miss Boxall, Messrs Fisher and Burge. It was never heard of again in the minutes!

New councillor – Cyril Woodrow (Woodfalls) joined the council. In December the chairman fell ill.

## **1941**

Jubilee Hall – in January a brick pillar was knocked down by a military lorry. The army were to be asked to pay. In July two tables were hired out to the WI for their jam and canning centre in Cox Green (Middle Gingers) at 1/- per week.

Playing Field – NPFA released the money to pay for the Children's Corner. The items were erected by Messrs Maxwell M Hart & Co of Glasgow (recreation ground contractor, trading 1933-1981). NPFA enquired how the field was being used, to which the answer was for troops, for evacuees (i.e., the school) and food production. The 'ocean wave' machine in the Children's Corner was broken (this is a playground roundabout that sways as it turns). Later in the year it was decided to get the ocean wave and broken swing seats repaired.

War Weapons Week – the council felt it had little involvement in either the wartime fund raising or the defence of the village, so it was agreed only to do whatever was necessary to make the week easy. However, they did take up a complaint that the ARP were not taking proper measures re alerts and all clears at the school, and that the ARP did not have adequate arrangements for notifying the fire service (based in the outbuilding at The Fox). These matters also came up in other sources. The school were basically left to their own devices, and the Fox had a telephone installed for the first time. Not clear if the council did anything, other than to write to Capt Pugh, chief ARP officer in Horsham. Later, the council bemoaned the number of flag days being held in the village. An ARP sub-committee was set up – Messrs Brutton, Fisher and Secretan. Mr Charles Cooper (ARP Warden, High Croft) asked the council to please place the Jubilee Hall at their disposal as they had no funds with which to hire it. Never mentioned again.

Horsham Rural District Council (HRDC) - sent a memo asking parish councils to encourage diphtheria vaccinations, to guard water supply purity, and to encourage rat disposal. In October, HRDC requested a list of all iron railings and gates in the parish, classifying them as 1, need for safety, 2, needed to prevent cattle straying, 3, of historical or artistic merit, 4, available for scrap metal salvage, requisitioned by Ministry of Supply.

Fire watching – the army enquired about fire watching in buildings they occupied. A letter was sent to Mr Cooper, the Rudgwick ARP Group Warden.

Chairman – Capt Brutton was back in action in May. But Mr Ingle resigned as vice-chairman through ill health. Mr Secretan stepped up to take this on.

The Home Guard asked permission to erect a hut on the playing field at the rear of the Hempstead coal yard (The Laurels). Granted. A cheque payable 2/6d pa for the duration of the war. [There is confusion in sources about this location, whether it ended up on land belonging to Bucks Green Place or on RPC property]

Allotments – the council debated the issue of unused allotment plots on Major St John's land (now The Marts). Could the War-Ag Committee use them? Decided they were not large enough.

Children's Corner – renovation of swings and ocean wave.

Complaint – too many flag days!

ARP sub-committee set up: Messrs Brutton, Fisher and Secretan.

Farming – HL Ireland granted free permission to sow crops on the field for a second year.

Complaint – Boys Club are leaving the tables dirty in Jubilee Hall.

## **1942**

Salvage – debated whether to send old rate books (over 20 years old) to salvage.

Allotments – wrote to War Ag at Chichester re unused allotments.

Jubilee Hall – charges raised 25% to cover deficit. Key to the hall with Mrs Butcher next door to open for emergency use.

HRDC made another request for a census of emergency water supplies, to be forwarded to ARP.

Mr Ingle retired in October, ill health. William Churchman (Farn Brakes) proposed to replace him.

The pond at Pitfield, Church St, to be fenced by Mrs Gossage, Windacres, a danger to footpath users.

Lynwick St brickyard was being used for machine gun practice. As it was not owned by RPC they were not to be held responsible for any accident. Decided to consult Mrs Tate as owner.

Two properties requisitioned by the military were unoccupied. Needed for housing families. Decision: to write to HRDC.

Mr Fisher asked for leave of absence from council as on essential work.

Children's Centre – swing seats were broken or removed. The ocean wave was to be greased.

The pump at the Haven Rd well at Wanford was out of use, the pump having fallen into well. Mr William Farley (builder) asked to seal well.

## 1943

Resolved to ask Mr Bartram, salvage officer, to remove salvage material. The issue continued into 1944. The dump in Church St was considered untidy. Later in 1944, it was still an eyesore.

The auditor asked that KGV field expenses be met from the rates not from capital.

In April, Mr Burge resigned. Lorraine Young (Oakdene) asked to fill the vacancy.

The bridge on the bridleway between Newhouse and Gibbons Mill was in bad repair. HRDC to be informed.

Proposed fete – to be held at Hyes on 6 June in aid of a new village hall. Parish council did not know of any such scheme. Mr Holman, the owner of Hyes, was asked to explain, and to state who was holding any funds. It was learned that the lay reader, Mr Campbell, had also collected a sum of money.

Warships Week – a testimonial from the Admiralty received praising Rudgwick's successful effort. To be framed and put up in Jubilee Hall.

Mr Cyril Woodrow (Woodfalls) gave notice of resignation, as he could not make the times of meetings.

Mr Ireland reported that the KGV field would be cross ploughed and left fallow this year.

The gates to Lynwick were reported locked. Mr J Stables, the farmer, was to be told to open them for users of the bridlepath. When Mr Stables queried this, it was pointed out that it had been agreed with the late Col Wilson. Mr Stables should consult a map.

It was resolved to place a balance sheet for the KGV field in the parish magazine for July.

The village hall fund was a Home Guard project, as reported back by Mr Holman via Mr Woodrow, also treasurer of the Home Guard, who explained it to a meeting. It was resolved to send a letter of thanks to Mr Frederick Hamlyn (Newhouse Farm), commander of the Home Guard for their splendid efforts. When conditions allow, it was proposed to form a joint RPC/HG committee.

The death of William Churchman was announced, 'so respected a member'. Mr Ingle was asked to return to the council in his place, and did so early in 1944.

Mr Ireland proposed to mole drain KGV field at his own expense. The council would pay for grass seed for sowing in spring 1944, and discussed what kind of seed to plant. Later, with no answer to their query to NPFA, it was agreed to ask the seed merchant to advise. The future layout, eg cricket square, was also discussed, but the map already prepared had gone missing. Eventually, Agates in Horsham were given the contract to provide seed. £163 10s was withdrawn from the Post Office Account.

A proposal to join Sussex Rural Community Council was agreed.

It was reported that local Food Offices were to be amalgamated.

A proposal to contribute to the Aid to China Fund was defeated.

Mrs Chappe-Hall (Green Lanes), also owner of Toll Cottage, Bucks Green, was having difficulty getting a Mr F Horner, tenant, out of the property even though the family were now living on Rudgwick Grange estate. It was agreed to ask HRDC for an eviction order. The property was needed by Mrs Hurkett and family.

Other unoccupied houses were reported at Gaskyns and Lynwick estates, not currently occupied either by a tenant or the military. HRDC to be informed.

## **1945**

The school requested to make a cricket pitch in KGV field, if/when the ground was ready.

Brickworks – Mrs Tate was ‘reluctant’ to cut the brickworks hedge. The hedge was eventually cut by May.

A disused shack in the corner of KGV field to be removed.

Housing – HRDC addressed the WI on the subject of post-war housing. RPC should be consulted first! Clerk instructed to write to HRDC. HRDC agreed to hold a public meeting to discuss housing for the village. A date of 31 May agreed.

The Lord Lieutenant of Sussex asked for a flag day on 26 May in aid of Sea Scouts, Cadets and ATC groups in the county. Agreed.

Mr Woodrow of the Home Guard offered RPC the Home Guard Hut for £200 for use as a temporary pavilion when sports got going on the field. The playing field sub-committee agreed it would be useful, but for storage. It's location made it unsuitable as a pavilion, but it was recognised that no permanent building would be built for some time. It would be difficult to dismantle. Offer turned down. The committee also considered using the firm Kaymat (a well-known firm at the time) to use their steam roller to roll the field. Would it be too heavy and destroy the drains? Kaymat replied they could not do it until the autumn. It was decided to use a motor roller, not stated whose. Yet again, the swing seats and the roundabout needed repair. Council decided they could not afford £5 to do the work.

In August, Mr Burge (pre-war captain of cricket) asked if the field would be in a fit state to arrange cricket matches from June 1946. How much would the council charge? Who would be responsible for the upkeep of the ground? The council asked Burge if the cricket club might buy the Home Guard Hut. The sub-committee said the ground could be ready by next June, but matting might be needed. The council could not afford to employ a groundsman, but will ensure it does not return to ‘wild’. The rent would be £5 pa, the same as for football and tennis. The council agreed that the club could use the hut on its present site if they bought it. WSCC said they could not mow the field – too far to come! The village Entertainments Committee (successor to the Home Guard) now wanted to use the hut, but can they move it to a more sensible location? Council agreed this, but the Entertainment Committee was to be wholly responsible. A meeting was agreed to choose a site.

## 1946

A town and country planning survey turned down the Lynwick Street site for housing for the third time. This was the council's favoured site. No source has come forward to locate this site.

In February, the clerk, Mr Hugh Jewson (Tisman's Common), died. Mrs Dorothy Westgate (Bignor Farm) was approached to take on the role.

A letter from Mr Cliff Griffin (The Haven), chairman, and Mr David Jackson (Avonlea), secretary, of the Entertainments Committee stated that they would hand over funds (which they had been collecting from events) to be used for re-erection of the hut as a village hall. Any funds left over to be retained for a future permanent village hall. This was the third anniversary of the committee. The council accepted the proposal (though later replaced by the hut from Faygate). Later that year, assets of £80 were transferred to RPC.

A tortoise stove was purchased for the Jubilee Hall at the request of the WI.

The Lynwick Street houses were again refused. No precise location has come to light.

In April, the cricket club again requested the council to get a groundsman, a roller and a mower. The council agreed to overhaul the motor roller, and to ask Mr Carlos Clark at Ellens to lend his mower. The council considered buying the old pavilion hut at Gaskyns.

A new playing field sub-committee was agreed, Messrs Ralph Bradshaw (Brook Cottage), Brutton, Frederick Cherriman (Buckhurst), E Ireland and HL Ireland. The council also agreed to set up an entertainments sub-committee, Mrs Helen Beaumont (Beckington), Mrs Eveline Burge, Messrs Bradshaw, E Ireland and Dr Kelsey (Church Hill). Later in the year, cricket and football club representatives were co-opted. Mr Ireland was again asked to mow the field. Messrs Hill Brothers were asked to roll it. it was felt the time had come to ask the village to help fund the maintenance.

Discussion about 'Buss's Hut' (disabled shoemender) at Franktonhook, but no one knew who owned it. it was wanted by the Scout Troop.

The Tisman's Common well at Glovers was finally sealed. It had been a key part of Exfoldwood Common from before enclosure in 1854.

*From this point on, the notes are confined to the big issue of the day ; the playing field and hall.*

The chairman, Mr Brutton, said he had seen a hut at Faygate RAF Depot. If it were to be purchased, the Air Ministry would need to be consulted. In October, the chairman and Mr Gossage (architect, Windacres) visited Faygate and inspected two huts. The larger one was 60' x 20', with an annexe 10' x 20', built in sections. The roof was lined with asbestos (which would not have bothered them at that time), and there were brick piers. The price was £250. The annexe was a corrugated iron structure, for £50. Dismantling might cost £150. The hut was thought to have a 20 year life, and had the potential to be extended. It would need plumbing for toilets and a water supply. It was hoped to be able to build a new hall in 10-15

years, at an estimated cost of £5,000 in 1946 money. Messrs Brutton and Gossage were asked to get the best price at Faygate for both hut and annexe. Messrs William Farley (Bucks Green) and Harold Boxall (Church St), local builders, were to be asked for tenders to erect and fit out the building. It was expected to use up all the Entertainment Committee funds (£647), maybe more. William Farley tendered £155, his offer accepted. Hoad and Taylor, Horsham, were contracted to dismantle and transport the huts for £150. It was agreed to name the hut The Home Guard Hall.

Regarding the completion of the playing fields project, the NPFA were asking when it would be completed. RPC were members at £1 pa. There remained the task of filling in a gully across the field within the cricket circle. The estimated cost was £263.

By November 1946, council houses were under construction (now Furze Road). RPC stated the choice of tenants was up to HRDC.

## **1947**

It was hoped to move the hut in January, weather permitting.

Mr William Huggett, headmaster, was invited to join the PF sub-committee to represent the village youth. The football pitch was already being damaged because too many games were being played on it (the grass sward presumably still immature). It needed rolling. Too many PoWs at the Bucks Green (Gaskyns) Camp were using the pitch. The officer i/c was to be asked to stop using it. Similarly the Youth Club was to be asked to stop using it. The pitch was to be given two weeks rest, then rolled. The cricket club was anxious as their gully had yet to be filled in. Also the square needed preparation as a priority. It was agreed that Mr Ireland would assist in this task. RPC finances were 'precarious'. Preparing the cricket ground could cost £3,000. The village had been asked to raise £1,000, but only £160 raised so far. However, the cricket club had purchased a mower which they wished to hand over to RPC. An Anderson Shelter was acquired to house it. however, in April, the cricket ground was still not in good shape. In desperation it was proposed to approach Mr Braby (principal of Pennthorpe which had just moved into Gaskyns) to use his field (once the village field from 1900 to the 1930s).

Meanwhile the new hall needed painting, £60, electricity, £15, paths and steps, £34. Water supply, a kitchen and a car park were still not costed. Piecemeal bills were adding up.

The Hall sub-committee was Messrs Burge, Cherriman, Bradshaw, E Ireland, and Mrs Helen Beaumont. Messrs Geoff Humphrey and Knight (not identified) joined the Playing Field Committee.

The next task was to erect the gates, a condition of the designation to George V. Mr Gossage was again brought in to help. Mr Farley's tender of £60 was accepted. Mr Coomb Heath would provide the stone sign, but the left hand one only. The NPFA agreed to pay this from grant. The gates were finished in November.

In April, Mr Brutton retired as chairman, replaced by Mr Secretan, with Mrs Burge as vice-chairman.

Discussion turned to the opening of the hall. It was decided to invite the public in on the first day of the cricket season, 31 May. But the official opening ceremony was to be in June. However, there was not enough money left for the toilets. £115 was needed. The football club demanded toilets before the season began, but the NPFA would not fund them from grant. The toilets would be in the corrugated iron annexe. The football club also needed forms for spectators to sit on, and agreed to borrow some.

In July, the cricket club learnt that Pennthorpe would allow them to use the better pitch at Gaskyns in the school holiday. The need for a groundsman was becoming desperate, and was not solved in 1947. The name of Humphrey Botting (Franktonhook) was in the frame. At last funds were found for the repair of the gully, from the WarAg committee who provided £400.

The parish Entertainments Committee (formerly the Home Guard) closed down, all funds transferred to RPC.

## **1948**

The new council houses were to be called Furze Road.

A groundsman was finally appointed in March. Mr William Tubbs (Hooklands) took on the role Mr Botting had done voluntarily. His salary was divided between the cricket and football clubs. The gully finally disappeared. There was still no water supply in the hall. The village appeal stood at a miserly £202. The toilets were beyond the budget. A temporary iron shed was found as a stopgap, probably very smelly!