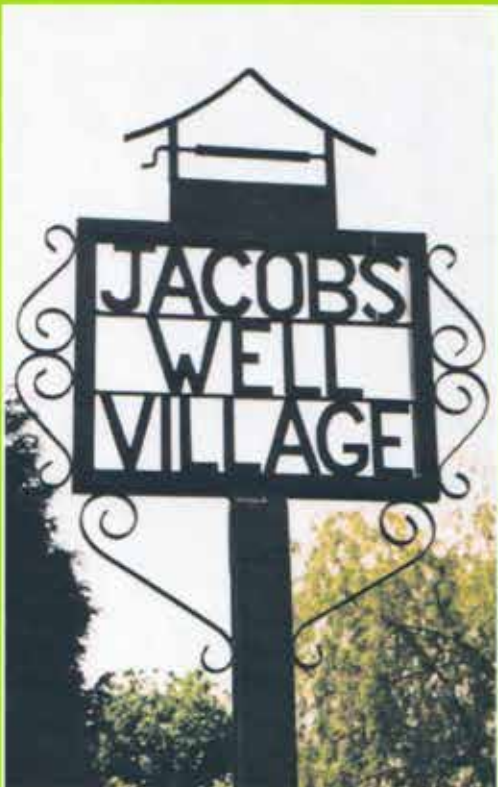
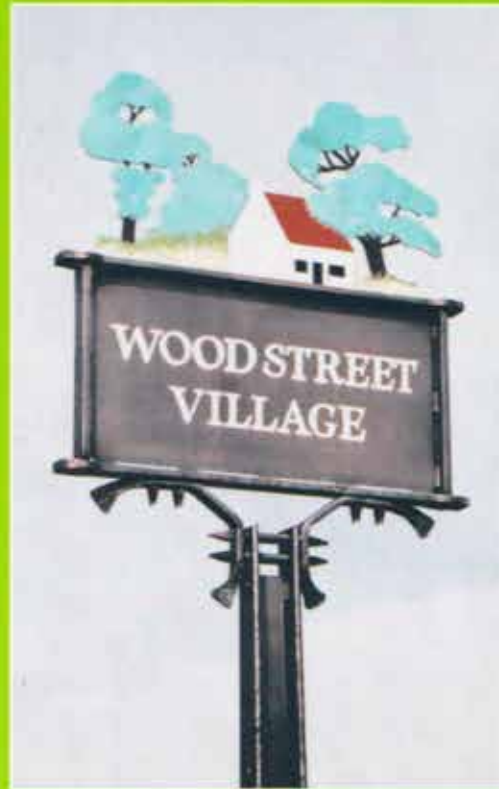


# WORPLESDON 2000

## The Tale of Four Villages



# **Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages**

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Dear Resident of Worplesdon,

I am very pleased, on behalf of the Parish Council, to be able to present you with a complimentary copy of this book, to mark the celebration of the Millennium in Worplesdon.

The publication is a collection of historical and topical information gathered by the editorial team, who spent many hours sifting through material submitted by numerous individuals and organisations to produce this book. If you would like any additional copies, a limited number of which are available, then please contact Gaynor White at the above address. There will be a small charge for these additional copies.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have worked tirelessly in preparing the book, and hope that you will find their efforts both interesting and informative.

Yours sincerely



Bob McShee  
Chairman

## Foreword



Who would ever believe that just three years of the mortal life of a child born in an occupied country around 2000 years ago would transform the history of the world? Yet that is our story. The churches of Worplesdon are our sign in this community of its persistent importance for people today.

Why did this all happen over the last 2000 years? At the heart of the answer is the impact of the truth which people discovered in Jesus Christ. His story connected with our story and offered us hope of another and a better way.

None of us know what the future will bring. The history we have been through makes it plain that the unfolding of the truth will continue to challenge us, to create controversy and even division and to change us by the responses we make.

The parish churches of Worplesdon, through the people who seek God's truth in its life and ministry, will be a force for new life and fresh hope in this community. May God go with you on this journey of faith towards what is still to come.



The Right Rev John Gladwin

The Bishop of Guildford



*Miss Mary Cunliffe & St Mary's Church viewed from St Mary's Gardens*

According to 'The Place Names of Surrey' the word Worplesdon is derived from 'werpels', a bridle-way and 'dun' a hill. Earlier forms of the name have been WERPESDUNE (1086) WROPLESDON (1241) WORPLUSDON (1316) and WOOBSDON (1757).

### **Bronze Age & Iron Age**

People have been walking around Worplesdon for at least three to four thousand years. Two Bronze Age barrows on Whitmoor Common, excavated by General Pitt-Rivers in 1877, are our evidence of a well-organised and united society living nearby. With copper and tin absent from south east England, these Bronze Age people continued to make and use flint tools. They would normally have kept a herd of animals and would have found it easier to work the lighter soils of this area with their crude tools.

Worplesdon villagers of this time lived in conical huts with thatched roofs and walls made from wattle and daub. An extraordinary population explosion occurred around 1600 BC and within a few centuries the population of Britain had risen to around a million and a half. This resulted in increased demand for land, and our forerunners may well have had to defend theirs or to link up with neighbouring villagers to build some defensive fortification.

The Iron Age, which followed the Bronze Age, is not at all well represented in this county; however, there are several fortified hill camps of the period in this area. It is not entirely improbable that here at Worplesdon, perhaps on the high ground at Perry Hill, another such camp may yet be discovered.

### **Romans and Saxons**

During the latter part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century Saxons and related German tribes continually raided from across the North Sea and although the wealthy Romans in Surrey may have been too far away to suffer damage to their property, they probably suffered financially in the damage to their export trade. To counter this threat, the Romans

employed, in addition to their regular troops, mercenaries. These mercenaries were given land where they could settle with their families in return for military service.

In 410 AD due to civil and foreign wars, the Roman armies were withdrawn and the Emperor Honorius advised the now largely Romanised British to take measures to protect themselves against the barbarian raids. The invaders' journey westwards was slow and was set back considerably around 500 AD when a general called Arthur inflicted a resounding defeat on the Anglo-Saxons. Nevertheless a short while later the Saxons arrived in this area.

A considerable community established itself in Guildford and six Saxon burial mounds were found on Merrow Down. The Saxons had no use for Roman methods and their hand-made pots replaced the factory products of the Romans. Latin, the official language of the Empire, virtually vanished along with literacy. The Saxons were pagans who brought with them their own beliefs and gods whose memories are preserved in our place-names such as Tuesley/Thursley or in the names of their tribes from which Woking, Dorking, Godalming and Eashing are derived.

The tribes lived in "suthrige" or Southern region hence "Surrey". They appear to be subordinate to a tribe north of the Thames and although they may have had their own king they were mainly under the rule of the East Saxons and the King of Kent. King Ethelbert of Kent established a powerful kingdom in the west which Ceawlin, King of the West Saxons saw as a threat. So in the year 568 AD he marched against Ethelbert and defeated him in a great battle at Wibbadune or Wipadune, slaying two of their leaders, Oslac and Cnebba. It is generally agreed this battle took place in west Surrey. The exact location is uncertain but Worplesdon has been suggested as a site. The Suthriges now came under the control of the West Saxon kingdom.

By the middle of the next century missionaries had established themselves

nearby in Stoke, and Worplesdon became part of the diocese of the West Saxon Bishop at Winchester. It continued so until 1927 when the separate diocese of Guildford was created. The Saxons divided the land into 'hundreds' for tax and administrative purposes. Each 'hundred' was also required to provide men for military service, if required. Everyone over the age of twelve was allocated to a tithing. This was a group of ten households. If anyone in a tithing was suspected of a crime it was the duty of the others to produce him at the court. The Lord of the Manor presided over this, and although this was regarded as an honour, it was also a profitable role as he pocketed the fines. By the time of the first millennium there was already a Manor of Worplesdon.

### Normans

With the coming of the Normans, records become more reliable, and from the Domesday Book we learn that Worplesdon was in the Hundred of Woking (formerly Oaking) and consisting of two Manors, Werpesdune (Worplesdon) and Borham (Burpham) with Wucha (Wyke). Both Manors were held by Sir Roger de Montgomery, the Earl of Shrewsbury. There was a church with chantry chapel attached, a mill valued at thirty pence, a wood valued at £10 capable of providing food for sixty pigs, and eight acres of meadow land. There were six and a half hides. A hide was reckoned to be enough land to support a family and its dependants (about 120 acres), and this size suggests a substantial community for those times.

It was in 1128 that the Cistercian monks arrived in Waverley Abbey near Farnham. They soon established huge herds of sheep and built bridges over the Wey (of which Tilford, Elstead and Eashing still exist) to enable them to move the sheep. It would be difficult to believe that the people of Worplesdon were not affected or influenced by the monks in any way. In 1212 Gilbert de Basseville, who now held the Manor of Worplesdon, gave the monks a plot of land in Worplesdon which they called "La Neuve Rude". This probably refers to a clearing in

the woods. In a list of ordination of Monks to Waverley Abbey in 1352, Adam de Worplesdon is mentioned both as sub-deacon and as a priest. King John is supposed to have visited the Guildford area from time to time, and the large house, now called Pitch Place House (formerly Tudor House or Cobbetts) is said to stand on the site of a hunting lodge used by him.

### Tudors

By Tudor times the area seems to have been prosperous and well populated, if one can judge by the number of houses and cottages of this period, still to be seen at Perry Hill, Jacob's Well and Wood Street. The large landowners employed a great many men as agricultural labourers, gardeners, carpenters, stockmen and foresters on their estates, and this must have enabled the working people to enjoy a certain amount of security.

After 1539 it becomes easier to visualise the life of the common man in the village. A law was passed ordering records to be kept by the church of all baptisms, marriages and burials, and from these records we can learn something about the families living here at that time. The names of Heather, Christmas and Jelley among others familiar in the neighbourhood today, appear in some of the early registers, though spelled in various curious ways. It must be remembered that in those days most people were completely illiterate and although they might be able to pronounce their surname, they had no notion of how to spell it. There was no systemised standard of spelling, and consequently when making entries in the registers the Rector went by the sound of the words.

In spite of the difficulties of transport in those days (most of the roads were only rough tracks) many families appear to have moved around, and may have been gypsies. Worplesdon was fortunate in one respect. At the time of the great plague which swept through the London area, no great increase in the number of deaths is recorded in the Parish, and the only reference to it occurs in

the entry: "2<sup>nd</sup> March 1665, ffive of Boyce his children about this time (buried) supposed to be of ye Plague" This however, must have been tragedy enough for the Boyces.

In those days travellers through Worplesdon, as well as the local lads, could obtain refreshment and good company at the White Lyon. In 1675 the inn stood near the site of the present pub but rather to the south of it (as recorded in the deeds of an adjacent property dated as the "seaven twentieth yeare of the Reigne of our most Gracious Sovereigne Lord Charles the Second"). In recent years old clay pipes and pieces of domestic pottery have been dug up in the garden of the present establishment. One can imagine the villagers sitting round clutching their mugs of ale and puffing at their churchwarden pipes, complaining bitterly about the noise of the coaches as they passed by.

### The 18<sup>th</sup> Century

By the year 1718 the White Lyon had become known as the New Inn, so the original inn had presumably been modernised at some date between 1675 and 1718, then renamed with some lack of imagination.



The present inn dates from 1939, and in 1966, under a new licensee, the name reverted to The White Lyon. Patrons may sit, drink, smoke and complain about the traffic just as they did hundreds of years ago, although in far greater comfort than in past. Outside the original New Inn once stood the

village stocks, and there are many folks who feel that these instruments of punishment were abolished prematurely, as a short spell therein would be a likely deterrent for today's vandals.

In 1725 Dr Willis, the Bishop of Winchester arranged for all his churches to be visited and a report prepared for each parish. In many places they found little to write about but Worplesdon has the following:

*"Patron Eton College. Rector Charles D Moore D.D. there is an Anabaptist meeting of about 50. A Quaker meeting of about 30. Poor children are taught by poor women paid by the minister. £5 p.a. given by Mr Shaw for the poor. A formerley taught school therein but it is now converted to the common use of the poor. Smith's charity is distributed."*

At that time there was no way of reaching Guildford from Worplesdon except by way of the Hogs Back, crossing the River Wey at the old town bridge. Coaches travelling from Reading to Guildford had to change horses at the Crown Inn (now Crown Cottage) before tackling the long haul up the hill. However, the Rev Dr Burton, who was instituted Rector of Worplesdon in 1766 is credited with the building of a causeway across the river at Woodbridge, thus shortening the journey considerably, both in time and distance.

### The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

In the 1790s the Admiralty had to prepare for a possible invasion from France. We cannot tell whether or not this worried the people of Worplesdon, but they must have noticed the increased traffic along the road to Portsmouth. At that time it took more than four and a half hours for a message to pass from the Admiralty in Whitehall to our naval base at Portsmouth and a faster method was considered essential. Accordingly in 1796 a series of towers was built within sight of each other and messages could be sent from tower to tower by observing the position of shutters.

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Due to the difficulty in observing in fog or rain, the communication line was rebuilt through Guildford in the 1820s and the shutters replaced by semaphore arms. In 1826 a branch line of the series was approved from Chatley Heath to Plymouth. The first station on its branch line was at Worplesdon. It was built close to the church and the land, which was part of parish glebe land, was purchased for £82-17s-2d (with £10 to the Rector). The Tower was built by Thomas Battey of Whitmoor Common.

manned by a half-pay Lieutenant with two assistants.

The population of Worplesdon in 1821 was 1,276 but in 1828 it was reduced by the departure of about fifty men and women from the parishes of Worplesdon and Pirbright, who set out from Spithead in the good ship *Parmelia* to found a colony in Western Australia. The party, whose passages were paid for by Captain (later Sir) James Sterling of The Lodge, Pirbright and Captain Preston of Whitmoor House, Sutton, Woking, landed on 2 June 1829 on Garden Island near the mouth of the Swan River, Western Australia. Here Captain Sterling hoisted the British flag before moving twenty miles up the river, where he selected an estate and built his residence. He named this 'Woodbridge' after the Guildford district that had been his wife's old home. She was born Ellen Mangles of Woodbridge, daughter of James Mangles the MP for Guildford District 1831-37.

If you were hard up, you could earn money by catching criminals. Russell's Almanac for 1842 tells us that Worplesdon is offering £21 for a murderer but only £10-10s for perpetrators of other capital felonies. If you caught someone stealing corn, hay, iron, lead, agricultural tools or other goods you could obtain £5-5s. Informing on someone stealing wood, coal, turnips, garden stuff, or fruit, or cutting underwood would make you £2-2s richer. For other offences the clerk Mr Joseph Hockley would only pay a guinea.

Between 1601 and 1834 the poor were the responsibility of the parish. Elected parish officials (overseers) were appointed to supervise endowments and charitable funds for the poor. Following an Act of Parliament in 1773 these overseers were instructed to provide workhouses, and it was probably about this time that Sundial Plain, at the junction of Perry Hill with The Avenue, was purchased for that purpose.

Until 1782 all paupers were confined to the precincts of the workhouse, but after that date the able-bodied obtained work outside. A pest house adjoined the site. Here,

parishioners with severe infectious diseases such as smallpox were cared for. An amendment to the Act in 1834 resulted in Worplesdon being part of the Guildford Union. However, until the new Union workhouse was completed the poor house at Worplesdon was retained for the aged and infirm from the whole area covering Godalming to Woking, Ripley, Horsley and Shere. The able bodied were sent to Godalming. The Guildford union workhouse opened in October 1838 (the remains of which still exist in the grounds of St Luke's Hospital) and Sundial Plain was put up for sale in 1839.

Should a fire have broken out in the village you could call on the Guildford fire brigade. But this could prove costly as this entry in Russell's Almanac suggests: "in the case of a fire in the country No 2 engine will be allowed to leave the town but not to be taken further than seven miles without the consent of the Mayor. A charge of 1s per mile will be levied to keep engine in repair, to the engineer 20s and to each fireman 7s plus the cost of any damage to the engine."

Post could be sent to Guildford in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but was unlikely to reach Worplesdon unless a messenger was sent to collect it. It was probably not until the 1830s that post was delivered to the village. The directory for 1842 tells us that delivery in Worplesdon is uncertain! In 1853 delivery in the summer is given as 8:30 am but no time is given for the winter season. The first mention of the village in the Post Office Archives is 1863 when a wall collecting box was placed in the neighbourhood of Rydes Hill and Wood Street.

Mr E.T. Gladwin of the 'Guildford City Outlook' wrote an article in 1939 entitled 'Worplesdon 70 Years Ago'. He drew the most idyllic picture of the village as he saw it. With its "large open common of grass, heath and rushes, with geese on its pond, and a fine cricket pitch, which was a glory for the children of those days". Moreover all the inhabitants seem to have been cheerful and industrious, bustling about their daily business with great verve. "There was Mr

## Worplesdon Through the Ages

*Hebburn himself with his timber stacks on the common, and Mr Christmas at Rickford who kept a comprehensive list of commodities: bread, pork and bacon, groceries, sweets, mousetraps and tin-tacks. There was Chitty an expert carpenter, Tom Heather the pig-killer, and Searle the carrier. There was Dick Gunner, the best mower in the district, and a Mrs Turner who drove a donkey cart to Guildford every Tuesday and Saturday taking poultry, eggs, butter, fruit and vegetables for sale. At Pitch Place there was Henry Hooker, the wheelwright with his saw-pit."* Henry received a special pat on the head from Mr Gladwin because "what he made lasted, he used a wealth of sound timber and good workmanship". Those indeed were the days!

Gladwin's account of days gone by continues, "There was even a real inventor in the shape of Charles Bushnell of Pitch Place, who invented a Mangold Drill and at Sundial Place a Mrs Mersh kept a very enterprising school for those days, with a language master coming in from Guildford to instruct the pupils in French. There was also Bowler the Postman, a short stout man who walked from Guildford to Pirbright daily, blowing his horn and distributing letters as he passed by, returning in the late afternoon when he collected letters taken to him at the roadside. On arrival at Pirbright he put up at the Anchor, but he did not waste his time, not a bit of it! He filled in the hours before he set out again on his long trek back to Guildford by taking in shoe repairing."

### The 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Whilst the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought many changes to the village, the pace of change really accelerated now. But up until the First World War the village still retained a tranquil pace. Children would spin their tops in the road where cars now continuously flow, and should your shopping be too heavy to bring home from Guildford you would wait out in the road at midnight for the carrier to arrive with your goods.

After the First World War a public meeting was held to decide what form a suitable



WORPLESDON CHURCH, AND SEMAPHORE.

The line, however, was never completed and only reached Romsey. With the lack of visibility on many days due to mists combined with the advent of electricity and its possibilities for use in signalling, there was little enthusiasm to complete the line to Plymouth. The Portsmouth line was used until 1847 and it is thought the Worplesdon tower was demolished soon after. The site of the tower is marked by a plaque in St Mary's churchyard. The tower had been described as "A huge eight sided edifice taller than the Church tower, covered with a yellow white-wash and every window blind, a pole on the top like a candle stuck on a loaf", by George Darley, an Irish poet who was staying with Judge Bovill at Worplesdon Place the year before the tower was taken down. It was in fact the largest tower in the service, and was

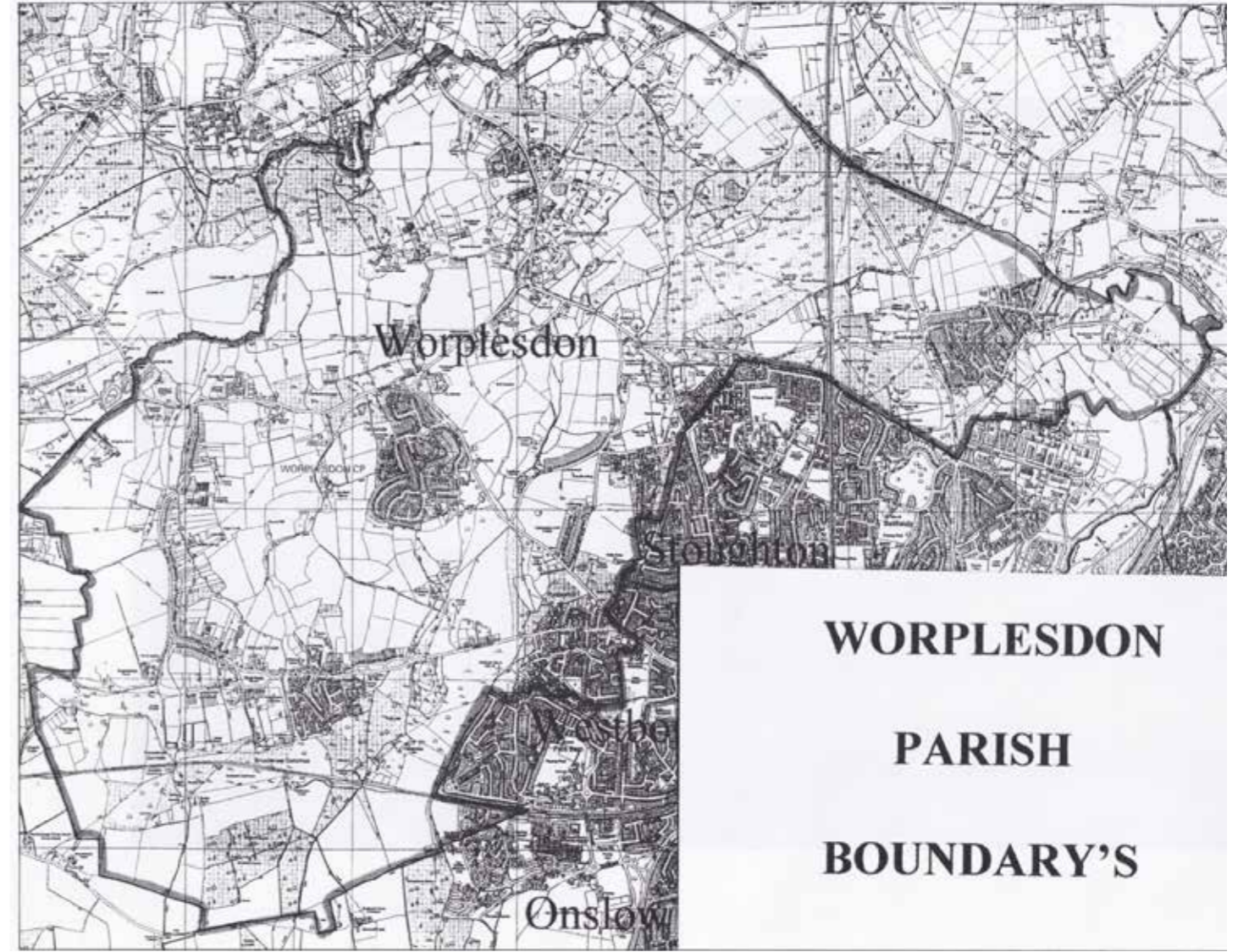
## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

Memorial should take, and it was eventually decided to build a Village Hall for use by all sections of the community. Sir James Walker of Worplesdon Place offered the recreation field as a site for the Hall and Sports Ground, and an anonymous donor (now known to be Sir Laurence Halsey of Gooserye) built the Memorial Hall and presented it to the village in 1922.



The Hall was endowed and equipped by public subscriptions. The Women's Institute playing a big part in collecting the necessary funds. The Hall remains the centre of most village activities, and should do for many years to come.

*Below: Sir James Walker and  
Sir Laurence Halsey*





St Mary's Church

## The Church in Worplesdon

Christians, agnostics, and atheists alike all number the years from the birth of Christ, AD, Anno Domini (in the year of the Lord). It is therefore appropriate that an account of Christian worship in the parish should feature early in this book that marks the millennium, for without the Christian tradition there would be no millennium to celebrate.

Historians have been able to date the crucifixion of Jesus at 33 AD, which churches celebrate on Good Friday, though his disciples certainly did not see anything good about it at the time. Whether one accepts the biblical account of what followed or not, it is a fact that by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, belief in the resurrection of Christ - Christianity - had spread throughout the Roman Empire. St Paul, by his writings and travels, rightly gets much of the credit for this but there were certainly many others involved. By the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the Roman presence in Britain was significant, and the locals were influenced by Roman culture. Some of them were Christians: the first English martyr, St Alban, to whom the church in Wood Street Village is dedicated, was a Romano-Briton beheaded in about the year 209 AD for sheltering a British Christian during the Emperor Diocletian's vicious persecution of the religion. There was a Roman villa at Broad Street which probably belonged to a rich Briton who had adopted Roman ways. Not far away at Wanborough was a temple probably used for the worship of both Roman and British gods. The religious customs of the two nations tended to merge during the Roman occupation which ended in the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. There is no evidence that Christians used the Wanborough temple.

For firm historical evidence we have to move on to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. In the Domesday Book of 1087 there is a record of a place of worship at Worplesdon. In 1987, in common with many old churches recorded in William the Conqueror's inventory of acquisitions, there were appropriate celebrations to mark the long history of our parish. It is possible that the local Christians worshipped in a wooden building on Perry Hill in the closing

years of the first millennium, replacing it with a stone church in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, but such wooden buildings rarely survive, so this can only be conjecture.

### St Mary's Worplesdon



In the present church there is some 11<sup>th</sup> century stonework visible near the west door, and where the organ now stands there are foundations of a chantry chapel of the same period. Although the chancel dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century the nave is of 14<sup>th</sup> century origin. The tower, one of the finest in Surrey, dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The little white cupola on top, which now houses the bell for the clock, is a much later addition. It came from the stables of the old Rectory (now Maryland), where it served to warn the coachmen, most likely at the pub, that the service was nearing its end and that they should come and collect their masters and mistresses!

Thus the church shows signs of the additions and alterations that have occurred over the centuries. The most recent change was in 1975 when an 1866 addition was converted into a room with a small kitchen and toilet attached. 1866, according to the Rev Chitty (Rector 1931-42) was the "year of disgrace" when the Victorians indulged in their enthusiasm for supposedly improving churches by "despoiling" St Mary's. Their worst offence was to throw out a Norman font. It was replaced by the present 17<sup>th</sup> century marble font. Box pews, shown in a watercolour of 1829, were replaced by the present ones. Luckily the Victorians did not destroy the 14<sup>th</sup> century glass, but removed

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

most of it from the east window to place it instead in various smaller windows in the north and south walls.

### Patrons

The Church of England has a system whereby a rector is presented to a parish by a patron, preferably with the consent of the bishop. There are local records of this since 1292 when the de Cobham family became the patrons. The family retained the privilege of patronage, with a couple of lapses, until the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Crown acquired the Worplesdon patronage after the Civil War, but in 1693 Eton College became patrons for our parish by giving Petworth to the Crown and acquiring Worplesdon instead. They have been patrons of the living ever since and have given, amongst other things, the font and the pulpit. It was clearly very convenient for senior ordained men at Eton to be pensioned off to a pleasant country living not too far away from the old school.

### Links with Guildford Friary

Prior to Henry VIII's quarrel with Rome concerning his divorce, Worplesdon, doubtless as well as other local parishes, had links with the Dominican Friary in Guildford. The Friary shopping centre now stands upon its site. This had been founded in 1274 by Eleanor of Provence, widow of Henry III, in memory of her grandson Prince Henry who died at the age of six in Guildford Castle in that year. It is recorded that two friars should come twice a week to St Mary's to celebrate Mass *"for the prosperity of the King in return for 40 cartloads of wood a year from Hendeley Park and Worplesdon Common"*. The Guildford Dominicans were suppressed by Cardinal Wolsey in 1523 and these weekly visits would have ceased.

### Extent of the Parish

The parish used to be significantly larger than it is now. This is true both of the church parish and the civil parish. Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the church parish included Wyke (Normandy) and Burpham,

both of which were quite sparsely populated at that time. St Mark's, Wyke was built in 1846 and became a separate parish. St Luke's, Burpham, just across the roundabout from the Sainsbury's superstore, was built in 1858-9 and remained in Worplesdon Parish as a chapel-of-ease for sixty years, separating from Worplesdon in 1920, and joining up with the southern part of St Peter's, Old Woking. It did not become a parish in its own right until 1954. Sutton Place was certainly within this parish.

### Roman Catholic Worship

Until the Reformation, the rectors and services at St Mary's were what is now called Roman Catholic, as were most English Christians. After Henry VIII set himself up as head of the Church of England this all changed. The extent of change was helped by the publication of prayer books in English rather than Latin, from which today's services have evolved. But not everybody accepted the changes and, despite persecution, Roman Catholic worship persisted.

The main centre for Catholic worship locally was at Sutton Place, built in 1525 by Sir Richard Weston. Henry VIII had given him a nearby manor house, built on the site of a hunting lodge used by Edward the Confessor. The King hunted frequently and heard Mass daily, so it is certain that Mass was said here. Moreover there was a chapel-of-ease as part of the manor, so the continuity of worship was maintained. Sutton Place had a private chapel and through times of great difficulty and danger the Weston family remained true to their Catholic faith. Mass continued to be said, the priests disguised as bailiffs or tutors, often living in Vine Cottage which now adjoins St Edward's Church and serves as a Presbytery.

St Edward's Church was built in 1875-6, so now in 2000 celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> year. In its churchyard is an old well, which marks the site of the King's hunting lodge. Thus there is a continuous tradition of Catholic worship here going back about 950 years. Roman Catholics from Worplesdon and Jacob's Well

## The Church in Worplesdon

are among the congregation here. Those from Fairlands and Wood Street tend to go to St Mary's Rydes Hill, being only a few yards over the parish boundary.

Although it is quite close to St Edward's, the small private chapel at Queenhythe, Jacob's Well, was used regularly from 1925 to 1934 when Mr Cameron Alexander lived there. Those further from the church could not get there as easily as today. In recognition of this, for several years from 1957 the Diocesan Travelling Minister, Father North, celebrated Mass every month for the locals at Little Rickford, the home of Mr and Mrs Laurence Salt. There was an unwritten condition to this: Father North bred turkeys, and his congregation was expected to get their Christmas bird from him!

### Bishops

It took about 700 years for Christianity to become accepted in southern England. Winchester Cathedral was founded in 675 AD and the see of Winchester was very large, remaining so until 1927 when at its eastern end the present dioceses of Portsmouth and Guildford were carved out of it. The first three Bishops of Guildford lived in Farnham Castle, which had been one of the residences of the Bishops of Winchester for many years. Dilapidation, wood rot, and the sheer impossibility of living in such a vast place caused the Church in 1956 to look for somewhere of more convenient size nearer to Guildford. Greenacres, between the Rectory at that time and the old school on Perry Hill was very seriously considered, and plans were drawn for an extension to serve as a chapel and offices. However the Church authorities were so slow in their deliberations that the owner lost patience and made a private sale. Willow Grange on the Woking Road was leased as an intended temporary measure, but after some years nothing more convenient was found and it was eventually bought as a permanent residence for the Bishops of Guildford.

### Rectories

It is not recorded where rectors lived prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Quite probably they did not live locally but employed curates to do their job, paying only occasional visits. However a rectory was built around 1700. It is the house now known as Maryland, with its entrance opposite the old school. This was soon after Eton became the patrons of the living, so perhaps this is no coincidence, and a succession of senior clerics from Eton lived here, some of whom are recorded on memorials in the chancel of St Mary's. In 1858 the house was rebuilt in its present form, following an extensive fire.



Rectory, Holly Lane

Another rectory was built in 1916 at the junction of Holly Lane and the Guildford Road. Both in size and construction this is typical of its period when rectories were large and several servants would have been needed to help run them. From 1953 to 1962 Maryland was once again the rectory as the Rev the Hon Andrew Elphinstone, whose house it had become, was Rector, and the 1916 rectory was let during this period. In the 1980s with the traffic through the village increasing, this rectory became less accessible from the church. A decision was taken to sell it and build a smaller rectory in the grounds of St Mary's. The old rectory was larger than was required and beyond the purse or energy of any rector to maintain it. But before this happened part of the grounds were sold off in 1981 to be incorporated in the roundabout at the top of Holly Lane.

The new rectory was built in 1988. Thanks to its siting and design, it does not intrude on the very attractive view of the church tower as seen from the road.



Present Rectory at St Mary's

**Refugees**

Sadly, religious persecution has been a fact of life throughout the ages, and continues to this day. In 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century France there was bitter rivalry between Catholics and Protestants (known as Huguenots). Many of the latter suffered persecution and emigrated to England, bringing with them a variety of skills. Some lived in the cottages on Perry Hill Green and others in the nearby Vine Farm. It is thought that they came over in about 1685. By 1700 there was a flourishing blanket making industry, based on Blanket Mill, with a barn for storing wool at Perry Hill.

Part of Frog Grove House dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and this may have been the home of more Huguenots, for during some renovations a fireback was found with the arms of the Comte de Paris on it. The Comte was the Pretender to the French throne, supported by the refugee Protestants. The end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the French Revolution with many more refugees, including Catholic Priests. In 1791 two large rooms were added to Vine Cottage at Sutton Place to accommodate some of them.

**Quakers**

Quite apart from the Roman Catholics there were many who found themselves ill at ease with the Church of England after the Reformation, and this took its form in various Nonconformist movements. One of the first members of the Society of Friends, known as the Quakers, was Stephen Smith, who lived at White's Farm. He was a personal friend of George Fox who founded the Society in 1667. Fox came to stay with him in 1677 and a large meeting was held at the farm. Smith gave an adjoining farm as a burial ground for Quakers, which was later known as Fairlands Farm and is now the site of Fairlands. This association with the Society is perpetuated in the road named Quakers Way. White's Farm lies near the Aldershot Road, now somewhat hemmed in on its south side by the much newer housing of Fairlands. Another Quaker House is believed to be Chapel House Farm on Pinks Hill. This was demolished and rebuilt in 1921. It had once been owned by Thomas Pink and known as Pinks Hill Farm. It seems to have been bequeathed by him for use as a Friend's Meeting House. The dates of these events are uncertain but it is known that Worplesdon Quakers joined with Guildford in 1739.

**Methodism**

This took the form of a breakaway from the Church of England under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley who founded their first chapel in Bristol in 1739. The movement spread widely and was certainly active in Guildford, but there is no particular record of a centre in Worplesdon itself.

**Perry Hill Chapel**

Although Nonconformist meetings in Worplesdon are recorded as taking place as long ago as 1683 in the house of Sir Nicholas Stoughton, a chapel was not built until 1822. This was under the auspices of the Surrey Mission Society, and helped by a £50 donation from the Guildford Congregational Church towards the total cost of £380. The Surrey Mission was disbanded in 1874 and Worplesdon joined the Guildford Group of

Churches along with other churches from surrounding villages. This did not work out well as the Worplesdon congregation did not take kindly to being controlled by the Guildford Church, not least because the work in Worplesdon was thriving with night schools, bible classes, entertainments and Sunday worship. They therefore decided to go it alone and erected an iron building in the grounds of Perry Hill House (opposite the entrance to St Mary's), the home of Mr and Mrs Samuel Burch. This building was known as the Hope Hall after its donor, and was used for worship and meetings instead of the chapel, which was left empty in the hands of the Guildford Church.

Up until then the pastoral care of the congregation had been in the hands of a succession of ministers who had the care of congregations in several surrounding villages, but now it was necessary to appoint a full-time pastor. Mr William Farris first conducted worship at Perry Hill in 1881. It is clear from records that he was a great success. The difficulties which originally provoked the abandonment of the chapel must have been resolved because under his leadership improvements and alterations were made to the chapel, not least buttressing the walls from outside as it was discovered that the chapel had no foundations! The Hope Hall continued to be much used and was eventually dismantled and moved behind the chapel in 1919.



Perry Hill Chapel

Relations between the chapel and the parish church were cordial, as indeed they are to this day. A particular incident in about 1901

is recorded. The Rector, the Rev Tovey, had slipped on wet grass when conducting a funeral and broken his ankle, requiring him to use two sticks for the rest of his life. One or two members of St Mary's congregation seemed to think that he should not be seen like this and intended to petition the Bishop to have him removed. At the Easter Vestry (now called the Parish Annual General Meeting) a vote of confidence in the Rector was proposed by Mr Farris, seconded by an unnamed Irish doctor and carried unanimously. This support for a Church of England Rector by a Nonconformist Minister and a Roman Catholic was considered worthy of mention in the London papers of the day. The Rector remained in office until 1913. Mr Farris died in 1914, and as a memorial to him a manse was built in Coombe Lane on land given by another member of the Burch family. This was occupied by a number of ministers over the years, lastly the Rev Edward Barrow who came in 1971. He and his wife entered fully into the life of the village in general and the congregation in particular.

In 1977 when Perry Hill School was closed, he requested and obtained the school bell which had summoned generations of villagers for over 100 years; this was re-hung at the front of the Chapel, thus retaining an important link with the past.



Rev Barrow retired in 1979 and was the last resident minister. The manse, not being needed, was sold later that year. In 1971 the Church had voted to join with other Congregational Churches of various

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

backgrounds to form the United Reformed Church (URC), the title in use today. Under this reorganisation, ministry has been shared with the URC in York Road, Woking. In 1994 the ancient hall was replaced by a modern one. It had served well for at least 115 years on two sites half a mile apart.

### Wood Street

Wood Street has always looked to St Mary's as the Parish Church. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century several residents were churchwardens, but no one from Wood Street was involved in the wholesale restoration of St Mary's in 1866. However, as the village grew, its sense of independence increased and a need was felt for a separate place of worship. In 1893 a Wood Street Mission fund was opened with the encouragement and financial support from the Parish Church. In 1901 the schoolmistress was allowed to live rent-free in her house in return for giving religious instruction on Sundays. In 1914 there was an intention to enclose some of the common on which to build a church, but nothing came of it, possibly because of the war.

In 1924, the Parochial Church Council (PCC), on the recommendation of the Wood Street Social Committee, purchased a site opposite the Royal Oak from a Mr Steer at a cost of £140, on which in 1925 a timber framed building with asbestos cement panelling was built in nine weeks. Although much energy and financial support came from Wood Street itself there seems no doubt that this was a parish effort.

Services had been held intermittently in the school but had lapsed somewhat, and were re-introduced by the rector, the Rev Bruce, in 1923. In 1924 the PCC appointed Capt. Wallis of the Church Army as a 'full time Missioner' for Wood Street and rented a property (Old Gables) for him for three years. He was thus in Wood Street when the Mission Hall was dedicated in June 1925 and was the first of a long line of curates living at this end of the parish. He left because the lease on Old Gables had expired, but the PCC felt it essential that he be replaced and that a house be built for a

priest. Accordingly in 1928 the present St Alban's House was built.

The Mission Hall served a dual purpose as the sanctuary (altar space) could be curtained off for secular activities. Although some people disapproved, this is exactly what would have happened in mediaeval churches, and probably in St Mary's itself. In days gone by, the village church was often the only substantial building suitable for large gatherings.



In 1937 the Hall was re-dedicated as St Alban's Church, by the second Bishop of Guildford, the Rt Rev John Victor Macmillan. Perhaps the name was chosen because Eton College, the patron, was also the patron of St Alban's in Wood Street in the city of London, a Wren church which was bombed in 1944. Or possibly it reflected the fact that the 1925 dedication had taken place soon after St Alban's day. Only eight months later the then curate, Charles Louis Bell, announced his conviction that a new church was required. This was the cause of much discussion over many years, and in 1967 the present church was designed by Mr David Nye and built by Messrs Jackson & Gocher at a cost of £16,312.17s.0d, just behind the old mission building.

The fifth Bishop of Guildford, the Rt Rev George Edmund Reindorp, dedicated it on 22 December 1967.

## The Church in Worplesdon



*Dedication Ceremony, 1967*

This was again a parish effort and about half the cost came from the sale of 8 Littlefield Way which had been purchased by the PCC as a home for a curate to act as minister for Fairlands in its early days as a community. The chairs from the old church were used in the new one until 1997 and the old church served as a hall until the present hall was added in 1972. Although the parish can use the Worplesdon Memorial Hall for large gatherings, there is no Church Hall in Worplesdon village and St Alban's Hall serves as a Parish Hall. From the late 1940s there had been a Church Room on Perry Hill. This was a wooden building on land near Thatcher's Lane. It was used for small meetings and by the Scouts, but there were maintenance problems and it was too far from the church to be of great use. It was demolished in 1975 and the present Church Room within St Mary's was partly paid for by the sale of the land, on which now stands Place Cottage.

When St Alban's Hall was built the old church was demolished and its base now serves as a small car park. A problem arose over the clock which was in a small clock tower on the old church and had been given as a war memorial. It could not be incorporated into the new church and various suggestions for new sites were unsuitable. Eventually it was bought by the Horological Workshops in Stoughton, one of whose founder partners was Brian Ward JP of Jacob's Well and a deputy warden at St Mary's. It has been very suitably placed above this shop and the movement is on view inside. Any Wood Street resident visiting the

fish and chip shop opposite can check the time by their very own clock.



### Fairlands

'Christians on Fairlands' started in 1966 and has been active ever since. This is exactly what its title says, a group of Christians of various denominations who meet on the first Sunday of every month for worship and who arrange events such as Harvest Festival celebrations. Although it comes under the wing of the parish and some of its members attend St Mary's or St Alban's, ministers from different traditions are invited to take the services. This only serves to emphasise that there is far more that unites Christians than the details that appear to divide them.

### Jacob's Well

Originally in St Mary's Parish, until the 1950s the village was a scattered collection of cottages. Although geographically nearer to St Luke's, Burpham, from 1920 until 1954 it formed part of the parish of St Peter's, Old Woking. Following a mission by the Oxford 'Cowley Fathers' regular worship had started in the old village hall, but in 1952 Stoke Church had 'planted' a church in an old Army hut near what is now Bellfields petrol station. This proved popular with the growing congregation from the new development in Jacob's Well and was the precursor of St Peter's Church in Hazel Avenue which was dedicated in 1968. This church, similar in design to St Alban's, Wood Street and by the same architect, David Nye, replaced the nearby church hall that had

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been shared for ten years by the URC and the Church of England as a centre of worship.



Initially, the parish of St Peter's was introduced on a trial basis, but as it seemed to work well, in 1972 it became a proper parish, including Jacob's Well. Thus in the space of just over fifty years Jacob's Well has belonged, for reasons that were quite sound at the time, to four different parishes.

Despite these various attachments a sense of independence has persisted and there is a tradition of regular local worship going back to the 1950s. This now takes the form of a monthly mid-week Communion service in the Village Hall, and the relatively new 'Church in Jacob's Well' has held well attended services in the Scout and Guides hut on Sunday afternoons since 1994.

### 2000 and Beyond

The URC at Rickford has links with Woking, and this year sees the start of an informal grouping of St Mary's and St Alban's with St Mark's, Wyke, which partially recreates the situation prior to 1846. A proportion of the congregations in the parish come from outside its boundaries and many who live within the boundaries choose to go to other churches in Guildford and Woking, while some are regularly part of the congregation at the Cathedral.

The word 'church' is commonly understood to mean a special building, but we have seen in this history of our parish that the word also means a gathering of Christians for worship (see Matthew chapter 18, verse 20) in a variety of buildings, probably starting in Worplesdon over a thousand years ago.

Mark Twain, reading his obituary published in error, remarked "*Reports of my death are greatly exaggerated*". This riposte could equally apply to much that is published today about the Church in the national press, where comments imply that the Church is in terminal decline. This view is partially based on changing habits of church-going that have arisen through a variety of cultural pressures, but it ignores the deep-rooted and often hidden beliefs of so many people that may only surface at times of personal or national crisis. Given reasonable maintenance, our church buildings will last for many centuries. This maintenance requires the involvement of a community that still cares for such things.

The following six pages contain a selection of photographs depicting Worplesdon during the last Century.

- 1 The Lych Gate at St Mary's Church after a heavy snowfall.  
Local working party in St Mary's Churchyard in 1936.
- 2 Rickford Mill in the 1930's.  
Friends Garth (a Meeting Place in the early 1900's on Perry Hill), no longer exists.
- 3 The home of Sidney Sime the celebrated artist of the 1920's & 30's who lived in Worplesdon.  
Sidney Sime at work.
- 4 A portrait in oil by Sidney Sime.  
An illustration for "Form" by Sidney Sime.  
An illustration for "The Idler" by Sidney Sime.  
An etching of a "Nude Lady" by Sidney Sime.
- 5 The wheelwright's shop on Perry Hill Green in 1899.  
The gardeners of St Mary's in the 1920's.
- 6 An Air Raid Police contingent for Whitmoor Common during the War in the 1940's.  
Land Army Girls at work during the War in the 1940's.



*St. Mary's in the Snow*

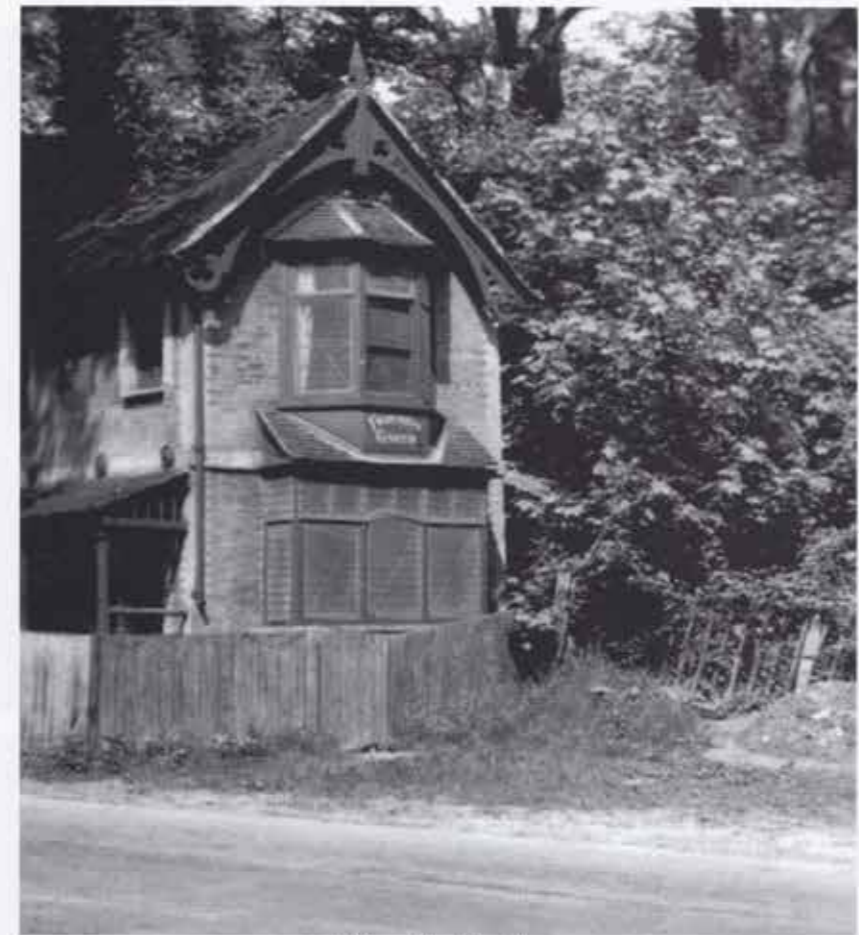


*Worplesdon, Rickford Mill.*

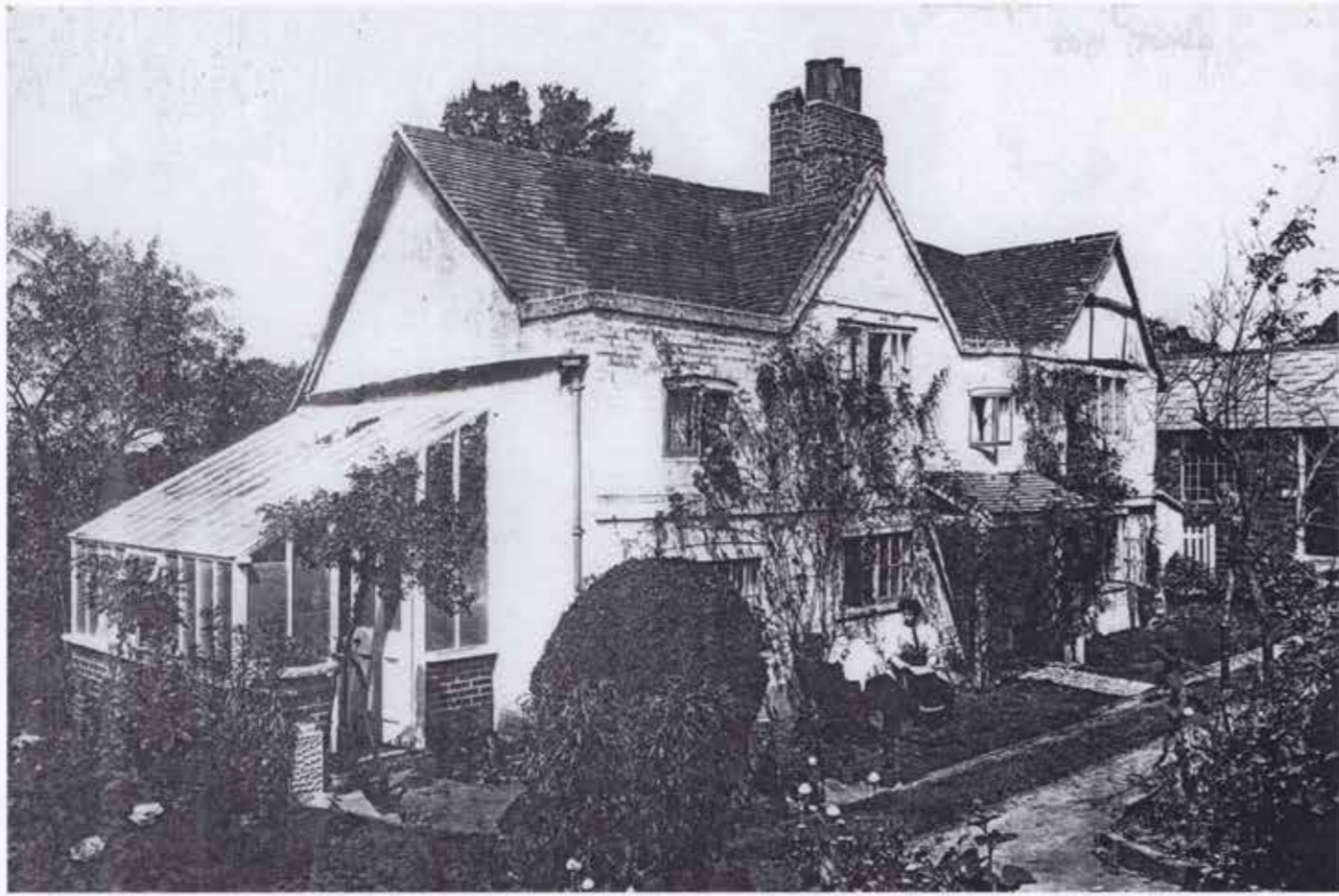
*Rickford Mill*



*Churchyard Working party - 1936*



*Friends Garth*



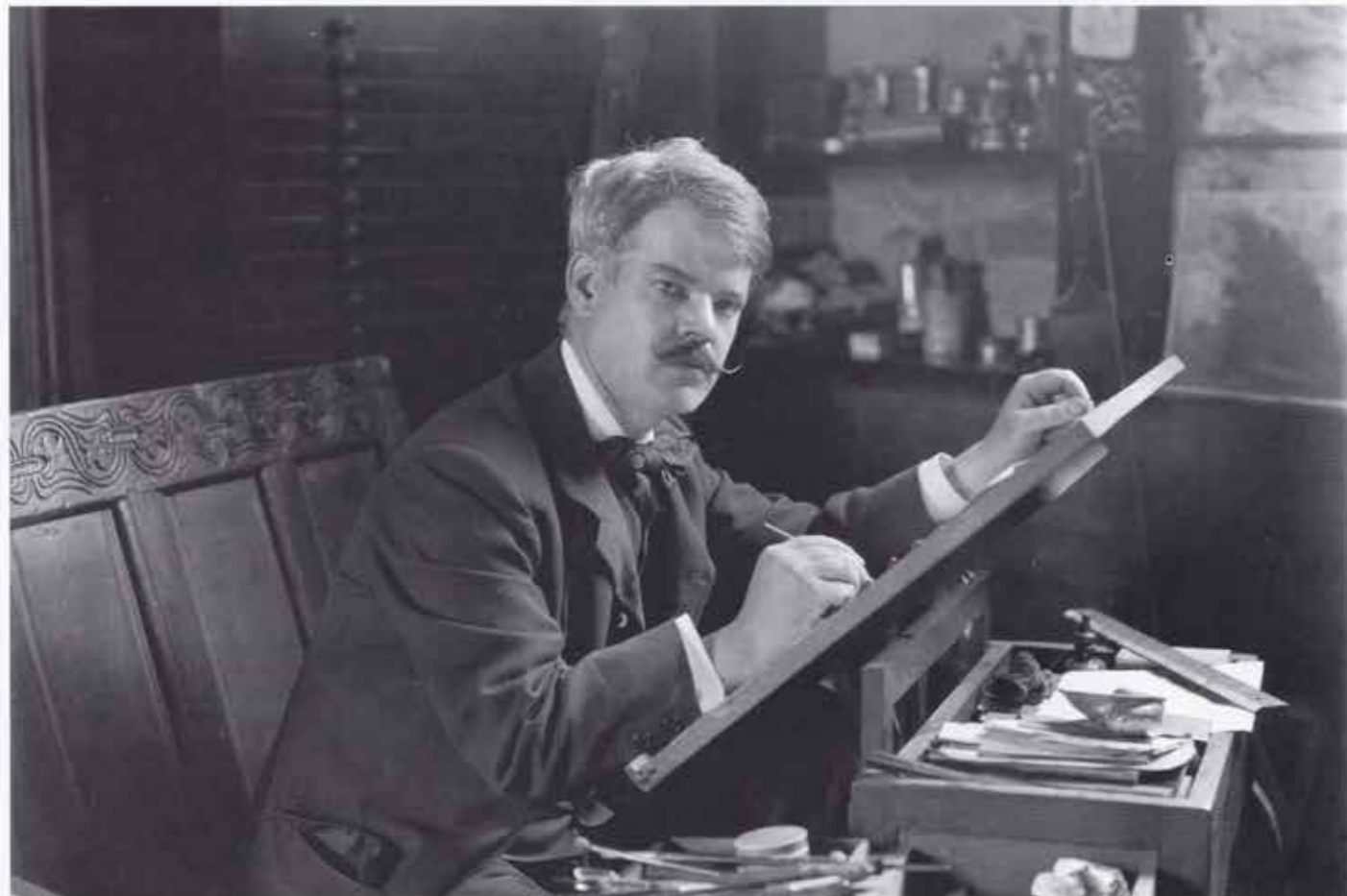
*Crown Cottage - Home of Sidney Sime*



*Mary Susan Pickett - in oils by Sidney Sime*



*'St John at Patmos', woodcut for Form, 1921*



*Sidney Sime at Work*



*In Faery Lands Forlorn, the Idler 1900*



*Etching inscribed 'Langham 1899'*



*Wheelwrights Len Primmer and "Austin" - c.1899*



*Whitmoor Common Air Raid Police*



*Gardeners at St. Mary's - c.1920*



*Worplesdon Land Army Girls*

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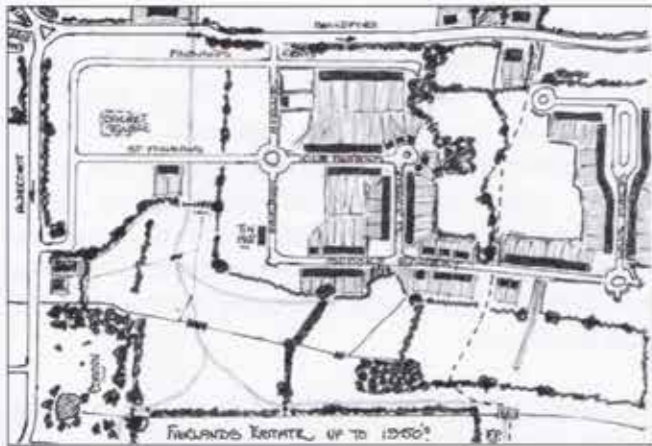


*Below: Same View 2026*



Fairlands is the newest of Worplesdon's four wards. The original development of Fairlands Estate began with the purchase of Fairlands Farm by Mr A.B. Johnston of Cranleigh. This included land on both sides of the Aldershot Road and across the common to Wood Street. He proposed to build a large residential estate of over 1,000 houses and bungalows. Plans were drawn up for roads and the siting of the houses, but the introduction of the Green Belt principle caused him to moderate his ideas.

The first phase of the development began in the 1930s, when concrete roads were laid, including the large roundabout on Fairlands Avenue, the small dual carriageway in Louis Fields and the roundabout at the other end. Bungalows were built in Louis Fields, ten houses in Fairlands Road, one house only in Fairlands Avenue, twenty-three houses in Kiln Meadows, twenty-seven in Dynevor Place, one bungalow and ten houses scattered in Brooke Forest and one pair of houses in St Michaels Avenue (see map). There were no shops on Fairlands in the early days, but buses came along every fifteen minutes to pick up passengers for town.



The first house to be built on Fairlands Road was erected by a small builder by the name of George Hart. Prior to the post-war building development on Fairlands, Mr Hart used to organise an annual November 5<sup>th</sup> bonfire on the big central roundabout, but this was no longer possible after the first main developer, Mr Robertson, took over the roundabout as his site depot and headquarters.

There were various old clay pits in the area, which used to supply the brick works along Gravetts Lane. These often became ponds once they had been worked out. One such pond, popular with children, was located at the end of Kiln Meadows, where Harry Leeder's garden now flourishes. This pond was a good source of frogspawn in the spring, and also contained three-spine and ten-spine sticklebacks to test the angling skills of local youngsters.

The houses were reckoned to be well-built by the standards of the time and the estate agents boasted of them having "modern drainage", comprising two cesspits which were pumped out by tanker four times a year. The tankers were then emptied onto 'Sheeps Hill' (now known as Envis Way): a method of disposal that might not find favour today! There was also another hill called 'Lambs Hill' on Littlefield farmland, where the public footpath goes across to Wood Street.

Building ceased following the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939. According to the late Eric Barton, after D-Day when the invasion of Europe was proceeding, it was thought that accommodation might be needed for many 'displaced persons' and 'families seeking refuge'. To meet this need, the Government requisitioned the land between the western end of Fairlands Road and St Michaels Avenue and ordered ruberoid clad huts, known as 'Portal Houses' (after their designer Lord Portal) to be built.

These sectional buildings were erected by Italian P.O.W.s, superintended by the Royal Engineers. The buildings were guarded at night by an N.C.O. and three men, so the Army built a wooden hut, approximately forty feet by fifteen on the land now occupied by the front gardens of 36 and 38 Fairlands Avenue. It had an entrance door at each end, two double doors on the side, obviously to house equipment and bunk beds for the guards. At the end of the war, it all seemed rather a waste of effort because the 'displaced persons' never materialised, so the huts were taken to pieces and removed.

When the war was over, and following the death of A.B. Johnston, a Mr Graham Brown purchased much of the land which was not, at that time, protected by the Green Belt, and he was anxious to re-commence building operations. He was advised to wait until main drainage had been laid. However, he was impatient and offered to build his own sewage farm on the estate, which he did. All the residents were very grateful to be rid of the cesspits and their attendant odour.

On the land next to Fairlands Farm, then part of Fairlands Estate, was a large mixer which supplied the concrete for the roads. This was not dismantled until some time later. At that time Fairlands had a well-prepared cricket pitch on the land now occupied by houses in St Michaels Avenue. It was every stalwart batsman's desire to strike a ball into the mixing drum.

Next, Surrey County Council decided to proceed with plans for a dual carriageway from Fairlands to Normandy. A compulsory purchase order was granted on the land between St Michaels Avenue and Fairlands Farm, and the housing development plans were accordingly revised. In fact, the only part of the dual carriageway ever to be built was outside Fairlands and an accident black spot was created in the process, at the junction with Holly Lane. The authorities have recently built a roundabout there, cutting down the number of serious incidents.

So St Michaels Avenue was developed and in-filling took place in Brooke Forest. Fairlands Avenue, Brocks Drive, Gumbrells Close and Quakers Way were well under way. Plans had also by now been approved for Envis Way. When the new development of houses took place, the Improvements Association was invited to name some of the roads - Brocks Drive, Littlefield Way and Close, Gumbrells Close and Quakers Way.

#### Memories of early Fairlands as recalled by Peter and Brian Cumber

*"The Cumber family arrived on Fairlands in 1937 and took up residence at 8 Brooke Forest.*

*"The Canadians came in 1944 ready for D-day; lorries were parked nose-to-tail all round the estate roads. Tanks and other heavy vehicles were assembled up on the Hogs Back.*

*"The soldiers were on Fairlands for a couple of months and either lived in their wagons or had tents.*

*"In the late afternoon on D-Day, planes and gliders went over Fairlands in what seemed like an endless procession.*

1945-46

*"Fairlands was chosen as a storage site for temporary pre-fabricated housing for people who had been bombed out of their homes. Stacks of hut sections, made of wood and plasterboard, appeared on the central roundabout on Fairlands.*

*"Prisoners of war assembled one of these huts, for use as a site office, down Fairlands Avenue, as shown on the map of pre-war Fairlands (on page 19). This hut was known locally as the "Tin Hut" on account of it having a corrugated iron roof.*

*"The prisoners were mainly Italian, although some were Poles who had chosen to fight on the side of the Germans. They were all obliged to wear brown overalls, identified with a football-sized yellow circle on the back. There were probably about fifty or sixty prisoners at work on Fairlands at any one time, supervised by British soldiers. They did not live on Fairlands, so were brought in by bus each day.*

*"In their spare time the POWs made baskets made from withies which they found in the hedgerows. They sold or gave away the baskets. They also made kites for the Fairlands children, made out of willows and sheets of newspaper. Apparently the Surrey Advertiser was preferred because the sheets were of a large size.*

*"The last lot of Poles to arrive on Fairlands used to like making dandelion soup, which they shared with the children. The Italians*

In all the time that the POWs were present on Fairlands, there was never any bad feeling between them and the locals, and the children in particular did very well by them.

#### Football and Cricket

"The original football field and cricket pitch was located at the end of St Michaels Avenue. The chairs and equipment needed for cricket matches were taken from the Tin Hut on a handcart and returned after the match. The players had to go back to the hut for tea, returning once again to the field to complete the match. A nearby oak tree provided 'stands' viewing for the more agile spectators.

"Harry Leeder, the current president of the FLG Community Association, took up with the Cricket Club following his arrival from the Channel Islands and soon became one of the leading lights. At that time, the club took pride in 'Lightning' Lassiter, who was a very fast bowler, and Arthur Slyfield, a star batsman. Harry Cater, long-time Chairman of the FLGCA, also played for Fairlands.

"On one memorable occasion, Fairlands played Worplesdon Cricket Club and succeeded in getting them all out for seven runs. However, their glory was short-lived because Worplesdon came back at Fairlands and got them all out for four runs. Peter Cumber remembers with pride that he scored one of those runs for Fairlands.

#### School

"In the war years, the children of Fairlands went to Perry Hill School which was run by Headmaster Mr Brown. Infants were taught at the Worplesdon Memorial Hall, where the juniors joined them for school dinners. Catering facilities were not laid on at Perry Hill until after the war. Older children would have gone to Northmead Secondary Boys School, or to the girls' school of similar name.

"Children were brought from Perry Hill School to line the route to Marylands when the young

"It was not uncommon for doodlebugs to appear over Worplesdon. On one occasion, the children were unable to go to school because a doodlebug had exploded behind the school, making a big crater, blowing all the glass out of the windows and knocking the top off a big pine tree nearby.

"A doodlebug also exploded at Merrist Wood Farm. The school children were able to take shelter from bombs, using the four brick air-raid shelters provided.

"The Germans dropped a stick of incendiary bombs on Fairlands which landed in a spread from Air Raid Warden Cumber's residence in Brooke Forest, almost to the junction of Fairlands Avenue with the main Aldershot Road. In fact, the tail fin from one of the bombs landed on the Cumber's garden shed, causing great excitement."

#### Residents' Association

The first Residents' Association was created in February 1936 under the name 'Fairlands, Liddington Hall and Gravetts Lane Improvements Association'. At that time there were only about 120 ratepayers on Fairlands, so by incorporating about thirty houses in Gravetts Lane and another sixty from Liddington Hall, the original founders felt they had more influence with the local authorities. The name of the Association was soon shortened to the 'FLG Improvements Association'.

The minutes of the early meetings reveal the fighting spirit of the Association members to improve their lot. Undeterred by the Germans, meetings were held, during the wartime blackout, in a disused hen house in Holly Lane. The improvements most frequently to be seen on the agenda were main drainage and a school on Fairlands.

After the war, when the army had gone, the old guard hut was left unoccupied and eventually was purchased by the FLG Improvements Association for £40. Mr Yeoman, a local signwriter, put up a sign on

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the hut that said "FLG Improvements Association". Willing workers added a concrete floor, a kitchen, a stage and toilets. The outside was clad with corrugated iron and became known thereafter as the 'Tin Hut'. The first carol service on Fairlands was held in a packed Tin Hut, conducted by Harry Cater with a Mrs Johnston at the piano.

It was decided to form a Bar Club. The Licensing Justices gave their approval, and a 'lean to' was soon attached to the outside of the hut to serve as a bar. It was very small, but two bar men could work together if they moved in turn. A photograph of the founding committee can be seen in the present bar.

At last, one day in the 1950s, the whole of the centre roundabout was taken over by the contract builder. A store hut was erected, fully fenced in, with gates at each end. A new phase of building was about to commence.



The big roundabout today

#### Horticulture

The Horticultural Section had always been active, with plant sales and an annual show day. Originally the show tent was erected on the land where the shops now stand. Later, before the dual carriageway road was built, a very fine show took place on the cricket field behind St Michaels Avenue. Water was laid on for teas by hosepipe from Mrs Hagger's house in St Michaels Avenue. Mr Lee-Smith was an early President of the new Association and in 1954 he preserved his name for posterity by presenting a 'Perpetual

Challenge Cup' to the Horticultural Society for the competitor gaining the most points in all the competition classes at the Annual Show.

Harry Leeder remembers that "the first year that the Community field became available (after the bridge was built) the tent was erected for the first time on our own land. A great day - but again it rained and rained. The tent was full of produce and bodies. We were packed so tight that prizes had to be passed down from hand to hand; no one could move."

#### The New Community Hall

New residents were now arriving and beginning to take part in the planning. When the houses in Fairlands Avenue were nearly completed, orders were given to remove the Tin Hut and willing helpers, led by Arthur Turner and Joe Breedon, dismantled it one Saturday afternoon. The roof struts were sold to a dealer for £40, thus recovering the original cost of the hut. Two wood-wormed pianos were broken up and burned on the concrete base and the debris was removed by Guildford Rural District Council. The shops had been built by this time and the butcher came out with two bass brooms to help tidy up the site.

The residents were once again without a meeting place and, while plans for a new hall were being finalised, meetings were held in the W.I. Hall at Broad Street and at other times in members' houses.

The Improvements Association were told that they would receive more favourable consideration if they became a full Community Association and a Registered Charity, as this would facilitate getting grant aid for the building project. So, with the approval of the Secretary of State for Education, the Improvements Association became the 'Fairlands, Liddington Hall and Gravetts Lane Community Association' and a fully-fledged Registered Charity, as it is today.

Mr Burr, Site Superintendent for the contract builder, advised that the cheapest

way to get a new Community Hall was to consider a concrete structure, made of pre-fabricated sections. At that time the construction firm was taking orders mainly for farm barns, but the manager saw the possibility of a new opening for his business and freely co-operated.

However, Association Chairman Arthur Turner set his standards high and said that no ordinary barn would be built. He insisted on a specially sprung maple wood dance floor, mounted on engineering bricks. He was also adamant that the kitchen and toilets must be built in traditional brick. Eventually the plans were approved and the builder's price for all this was just over £13,000. The new FLGCA then applied successfully for a 50% grant from national government and a further 25% from Surrey County Council. The remaining 25% was raised by a twenty-year loan of £3,250 secured with Guildford Borough Council.

The project was under way and, early in 1964, the builders moved in. The weather was very unkind, and as fast as holes were dug, the rain filled them. Channels were dug to guide the water away and eventually cement-lined holes were ready to receive the main uprights of the hall. At last, in the autumn of 1964, the result of all the years of planning was there for everyone to see.



Soon after the opening in October 1964 a new Youth Club started, along with a new W.I. branch, Leisure Club, Old Time Dance Club. Then the W.I. formed a Drama Section early in 1965. Surrey County Council used the hall for its Friday Library and a

fortnightly clinic catered for all the babies brought along by their mothers. The hall was also used for all kinds of meetings and many weddings. At weekends the club and bar fully utilised the hall space for table tennis, billiards and cards.



*Officers of the Leisure Club, 1965*

### Recreation

When A.B. Johnston planned the original estate development project, he had set aside four and a half acres of land as a recreation area and promised it to the residents through Mr Snellings, who was Chief Executive of Guildford Rural District Council at the time. Allegedly, the new developer Mr Brown, was not prepared to honour the promise laid down by Mr Johnston and a battle commenced between Mr Brown and Mr Snelling which was not resolved until some years later. The developer eventually requested planning permission to erect a number of bungalows on the proposed recreation field. However, Mr Snelling and the Planning Committee would not be moved and a compromise was reached whereby the land was freely given to the community in exchange for an increase in the number of dwellings per acre in Envis Way and Wallace Close to compensate the builder.

When the Association first took over the field in 1962, it had been used for cattle and a deep ditch ran right across the centre from north to south. Bulrushes were plentiful and the area abounded with wildlife of all kinds. Watercress used to grow in the

stream where it ran past the end of Quakers Way.

Advice was sought from Mr Barnes, a groundsman at Woodbridge Road cricket ground. He came to inspect, took test borings over thirty locations and found at least six inches of good topsoil at all points. He recommended that a contractor should be allowed to skim off two inches of topsoil and remove it for his own use. In return the contractor would plough, harrow and level the whole area, maintaining the natural fall of the land. He would then seed the whole area and lay, in the space now a children's play area, enough turf to stabilise before being transferred to the area designated as a cricket square.

This seemed a generous offer because it promised a ready-made sports field. A number of residents thought it unwise to let so much soil be removed, but it is doubtful whether a sports field could have been funded at the time without such a deal. There was a precedent for this soil removal. Before the original development of Fairlands Road, Louis Fields, Brooke Forest, Dynevor Place and Kiln Meadows, Mr Johnston had sent contractors in to remove three inches of topsoil and transport it to Cranleigh. Some residents may feel that there is a connection to be made here with all the surface clay in their gardens.



Soon after it became known that the gift of community land had been made, the Local Education Authority came to Fairlands seeking a site for a school. They had in mind the field between Dynevor Place and Louis

Fields, but were not really satisfied with it.

At one time, in 1949, a hoarding was erected opposite the entrance to Fairlands, saying "Surrey County Council Site for School". However, as one of the objections to the continued existence of Perry Hill School was that it was situated on a main road, the proposed Aldershot Road site did not find favour and the hoarding was quietly removed.

The LEA offered to share the community land and maintain the playing field. They would use it by day, with the Association using the school and field by night. However, this seemed fraught with difficulties and a counter suggestion was made of purchasing a site out in the wilds beyond Louis Fields roundabout. The sale of this site was negotiated and in due course Fairlands had its school.



### The FLG Club

When the new centre was built in 1964, the first bar in the new community centre was located where the telephone kiosk is now. Then Arthur Turner of Louis Fields provided and erected a fine corner bar within the main hall, complete with fittings and roller shutters. The Club became, and still is, a very important part of the Association. The Club, at first, opened only on Friday and Saturday evenings with table tennis, billiards and darts for entertainment. The Association soon decided that the Club members ought to have their own clubroom. So when funds permitted, an extension was planned, starting at the common room and

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running southwards. A corridor led to the main hall to visit the toilets, but otherwise the bar was now self-contained.

There had never been a public house on Fairlands, but Courage owned a site at the roundabout before the war. They relinquished it for residential development in the late 1970s, finally acknowledging that the FLG Registered Club was too well established for the brewery to compete profitably.

There has since been a succession of extensions and improvements to the community centre, including a larger bar, offices, bar toilets and a committee room. The main hall has enjoyed the addition of a permanent large stage, more storage facilities, a new entrance lobby and a larger rear car park where the chiropody and library vans call at their appointed times.

### The Youth Club

Joe Breedon, father of one daughter and three sons, started the Tin Hut Youth Club. When Harry Leeder took over, there were a few problems with gatecrashers from a neighbouring village, but two big lads, Terry Cater and Brian Nubbert kept them at bay. The members appointed their own officers and committee, and paid a weekly subscription that was usually spent on the latest 78 rpm 'Record of the Month'.

Two of the girls began taking an interest in Worplesdon Old Time Dance Club and they taught everyone 'The Moonlight Saunter'. This suddenly became the craze of the moment, and with the 'The Gay Gordons' on the reverse side of the record, the club rapidly moved into a new phase. Dancers whirled their way around the billiard and table tennis tables, holding up the games until each record ended.

As is often the case with Youth Clubs, a number of romances began, with the result that eight couples eventually tied the knot and the Club gained the title of 'The Fairlands Matrimonial Agency'



*Youth Club outing*

After 1964, Ken Butt formed a new Club, and when Ken left Fairlands, Derek Kernan and his wife took over the Club and ran it successfully for fifteen years. At present the Youth Club and its assets lie dormant, but it is hoped that the new millennium may see its renaissance.

### The Dance Club

The inaugural meeting took place in the new hall on Thursday 21 October 1964. Over seventy prospective members attended and voted to form an Old Time Dance Club. Officers and committee were elected and the members had their first big ball in March 1965. The night was a great success, attended by nearby local clubs and their leaders. The Club has prospered ever since.

Geoff and Sylvian Elderton have been leaders for many years of what is now the 'Fairlands Modern Sequence Dance Club'. They are fully qualified in all branches of dancing and have helped to make Fairlands recognised in dancing circles as one of the bigger sequence dance clubs in Surrey.

### Fairlands Wanderers Football Club

The Club was founded in 1963. The first Secretary was a Mr Peter Goss, who lived at Fairlands Avenue, but moved away after a couple of years and finally emigrated to Australia where he now lives.

Tom Thorpe, of Fairlands Avenue took on the job and remained secretary for the next sixteen years. Dave Brock was the Treasurer

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during this time and there were various Chairmen, including Lloyd Lewis and Reg Elliott.

The Club entered the Guildford and District League, and became Division IV champions in the 1964-65 season. They became Division III champions in 1965-66 and Division II champions in 1967-68. The Club also won the Sportsmanship Trophy in 1965-66, 1966-67 and 1967-68.

On Boxing Day each year up to 1970, the Club played Worplesdon FC in the Culley Memorial Cup. This cup was inaugurated in memory of Brian Culley, who died of a ruptured spleen during a match whilst playing for Worplesdon. The only time that Fairlands won the cup was in 1965.



The Wanderers currently has a first and second XI in the Surrey Intermediate League, Western.

### New Doctors' Surgery

One of the most important changes to take place on Fairlands in recent times has been the advent of a new Fairlands Medical Centre, built next to the Community Centre.

During 1992 the doctors on Fairlands let it be known that the premises they occupied as a surgery were too small. The building was cramped and unsuitable for many patients, especially invalids and the elderly who were required to climb a stairway to see the doctors, so the doctors actively sought a new surgery site on Fairlands.

In March 1993 Dr Hillard addressed the FLGCA executive committee, outlining their proposals which centred around two sites, one of which was common land at Sandpit Heath; the second being part of the playing field at the Community Centre. Each site presented certain problems, but after a ballot of Fairlands residents run by Worplesdon Parish Council in August 1993, it was established that a large majority preferred the Community Centre site.

Then, in September 1995, a community meeting was held at the Centre to hear arguments for and against the proposals. The vote that followed showed a large majority for authorising the FLG Management Council to sell part of the community land to the doctors and, in addition, to have a new sports pavilion built and to receive some adjacent farmland for a new sports field.

The project then advanced through all the complications of land transfer, planning approval and funding. The new Fairlands Medical Centre was opened formally in August 1998 and the new sports pavilion was dedicated to the long-time FLGCA President, Harry Leeder in recognition of his services to the Association.



*Harry Leeder*

The sportsmen are still waiting to have their new field handed over, but it is scheduled to happen any day now, to the benefit of all, we hope!

### Residents

One of the most interesting personalities was an old sea captain, J.L. Beatley who for many of the war years had a house in Brooke Forest. He was captain of a small cargo boat that plied between England and the Middle East, passing through the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean. It is recorded that on one trip the convoy was attacked by enemy aircraft and he shot down two of them single-handed in order to save his vessel. This was noted by the Escort Naval Officer and resulted in a gallantry award presented by King George VI and a visit to Buckingham Palace.

### The 'burying ground' in Worplesdon.

The ground we now know as Fairlands Estate has an interesting history in its own right. A booklet on 'Early Quakerism in Guildford' was published in 1952, when it became apparent that the precise location of the old Quaker Burial Ground at Worplesdon had been forgotten, together with the names of those buried therein. In August 1954, Herbert Rowntree of The Bungalow, Worplesdon, published a supplement establishing the site of the Worplesdon Burial Ground, including other historical details and a list of the names of the Friends who had been buried there. What follows is based on Mr Rowntree's work. A brief history of George Fox and the origins of the Quaker movement can be found in Chapter 2, 'The Church in Worplesdon'.

Minutes from the 1835 Dorking and Horsham meeting of the Society of Friends show that, in the year 1667, the Quakers of Worplesdon - who were numerous at that time - acquired leasehold of two pieces of land:

*"A Lease for 2000 years at a Pepper Corn Rent, if demanded, from the 25th March, 1667, granted by Richd. Baker, of about 20 perches or rods, also 2 rods between the Wall*

*and the Road, without impeachment of waste, with various Trust conditions, for a Burial Ground."*

*"A lease for 2000 years at a Pepper Corn Rent from the 30th Sept., 1705, by Richd. Baker, Wm. Constable, Henry Gill, Thomas Russell and Jacob Bembrick, ..., No Trust conditions - but without impeachment of waste."*

An extract from a Minute of Dorking, Horsham and Guildford Monthly Meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> of 12<sup>th</sup> month, 1852 reads thus: *"The property to which the foregoing Deeds relate was sold in the year 1852 for £40 (of which £20 was apportioned towards purchase of ground at lfield in 1855)."*

### Fairlands Farm House

The lease for the Burial Ground was granted originally in 1667 by Richard Baker, who is on record as having been laid to rest in that place in 1722. It can therefore be assumed that he was the owner of Fairlands Farm at that time. The stonework of the front part of the Farm House bears the name of 'John & Ann Baker' in conjunction with the date 1735. John and Ann Baker are recorded as having been interred in the Burial Ground in 1750 and 1755 respectively. The back part of the house, however, was built earlier. It is half-timbered, and there are three large window spaces which were probably bricked up when the Window Tax was imposed in 1695.



A feature of the older part of Fairlands Farm House is a single-storey building, extending

from the house and having a curved brick ceiling. This was said by Mrs Brock to have been used as the mortuary for the Quaker Burial Ground, although no supporting evidence has been found.

In his 'Journal', George Fox recorded that he visited the house of Stephen Smith, for the purpose of holding meetings, in 1673 and 1677. This Stephen Smith suffered distraint upon his cattle on numerous occasions for his refusal to pay tithes. The following is an abbreviated extract from a quotation appearing in 'Early Friends in Surrey and Sussex' by T.W. Marsh:

*"This year (1678) died that faithful servant of God, Stephen Smith of Worplesdon in Surrey, a man of account in the World. He was born the 15<sup>th</sup> of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, 1623, and resided some time at Scanderoon (Alexandria) in Syria, as a merchant. He received the truth in 1665, and gave up to obey it and walk therein, and suffered both in person and estate by imprisonment and spoil of goods. An honest and upright man, one that feared God and was of good report in his country the Lord endued him with the gift of ministry."* Appended to the original memorandum is a list containing all the known names of Friends who were buried in the Worplesdon Burying Ground. This has been compiled from the record at Friends House, Euston Road, London, which bears the following lengthy title:

'Digested Copy of the Registers of Burials of the Quarterly Meeting of Sussex and Surrey comprising a period from the year 1645 to the year 1837, both inclusive, which said Registers were surrendered to the Crown Commissioners of Non Parochial Registers pursuant to the Act of Parliament of the third and fourth of Victoria, chapter the ninety-second'.

It will be seen that those names number 185, whereas it has been stated that 214 burials took place in that Ground. The difference might represent burials after 1837 and up to 1852 when the Burial Ground ceased to be used as such.

### The Quaker occupation of Fairlands Farm

The late Miss Evelyn Thompson states in her 'Notes on the History of Worplesdon' that: *"The Worplesdon Friends burial ground, which was sold in 1852, is now part of Fairlands Farm. The walls and buildings were pulled down and the bricks used to build the cottages at Merrist Wood."*

In his book 'Guildford in the Olden Time' (1904), Dr George C. Williamson says that he remembered *"as a little boy, when staying with the late Mr Jesse Wells at Merrist Wood Farm, Worplesdon, being taken up by him to the cornfield occupying the site of the old (Quaker) Burial Ground, and having the boundaries of the land pointed out by Mr Wells. The Ground has long since been merged in the fields near, boundaries and hedges removed, and the exact spot changed very much in appearance."*

Dr Williamson then adds: *"Stephen Smith is said to have lived in the large gray farmhouse near Merrist Wood by the side of the road, and the Meetings were held in the orchard next to the house, and in the winter in the large stone-floored kitchen."*

Miss Thompson's statement that the Burial Ground was on Fairlands Farm appears to be borne out by three maps which, however, disagree as to the site on Fairlands Farm. The earliest of these maps is 'Rocque's Map of Surrey (1762)' which shows Merrist Wood Farm (but spelt "Marystoo") by lettering on what is the present site of that farm. No name appears on the plan for the fields now forming Fairlands Farm. On the latter, however, there appear the words 'Burying Place', this being on the same side of the Aldershot Road as is the Farm House, but nearer to Gravetts Lane.

The next map was reproduced to form part of a Notice of Sale, dated 1835, of *"An Estate called Burying Place Farm"*. Both the plan and the wording of the notice, showed that the 'Estate' was what is now known as Fairlands Farm, sited in the field immediately opposite to Fairlands Farm House, on the south side of the Aldershot Road.

## Fairlands

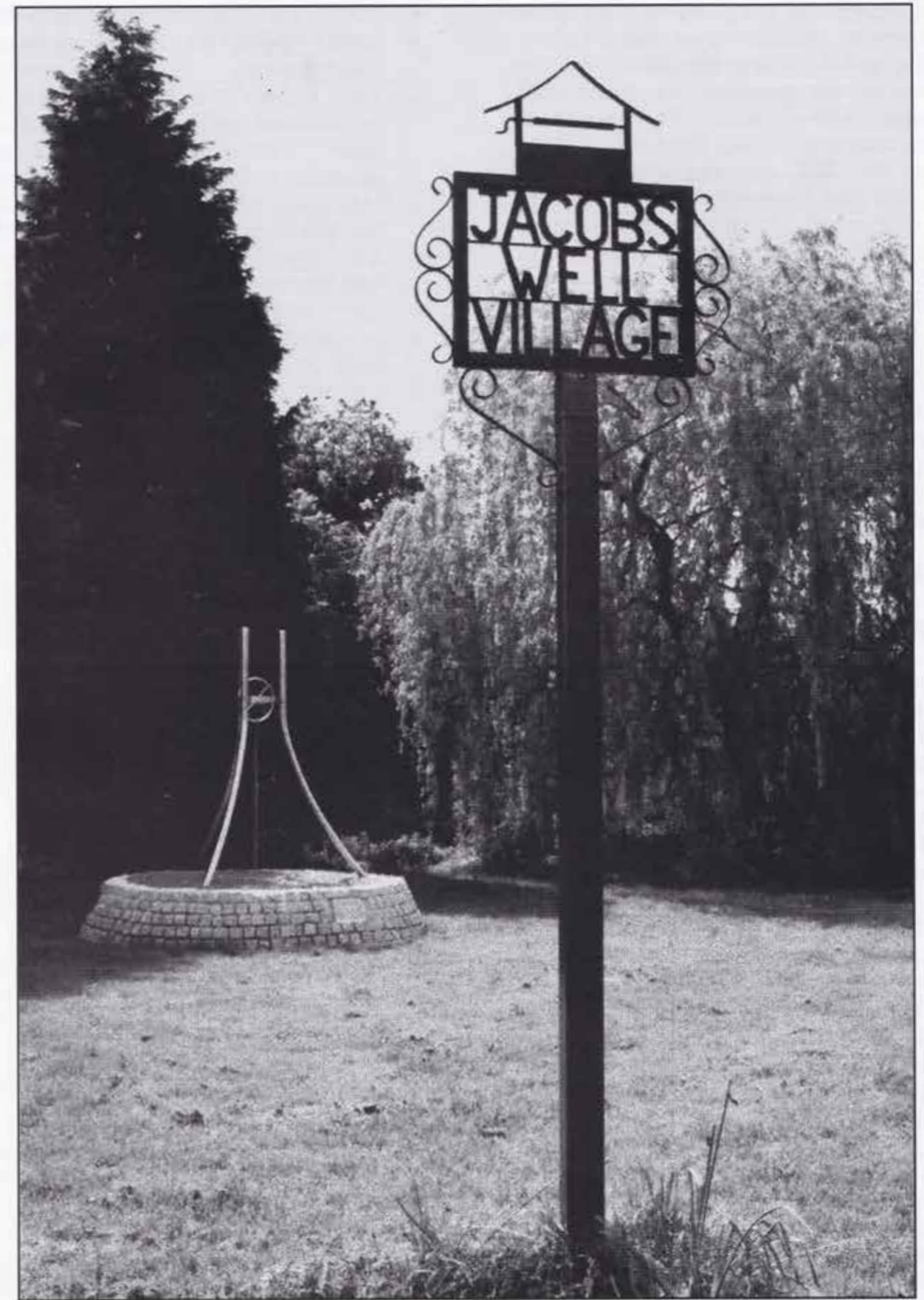
The above location of the Burying Ground is confirmed by a Tithe Map of Worplesdon, dated 1839, which clearly indicates that the Ground was on the opposite side of the road to Fairlands Farm House. The record of ownerships relating to that Tithe Map shows the plot as No. 702, and the landowner as 'Quakers Burying Ground', the area being stated as '22 poles'. Further evidence came to light in July 1954, when a trench was excavated to a depth of three to four feet through that plot of ground, for the purpose of laying telephone cables. The contractor's foreman showed Mr Rowntree certain markings which, he stated, clearly indicated that in time past there had been a series of excavations and fillings-in such as might have been caused by the removal of coffins.

### Place Names on Fairlands

- FAIRLANDS ESTATE, ROAD and AVENUE: named after Fairlands Farm.
- QUAKERS WAY: derived from the Quaker Burial Ground that was situated just south of the present-day Fairlands Farm.
- BROCKS DRIVE: Brock was the name of a family who formerly owned Fairlands Farm in the 1940s.
- ENVIS WAY: Jack Envis was a carter at Fairlands Farm.
- GUMBRELLS CLOSE: James Gumbrell was a shepherd and ploughman at Fairlands Farm.
- LITTLEFIELD WAY and CLOSE: named after Littlefield Common or Manor.
- WALLACE CLOSE: The Wallace family farmed for many years at Hunts Farm.
- DYNEVOR PLACE: named after the 8<sup>th</sup> Lord Dynevor (Hon Charles Rhys), MP for Guildford 1931-35.
- BROOKE FOREST: This road was known formerly as Spooks Forest. The name was eventually changed to Brooke, which was the maiden name of the mother of A.B. Johnston, the man who started the Fairlands development in the 1930s.
- ST MICHAELS AVENUE: St Michael is the name of the archangel who leads the celestial armies in battle. Fairlands football and cricket pitch was located here originally, but the connection seems tenuous.

- LOUIS FIELDS: So named from early on.
- SANDPIT HEATH: Named at time of new development.
- KILN MEADOWS: Bricks used to be made in Gravetts Lane, where the factory site is now. There was a clay pit near the junction of Dynevor Place and Kiln Meadows, which may have supplied clay for local brick making. Prior to the post-war development of the estate, the pit had become a pond and home for frogs.
- GRAVETTS LANE: Always named thus.
- LIDDINGTON HALL: Named from the Hall.
- KEENS LANE: Named from Keens Brickworks.
- HOLLY LANE: From 'Holy Lane'.

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## Jacob's Well

The name Jacob's Well first appears in the original Ordnance Survey of Surrey in circa 1807. It applied to a small area at the junction of Jacob's Well Road and Clay Lane where two properties faced each other at the crossroads. One of these is now called Jacob's Well Cottage but the other, at the opposite side of Clay Lane, was replaced at the turn of the century by Burpham Cottages.

The prominent name in this area had been Hurst (from the Saxon word meaning 'a wooded clearing') since at least 1290 when William le Frances of Worplesdon granted to Agnes of Hurst the lease of the farm which her father Robert of Hurst had formerly held in Villa de Teresworth [Burpham] for an annual rent of three shillings and seven pence.

### Hurst, the Russell homestead



Hurst, west of the Woking Road, was home to a branch of the prominent Russell family. The eastern wing of the house now known as Willow Grange has been described by the Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG) as "a four bay timbered mediaeval hall house of yeoman status, basically still complete and dating from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century". Parish registers began in 1538, and the name Hurst appears in 1595 with the Worplesdon burial of "Alice Russell, widow of old Thomas of Hurst". A few years later a Thomas Crosse was named supervisor to the will of his brother-in-law Thomas Russell the elder, whilst in 1619 "William Crosse my neighbour" acted in the same capacity to the next Thomas of Hurst. His sons Thomas and

Peter were the last Russells to bear the name of Hurst and eventually the Russell farm was merged with that of the Crosse family.

### Hurst, the Crosse homestead



The other Hurst, directly across the Woking Road became known as Burpham Court House from 1927. According to the DBRG the north wing retains one bay of a mediaeval house dating from about 1500 while the remainder was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was the home of the Crosse family from at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In 1686 William Crosse commissioned Daniel Sarll to survey his properties. The resulting map and 'terrier' (list of land holdings) shows that he owned forty-seven plots of just over 107 acres all to the east of the Woking Road.

William and Joan Crosse had three daughters but no sons, so the name Crosse ceased to be connected with Hurst when William died in 1719. Catherine, their firstborn, died in infancy and Jane never married, so it was the youngest, Elizabeth, who eventually inherited the Crosse properties and the Russell portion of Hurst with which they had been merged. Her daughter Elizabeth married Samuel Ayling of Petworth, and moved to Sussex, leasing 'Great Hurst' first to William Wells then to Joseph Cobbett and later to his son John. When Samuel and Elizabeth died, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, their heirs sold the property to Richard Sparkes who leased it to James Smallpeice. The names Smallpeice and Hurst had been linked by marriage since 1616. At some time the old Russell home became the farmhouse and the old Crosse

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building was subdivided into tenements to house the farm labourers and renamed 'Hurst Cottages'.

By the 1841 census, the farm held 200 acres and eight labourers. The tenant farmer was George Burt, a prominent local figure and member of the manorial courts of both Worplesdon and Burpham. He was probably a descendant of George Burt, also known as Loveland, who had lived in Worplesdon in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He certainly had links with the Smallpeice family, as one of his brothers was Richard Smallpeice Burt and a James Smallpeice was a witness at his 1832 wedding. During his tenancy of Hurst Farm its ownership passed to Sir William Bovill, MP for Guildford, after whose death, his trustees authorised a public auction of his properties in April 1877. The western part of Hurst was over thirty-five acres including "A comfortable old-fashioned Farm House, built of brick and tile and containing 25 Bed Rooms, 2 Parlours, Kitchen, Pantry, Brewhouse, Dairy etc together with barns, cowsheds, stables, Chaff House, Meal House, pigsty with Farmyards and Productive gardens" whilst the eastern farm included thirty-four acres and "an old-fashioned farm house built of brick, half-timbered and tile, now in 5 tenements, 3 rooms each, with a Barn and lean-to, Brick Timber and Tile, a stable for 4 horses with loft over, Brick and Tile, an open shed, Timber and tile, enclosed farm yard and large garden."

George Burt was given notice to quit but died, aged sixty-nine, almost immediately and the farm was re-let to Robert Ferguson, a Scotsman. As neither farm reached its reserved price the Trustees authorised another auction in 1898. Robert Ferguson was still there in the spring of 1900 as the tenant of Charles Burgess of Godalming

### Watts Farm

The 1686 map of the Crosse Estate shows a farmhouse east of what is now Jacob's Well Road. On the earliest Ordnance maps it is named Tenement Farm but there is no other information about it until 1841 when it is

listed in the Tithe Apportionment as a 'cottage' forming part of Hurst farm.



The name Watts Farm first appears in the 1841 census. In the 1877 auction it was described as "Brick, half timbered, now in two tenements, containing 4 bed rooms, an Attic, 2 Sitting rooms, 2 Kitchens, 2 Pantries, wood House etc and good Garden". The Homestead had recently been burned down except for a "Wagon Lodge, Brick Timber and Tile and Piggery".

The farmhouse no longer exists and its site is part of Slyfields Industrial Estate, but a photograph published in 1908 shows its full extent.

### Watts Cottage



The building now known as Watts Cottage, still standing at the junction of Jacob's Well Road with the old entrance to Watts Farm, was also shown on the 1686 map. In 1877 it was described as "A cottage Dwelling, Brick, Timber and Tile, containing 2 Bed Rooms, Kitchen, Pantry, Woodhouse and Pigsty, Timber and Tile and Garden."

### The Old House

The Crosse map shows a fourth building in addition to the one at Hurst and the two at Watts Farm near the north-east corner of the crossroads and adjacent to what was later called Jacob's Well field. It appears to be a large house with two smaller farm buildings at the roadside and another across the road. The 1841 census described it as "cottages and gardens" because, like Hurst Cottages and Watts Farm, it had been subdivided. Among the five households listed there was that of the owner, John Neale with his wife and six others. These included William and Charlotte Hetherington and James Stillwell, all approximately fifteen years old. Ten years later James and Charlotte Stillaway (later the name reverts to Stillwell) still lived there as lodgers and remained here for many years. William Hetherington appears in 1861 with a wife and son also named William. The Etherington family still resides at the crossroads.

The old house was eventually demolished and replaced by Burgham Cottages.

### Jacob's Well Farm

The house now called Jacob's Well Cottage is described by the DBRG as "a three bay open hall house with one bay built circa 1500". It was omitted from the 1686 map as it did not belong to William Crosse, but there is no way to identify its owner. In the Tithe Map and Apportionments of 1838/4' it is described as a "House and Garden" of some twenty-three acres together with "yard and outbuildings", where Natty's stable now stands, owned by John Bicknell and occupied by William Taylor.

In 1877 the particulars of sale for the auction of Sir William Bovill's properties describe one plot as being "situate opposite Jacobswell farm" and describes it as belonging to the late Mrs Bicknell. Four years later the property is specifically named in the census return, as occupied by a thirty-two year old farmer from Woking, Charles Hart. Since his seven children between three and fifteen years had all been

baptised in Woking it is likely he had only recently taken over there. At the 1877 auction he had also bought a plot adjacent to the farmhouse as well as the plot opposite on which a cottage was later built to house his cowman's family.

### Queen Anne Farm

Another blank space on Daniel Sarll's map corresponds to the property south of Jacob's Well Road now called Queen Anne Farm. The DBRG report describes the oldest part of the house as "A three bay timber framed mediaeval house with a single bay open hall in the centre...date probably fifteenth century."

In October 1592 the Lord of the Manor of Burgham, Edmund Winsor, signed a thousand year lease allowing Thomas Russell the younger of Burgham (later Thomas of Hurst) to farm a property which comprised "all that messuage or tenement with Barn Stable Edifices Buildings Garden Orchard thereunto belonging or appertaining called fagotters" as well as several parcels of land totalling about ten acres. Three of these were next to the house, while a fourth lay "between the lands of William Crosse and the lane called Clay Lane". This last plot was known as Greencroft. The yearly rent for all this was two old pennies.

In due course the lease passed to his younger son Peter of Hurst and subsequently his son Thomas. Then for about 200 years it was in the hands of the Tisbury/Tisberry family of Shalford. In 1800 the rent roll of the manor records that John Cobbett held freehold tenure of Fagotters. This was presumably the same man who had taken over the lease of Great Hurst after the death of his father Joseph in 1795. By 1840 the nine acres of "lands previously called Rolls otherwise Fagotters formerly Russell's and Christmas" was in the hands of Richard Fathers, and the next year the owner was James Windebank and the occupier John Matthews. By 1858 "Fagotters late Pisburys" was held by Richard Greening and his wife Eliza. They were still there in 1861 when the census records the name Queen Anne Farm for the first time. After their deaths, the farm

was occupied by Emily Rose Greening, an independent unmarried lady and it seems that William Burt (son of George Burt of Hurst Farm) lived across the road at Queen Hythe and ran both properties. By 1891 the sole occupant was Thomas Williams, a farm manager. One plot, known as "The Crooked Field" and separated from the main farm by the road to Sutton Green, was sold and the house named Greencroft built on it. The property survived as Jacob's Well Nurseries until Mr Leonard Pratt moved away in 1988. Recently it was demolished and replaced by three new houses on the north-west side of Jacob's Well Road between Meadowside and Artillery Cottage, while the rear of the property has become the north-east side of Holly Lane.

### Queen Hythe



Built in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the name Queen Hythe first appears in the records of the Land Tax which was levied by county authorities from about 1692 to 1832. Between 1780 and 1796 it was owned by John Smallpeice and occupied by William Wells (the first tenant of Great Hurst). After 1796 it appears to have passed to Thomas Bicknell who had a succession of tenants until 1831. In 1841 'Queen Hive Farm' is named on the Tithe Map and described as a "house and garden" of four plots totalling nine acres owned by John Smallpeice and occupied by James Peters. One of the plots was called the Pond Field, indicating that the larger pond on the present village green existed at that time - although it was not actually marked on the map.

At the 1877 auction 'Queenhithe Farm' contained nearly forty-seven acres and the house was described as a small farm house built of brick and tile with "Sitting room, Kitchen, Scullery, Dairy, Wash house" the homestead had "a Barn, Corn house, Cow house for 3 cows, Stable for 2 horses all Timber and Thatch: an open shed, and a Tool house Timer and Tile, farm Yard and large Garden". This is the only mention of a thatched roof in the area. No one bid the reserve price of £2000 but William Burt acquired the property in October 1877 and was living there farming fifty-seven acres at the end of the century. The additional acreage probably included his management of Queen Anne Farm

### Stringers Barn

In 1660, Daniel Stringer, a carpenter, rented from the Lord of the Manor of Burgham the "new erected cottage lately built upon the comen of Burfam otherwise Burgham... together with Fower acres of land heretofore parcell of the said Comon" a few hundred yards west of the village for an annual rent of six shillings and eightpence and two fat pullets. The DBRG states the house was probably built in the early to mid 16<sup>th</sup> century and the 'new erected' refers to recent modifications. A brick building, added to the front of the house circa 1800, and the 18<sup>th</sup> century barn, are visible from the road but passers by remain unaware of the earlier timber framed house behind them. Little is known about Daniel Stringer, whose name is given to Stringers Common (previously Burgham Green), Stringers Farm on Stoke Hill and Stringers Avenue.

### The White House

All these buildings were built before the 17<sup>th</sup> century and survived until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from any small cottages one other house appears to have been built during that period. In 1754 John Rocque published a map of Surrey in which appears the building now known as the White House at the junction of the Woking Road and Jacob's Well Road.

## Jacob's Well

In 1841 it was described as a cottage and garden in an area of just over one acre, with another cottage and garden of about a quarter of an acre within the present grounds of the White House. In 1861 there were indications it had been extended and renamed St Ann's Villa. By 1871 it was called Burpham Lodge and was occupied by Thomas Corney, a land surveyor, with his wife, son, uncle and two servants.

In total, therefore there were some fourteen residential buildings in the area by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, only two of these called themselves Jacob's Well. The prospectus for sale in 1877 spoke of "tempting sites for building" and referred to plans for a new railway station at Worplesdon within half a mile of the main lots. Gradually, newer homes began to appear.

### The Ives

A field of one acre of valuable pastureland, directly across the road from Jacob's Well Farm was sold to a Mr Hart of Woking. By 1881 he also owned Jacob's Well Farm and had built The Ives to house his cowkeeper

### Crabtree Cottages



Little Crabtree and Great Crabtree fields were sold as one lot. Crabtree Cottage had been built on Great Crabtree field by 1881, and still bears the 'fire-mark' of the Sun Fire Office, which was the first to have a company fire brigade and which started the custom of marking its policy holders' houses with its company badge.

### Henry Treeby



The arrival in 1905 of Henry Treeby was destined to affect the entire locality. He had been an army officer and had recently married the eldest daughter of Rev Francis Paynter of Stoke Hill. After being invalided home from the South African war, he acquired and lived at Hurst Farm which he extended and renamed Willow Grange.

In 1911 twelve new homes appeared along Stringers Common Road - later called Sutton Green Road and renamed Jacob's Well Road in 1968. Those nearest the crossroads were a pair of semi-detached cottages named Elmhurst and Batchelor's Cottage (recently renamed Honeysuckle Cottage), and a detached house, Meadowside. These three were built on a plot that was sold for £125 in 1877. On the other side of the road Rose Cottage was built on an island plot called Roundabouts, which lay between Stringers Common Road and a track which branched off to the east to join Clay Lane near Jacob's Well Farm. The Old House had been demolished and Burpham Cottages built by 1915. Watts Farm was demolished at about the same time. Further west along the road, several more homes were built on what had been the fields of Queen Hythe Farm. These were Moat Farm (so named because a footbridge across the brook was necessary

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for access to the road), Queen Hythe Farm Cottage and Pear Tree Cottage, Elm Cottages, Adeline Cottages and Artillery Cottage. Finally, on the Woking Road the semi-detached pair of Oak Cottages appeared on another part of Queen Hythe Farm. By 1920 numbers 3 and 4 Crabtree Cottages (now called The Dell and Peacehaven), and Cosy Cot had been built, and by 1925 came the house first described as 'Tynley Road', then 'Tynley' and finally 'Tynley'. In 1923 Queen Hythe became a private dwelling for the first time, rather than a farm or smallholding. The new owner was John Cameron Alexander, a devout Roman Catholic who brought a rare distinction to the house by obtaining "episcopal permission, endorsed by papal brief" for a private chapel in the house where mass was said on eighty-six occasions between 1925 and 1934.

### The first village shop



The neighbouring Manor of Sutton had passed to Mrs Louisa Witham and then to her son Philip. They resided at Whitmoor House where their coachman Frederick Ayling lived in the Coachhouse Cottage. When Frederick Ayling retired, Philip Witham provided him with a house close to the crossroads at Jacob's Well. To this day the large shed at the back of 'Fourways' is known as the 'Coach-house'. After Mr Witham's death in 1921 Fred Ayling and his wife Harriet Rhoda set up and ran a village store in their house, helped by Fred's niece Annie Moore, later Saxby. By 1934 the Aylings had died and Annie Saxby taken over the shop. Several residents still remember

Mrs Saxby fondly, and with gratitude for her generous attitude towards credit in hard times. Her shop is recalled as a kind of treasure cave where almost anything was available if only one could find it in the maze of upturned biscuit tins which served as a primitive form of storage unit. After her death, the house was bought by Mr and Mrs Boycott with the intention of carrying on the business. However, competition from the new shops in Stringers Avenue proved too strong, and in 1970 they sold up and moved to Sutton Green.

### Burpham Court House

During the late 1920s Hurst Farm cottages were converted back to one house, modernised and occupied by Mr and Mrs Phillip Rioux Benson. The restored house was renamed Burpham Court House. In 1897 a local historian had noted that "the old saying is that it was the old manor house and that the courts of the parish used to be held there": others have repeated this more recently. However, the word 'Court' had referred to Burpham Court Farm for much longer, and it was also reputed to have been the old Manor House.

### The White House

Around 1930 Burgham Lodge changed hands yet again and the new owner, Major A R Boyle renamed it the White House. Not long after, and close by, the first example of speculative development occurred, when some eighteen houses were built along the Woking Road and down a farm lane known colloquially as Frog Alley, which was renamed White House Lane in 1963.

Henry Treeby died in 1935 and the release of his land holdings sparked off the first spate of large-scale development. Soon, Douglas Road became the address of some nineteen new homes, on land just off Stringers Common Road, which had been part of Queen Hythe Farm. North of Clay Lane, on what had been Great Crabtree Field, another new address was Tynley Grove with sixteen new bungalows.

## Jacob's Well

By 1939 Grangefields Estate held some twenty-three homes, thirteen of which formed what became Oak Tree Close. The large trees which can be seen at the rear of their gardens were once known as 'Ridings Coppice' and are clearly marked on maps as far back as 1686. A similar reminder of the rural past is the tiny copse in Treebys Avenue that originally marked a boundary of 'Great Bushy Field'. The other homes here were four houses and six bungalows just around the corner in what was to become Stringers Avenue. However, the outbreak of war in 1939 caused a suspension of building and they remained in splendid isolation until the war was over.

The Second World War saw the end of the village pound, or pinfold, which had stood at the crossroads - where the telephone box now is - for many years. It used to hold stray animals until the owners recovered them on payment of a fee. The pound was guarded night and day because local gypsies resented having to pay to reclaim livestock which they had allowed to roam free.

It may be thought that Jacob's Well had become a village by 1891 when the original two houses at the crossroads had become six. Or maybe it was just before the Great War when some twenty homes used the name as their address. Perhaps Jacob's Well did not achieve this status until 1939 when over fifty homes spread southwards along the road to Guildford and westwards along Clay Lane. But as the wartime restrictions were gradually removed, the developers got out their plans, dusted them off, and proceeded to act upon them. By the mid 1950s Stringers Avenue had been completed and, together with Grangefields Road, Treebys Avenue and Queen Hythe Road a total of some 300 new homes and shops had been provided. Following such an influx of new residents, in June 1960 a public meeting voted for the creation of the Jacob's Well Residents Association. The name indisputably now applied to a community.

## The Social Club

In October 1969 the first General Meeting of the Bar Club was held, attended by thirty-three members of the Jacob's Well Residents Association, in the new Village Hall. A Club License was granted on 10 December 1969. The early years were hard work for the pioneer members, but the club flourished, bringing in new members with new ideas. In 1976 the Social and Activities Committee amalgamated with the Bar Club, to form the Social Club. Activities increased, with more cabarets and dances, the introduction of car rallies, rambles, theatre and shopping trips. In 1978 the extension was commenced and the winter darts team founded. In 1982 came bingo, cribbage, dominoes and the installation of a space invader. 1983 brought a jukebox and a till behind the bar! A pool table was purchased, leading to the formation of the Pool Club and league in 1984. The club was redecorated in this year and whist was introduced.

The darts team was promoted to the first division in 1983, and the summer team entered the Woking News and Mail league, taking the second division by storm and not losing a single match. The ladies' darts team, founded in 1980 ran for three years but was re-formed in 1998.

A fishing club was formed with regular monthly trips, and the introduction of a football club in 1995 was a definite high. 1999 saw a 3-1 cup win for the team in the Prince Albert Cup over the Coach and Horses. A bar manager was employed for the first time in 1998.

The club still flourishes today, with most of its original facilities and activities still intact, albeit updated.



## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages



*Below: Perry Hill School - circa 1909*



## Perry Hill

In the time of King John, Windsor Forest extended as far as Guildford. Large landowners employed a great many men as agricultural labourers, gardeners, carpenters, stockmen and foresters.

Usually we associate the woollen industry with the mills of Yorkshire, but in former times it was the south of England that was noted for its fine wool. There was a wool market in Guildford, and in Worplesdon a large barn once stood on the north side of the White Lyon Inn (New Inn), used for the storage of wool. This barn was later used to house a blacksmith's shop and was pulled down in 1938 to make way for the building of the existing inn. The barn opposite, housing the wheelwright's business, was also used for storing wool in earlier times.

In the reign of Charles II the wool trade slumped and, to give it a boost, a law was passed ordering all bodies to be buried in wool.

In 1700, according to Mr Hebburn a local resident who died in 1911 at the age of ninety-six, a blanket industry flourished in the village at a place not surprisingly known as 'Blanket Mill'. The mill was pulled down, but according to Mr Hebburn he was told by Mr James Heather that he could just remember seeing the old water wheel in 1820 when it was very old and falling to pieces. The blankets themselves seemed most attractive, "They was very thick and warm" he tells us. They must have been long-lasting too as he quotes a Mr James Terry of Rickford Hill as saying that he recalled "seeing some of the blankets when he was prenticed to a wheelwright at Wood Street, a Mr Chitty, and has laid in them." The blankets were woven by French Huguenots who had settled in this country when seeking refuge from religious persecution. They occupied the charming old cottages on Perry Hill Green, and also Vine Farm. In the years that followed, Blanket Mill was an active dairy and arable farm.

## The Old 'New Inn' and the Blacksmith's Shop



The blacksmith's shop was housed partly within the original wool storage barn. It was in this part of the barn that the farrier shod an array of heavy farm horses and ponies brought in from a radius of many miles. The adjacent inn was an ideal haven for a flagging carter, after walking and leading his horse for many miles, to seek refreshment whilst awaiting the turn of his charges to be fitted with a new set of shoes.

The blacksmith's work covered many aspects of the agricultural and rural scene such as farm machinery repair, wrought ironwork, building accoutrements and all manner of general metal work. The forge at Perry Hill, prior to the war and for sometime after, was operated by large hand-pumped bellows. One can imagine that it was not an easy task to maintain the heat required to fuse-weld, by sledgehammer, a heavy waggon tyre prior to re-shrinking onto the wheel. Once the wheels had been re-tyred at the rear of the blacksmith's shop they would be rolled by hand 'hoop fashion' over the road and the green, to the wheelwright's shop, where they would be painted and lined in readiness for re-assembly onto the waggon.

It was not unusual, in rural communities, to find undertakers' businesses in tandem with wheelwright and building firms to cater for the complete funeral service. This was so at Perry Hill, with the undertaker housed in the shop beside the green where the coffins were made on-site by the wheelwright. During the

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

Second World War a contract was placed for batches of coffins to be produced for the War Graves Commission.

From the start of the century until the business was discontinued in 1975 it had been owned and run by the Primmer and Terry families. Firstly by Mr Charles Primmer (wheelwright), then from the period between the wars and afterwards, by his son-in-law Mr Ebenezer Terry (wheelwright) and his son Mr Leonard Primmer (farrier/blacksmith).

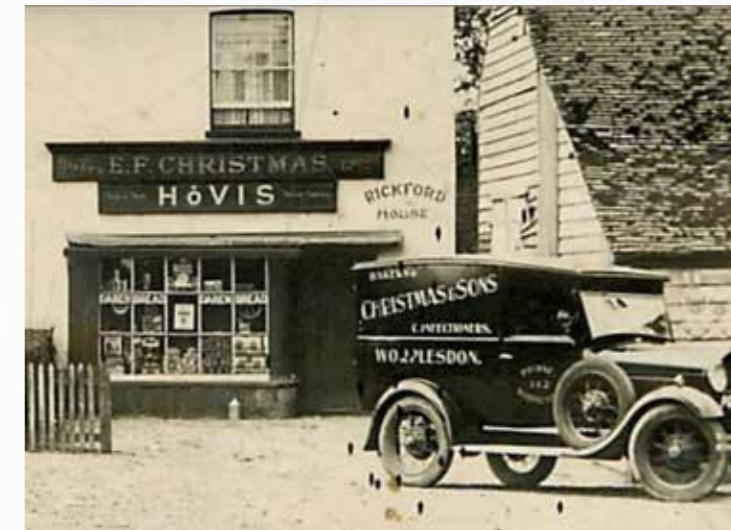


Primmer & Terry's Wheelwright and Blacksmith's Shop

## Rickford Bakery

Rickford Bakery was started by Mr James Christmas in 1861, and has been owned and operated by generations of the Christmas family up to the present day. Bread and cakes, of renowned excellence, were delivered door-to-door throughout the village until sometime in the 1960s. At the cessation of this service, in addition to full purchasing from the shop, existing outlets were found in other areas covering a wide radius. Many local residents have worked at the bakery over the years including one of Worplesdon's cricketing stalwarts of the 1930's, Leonard Collins, a prolific run scorer easily recognised both by size and his cricketing headgear - a trilby hat! Both Mr Frank Christmas and his son Sidney (respectively son and grandson of the founder) were keen followers of local sport.

Dairy products could be obtained from various locations such as Perry Hill Farm (the Faggetters family), Pitmore Farm (the James family) or Brook Farm (The Miss Thompsons), but for many years the Burches' farm supplied many of the Perry Hill residents with milk, direct from the cow, delivered by Mr Alfred Burch. The means of milk transportation was an old bicycle that was mounted acrobatically, over the rear wheel, via a footrest attached to the rear hub. The milk was carried in cans hung precariously from the handlebars. In addition to the milk, the cans also contained one-and-a-half pint ladles stowed within. Customers waited at their gates to have their jugs filled with a very creamy milk. Butter and cream from the Brook Farm herd could be purchased from the Miss Thompsons' dairy at 'Perry' where it was produced in a hand-rotated wooden tub.



## Rickford Mill

Rickford Mill, owned by the corn merchants D. Taylor & Sons, started operating in the 19th century and finally closed as a commercial operation in the second half of the 20th century. For a long period during this century the miller was Mr Alfred Chuter from Perry Hill. He was a genial character liked by all the young aspiring village anglers who, depending on good behaviour, would be allowed to use their modest equipment to try to outwit dace, roach and the occasional pike

## Perry Hill

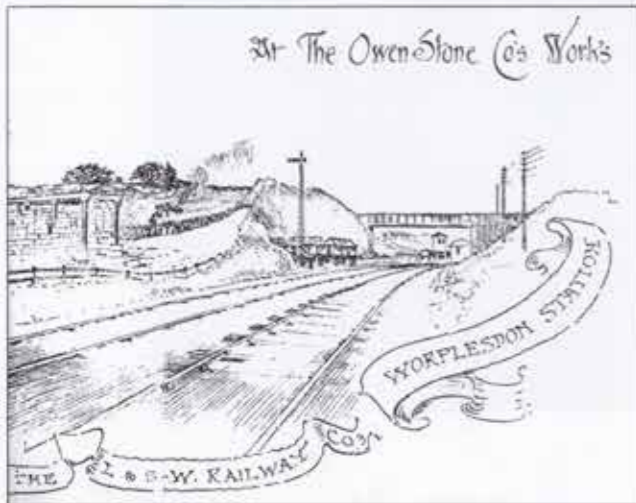
### The Railway and Worplesdon

The London and Southampton Railway opened a service to Woking in May 1838. Regular horse-drawn coach services were then provided every morning, afternoon and evening between Guildford and Woking station.

In 1844 the Guildford Junction Railway was set up, only to be bought up by the renamed London and South Western Railway. In May 1845 they opened a single line which enabled passengers to travel from London right through to Guildford, and a siding was formed at Whitmoor Common with the understanding that a station would be provided there in due course.

Eventually in December 1876, a public meeting was convened in the vestry room at Worplesdon church to consider "the best means to influence the directors of the London & South Western railway Co to erect a station in the parish between Woking and Guildford". Their attempts must have been successful, because the railway company agreed to open a station if £2,100 were paid to them.

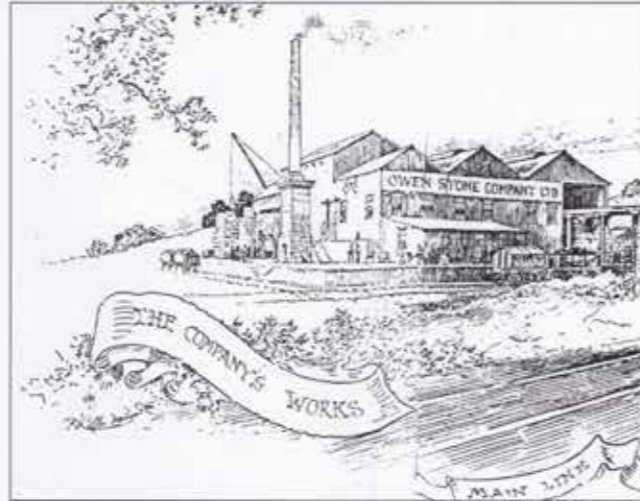
The station was opened at Mayford - not actually within the parish of Worplesdon - on 1 March 1883, and a timetable for the following year shows it was served by ten daily trains from London and nine trains to London. Most of these were slow services, taking well over an hour.



On occasions, special trains for the Duchess of Sutherland's garden parties at Sutton

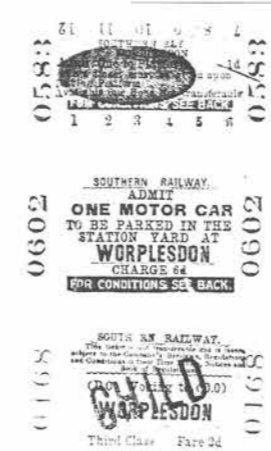
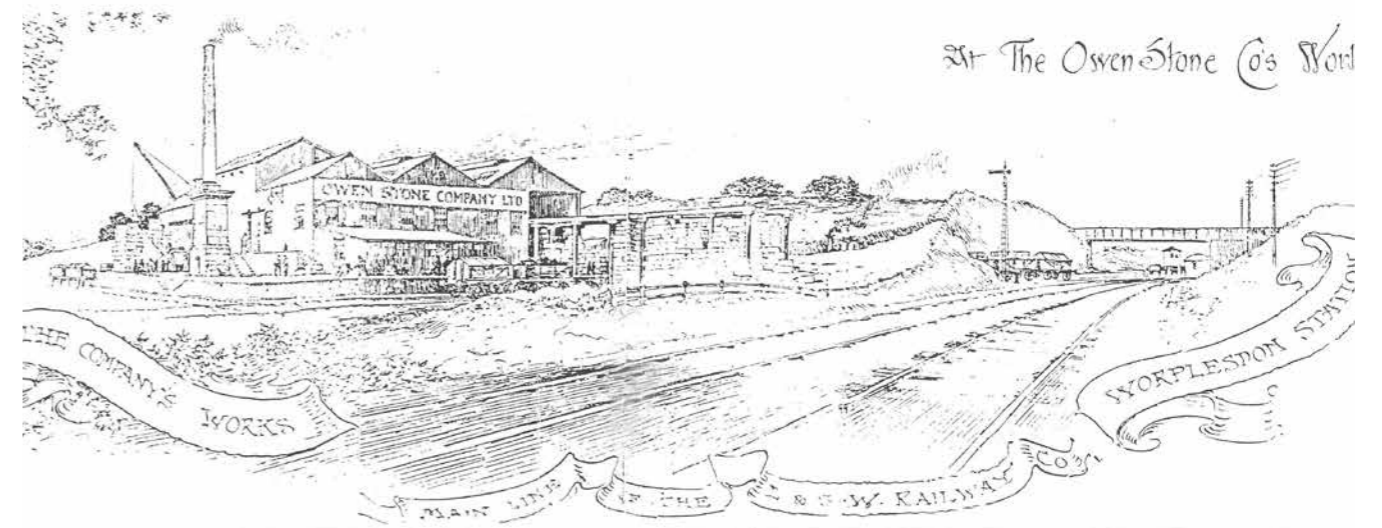
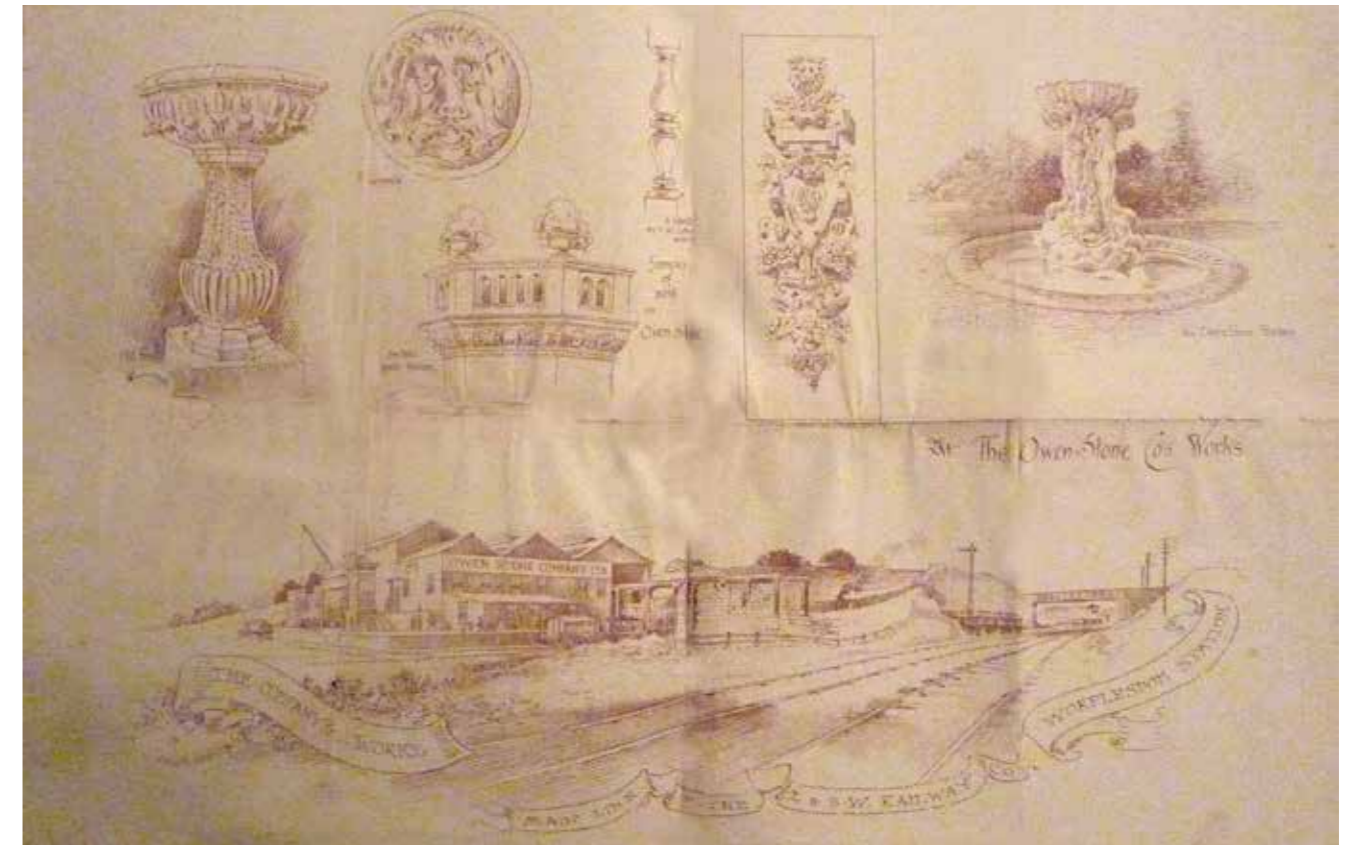
Place, would terminate at Worplesdon station. They were made up of first class carriages of various shapes and vintages, but they would have the proper red-painted Worplesdon coach labels instead of paste-on paper strips.

### The Owen Stoneworks



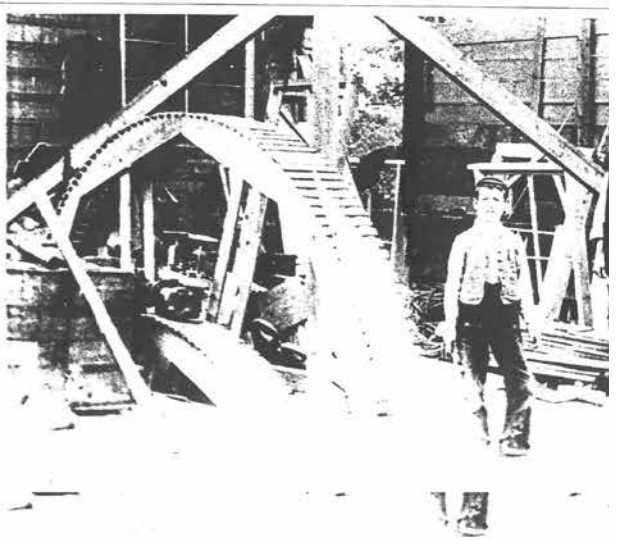
Between 1897 and 1910, Worplesdon Station was the site of the Owen Stone Company, who had a siding from the main line into their works just south of the station. The platform of the works can still be traced, and the cutting for the siding is still visible. The Owen Stone Company manufactured artificial stone made from local materials. It was said to be equal to the best Portland stone. When tested with extremes of heat, cold and pressure it performed very well. Unfortunately the test of time was its downfall: when exposed to the elements it started to crumble. By 1910 the firm had gone bankrupt and closed.

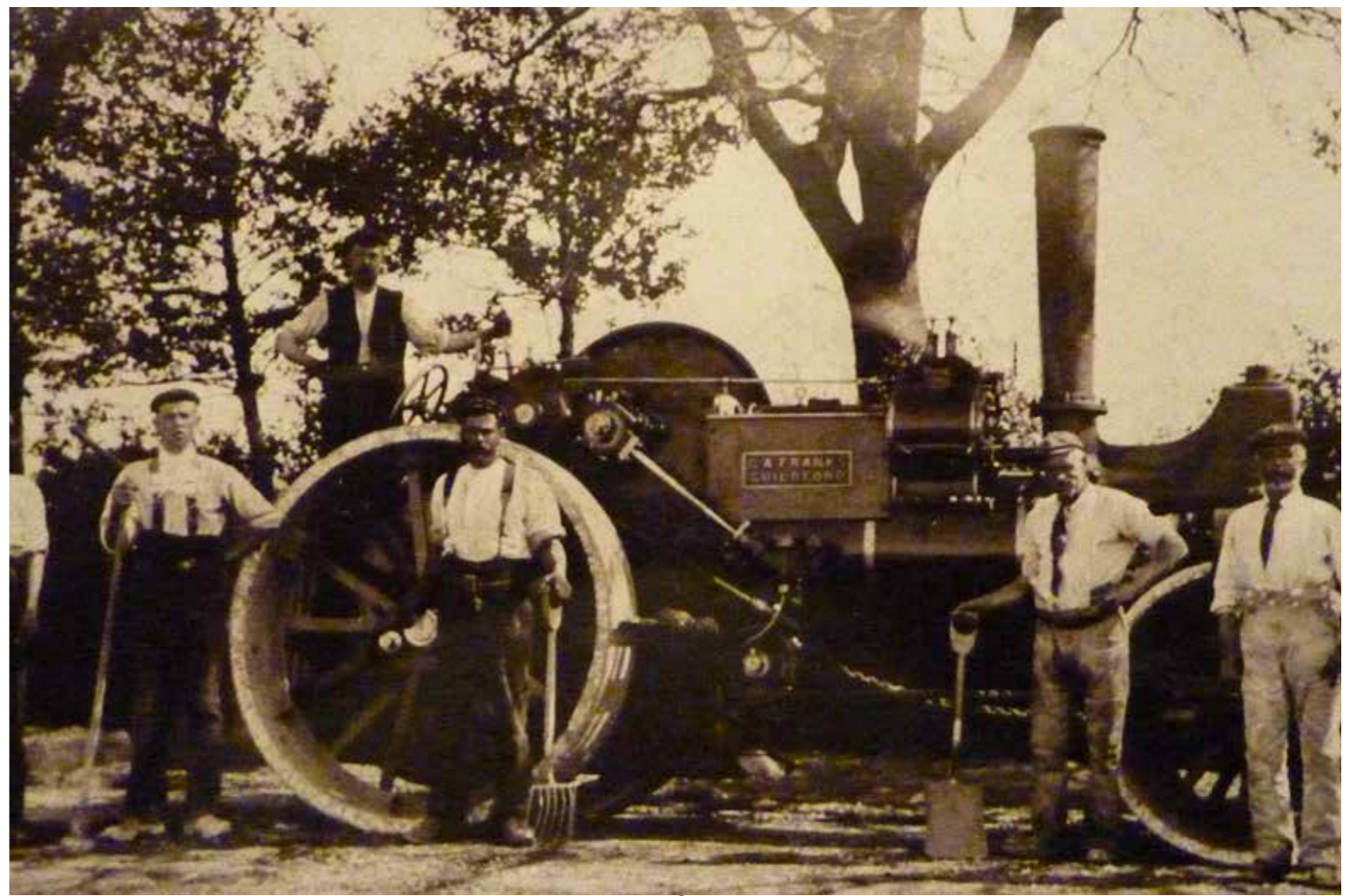
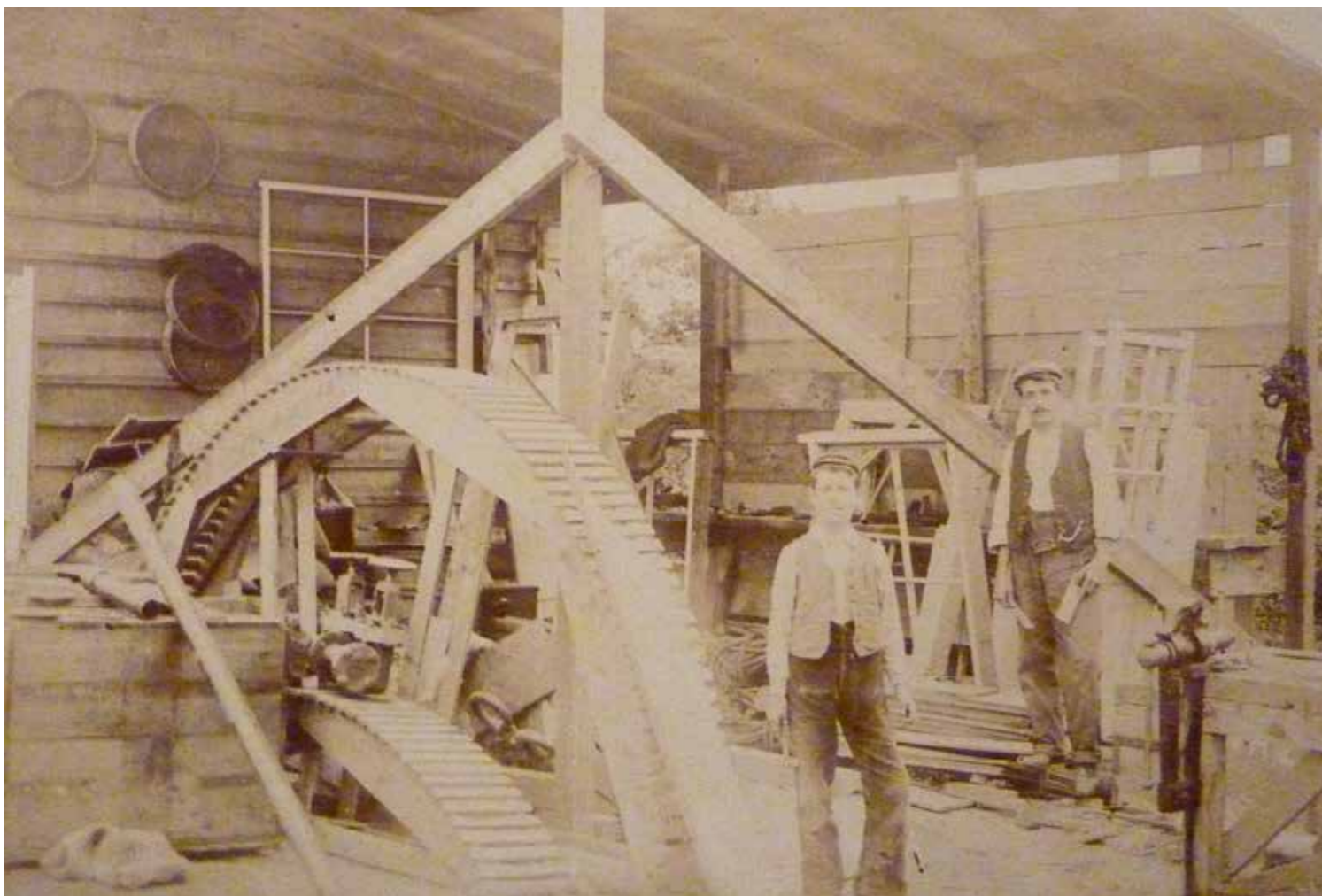
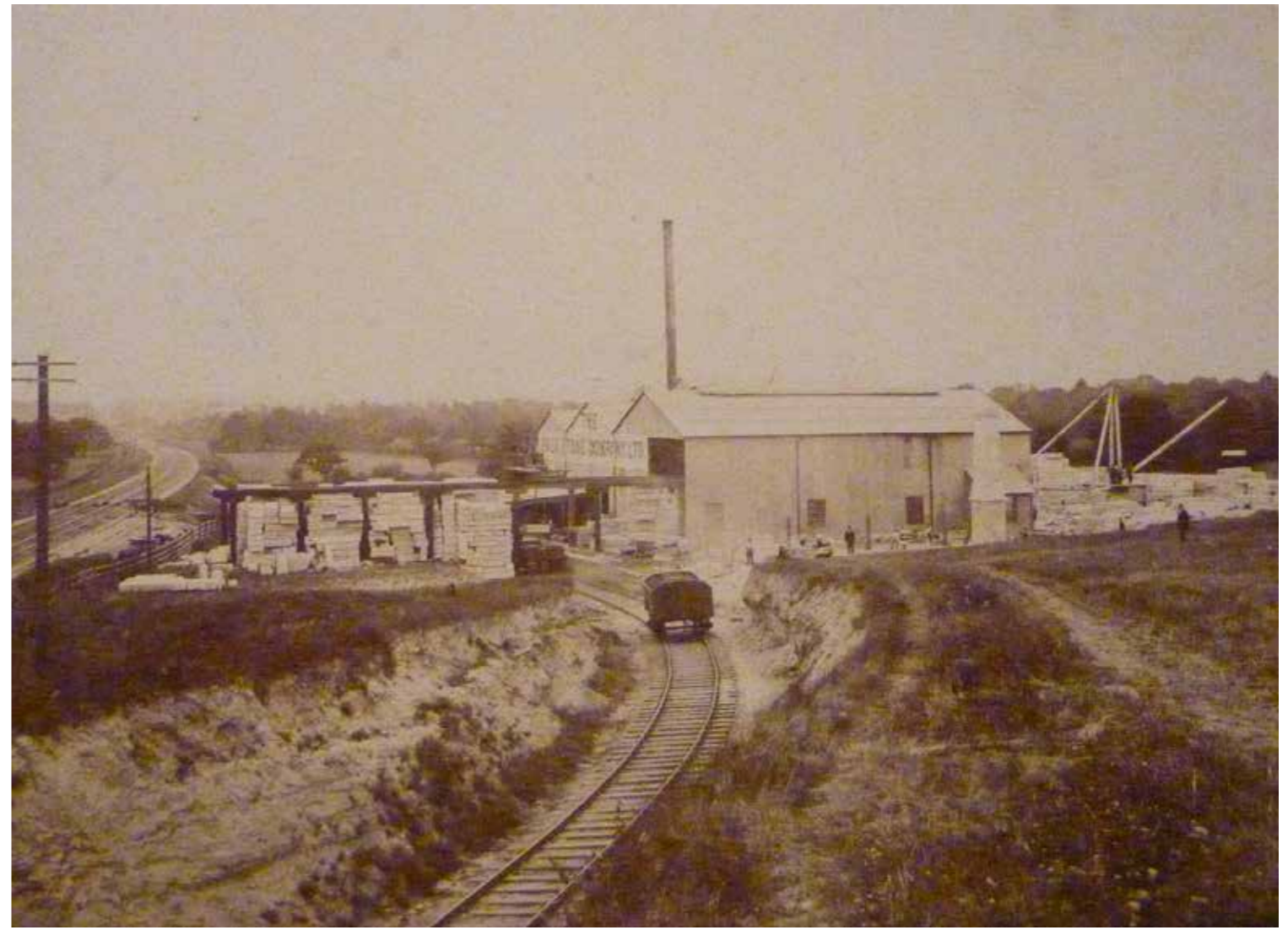
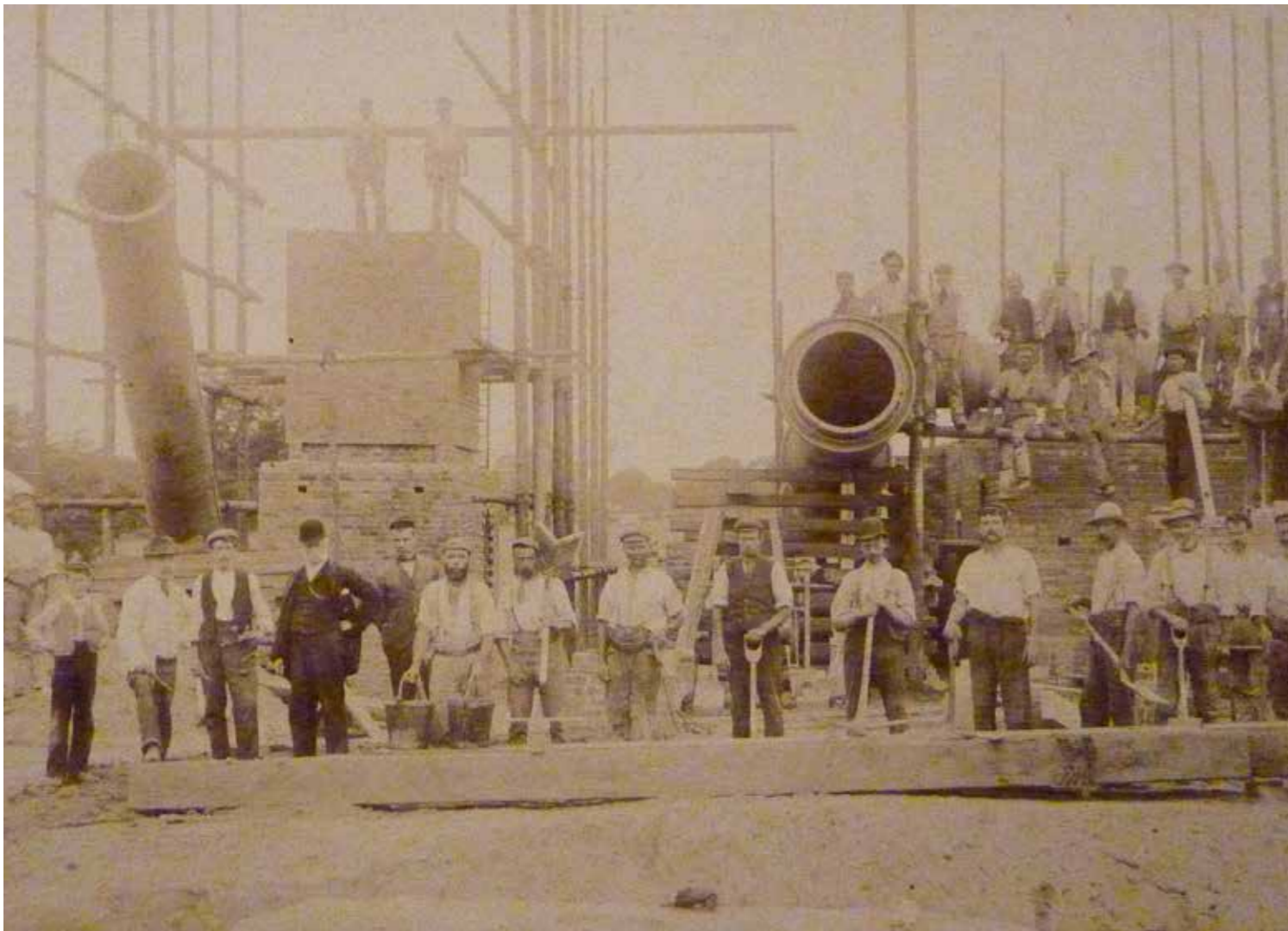
The 'old font' at Worplesdon Church was made of Owen stone, as was the porch of the Albion Hotel in Woking (built in 1899).



THE OWEN STONE WORKS. AT WORPLESDON STATION.  
The station can be seen in the background of this drawing of the Owen Stone Works. It shows the works soon after opening in 1897, with their own company siding and platform. The site of the works can still be seen from the bridge, and the foundations are still traceable.

SELECTION OF TICKETS  
1. Southern, Worplesdon Platform Ticket.  
2. Southern, Worplesdon Car Park Ticket.  
3. Third Class, Southern, Woking to Worplesdon.





## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages



*Fishing on Wood Street Pond*



## Wood Street

### Roman Legacy

It is pleasant to think that, through the ages, people have enjoyed life in Worplesdon as we do today. However, Wood Street Village has the most tangible evidence of the past. In July 1829 some labourers discovered the site of a Roman villa, known as Sibthorpe's Villa, on Broad Street Common. A local farmer, Mr George Charman had noticed that cattle chose a particular place to rest, since it was drier than the surrounding ground, and suggested that the men dug there for stones. They only dug a few inches before they came across flints forming the foundations of the villa. On learning of this, Lord Onslow ordered them to proceed with greater care. The building measured sixty-two feet by twenty-three. It had a bath in the centre with rooms around it and a passage with tessellated tiles.

A report prepared sometime later suggests that only small portions of mosaic pavements were found but that these were badly damaged, possibly due to farming as they were close to the surface. Some years later, after the land had been ploughed, pieces of pottery were found, some of which were identified as having been produced in kilns in the Farnham area which were known to be operating during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is likely that the Broad Street villa dates from that time. In 1998 an area near to Barnwood School was sold for housing development. This was adjacent to the villa and so the opportunity to excavate the area was taken prior to the development.



A report by the Surrey Archaeological Society dates the findings from early-to-mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century. They include human cremations and remnants of another villa. It has often been suggested that a Roman road should exist, but so far no evidence of one has been found. Traces of a road have been found near the University and also at Farnham. A Romano-Celtic temple was discovered at Wanborough in 1985 - which would in all probability have served the community on Broad Street Common.

### Growth of the Village

There is no official boundary to Wood Street, and it used to form the majority of a tithing known as West End. The mediaeval name was 'Woodstreet' or 'Woodstreat' - used to describe a hamlet or group of houses served by a common thoroughfare. The modern name Wood Street Village was formally adopted in 1985 - thus putting an end to much confusion by folk who thought 'Wood Street' was a road name.

A village may be defined by many tangible things, such as its population or geographical boundaries, but perhaps the most important qualities are the intangible ones such as sense of community and feeling of 'pulling together'. Grouped around its small modern church, Wood Street has this in good measure. Its many past and present organisations include: British Legion, and British Legion Women's Section, The Companions, The Cricket Club, Fairwood Helpers, The Football Club, The History Society, the Horticultural Society, the Wives of Wood Street, Wednesday Chat, Wednesday Breakaway, Women's Institute, Over 60s Club, The Gleaners, The Village Association, the Mothers' Union, Mother and Toddler Group and Sunday School, Scouts and Guides.

### Brownies and Guides

Mrs Wallis, wife of Captain Wallis (Church Army licensed reader at St Alban's 1924-1927) began a Brownie Pack and Guide Company. This was continued by Mrs Iredell and her daughter Joan between 1927 and

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

1930 during the Rev E.O. Iredell's ministry in the village. It is believed that Mrs Abbott from Inholm's Farm, and later Little Gables, may have given the Guides their Company Colours, but these were lost in the war. In the 1930s Margaret Newnham was captain and Daisy Cousins her lieutenant. Summer Camps to Budleigh Salterton in 1936 and Foxlease in 1937 were instigated.



Daisy Cousins had to leave the Guides in 1942 but returned after the war, helped by Connie Kateley and Dorothy Heath who also ran the 5<sup>th</sup> Guildford Guides. Guide Captains had to retire at sixty but could continue as a helper until aged sixty-five.

There was a gap of a few years until the Company was reformed by Mrs Mavis Shaw, followed by Mrs Betty Rushen, helped by Daisy Cousins. At the time of writing there is no Guide Company at Wood Street.

### Cubs and Scouts



A Mr Kennedy who lived at Inholms, was scoutmaster before the First World War. Joint camps were held with the Worplesdon Scouts. They were ordered home from Hunstanton-on-the-Wash when war broke out. The group met in the wooden room at Inholms, lit by three or four wall-hung paraffin lamps. Later came the Wood Street Sea Scouts, founded in 1944 by the Rev W.A.M. Langdon and Mr R.G. Longmore. The twelve scouts met in the barn between the smithy and the White Hart and practiced their rowing in a large boat moored on the River Wey. This group closed in 1948.

At the request of parents to the vicar at the time, Rev H.G. Meirion-Jones, the Wood Street (St Alban's) Scout Group was reformed in 1975, sponsored by St Alban's Church. The cubs, led by Mrs A. Isted and Mrs P. O'Keefe met in January 1975 and the Scouts under the leadership of Bill Hamilton and Bob Rochester in May. Subsequently Kitty Bagley became Akela and Alan Weighill Scout Leader. The youngest (Beavers) section was formed in 1995 under the leadership of Mrs D. Hogan and then Mrs F. Dorling. Although the Scout section closed in 1998 the group as a whole is still going strong under the leadership of Mr R. Todman (Akela) and Ms T. Griffin (Beaver Leader).

Highlights have included a commendation for fortitude after camping out in severe weather, winning the Cub Scout quiz and the Cub cooking competition. Many activities are enjoyed by all who belong, such as gliding, abseiling, buggy riding, night hikes, shooting, archery, swimming and of course cooking on campfires. On one occasion the fire was said to be so efficient that the soles of a Scout's boots were melted! There are fond memories of the Beaver Scouts' amazing cardboard dragon and of their remarkable Christmas entertainments.

### British Legion

The British Legion started in approximately 1937, with about twenty-five members including founder members William Baigent and 'Toby' Thomas Herbert Page-Smith. By 1951 there were more than 200. Meetings

## Wood Street

were held in the original wheelwright's shop on the Green, next door to the forge, until a new pre-cast concrete building was built.

The Women's section was formed in 1939, with founder members including Dorothy Andrews, Doris West and Daisy Stovold.

It was not until Remembrance Day 1995 that the War Memorial was dedicated, and it was from monies raised on this occasion that the memorial plinth (now standing by the flag pole outside the British Legion at the corner of the Green) was bought. After a service at St Alban's Church, a contingent from the Legion marched to the memorial, followed by a procession of Cubs and Scouts. The Rev Helen Woodhead led the dedication at eleven o'clock after a lone trumpeter had sounded the last post. Then poppy wreaths were laid.



### The Over 60s Club

The inaugural meeting was held at Pound Court in December 1971. When St Alban's Church Hall was finished in December 1972 the meetings were held there. Retired residents and some members from outside the village enjoyed talks and film shows, outings to Normandy Amateur Players' dress rehearsals, and Christmas entertainments. Due to falling numbers, the club closed in 1998 and funds of about £1,000 were

distributed amongst other local causes. A farewell party was held at Midsummer.

### The Gleaners

In 1956 the Gleaners, covering Wood Street Village and Fairlands, was formed. The group was started by five local men in order to raise money to assist a widow with a young family. It then continued as a weekly draw with members paying a 'tote' of one shilling.

The photograph below shows Ray Tindle (President of the Gleaners) presenting a print of Millet's 'The Gleaners' to Mrs Marion Choate.



As at January 2000 membership is 1,500 members and the price is still five pence. Charitable works include sending flowers or fruit to those in hospital, grocery vouchers for pensioners at Christmas time, and summer outings.

### Fairwood Helpers

A joint venture between Fairlands and Wood Street, the Fairwood Helpers was launched on 11 May 1998 at Pound Court. The scheme helps local people who are made vulnerable through gaps left by existing care agencies. Services provided include transport, shopping and light gardening, filling in forms, collecting prescriptions, reading to the blind and other odd jobs. The original committee, chaired by Gordon Stuart, included John and Beryl Barton, Audrey Vollans, Theresia Watson, Heather-Ann Adlem, Mary Bishop and the Rev Helen

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

Woodhead. Professional advice and training was provided by Vicki Turton from Surrey Voluntary Service Council.

### The Maypole



One of the most evocative images of English rural life is that of the maypole upon the village green. Most Surrey villages had maypoles until the early 1800s, but Wood Street is the only place in the county to still boast this tradition. The pole was renewed in 1871, together with the custom of 'garlanding'. Children went from house to house with a garland, or a pole decorated with flowers, and were presented with gifts in the style of a 'penny for the Guy'. Worplesdon School logbooks show absences on May Day for this purpose. By 1953, when the pole was again renewed, an annual May Fair was still held on the Green. Parish records show that there were roundabouts, a shooting gallery, coconut shy, swing boats, side shows and many other stands. The Fair was revived in its modern form in 1947 by Wood Street Horticultural Society. The Flower Show had been taking place since 1938. Mr Arthur Stock, secretary of the society was presented with a chiming clock to commemorate his efforts in setting up the first show. In 1988 Mr Stock wrote from Blackpool, at the age of ninety, to say that the clock was still going!

In July 1953 a village sign was erected out of funds left over from the Coronation Fund. All the work was done by local craftsmen. In 1994 the stonework base of the maypole was restored by Mr Robert Grimmond, a local nurseryman, and was ceremoniously unveiled on May Day by the Deputy Mayor, Douglas May. In the same year a new sign was created by Terence Clark with the base by Robert Grimmond.

In direct contrast to the neat and orderly Green, nature in Wood Street grew gloriously wild. There were badgers on Pinks Hill Common, and children frequently hid in the branches of overhanging trees to watch them feed in the early morning. Five different types of orchid grew around Pinks Hill Pond and wild strawberries and cowslips grew everywhere. The commons grew taller when they were cleared of cattle in 1946.

### Cricket on the Green and elsewhere



It is thought that the first cricket ground was prepared after the maypole was renewed in 1871. A copy of the Wood Street Cricket Club subscription book dated 1889 shows weekly payments of two old pence. From about 1931 the Army from Aldershot had an annual match against Wood Street, and arrived in a four-horse army transporter, often allowing local lads to ride the horses. A barrel of beer was put on the Green for the players during some matches: others were enlivened by the presence of 'Pop' Reeves, whose wooden leg did not prevent him from occasionally participating in the game. In about 1935 Mr Frapwell from Frog Grove House agreed to pay for land drainage

## Wood Street

materials for the Green, on condition that the work was done by local volunteers. It is believed that the Cumberland turf for the cricket square came from Guildford Bowling Club on the Woodbridge Road.

Cricket ceased during the war. In the early 1960s the Green was again drained and the ditch filled in. In 1967 Mr Battersby donated a Dennis mower, kept at the Forge, and a roller was provided by Walter Fisher. Teas were served from the old garage at the White Hart and the teams changed in the old barn, now the White Hart restaurant. Later the club used the British Legion as their headquarters.

In 1977 the Cricket Club won the Admiral Dunlop Cup against Shamley Green. The final was played at the Woodbridge Road ground.

When the Football Club ceased to play at Backside Common, the Cricket Club moved from the Green to their present ground. It was named Toby's Oaks in memory of Toby Page-Smith, who had done a great deal in the clearing of the ground for football in 1967. The Cricket Club's present pavilion was formerly a science laboratory, but it is hoped that a more permanent building will soon be built. The new ground was officially opened in 1991 by Ian Greig, who was captain of Surrey County Cricket Club at the time and whose brother Tony was England captain in the 1970s.

At present the club has two Saturday and two Sunday teams, as well as a very successful colts team. Additionally, the Cricket Club used to organise the village bonfire and fireworks in the field at Hill Place Farm, by kind permission of Nick Hood, between approximately 1979 and 1995.

### Football

In April 1929 a comic football match was played between the Ladies v the Gents supporters. Football was also played in Mr Pullen's field beside the pond during the 1930s. In the 1947/8 season the Wood Street British Legion Football Club were

runners up in the Guildford and District Football League.



In the early 1960s Dennis Holt, Peter Parry, Jack Thomas, Ted Hunt and Toby Page-Smith began the fundraising for a new pitch. The £100 they collected went towards a new ground at Backside Common. During 1964 the ground was prepared, drains laid and the pitch seeded. The club colours were all white with a blue trim. Successes included the District and League Cup double won at Backside Common by the under-18s. Football ceased to be played there in 1982/3 and was played in a field behind Inholm's Farm. There has been a junior team playing on the Green since 1992.

### Businesses Past and Present

The 1936 Kelly's Directory lists the following businesses in Wood Street:

- George Croft, Shopkeeper, Jubilee House
- Mrs M Edmund, Farmer, Woodlands
- T.J. Evans & Son, Nurseryman, Whipley Nurseries
- Hugh Ewing, Farmer, Compton Farm
- Miss Mary Goodchild, Draper, The Mount, Wood Street
- Guildford Corporation, Sewage Farm, Woodlands
- Guildford Haulage Company, Wood Street
- Ernest Harding, Farmer, Hook Farm
- William Harvey, Bootmaker, Lenella
- James Herbert Heath, Haulage Contractor, 6 Nightingale Villas
- Alfred Hester, Wood Merchant, Farm View

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

- Henry G Hood, Poultry Farmer, Orchard Farm
- Edgar Jarvis, Market Gardener, Godavari, Broad Street
- James Langford, Threshing Tackle Proprietor, Vine Cottage
- Herbert Lintott, White Hart Public House
- Henry Love, Market Gardener, Pinks Hill
- Alex Mersh, Builder, Pinks Hill House
- Charles H. Nye, Firewood Merchant
- Ernest Arthur Pullen, Farmer, Hill Place Farm
- Charles Rushen, Farmer, Russell Place Farm
- George Southerton, Decorator, Holly Cottage
- R. Wells, Poultry Farmer, Wodehaven Farm
- Moses W Wheeler, Market Gardener, Hillcroft
- Mrs Edith Ellen White, Royal Oak Inn
- Arthur Woodhams, Grocer and Sub-postmaster
- Arthur J Woodman, Farmer, Dunmore Farm
- J.R. Fox Proprietor, Worplesdon Herd (pig breeders), Graylands Farm
- Thomas Wye, Coal Merchant, Oak Villa
- Richard Young, Market Gardener & Greengrocer, Rightene
- Henry Crooke, Farmer, Passengers Farm
- Mrs Ruth Huck, Shopkeeper, Rydes Hill
- Ernest Sidney Pearce, Hare and Hounds Public House
- Southern Counties Poultry Society, Broad Street
- Drummond Bros Ltd, Lathe and Machine Tool Makers
- Kingsley Components, Hydraulic Engineers and Repairers
- Pinks Hill Nurseries, Landscape Merchants
- Post Office and Stores, General Food and Provisions Shop
- Transport Maintenance, Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs
- T.J. Hunt (incorporating A. Hester & Son), Cesspit and Septic Tank Servicing
- Spooners Turf, Turf Suppliers (local transport base)
- Ansom Moore Ltd, Trophy Supplier
- Jubilee Stores, Newsagent
- T.M. Clark, Blacksmith, Wildfields Farm
- Woodlands Farm Nursery, Nursery and Garden/Architectural Supplies
- Redwood Tree Services, Tree Surgeons
- Steadmans Mead Stables, Riding School
- Five Acres Kennels and Cattery
- Sandiacre Nursery, Wholesale Plant Suppliers



Arthur Drummond was born in 1871 and lived at Pinks Hill near Wood Street. Like his father, he was a talented artist and had exhibited at the Royal Academy by the age of nineteen. He was also interested in model engineering, and in 1896 designed and built his own lathe. With the help of his brother Frank, an engineer, he set up production in a workshop adjacent to their home, Old Gables. In 1902 they opened a factory at Broadstreet.

Their range of machine tools was expanded again after World War I. The Wood Street factory was then employing about 300

The following list of businesses were known to be operating in Wood Street in 1999:

- Hare and Hounds, Public House
- Royal Oak, Public House
- White Hart, Public House
- The Pines Trading Estate, business park on site of former Drummonds factory Flemings, Garden Centre and Lawnmower Repairs
- Cheesman Bros, Wholesale Fruiterers and Greengrocers

## Wood Street

people, but it unfortunately had to close in 1981.

### Jubilee Cottage and Jubilee House

The shop, built in 1937, was at first a shoe menders named "Snob". Later it became a newsagent. There was a cigarette machine at the side of the shop where a small packet of Woodbines could be bought for one old penny. The Sillence family, who lived next door, used to feed these to the family goat, which apparently loved them.

### New House Farm

Older residents may remember this cattle farm and dairy, with all the surfaces made of thick slate for coolness. Jack Miles was the farm bailiff with his sideburns and gaiters. New House Farm and its land was sold in circa 1964 and now forms Hillbrow Close, New House Farm Lane and Oak Cottage Close. The first house was finished in 1965, and the old farmhouse was demolished shortly afterwards.

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages



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## Worplesdon's Natural Heritage

### Worplesdon Group of Commons

Today the Worplesdon group of commons is a series of large open spaces within the parish bounds and as such form an important part of the natural and social history of the area. As much as in any other time in history the commons are an important part of the lives of the people of the parish today, an indicator of the long term health and vitality of our parish. It is true that they are no longer an economic necessity to local people, as the commons were in the past, but nevertheless Worplesdon without commons would be a poorer place. Indeed it would be mind-boggling to contemplate what our parish would look like if it were not for the green open spaces. A 1934 book, 'The Surrey Landscape', by Geoffrey Clark and Harding Thompson exclaims "between London and the North Downs the villages and towns are rapidly disappearing as individual units...(This) Intensive development must cease, or Surrey, like unfortunate Middlesex, will lose its rural character."

Our parish is rural to a large extent, and the people within it are of a mind to keep it so. It is not just for their protectionist value that the commons should be valued, but because these open spaces are also a haven for our wildlife and deserve to be mentioned for this as well as anything else. For places that were once described as "Desolate wastes and heaths", they are now a gauge for the spirit of the parish.

As of today the Worplesdon group of commons comprises nine areas of common, three village greens and various small parcels of manorial waste totalling some 1,110 acres. Surrey County Council bought the land from the Onslow family in 1967 and now manages the commons, maintaining them principally for the "air and exercise" of the people of Surrey as well as for conservation purposes and green belt potential. But the man management of the commons goes a lot further back in time than the stewardship of Surrey County Council. Some 3,000 years in fact, back to the Bronze Age when the very first tribes

settled down and started clearing the woods for their stockades, houses and rudimentary crops. Centuries after these small beginnings the commons are mentioned again in the Domesday Book, William the Conqueror's audit of his entire domain. The entry being:

*"Thorold holds Worplsdune from the Earl (Roger). Osmund held it from King Edward. Then it answered for 8 hides, now for 6 1/2 hides (780 acres). Land for 7 ploughs. In Lordship 1 Plough; 13 Villagers and 3 small holders with 6 ploughs. A church; 1 slave. Meadow, 8 acres woodland, 60 pigs from pasturage. 2 men at armshold 2 hides and 1 virgate of this land. In lordship they have 2 ploughs, and 3 villagers and 2 small holders, 1 mill at 30d. Total value before 1066 and later £10."*



Rydes Hill Common

Life on the commons was hard. This waste land was useless to the lord of the manor for agriculture, but was protected by the royal imperative for hunting ground so at least it gave the poor somewhere to graze cows and sheep, harbour pigs and remove wood for fuel and building. These wastelands supported not just a whole economy but a way of life, which kept the commons as an open landscape for many centuries. This constant and arduous removal of material over many centuries either in the form of grass for grazing, wood for fuel, bracken for bedding, stone for roads, or fish for eating did, over time, create the landscape that was present right through to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

The landscape around us is, therefore, in part a living record of Worplesdon's past.

The open commons are special places, given that Surrey purports to be the most wooded county in England. We know that Worplesdon itself is split, being divided by the underlying geological base of clay and Bagshot beds. This makes adjoining commons different from their neighbours. Such a juxtaposition of character means we have a very special place indeed and one that needs describing in more detail.



*Broadstreet Common*

In the south west we have the commons of Broadstreet and Backside, stretching from Bailes Lane, through Wood Street and out onto the Aldershot Road by the Cricketers public house. The wet clay soils here have provided ample nutrients and moisture for oaks and birch to grow. In the truly open spaces, open I may add because they were ploughed for the war effort in the 1940s, skylarks sing and in the smaller bushes yellow hammers shout out their "a little bit of bread and cheese please" song. Where there is open ground that has not been grazed, mown or trampled, hawthorn, black thorn and hazel have sprung up, covering the commons with an impenetrable shield that is most desirable to some of the local wildlife. This dense scrub is harbour to many animals and birds, with a variety of migrants visiting every summer. These include chiff chaff, white throat, lesser white throat and blackcap, all of which use the scrub as cover, as well as feeding and nesting areas. Where the canopy has met overhead, and the ground underneath is

permanently shaded, very little grows, but the treetops themselves are host to turtledoves, an increasingly scarce bird these days. In other areas where coppice management of the scrub and hazel has allowed low-lying cover to develop we are seeing, but more often hearing, the return of the nightingale to the area. These elusive birds like open space but only when it has a dotted covering of dense scrub to which they can retreat.

All would seem fine for the smaller birds were it not for the constant danger posed by the over flying kestrel and sparrowhawk constantly on the search for prey. The wood mouse, vole and shrew, all of which are busy trying to find sufficient food to maintain their high body temperatures must also avoid unwanted attention from above. For these small rodents, danger is present on the ground, too, as weasel, fox and stoat are always on the look out for a tasty morsel.

Across to the sandy north east we have both dry and wet heaths lying on the Bagshot and Bracklesham beds. These open heath landscapes being a fragment of the vast tracts present in the 1700s when Rocque's map was first produced.

On this purely man-made habitat live many rare and precious birds, plants and reptiles. These are specialists, surviving purely on this rugged and inhospitable land which is typified by Whitmoor Common, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated as such purely because of the scarcity of heathland and the incumbent flora and fauna living off it. Of all the groups of plants and animals on the commons of Worplesdon it is these that are under the most threat, locked inescapably to this precious habitat.

Within the extensive cover of lowland heath comprising ling, bell heather and cross-leaved heath we have such wonders as marsh gentian growing, the bright yellow bog asphodel and the primitive but successful sundews. These latter are one of the UK's last surviving insectivorous plants. Equally at home here are the sandy loving tiger beetles and a wide range of solitary wasps



*Sunrise at Maryland*



*Tranquillity at Merrist Wood*



*Rainbow over the Green*



*The Cricketers*



*The Royal Oak*



*The Hare and Hounds*



*The Ship Inn*



*The Jolly Farmer*



*The White Hart*



*The White Lion*

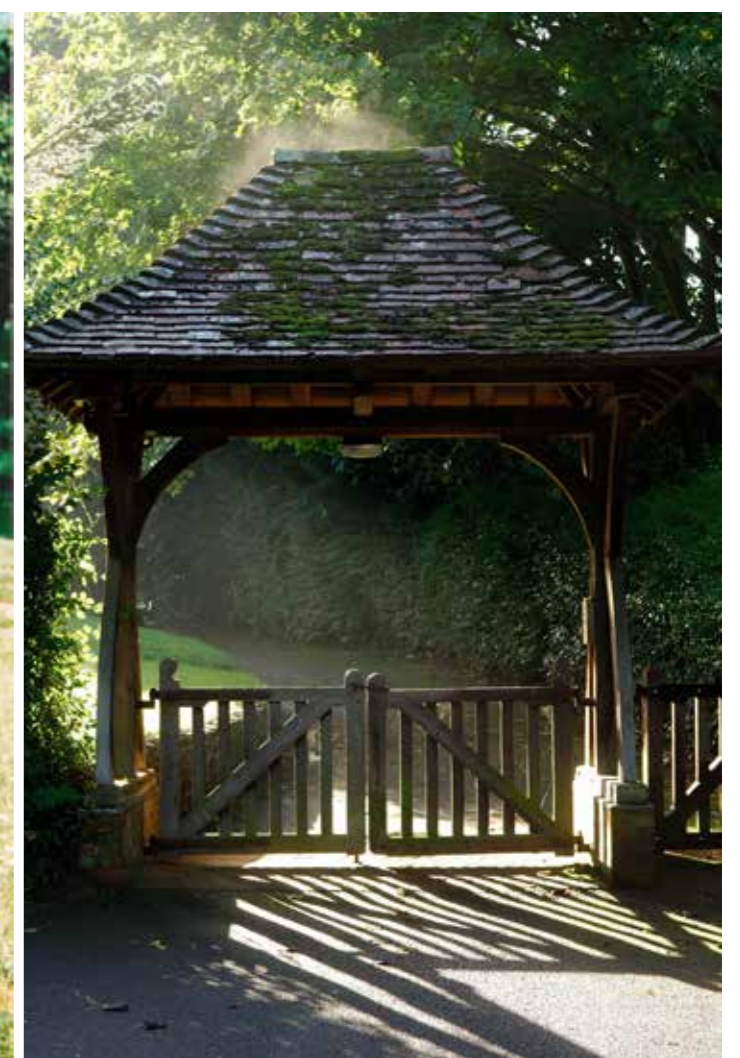


*The Worplesdon Place*

*Reverend Andrew Bryant wearing 1890 Smock owned by Mr Hebburn.*



*Reverend Andrew Bryant wearing 1890 Smock owned by Mr Hebburn*



*The Lych Gate of St Mary's donated by Mr Hebburn*





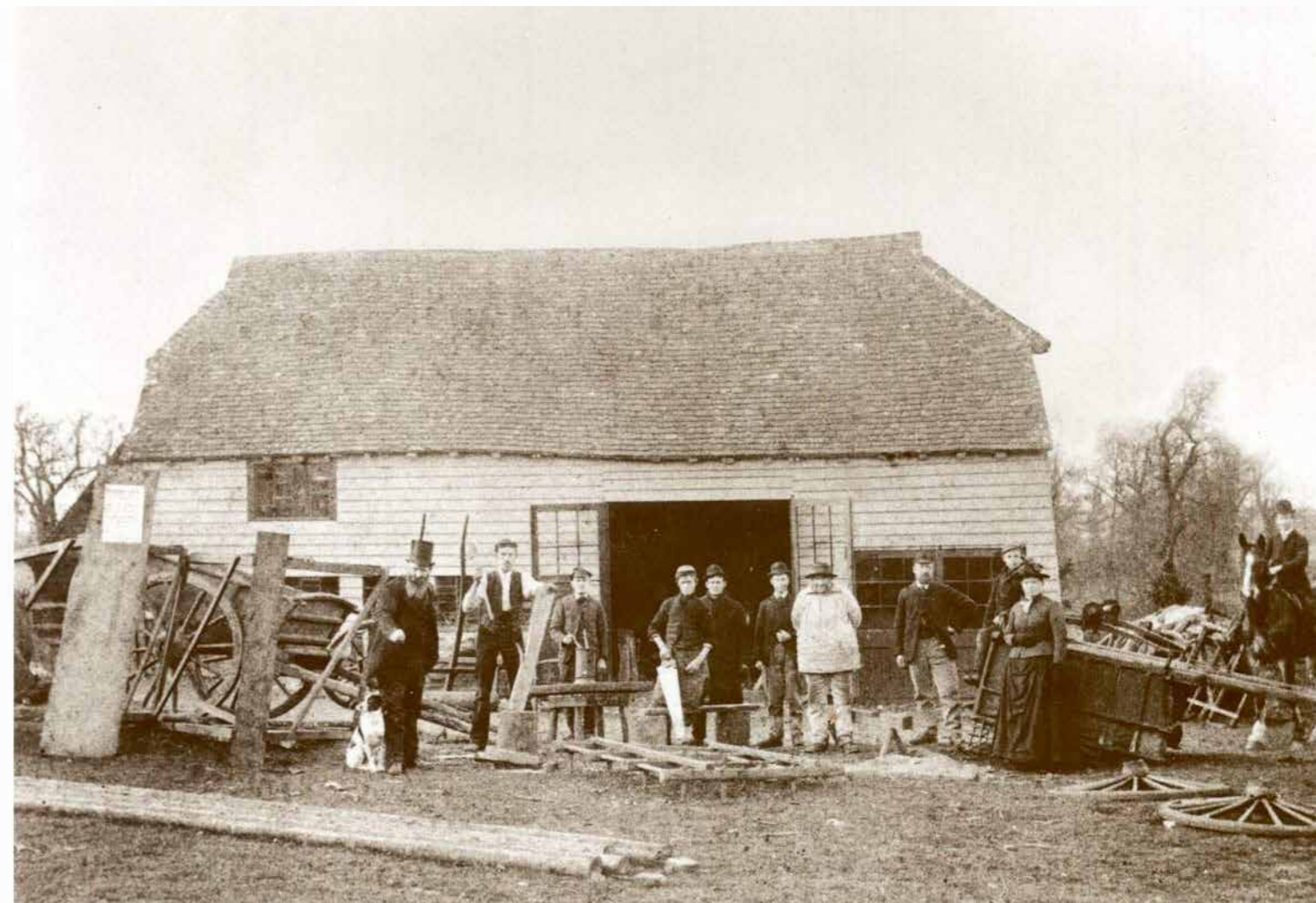
*Landscape by Crosby Cook*



*Worplesdon's Workers - 20th Century*



*The Old Wooden Cottages, Littlefield by Ron McGill*



*Worplesdon's Workers - 19th Century*



*Worplesdon Green by Margaret Witts*



*Maypole Dancing on Wood Street Green*



*Geese on the Green*



*Jacobs Well*



*Storm*



*Flood*



*Frost*



*Snow*

ready to deal a deadly sting to an unlucky caterpillar or grub. Above in the skies hobby, nightjars and stonechat fly. Closer to the ground there is a plethora of dragonflies utilising both the aquatic habitat of Brook Pond to breed and rear young and the open heath to hawk for food and seek shelter. On the pond itself little grebe and mallard swim about foraging in the weed and heron stalk the reeds for unsuspecting morsels to eat.



Brittens pond - Whitmoor Common

Today the public uses the commons as a recreational resource. Gone are the days when the local economy counted on them for survival. The decline of traditional uses of common materials and the lifestyle that demanded them has led to a decline in those practices that allowed the commons to remain open without any form of intrusive management. The reduction in wood cutting, turf stripping and grazing means that the slow move towards woodland is inevitable unless works are carried out to prevent the afforestation of the open spaces. Hence the need in part for a countryside ranger. Without a doubt, though, the commons would best be managed and cared for by the people of Worplesdon. After all, there are far more parishioners than countryside rangers!

The new millennium is a time for change, but if today's society is the sum of all that has gone on before, then Worplesdon in the year 2000 inherits a legacy to protect the commons for the future. As stewards of the countryside, it is important that everyone plays a part in looking after the land,

however they may view it. When another book is written for the next millennium, I hope that the commons will still be as important to the citizens then as I know the commons are to those here today.

**The Commons of Worplesdon:**

- Littlefield Common
- Rickford Common
- Rydeshill Common
- Stringers Common
- Whitmoor Common
- Backside Common
- Broadstreet Common
- Chitty's Common
- Clasford Common
- Pitch Place Green
- Wood Street Green
- Perry Hill Green

**Geology**

Geologically speaking Worplesdon Parish is a distinctly mixed bag with north and south being surprisingly different. This can come as no surprise to those people who have commented on how different the Wood Street commons are from those in Worplesdon village itself.

Overshadowing the whole of the parish, and influencing the water that flows through it is the Hogs Back. Many thousands of years ago the clays that Wood Street lies upon were as high as the imposing chalky ridge that dominates this part of the county.

Some sixty million years ago an estuary or delta flowed through into a prehistoric sea in the region of the Thames basin. This flow into a wider water body allowed deposits of silt to build up, as the water velocity was lost and even the smallest particles could not be held in suspension. Over parts of Surrey these deposits were as deep as 300 metres. Over time the silt deposits were eroded, land formations were tilted and the landscape, in the broadest terms, became the familiar sight we see today.

These two main geological features have been a strong influence in the history of Worplesdon. The nutrient poor Bagshot beds are useless for farming and agriculture, but remain relatively dry so they became settled first though they were only ever sparsely cultivated by anyone. The adjacent heaths became places in which to forage and provided extensive grazing, supplementing the poor, subsistence lifestyle of common man.

The waterlogged clay soils beneath the chalky Hogs Back were uncultivable for different reasons. The wet land was arduous to till and crops withered in the cold conditions. Modern technology has made these areas viable and today we see farming even up the slopes of the chalky backbone of Surrey.

**Enthusiastic Gardeners: A Hundred Years and Still Digging!**

*"Gardeners no longer belong to big houses or little cottages. Gardeners are everybody!"* This was written in an article for Worplesdon garden enthusiasts from 1916 to 1966, and is just as true today.

We can trace an interest in gardening in the parish to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when a solid silver cup engraved *"Worplesdon Horticultural Show. Prize for the best Cottage Garden. Presented by Sir James Walker"* was first won in 1907.

The hand written minute books for the Horticultural Society only go back to 1936 when a Mr Knight was the secretary. He retired in 1959. Having served the Society for fifty years, he felt the time had now come for someone else to undertake the duties.

The Society was run by a committee of twenty-four. Its aims were *"to promote the better cultivation of vegetables, fruit and flowers, throughout the district"*. There were no lectures or visits, just the Annual Horticultural Show, which was the highlight of the village year. 'Subscribers' sponsored cash prizes for various classes which were divided into 'cottagers classes', for those who

did their own gardening, and 'open classes', open to everyone including professional gardeners.

The earliest full year of minutes describes the preparation for the 1938 show that was held (surprisingly) on a Wednesday in July, at the Memorial Hall. A large marquee (thirty-six yards by thirteen) with tables and hessian surrounds was supplied by Bull & Co at a cost of £12. Donated prizes included two twenty-eight pound bags of hop manure, valued at six shillings each, two twenty-eight pound bags of garden lime, valued at three shillings and six pence each, and six rose bushes valued five shillings and six pence, and a ham! There were special classes for Fairlands, Liddington Hall and Gravetts Lane residents for the best front garden with prizes of 10/6, 5/-, and 2/6, and a class for a collection of six vegetables with prizes of 7/6, 5/- and 2/6. Big money in those days! Two other classes were for *"three ways of cooking potatoes, shown on a plate"* and the King George monogram, 'GR' sown with mustard and cress.

A Mr Pelham paid £4 for the sole rights to provide fairground amusements and an application made for one police constable and two special constables to be present. There were sports for children and adults. The Ray-den Domino Dance Band was hired for forty-five shillings to play in the evening from 8.30 until midnight, whilst a conjurer who also displayed ventriloquism skills was more highly paid at three guineas to give two performances. Unfortunately the Women's League of Health & Beauty were unable to provide a display!

The committee meeting held after the show records a profit of thirty shillings: a big improvement on the 1937 show which lost £5 due to adverse weather.

Mrs Pat Trotter and Mrs Rachel Collier, residents on Fairlands, have memories of the pre-war shows. Mrs Trotter recalls that she entered a girl's needlework class for the best hand-made apron. Unfortunately she didn't win a cash prize, so she took her entry around the staff at Mingary where her

father, Mr Rix, was the gardener, asking for their opinion of her handiwork. She ended up being given more sympathy money than if she had won first prize. Mr Rix was a major exhibitor at the show.

Mrs Collier was the daughter of the long serving secretary Mr Knight. She remembers helping her parents set up the show in a marquee in the grounds of the Memorial Hall and her father sleeping in it overnight to keep the exhibits safe. She entered the show and eventually won an ornate solid silver teapot, presented by Lady Stott to the member of Worplesdon Women's Institute who gained most points. Mrs Collier was also successful for the next two years so won the trophy outright. Lady Stott then presented the Society with a beautiful silver rose bowl, but this time, not surprisingly, it was to be awarded annually.

During the Second World War, the show changed its emphasis. In 1940, the 'Worplesdon Grow More Food Committee' decided to run a series of lectures and asked the Horticultural Society and Worplesdon W.I. to assist both financially and creatively. There was no summer show that year but a small autumn vegetable show was organised.

The 1941 show finished with a dance in the evening with members of HM Armed Forces in uniform charged 1/6 entry, whilst members of the public were charged 2/-.

In 1942 the numbers attending the show were down from the previous year, mainly because there were no troops stationed in the village, much to the disappointment of the local girls!

In the 1943 show there was a display of various breeds of tame rabbits with a pair of rabbits being donated for a lucky number competition.

With the return of peace in 1945 the show reverted back to the way it was run in 1939. Many of the firms who previously provided prizes and put on exhibitions offered to support the show again. One interesting

class in 1946 was for a man's supper costing no more than 1/-.

In 1951 prizes offered for the show included a boiling fowl, an iced cake and five pedigree rabbits.

In 1956 the Merrist Wood principal Mr Hankinson "offered to fix up the enclosure for the alligators". Alligators at that time were kept as pets in the house adjacent to Brittens Pond and indeed starred in the film "An Alligator Called Alice". The minutes record that the Society donated £5 towards the Guildford Cathedral Fund.

The minute book finishes in 1959 when Mr Knight retired leaving a wealth of memories and information in beautiful copper plate writing. The next minute book dates from March 1969 when the Worplesdon Garden Club was founded "to promote interest in gardening and the Worplesdon Flower Show, to exchange plants and arrange for talks and visits to gardens".

The Horticultural Shows continued and the schedule for 15 July 1967 celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Show. There are ten shows "missing" from the date of 1907 on the first challenge cup, but the chairman's report on 'The First Fifty Years .....and The Next Fifty Years' makes interesting reading.

### *"The First Fifty Years"*

*"In the early years of the Show's history it was the main event in the district and took place on August Bank Holiday Monday thus enabling competitors to prepare their exhibits during the preceding Saturday and Sunday. No separate Shows were held at Wood Street or Jacob's Well, and the Fairlands estate was still farm land. As many as 800 exhibits were regularly entered for the competition which was staged in the grounds adjoining the present Memorial Hall. Most of the support came from the big set garden displays put on by Worplesdon place, Tangley Manor, Maryland and Merrist Wood. Mr Small of Pitch Place always exhibited his bees. These private estates kept large staffs of gardeners and it*

*was the custom to stage their exhibits during the night before the Show and for one of the undergardeners to act as night-watchman to prevent any damage. Rivalry was strong. At least fifty private gardens used to be entered for the classes open to best-kept flower gardens or best-kept vegetable gardens. This section was continued until two years ago when only three entries were received the last time this competition was offered. The other large group of keen supporters came from the cottage gardens everywhere in the village. Mrs Pat Trotter, who now lives at Fairlands, remembers that thirty years ago her father used to hire a lorry to take his produce to the Show and that the lorry was always filled to capacity with vegetables, flowers and fruit. Mr Rix won many awards. His family still prizes a huge silver cup which he won outright after three years of successful exhibiting. This cup, which is of ornate design and inscribed with full details of each award, will be on view at this year's Show. The majority of people living in Worplesdon district to-day are probably unaware of the years of hard work put into the Show by its past Presidents, enthusiastic members of the Committee and officers of the Society. The most outstanding, Mr Bill Knight was the Society's Secretary for the greater part of its existence.*

*"Things began to change in the mid-thirties. Fewer people went into private service and the big estates were forced to cut down on staff both inside and out-of-doors. Village people sought work in the nearby towns and had less time and energy to cultivate their gardens as a hobby when they came home in the evenings. Increased general prosperity brought weekend travel by car or motor-cycle to the majority of people and other interests distracted them. Each year the Show declined in popularity although there were still so many events offered to make the day a special one for Worplesdon. There were always several side-shows, the best remembered being Bowling for the live Pig which was given every year by Mr J.L. Brock. A full sporting programme was arranged for children and adults, including races, throwing the cricket ball, tugs-of-war and so on. All afternoon a Band played to add to the gaiety of the occasion - usually the*

*Gordon Boys' School Band or the Mayford Industrial Schools' Band, and there was a big Fancy dress Parade for the children who were allowed into the grounds free of charge provided they had entered for the Show. In those days, too, there were no entry fees for any of the classes. The climax of the day was a dance which continued late into the night and this event was included in the programme until 1959 when the attendance was so small that it was not considered worth running in the evening after future Shows.*

*"The first year to affect the uninterrupted record of the Show was 1940, but from then on the Committee managed to organise an austerity version of the event until the end of the war came and things gradually returned to normal. During the war years the emphasis was on 'Digging for Victory' and people began to supplement their rations by growing their own food, even sacrificing their lawns and flower-beds to do this as productively as possible. This helped to introduce large numbers of people to do-it-yourself gardening, first as a necessity and eventually for the pleasure and sense of achievement brought by successful results, and the challenge presented by the inevitable failures, not always to be blamed on the climate. These years taught many of us that vegetables freshly picked from one's own garden are unbeatable for flavour and food value.*

*"The past twenty-five years since that time have seen vast social changes in village and urban life. In Surrey many areas are occupied by commuters and there seems to be a welcome and increasing trend for these families to take part in their home district's activities. There is less incentive to travel at the weekends now that all the roads to the coast are crowded with traffic and the beaches even more crowded with other people on arrival. Parking problems make any excursion hardly worth the effort and gradually a return to the appreciation of the peace and quiet of one's own home surroundings is seen everywhere.*

### *"...and The Next Fifty Years*

*"In these days when labour is both difficult to find and too expensive for the average family to employ, the upkeep of a house and garden becomes each family's own responsibility and most people are their own interior decorator and jobbing gardeners. One of the most interesting developments as a direct result of this is the new and fascinating art of flower arrangement. Worplesdon has its own Floral Club which was formed three years ago and now meets on the second Tuesday in each month at 3.00 p.m. at Maryland, Worplesdon. The members are mostly beginners and learn not only from experts but by helping each other as they practise using a variety of materials and containers for floral art arrangements. ...For the first time a special cup is to be awarded to the Best in Show in the Floral Art classes and it is hoped that a really splendid display will be presented for the visitors to admire. The amateur gardener often plans his flower garden with house decoration in mind, thinking ahead to the bare months when variegated leaves, berries, dried flower and seed heads can be used to advantage.*

*"These days there are so many aids to the amateur who has little time at his disposal. There is the comparatively new cult for 'instant gardening' which means that almost any shrub can be bought to fill a gap in a flower bed at almost any season of the year and immediately put into position out of the polythene bag or pot in which it grew. There are sweet peas which do not need elaborate supports, there are herbaceous plants which need little or no staking, there are chrysanthemums reputed to flower for nearly nine months of the year! Gardeners no longer belong to big houses or little cottages. Gardeners are everybody, and we all hope that the second fifty years of the Worplesdon District Horticultural Society will show an increase in the competitive spirit amongst amateurs, not only in garden produce and floral arrangements, but in the domestic and handicraft sections as well, for adults and children alike - not hoping for perfection, but producing and exhibiting the very best each*

*one can do by his or her own efforts. Why don't you try this year?"*

The silver cup won by Mr Rix, and on display at the 1967 show, was later given to the Horticultural Society by Mrs Pat Trotter. The 1968 show was held at Merrist Wood and attracted 1,500 visitors. There was a fancy dress competition for the prettiest entry which was won by Victoria Hope-Walker as a bride. Sarah Hope-Walker, as the eponymous 'Heidi', Nicola Hope-Walker as a fairy and Vanessa Hope-Walker as Red Riding Hood won honourable mentions.

Over 2,000 people attended the 1970 show, when there was a bonniest baby competition, judged by secret ballot.

The show schedule for 1971 included a new attraction - the West Surrey Rabbit Fanciers Show with nearly 100 classes to view. The Worplesdon Garden Club staged an exhibition illustrating amateur gardening and the Show Committee asked exhibitors to donate their entries for sale at a produce stall at the end of the afternoon. This, together with a jumble sale in the autumn, was to raise money to help run the show rather than have to rely on subscribers' donations.

By 1974 the show was beginning to run into trouble, as the Committee found it difficult to recruit enough volunteers to organise it. Since the formation of the Garden Club in 1969, members had been encouraged to exhibit and help steward the horticultural side of the show, but the Club did not feel it was able to assist in the running of the fete. So a Worplesdon Village Fete Committee was set up so that the show and fete could be run together. In 1980 the trustees of the Horticultural Society transferred the cups and trophies to the custody and control of the Garden Club. These cups are:

- 1907 The Cottage Garden Cup
- 1908 The Schofield & Slyfield Cup
- 1925 The Walker Perpetual Challenge Cup
- 1934 The Eb Terry Challenge Cup
- 1951 The Worplesdon Horticultural Society Challenge Cup

- 1961 The Lady Stott Women's Institute Silver Rose Bowl
- 1974 The Cranstoun Cup

At the 1981 show Mrs Valerie Wild of Frosbury Farmhouse won all seven cups, including the W.I. Rose Bowl - the first time that this has happened in the show's history.



In the early 1990s the Village Fete Committee disbanded and now the horticultural show stands alone. It is usually held on the second Saturday in July at the Memorial Hall and has classes for vegetables, fruit, flowers, pot plants, cookery, photography and children's classes. The 1999 show included a class for "a gardening disaster", which was hotly contested, with the winner being a very dead dwarf acer. The cups are held for one year only and small plaques are given to the winners. Money prizes are given only to junior prizewinners. To encourage beginners, no exhibitor can win a cup for more than three consecutive years and a cup is awarded to the novice with the highest number of points.

Since 1973, Worplesdon Garden Club has taken part in quizzes between local clubs - Fairlands, Wood Street and Jacob's Well. In 1982, Worplesdon presented the winner, Jacob's Well, with a Rose Bowl and from then on the annual quiz became known as the Jacob's Well Rose Bowl Quiz with more teams from surrounding districts asking to join in.

The programme for the club includes talks, visits to member's gardens, the annual show, quizzes and a Christmas party. In 1997 the club received a £1,334 windfall from a free share issue when the Alliance & Leicester Building Society became a bank. It was decided that some of the money should be used for a conducted tour of the house and gardens at Sutton Place. That was the month it was placed on the market for £25 million although no one made an offer after our visit!

Other scheduled events for 1999-2000 included talks on 'Sex and the Single Plant', 'Floral Photography', 'Trees and Shrubs', 'The Skeleton Coast and Namibia', 'Spring Gardens and the Mixed Border'. The July afternoon visit to four gardens belonging to members and finishing with afternoon tea was very popular. The club continues to meet at Merrist Wood and is thriving with a membership of approximately fifty.

### **Merrist Wood**

The earliest form of the name Merrist Wood appears in the reign of Henry III as 'Merehurst', meaning the wood or wooded hill by the pond. It is possible that there was a residential property here as well, for it is recorded in 1317 that a John de Merehurst sued for land in Worplesdon. In 1163 Henry II declared all of Surrey to be forest. This did not necessarily imply a wooded area but just an area of land that was subject to forest law and where the ordinary laws did not apply.

Forest law brought a wide range of severe penalties. For instance, penalties applied to those who kept dogs or followed trades such as tanning which might affect the forest or worry the deer, but the penalties could often be avoided on payment of a fine. Deer were allowed free access to all land within the forest. All enclosures or fences around property and cultivated land had to be low enough for the deer to cross, or low sections of fence where the deer could leap had to be provided. Forest law continued until 1645 although the laws did relax after Magna Carta. Nevertheless the Merrist Wood of

## Worplesdon's Natural Heritage

1317 was just as likely to be troubled by deer as it is today.

In 1582 Merrist Wood was leased by Elizabeth I to Sir George More of Loseley for £3-16s per year. It then contained eighty-two acres of wood and wooded ground. This consisted of mature oak, ash and beech trees, together with the saplings needed to regenerate the wood. By 1605 the area had extended to one hundred acres but by 1839 only fifty-three acres remained.

The parish registers record, with slight variations in the spelling, the marriages or burials of several Merrists from 1570 to 1602. Thomas Shaw, in his will dated 1605, stated that after the death of his wife his house and land should pass to his brother and after that to his brother-in-law John Merrist. There was one condition: that John gave £5 every year to the poor of Worplesdon, fifty shillings on Christmas Eve and another fifty on Good Friday. The money was distributed at the discretion of the parson and the churchwardens. The charity still continues, and in 1998 the amount available for distribution was £15.31.

By 1664 the land was probably owned by the Martin family, who sold it in 1811 to John Peto Shrubbs, including "part of the farm called Merrist". In the 18<sup>th</sup> century they were clothiers in Godalming, and in 1841 a John Peyto Shrubbs lived at 7, Woodbridge Road, Guildford. However, the family did not reside in Worplesdon until 1881, when Charles Payto Shrubbs engaged Norman Shaw to build Merrist Wood House.



In his earlier days, Shaw worked with George Street, who designed the Law Courts in London. Shaw's style, however, was very different to Street's. Shaw wished to recapture a mediaeval atmosphere, so he designed Merrist Wood with a large oriel window overlooking a fine view to the Hogs Back, large chimney stacks and a square entrance hall rising to the full height of the house complete with minstrel gallery. It suffered very severely from a fire in 1977 but was rebuilt and stands to remind us of a past age when the staff included eleven gardeners, butler, footman, nanny, cook, parlour maid, lady's maid, two housemaids, two chauffeurs, two grooms and a game keeper. In 1918 it was sold to Mr Harold Arbutnot.

A local story relates how Mr Arbutnot was travelling on the London train with some friends, and they fell to discussing the price of houses. They asked Harold what he thought the value of his property might be, and decided the only way to find out was to place it on the market, see what was offered, and then withdraw it from sale. The truth of this tale is uncertain, but Merrist Wood was offered for sale a short time later.

On 14 May 1937 Surrey County Council approved a resolution to build a mental hospital on Merrist Wood. Apparently fourteen sites had been suggested as suitable but the council preferred Merrist Wood, and their minutes remarked that "Overtures for an agreed purchase having proved unavailing your committee recommend compulsory purchase". Letters of complaint poured in to the Surrey Advertiser, one of which asked if we were living in free England or Soviet Russia. Duncan Tovey, son of a former rector of Worplesdon, wrote that "the compulsory purchase of a house which is not for sale is quite indefensible...when so many large estates are on the market. No man will be able to feel he can safely call his home his own whether he is a landed proprietor, small holder or cottager. Such a state of affairs is contrary to the fundamental principles of justice in this country where dictatorial methods are not tolerated". Mr Scott reported

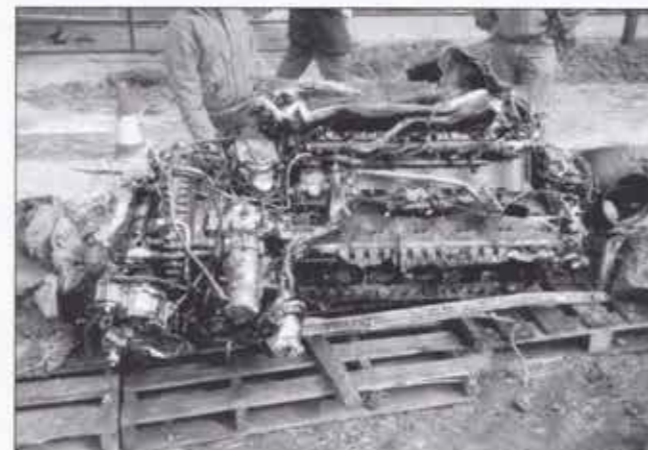
## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

that the owner told him he had never even been approached in the matter.

The Parish Council met on 22 June and passed a resolution objecting to the mental hospital. The villagers reported that surveyors had been taking measurements across the farm adjacent to Merrist Wood, belonging to Miss Cunliffe. Guildford Rural District Council had no alternative to turning down the application for planning permission since it contravened their own plans for the area which had been registered and approved with the Government under the Town and Country Planning Act. The Council appealed to the Minister of Health, who confirmed the compulsory purchase order. The Surrey County Council minutes for 25th October 1938 show the acquisition of the 610 acre Merrist Wood estate from Mr Harold Arbutnot for the sum of £44,000. He and his wife had lived there for twenty-one years. An exchange of lands was also agreed with Miss Cunliffe. Within a few months, war broke out. The Council used the house for offices and the hospital was never built.

On the night of 10 March 1941 six Halifax aircraft of Bomber Command took off from Yorkshire and bombed the docks and shipping at Le Havre from a height of 11,800 feet. On the return home one of them, L9489 (F-Freddie), was attacked by a British night fighter as it crossed the Hogs Back.

The engines and wing caught fire and the plane plummeted to the ground in the Merrist Wood estate. Only two of the crew survived. Although the surface wreckage was removed one engine remained buried.



This was located recently by the Croydon Aviation Archaeological Society and a plaque in memory of those who died was placed at the site, close to the fourteenth green of the golf course, on 9 March 1997.

After the War, Merrist Wood became an Agricultural College and Farm Institute. It has obtained many certificates over the years for its gardens at the Chelsea Flower Show once winning the 'Wilkinson Sword of Honour' for the best garden in the show. Students who qualify from the college are in demand throughout the world. Student accommodation, a library and indoor dressage area, and other buildings have been added. Today the college concentrates mainly on arboriculture, equestrian skills and golf green management. It is now an independent college known as Merrist Wood College.

Amongst those letters of June 1937 was one signed 'A lover of Surrey' which said of Merrist Wood, "It delights all lovers of nature with its quite wonderful series of spring and summer carpets, from the early anemones, primroses and wood violets or the countless multitudes of 'Lent lilies' which follow, to the enchanting sheets of lilies of the valley, rose-coloured campion, and spires of blue labiates. Beyond and around this fairyland stretch another 450 acres of grassland and other cultivated crops, besides the beautiful gardens of Merrist Wood House, and all of this property has been generously and freely shared for many years by the present owners, who have thrown it open to large parties from London slums to village fetes, cricket matches, school treats, Mother's Union and Women's Institute gatherings, besides countless other needs of the parish and neighbourhood".

Merrist Wood still abounds with flowers and the golf course is deliberately managed to provide a wide range of habitats for wildlife and plants. The college arranges tours of these for the public during the summer.



*Entrance to Merrist Wood - Below: 2026*



## Local Lives

### The Christmas Family of Rickford Bakery

The business of J.A. Christmas was founded by James Christmas. He sold it in 1907, but shortly afterwards it was bought back by the Christmas family and taken over by Ernest Frank Christmas, James' son.

At that time all the baking was done in faggot ovens. There was a tiny old bake house with adjoining flour loft, and underneath a place for animals and the horse and cart. There had apparently once been a slaughterhouse on the site. In those early days they concentrated on bread, a few buns, groceries and sliced bacon. Their delivery van was the first in the area.



Ernest Frank and his wife Maud had three daughters, Winnie, Beatrice and Margery, and two sons James Arthur (Jim) and Sidney (Sid). On leaving school Jim did part of his apprenticeship at the Co-Op then went to his uncle at Capel to learn the trade. At the age of eighteen, he started work with his father, while his brother Sid joined the army. Jim married Bertha in 1941 at Pirbright church and they lived at Fairlands. But when Margery married, they joined Ernest Frank at the bakery and Bertha took over the business. She recalls what a change of lifestyle this brought. The old house made for a considerable amount of scrubbing and polishing. Additionally, Bertha helped mix the dough by hand, throwing it onto a table, kneading it again then scaling it and rolling it into shape before placing it in tins to be baked in the coal-fuelled ovens. Flour was purchased from Bottings Mill and Heath Mill at Fox Corner. She also undertook the

deliveries when drivers were on holiday, served in the shop and raised their two sons Tony and Raymond (who later learned the trade at technical college and opened a shop in Ash).

In the late 1950s the retail deliveries were phased out, and the business turned to wholesale trade as well as increasing the confectionery lines. Jim opened another shop at Aldershot but due to illness, had to retire, leaving his manager in charge of the bakery. The family still runs a flourishing trade in bread and cakes, as well as take-away meals, pizzas, and refreshments for passing trade. Bertha's smiling face is still seen behind the counter as she works among the staff. Her two great grandchildren will ensure that the Christmas name will live on into the new millennium.

### The Ellis Family - Lantana Nursery and Brooke Farm

Farming and the nursery business were in the blood of the Ellis family at Lantana Nursery and Brooke Farm. John William, son of a farm bailiff, was introduced to the business by Fred Street at the tender age of twelve. In 1916 he was called up and was forced to leave his wife, Caroline and their three young children.



*John William Ellis*

As their cottage was tied to John's job, Caroline had to find rented accommodation

and manage on a mere pittance a week. John came home shell-shocked from the war, and after moving around various estates as head gardener, finally settled at Egham.

Jack, the eldest son, became a Reservist in the Royal Signals and his brother Don an apprentice drummer in the East Lancashire Regiment. From an allowance of two shillings per week Don had to buy all the cleaning materials for his kit. Entertainment came in the form of silent films, followed by a bag of chips bought for three old pennies before going off to bed at 9.00 – right the way up to eighteen! On his recall to the regular army, Don taught recruits and was promoted first to Staff Sergeant Instructor in the Small Arms School Corps and later Company Sergeant Major Instructor. Meanwhile Jack was in the Burma campaign and his bravery was mentioned in dispatches. Between 1941–44 Fred drove lorries for the Spare Parts Department in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, but was invalided out through deafness caused by gunfire.

In 1946 they moved to Worplesdon, which offered more land to expand the business as well as a smaller house as Mary Ellis had married and moved away. They bought a dilapidated bungalow, set amidst an overgrown orchard that had been part of Bridley Manor Estate. Don and his younger brother Fred prepared the new business, while their mother and father, with the help of Jack, kept the Virginia Water business going for two years. The former occupant of Lantana was a dealer in glass, which meant the land was full of buried pieces of glass. There were even boxes of it buried under the floor of the house. When Brooke Farm, straddling the Hoe Stream, was purchased from the executors of Miss Thompson, they established a milk herd of twenty cows, and also farmed pigs, beef cattle and turkeys. It was a team effort, employing no outside staff except two land girls during the war. These two proved to be more of a hindrance than a help, once pulling up all the new seedlings instead of the weeds!

Mrs Ellis died in 1958, her husband in 1966 and Jack in 1995. December 1999 saw the

closure of Lantana, but Fred is still in business at Brooke Farm.

### The Terry Family



*Eb Terry*

Ebenezer Terry (b 1894) came from Newbury as a qualified coachbuilder and started work at Dennis Brothers. During the war, he worked at the experimental wooden airframe shop of Fairy Aviation at Hayes, Middlesex. There he met Alice Liliam Primmer, daughter of Mr and Mrs Charles Primmer from St Mary's Cottages, Worplesdon. They married in 1919 and later returned to 1 Thatchers Lane, Worplesdon, where they remained until their deaths. When Charles Primmer died in 1920, Ebenezer Terry took over the wheelwright and blacksmith business, which he ran with his brother-in-law Leonard Primmer. Ebenezer was an actively public-spirited person.

He was Councillor and Chairman of the Worplesdon Parish Council for many years, People's Warden at St Mary's church, and Chairman and Secretary of both Worplesdon Cricket and Football Clubs. He was also on the Committees for Worplesdon's flower show, Men's Club and various village fetes. His war time fundraising included National Savings Week (1941) Prisoner of War Fund Week (1942) Wings for Victory Week (1943) Salute the Soldier Week (1944) National Savings Thanksgiving Week (1945) and many other events.

Ebenezer and Alice had three children: Basil (1920) Sheila (1922) and Roy (1927). All were educated at Perry Hill School, then the Royal Grammar School or the Guildford County School. All three worked in local government around the time of the war: Basil with Surrey County Council, Sheila and Roy with Guildford Rural District Council.

Basil was called up in 1939 and served in the Royal Armoured Corps, finally as adjutant of the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry. Sheila was a volunteer nurse with the British Red Cross Society, during which time she and her father (who was Rescue Party Leader and Assistant Commandant of the Surrey 59 Detachment BRCS) were first on the scene at Worplesdon Place when it was struck by randomly dropped bombs. She later joined the Women's Auxiliary Airforce. Roy was a member of the local Home Guard before serving in the Royal Armoured Corps with the 5<sup>th</sup> Royal Enniskillen Dragoon Guards.

After the war, Basil and Roy worked for the family business, while Sheila became a teleprinter operator with the GPO. In 1954 Basil emigrated to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) where he managed the agricultural machinery department for a large distributor of Ford Motors. Roy spent thirty-seven years in armoured vehicle research and development for the Ministry of Defence. All three are now retired. Basil and Roy both played football for Worplesdon, and both have captained the cricket 1<sup>st</sup> XI. Basil was also involved in local amateur dramatics.

### 'Maryland' Lives



The Old Rectory at Worplesdon dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1766 a turret and bell were taken by the incumbent Dr Burton, and placed on the church tower. The bell was rung towards the end of the sermon to warn the coachmen and footmen, who stabled their horses at the inn, to prepare for their masters' departure. The turret still remains on the church tower to this day.

Part of the Old Rectory was burned down and rebuilt in 1828, providing the fine wall of Victorian decorative brickwork. The rear entrance boasts a porch supported by classical columns, complementing those on the front entrance. Over the rear porch extends a balcony that has no access from within, probably because it faces east. Another rear wall has a beautiful wisteria, and the rear grounds have a magnificent old deciduous cypress tree, a holm oak, three plane trees and many shrubs, together with a tulip tree planted by Lord Elphinstone in 1928. Sir James Walker of Worplesdon Place was the first buyer when the Old Rectory and Glebe land was sold in 1913, while the Rev John Collingwood Gainsford Bruce MA was the incumbent at St Mary's.

In 1918 Lord Elphinstone bought the Old Rectory, including thirty acres of land, outhouses, pigsties and a barn, and renamed it Maryland. In the 1920s he added a gardener's cottage with flat above for staff, and had the house internally refurbished and the gardens redesigned.

However, he did not reside here permanently, but often returned to Scotland, renting out the house under the watchful eye of his Scottish caretaker Miss Lizzie Wyllie.

The Hon Andrew C Elphinstone, younger son of Lord Elphinstone and nephew of the Queen, was married in 1946 to a Lady in Waiting of Princess Elizabeth. He had met his bride in the lift at Buckingham Palace, whilst he was living there, and working at the War Office. An old Etonian, he succeeded Canon Sidney F Cornell as rector of St Mary's Church in 1953, and made his home at Maryland. Princess Elizabeth was godmother to their daughter Rosemary, and

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attended Rosemary's Christening at St Mary's Church, accompanied by Princess Margaret and Lt Philip Mountbatten.



The children of Maryland, Jennifer, Rosemary and James spent the early years of their childhood in the care of little Nanny Farthing, who was only four feet high and who had been nanny to their mother. Horse riding was a favourite pursuit for the children, who kept ponies at Maryland and sometimes visited the stables of Miss Borrell. During this time the head gardener was Mr Waugh. Jim Horton, a well-known local man, later took over.

The garden at Maryland has offered itself for many functions in aid of charities. The Hon Mrs Elphinstone, taking a keen interest in the local W.I. and Mothers' Union, has welcomed fellow members and friends to her home. One anecdote tells of the Brownies' picnic. Whilst the girls revelled on the lawn, they were unaware of a hungry visitor. The visitor was a friendly elkhound who ate their entire picnic meal, much to everyone's amazement.

The marriage in 1967 of Rosemary Elphinstone with James Pige Leschallas gave the village another opportunity to welcome Her Majesty the Queen, when she arrived at Worplesdon Station en route for Maryland. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev

John Hoskyns and the Rev A. Elphinstone, and the reception afterwards at Marylands. In March 1975 the village was shocked to learn of the death of the much-respected Rev Elphinstone. On the death of his uncle in Scotland, James took the title of Lord Elphinstone and settled on the estate in Scotland until his own untimely death.

Mrs Woodroffe, as she later became, and her daughter Rosemary and husband, continue the longstanding tradition of life at Maryland, with the added pleasure of visits from her ten grandchildren and one great grandchild.

### Lord Swaythling of Bridley Manor

Louis Samuel moved from Liverpool to London in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. His son Montagu founded a banking partnership in 1853 and added Montagu to his surname in 1894 when he received a baronetcy. He sat as MP for Whitechapel, and was created Lord Swaythling in 1907. His second son Edwin Montagu became Secretary of State for India.

The third Lord Swaythling who resided at Bridley Manor, Worplesdon was a Liberal peer who served briefly as a partner of Samuel Montagu, the family bankers. His chief interests, however, were dairy farming and road safety. His most notable legislative achievement was to pilot the Bill which made rear bicycle lights compulsory. He died in 1990 and his son David Montagu succeeded to the peerage.

### Bede Clifford, GCMG, CB, MVO

Bede Edmund Hugh Clifford was born in July 1890 in the South Island of New Zealand. He was the youngest son of William Hugh Clifford, later Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, and Catherine Mary Bassett.

When World War One broke out, he joined the Royal Fusiliers and was commissioned. After being gassed, he was invalided out of service, and in 1917 was appointed aide-de-camp and later private secretary, to Sir Ronald Munro-Ferguson, Governor-General of Australia. In 1920 the Prince of Wales visited Australia and Bede Clifford was awarded the

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M.V.O. (Member of the Royal Victoria Order) for his services to the Prince during this visit.

In 1921 he went to South Africa and first became secretary to Prince Arthur of Connaught, the Governor-General, then in 1924 to his successor, Earl of Athlone. In 1928 Clifford was appointed as the first representative of the United Kingdom to the Union of South Africa. For these services he was awarded the C.M.G. (Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George) by the Dominions Office (an honour that was promoted to Knight Grand Cross of the Order on his retirement in 1945) and later the C.B. (Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath) by the Prime Minister. He was also made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, presumably in recognition of being the first white man to cross the Kalahari desert.

In 1931 he left South Africa to become Governor of the Bahamas - at forty-one the youngest governor in the colonial service. Two years later he was knighted.

His next appointment was Governor of Mauritius in 1937 and then, in 1942 he became Governor of Trinidad, where the Battle of the Atlantic was of major concern. For these services he was awarded the United States Legion of Merit.

In October 1925 he had married Alice Devin, daughter of an eminent banker from Cleveland, Ohio. Their three daughters Anne (Frances Mary), Pandora (Patricia) and Atlanta (Alice Devin) were renowned for their beauty and wit.

After the Second World War, Bede Clifford retired on medical advice and bought Queen Anne Farm at Jacob's Well. The Cliffords were friendly with the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, who at that time owned Sutton Place. Socialising between the two homes continued after Paul Getty bought Sutton Place.

After his death in 1969 he was buried in the family vault at Chudleigh. His wife returned to America, but continued to visit her

daughters at Queen Anne Farm until it was split up and sold in 1976. Lady Clifford died in 1980.

### The Philps Family

In 1912, Mabel Annie Louise and Frank Philps came to Perry Hill, to take on the farrier's business previously run by Mr Charman. Frank's brother, Fred Philps was already living opposite the Forge at Sunnyside, still so named today. They brought with them their four young children Ellen (Nell), Percy, William (Bill) and young Frank.

During the First World War, Frank worked single-handed, shoeing for the cattle testing station and various military camps on Bullswater Common. Between 1916-20 John (Jack), Isobel (Belle) and Ronald (Ron) were born. Frank died at the age of 54, leaving Mabel to support these seven children.



Frank Philps

The eldest son, Frank, made his own way by taking on various jobs outside the family. At one time he was a steward on a liner, and later butler to the Arbuthnot Family at Merrist Wood, and finally he established his own taxi business. Nell undertook the housekeeping, and often took Frank's two children under her wing. Percy and William left Perry Hill School at an early age and undertook tasks to make a living for the family. John spent much time with his aunt and uncle at Sunnyside but still had chores

to do at home. Eventually he became manager of various shoe departments in Guildford and Aldershot. Isobel worked for a local solicitor, until she was needed to deal with the general office work and management of the shop at home. Ronald was the baby and tearaway of the family. His favourite occupations of motorbikes and scrambling often caused local residents to remark "there goes that mad Philps boy again!"

In all respects, Mabel had her hands full. At first she made and sold sweets from her front room. The Forge was converted into a general store and workshop, and she negotiated the licensing and installation of petrol pumps and Pratt's Motor oil cabinets. Accumulators for radios and batteries for cars were charged up for customers, and a car-hire service became available. In the early days of motoring, petrol was 1/5d for a gallon, pumped by a manually operated handle. Prior to this, Mabel delivered the petrol in cans, in her pony and trap. And so Perry Hill garage was born. In the 1930s they acquired their first Morris car, and Bill and Percy rode various motor bikes.



Bill Philps

In 1936 Percy married Muriel at St Luke's Church, Burpham. At the time she was working for Dr Cranstoun at Hollow Trees. They made their home in Gooserye Road and the following year their daughter Anne was born.

The family was already selling and delivering newspapers, which came by train from Waterloo to Woking station, where they were collected in the early morning often in hazardous pea-souper fogs. The local 'Surrey Advertiser' and 'Surrey Times' were picked up weekly from Guildford.

John was the only other son to marry, in 1938. As his bride Edna was Muriel's sister, this made the unusual situation of two brothers marrying two sisters. Sylvia, their daughter was born in 1939 and after John came home from his service in the Royal Corps of Signals they had a son named Ronald, much to the delight of grandma Philps.

Meanwhile, Mabel, Ellen and Muriel provided refreshments for the troops stationed nearby. The little wooden room at the back of the house was frequently filled with laughing lads enjoying steaming cups of tea and chunks of fruitcake on bitterly cold days. Many of the soldiers made entries in an autograph book kept by the family, and some of the officers came in to play the piano or have a singsong. Sometimes the Philps daughters were allowed to attend dances at the Memorial Hall - always accompanied, of course. Mabel's granddaughter Anne remembers being sent off in disgrace as a small child for refusing to speak to one of the officers, who was not in the least put out, but who commented that the little girl certainly had a mind of her own!

In the ensuing years, Nell and Muriel served luncheons and afternoon teas set at 2/6d per head, often in the pretty garden cultivated by Percy and Bill. Mabel, often referred to as "the old dragon", worked hard and could be kind under her stern exterior. She added to her premises, having an extra storey built on what was originally a bungalow. The newly enlarged shop, well stocked and ably run by Isobel, continued to draw a wide variety of local residents and passing trade. William looked after the now electrically-drawn pumps and the car maintenance with Percy, who was much in demand for cycle repairs.

The news delivery route became more extensive, covering an area including Bagshot Road, Fox Corner, Burdenshot Hill Gooserye, Fairlands, Gravetts Lane, Liddington Hall and Worplesdon Road. Much of this was carried out by family members, later helped by lads from the village. As the contents of newspapers and magazines increased, so did the weight, which necessitated the use of cars for ease and speed. The family absorbed the cost of this rather than passing it on to their customers.

In 1953 Anne joined the team, and became especially involved in the shop and the news deliveries. She fondly remembers bygone commodities like loose sugar weighed up into blue bags, and biscuits sold loose from large tins. Draught vinegar, stone ginger beer bottles, siphons of soda water, Reckitts Blue, Puritan and Sunlight soap. Later there were jars of sweets, especially jelly babies, enjoyed mostly by grown men. The children bought sherbet dabs, gob stoppers, chews, shrimps, liquorice sticks, bubble gum and lemonade powder. There was never a dull moment.

Sadly, Bill suffered fatal injuries in a road accident at the age of 80 in 1989. Isobel and Muriel were in poor health, so it was left to Anne to continue with John's help for as long as she could. After seventy-seven years of business, the Philps era ended on 1 July 1989, and Perry Hill Antiques now occupies the site as we move into the new millennium.

Harry Cater



The man who was called 'Mr Worplesdon' by his friends and colleagues, was born in Dorset in 1909, and came to Guildford after the death of his father. He attended Sandfield School and started his working life at Grimmonds Bakers, but tried several occupations before deciding to go into the motor trade at Jordan's in Godalming. He owned and rode a Norton motorcycle that was his pride and joy. He married Mollie in 1934 and they bought a new home in Liddington Hall Drive for £495 - which his friends said was a waste of money!

A member of the Territorial Army, he was one of the first to serve at Dunkirk and one of only twenty in his unit to survive the Battle of Arnhem. He had a brother in the Navy, another in the Air Force, a sister and a younger brother, Clem, who still resides in Worplesdon. His own three children Terry, Pat and Yvonne grew up during the war years, and so had only rare weekend leaves to spend with their father.

On his return to Worplesdon he became involved with the Fairlands, Liddington Hall and Gravetts Lane Community Association (FLGCA) and along with a few other keen residents of Fairlands, negotiated the purchase of a disused Nissen hut on Fairlands Estate. This became the first centre for the FLGCA. Many years later in 1963 he was also involved in the fund raising and the building of the current community centre. In the same year he joined Worplesdon Parish Council where he served, as Chairman from 1974, until his death in 1986. He was a Trustee of the Worplesdon Memorial Hall and ground, Chairman of the National Federation of Community Associations and was Secretary, Vice Chairman, Chairman and finally President of the FLGCA. He was wicketkeeper for Fairlands Cricket team, and when he retired from active play he would still spectate.

He was responsible for many fundraising activities in Worplesdon, his favourite being the Royal Surrey School for Nursing. Each year, when the Worplesdon and Fairlands Christmas parties were held, his grandchildren were puzzled to find that

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Grandad was always missing when Father Christmas was there, and that the jovial distributor of presents shared their Grandad's brown shoes! The main hall of the community centre is dedicated to him and is known as the Harry Cater Hall. A road has also been named after him: Cater Gardens in Worplesdon.

A genuinely public-spirited person, the highlight of his life was his invitation to one of the Queen's garden parties for his services to the community. After his death, one of the many moving tributes that appeared in the 'Surrey Advertiser' described him simply as "the spirit of Worplesdon".

His son Terry, a lifelong resident of Worplesdon (with the exception of three and a half years spent living and working with his family in Zambia from 1971) is following in his father's footsteps. Married to Zenda and with two children, Joanne and Michael, they live in Gravetts Lane. After forty-two years playing and being involved in the running of Worplesdon Football and Cricket Clubs; as Hon Secretary for the Football Club for twelve years, Chairman of the Cricket Club for ten years, followed by President for a further ten years, he is now responsible for the square at the Cricket Ground.

Terry has now retired from a successful career in Telecommunications. He has been a Parish Councillor for several years and is a Trustee of the Memorial Hall. He was also Chairman of the committee responsible to the Parish Council for the production of this book.

### Sidney H. Sime

Crown Cottage, Perry Hill, which used to be an old coaching inn, became the home of Sidney Herbert Sime and his wife Mary Susan (nee Pickett) in the early 1900s. Sime had an old stable in his garden, which he converted into their studio and where he housed many works by artists he admired, and produced a great amount of his own.



The large living room contained a gallery, a considerable library and a wide chimney that had once almost certainly been used for curing bacon, and reputedly used for harbouring those wanted by the police. There were queer windows, doors and cupboards in most unexpected places, and on the walls hung a number of Sime's own paintings. Among his local friends were Duncan Tovey, living next door in The Old Posthouse and Adrian Beach, another Worplesdon artist.

'Sidney Sime, Master of the Mysterious' by Simon Heneage and Henry Ford states "Sidney Sime was an artist of great originality and variety, whose best work was comparable with Aubrey Beardsley, Arthur Rackham and Kay Nielsen. His mysterious and fantastic illustrations were published in the well-known weekly and monthly magazines of the turn of the century, such as the 'Strand', 'Pall Mall' and the 'Idler' and were considered sensational at the time. He was also a graphic humorist, theatre designer and book illustrator, whose long and harmonious collaboration with Lord Dunsany, the Irish storyteller and playwright, was uniquely creative.

"Sime had a meteoric career - he rose from pit-boy to artist in a few years and made his name in London largely as an illustrator, though he was also a painter of distinction. Among his friends and colleagues on the London scene were Augustus John, Max

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Beerbohm, Frank Harris, Howard de Walden and the composer Joseph Holbrooke."



Imperturbable Boatman: "Haud up yer rod, man! Ye have'm! Ye have'm!" Cartoon for *Punch*, 1902

Macfall writes in an article "It requires no great prophet to foretell that Sime will be one of our greatest black and white artists..." Whilst Lord Dunsany writes in a letter "I don't know where imagination has ever gone further in black and white. Very few artists had his mental range. I do not know any man who could bring such sense of wonder down upon paper with lamp-black and Indian ink."

James Thorp, who first met Sime at the Langham Sketch Club, described him as having a "slim figure slightly above average height, with a rather large head, crowned with a thick mop of black hair. His family called him "Tad" short for Tadpole... He had a thin black beard which grew in two points... He was quiet and reserved in temperament because of his wisdom but he had a quick and biting gift of repartee, more conclusive than cruel. He preferred a few friends, choice kindred spirits, to a crowd."

It is written of Sime that after rising late in the morning, he would spend much time at the New Inn, Worplesdon, an attractive three storey building with an 18<sup>th</sup> century facade, now demolished. Here, according to Mrs Wadey, daughter of the landlord, he would sketch caricatures of the customers, who were mostly local working men and tradesmen. These were later hung in the bar for all to view. Many of these caricatures may

be seen today in the Sime Memorial Gallery, housed in the Worplesdon Memorial Hall. This man of many parts owned a telescope and a microscope and was known to conduct experiments with electricity. On one occasion he nearly blew the roof off his studio whilst dabbling with a primitive chemistry set.

In the later part of his life, Sime disappeared from public view, becoming a recluse in his country cottage. He died on 22 May 1941 and is buried in the graveyard at St Mary's Church. In 1949 Mary Sime died in tragic circumstances, and her will bequeathed all Sime's pictures that remained in her possession to the Trustees of Worplesdon Memorial Hall for the creation of a Sime Memorial Gallery, which she endowed with the proceeds from the sale of Crown Cottage. Joan Tovey, wife of Duncan Tovey, became the first curator and assembled, catalogued and arranged the exhibits, assisted by Adrian Beach. The Gallery opened in 1956 to great local interest. During the ensuing years the gallery has remained under the watchful eye of the trustees and caretakers of the hall. Visitors are welcomed to the gallery, by appointment with the caretaker.

### William Bovill



William Bovill, a younger son of Benjamin Bovill of Wimbledon, was born at Allhallows, Barking on 26 May 1814. Instead of attending university he began his legal career by accepting articles with a firm of solicitors in London. During his articulated training he

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was praised as "remarkable for the zeal with which he pursued his legal studies", and as a result became a member of the Middle Temple and was called to the bar in 1841. He was largely engaged in commercial cases and became a QC in 1855.

In 1844, at the age of thirty, he married Maria Bolton, eldest daughter of John Henry Bolton of Lee Park, Blackheath. They first lived in London, then moved to Worplesdon and made their home at Worplesdon Lodge (later named Worplesdon Place). The census of 1861, taken on a day when William was presumably elsewhere on legal business, gives an impression of the lifestyle of an upper class Victorian family.

There were fourteen staff altogether, including a groom, a maid for the lady of the house and another for the young ladies of the house, a governess, two nurses and two nursery maids. The house was run by a butler and an underservant, a cook, a kitchen maid and two housemaids. Presumably a valet and coachman were also employed but were absent attending their master. At home with Maria Bovill were four sons and four daughters, aged between nine months and fourteen years, of whom only the two youngest had been baptised in Worplesdon. Another son, who was later appointed by his father as clerk of assizes of the western circuit, may have been away studying at the time of this census. In return for generous donations towards the church restoration, Sir William was granted a large plot of common land adjoining Worplesdon Place. This included the pond that can still be seen in the grounds, which had previously been the village pond and was used to water the horses grazing on the common.

William Bovill and his wife were very involved in both parish and town activities and in 1857 he was elected MP for Guildford. From 1858-72 he was also President of Guildford Working Men's Institution (now the Guildford Institute which has a photographic portrait of him in its library). He was Justice of the Peace, and the Worplesdon Agricultural Association "almost owed its existence to his interest in agricultural pursuits, and his strong

desire to encourage those connected with them". In 1870 he was made an honorary Doctor of Civil Law of Oxford, and he was also a Fellow of the Royal Society.

At first he took no leading part in the House of Commons, but later became more active after 1860 until on 6 July 1866 he was appointed Solicitor General under Lord Derby. By November of the same year he had become Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and had to give up his seat in the Commons. His most famous hearing was the Tichbourne trial.

In August 1873 he gave out the prizes at the annual ploughing match of the Worplesdon Ploughing Association which took place at Hurst Farm. According to the Surrey Advertiser he also gave a "long address" which appears to have been typical of Sir William, in which he referred to Worplesdon as a place where he and his family had passed so many years of happiness. A similar speech was given at the annual dinner of the Association held at the Angel Hotel in Guildford.

Sir William died on 1 November 1873. The 'Surrey Advertiser' reported of his funeral: "During the time the sad and solemn ceremony was taking place at Kingston all the shops in Guildford were partially closed, and the bells of the churches were heard tolling".

### The Osgood Family of Bonnishott Farm



Abraham John Osgood, (born 1885) came to Worplesdon with his parents James and Lucy, as a sixteen year old. They lived in one of the cottages, now demolished, at May's Hill, Gooserye Road. James Osgood farmed Bonnishott Farm for its owner Arthur Kelly, whilst Abraham was the gardener at Hockley Lands. In 1929 Abraham took over the farm from his father.

He married Caroline Merritt, of Worplesdon in 1906, and they had nine children, the youngest of whom was called Gordon, after Dr Cranstoun. Betty Osgood (now Cater) recalls receiving sixpence from Dr Cranstoun for being a good girl and how, as children they helped around the farm, collecting eggs, milking cows and haymaking in the summertime.

In addition to farming, Abraham (known as Jack) was licensee of the Jolly Farmer, Whitmoor Common from 1938-43. His rent to the Brewery was £20 a year, whilst his weekly takings were 7/6. He also had a habit of giving beer away to the soldiers billeted at Heather Court on Whitmoor Common.

Mr & Mrs Osgood passed away in 1967, leaving eighteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Gordon (locally known as Sam) took over the farm for a number of years until the Hockley Lands Estate was sold.

### The Miller Family of Bonnishott Wood Farm



In 1923, Robert and Mary Miller moved from Scotland, to farm thirty-five rented acres opposite the Osgood's farm. Cornflower growing was prolific in this area, and the flowers had to be picked, packed and dispatched to Worplesdon station en route to Covent Garden, priced at 1/9 for a dozen bunches. As well as cornflower growing, for which up to twenty part-time pickers were hired, the Millers transported flowers and empty crates for other growers, ploughed and sowed wheat, tended gardens, sold logs, picked fruit and undertook numerous other tasks. In these days the land was fertilised with a selection of dung, fish manure, pot-ash, and bones - reassuringly organic!

Robert and Mary's children, James, Margot, Watson and Robert, attended Perry Hill School and later took an active part in farm life. In 1936 the White House, later to become their home, was built at a cost of about £300.

During the 1940s Robert rented extra fields at Kemishford. His sons Jim and Bob were now doing the ploughing. At around this time, the farm diary notes the acquisition of a telephone and a wireless set with accumulators.

Robert Miller died in 1974 - his fifty-first year on the farm, and his ashes were scattered on the land he had loved so much.

Jim married, and raised four children. In 1948 Margot married Eddie McCulloch, a professional footballer, and they had five children. Watson died in 1998. Bob continues at the farm with a great deal of help from his nephew, Andrew, who farms 600 acres at Old Woking.

### The Fox Family

Henry James Fox moved from Woking to Bay View, Pitch Place after the death of his first wife. He brought with him his son John W Fox and second wife Grace. In the war years Jim was Head Air Raid Warden for the area and in the early 1960s he became a member of Worplesdon Parish Council. He was vicar's

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warden at Emmanuel Church, Stoughton for eleven years.

Mrs Grace Dorothy Fox had been a teacher at Perry Hill School prior to her marriage. During the Second World War she taught at a number of local schools, principally Sandfield. She was a member of the Pilgrim Players and the Women's Institute.



Jim Fox

Their son James Alastair Fox (1929) married Pamela Money in 1955 and had two children. He was Worplesdon Parish Councillor for thirty years, and was Vice President of the Surrey County Association of Parish and Town Councils., and Trustee of the Memorial Hall. He was Vice President of Worplesdon Cricket Club and on the Worplesdon Youth Advisory Committee. He died in 1982.

### The Tickner Family

The present family of Tickners are descended from George Tickner (1838-1913) a farm labourer from Sutton Green. He married a local girl, Emma Pearce, and they raised their family of five at Gooserye. The eldest son moved away after the Great War. The second, Frederick, married Dorothy Burch. The third son, Reginald was known in the village for his cricket and football skills. He was also a bell-ringer at St Mary's church, and his name is recorded on the two peal boards at the belfry there. He died of influenza at the age of twenty-seven. The

eldest daughter, Phyllis is now ninety-two years old and lives in a nursing home at Farncombe.

Over the years Frederick and Dorothy lived in 'Hillcot', 'Perry Hill House' and finally 'The Green', overlooking the Village Green. They raised a family of three boys and four girls, of whom two are living in Worplesdon. Phyllis and Stella, both married, reside at 'The Green' and a house in Thatchers Lane, respectively. Stella and her husband John take a great interest in Worplesdon. She was a parish councillor for twelve years and a trustee of the Memorial Hall for eight. She is also an Elder of the United Reformed Church and is currently its Treasurer.

### The James Family



John Alfred "Jack" James was born in Dorset to a family of itinerant farmers. In 1914 he joined his brother and brother-in-law in the Royal Horse Artillery, spending four years at the Front in France, fighting on the Somme and at Ypres. On one remarkable day, three of his horses were shot from under him, yet he remained unscathed.

Jack married Florence Maud in 1923 and they came to live on a small rented farm in Worplesdon in 1925. It was a life of hard work and good humour. As their herd increased from the original two cows, the cattle were put to graze on the common which is now Fairlands Estate. John soon

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became a familiar figure, on his trade bike equipped with churn and ladle from which he measured out his customers' milk into their own jugs, or at the Guildford Cattle Market where his judgement of cattle was widely respected.

In 1930 their daughter Dorothy was born, followed by young John in 1935. Dr Cranstoun and Nurse Hope attended the home birth, for whose services a charge of one guinea was made.

At the start of the Second World War, Jack's entire herd had to be destroyed due to foot and mouth disease. However, other farmers rallied round and supplied the milk and bottles which enabled him to continue his delivery to a wide area including both Perry Hill and Wood Street Schools. The school children had one third of a pint each - all bottled by hand. The drivers had been called to serve in the war effort, so land girls drove the two delivery vans, often aided by the Canadian soldiers stationed in the village whilst awaiting their posting to Normandy.



Jack's high quality milk won him the Victory Churn contest for three consecutive years, whilst Florence developed a poultry business of her own, with ducks, geese, hens, bantams and of course plenty of eggs!

Dorothy started work at the Milk Marketing Board but hated it, and moved to Gammons in Guildford, as an apprentice in the drapery departments. She married John Sands in 1952, and they now have two sons and three grandchildren. Her brother, John, married

Sheila in 1964 and they have twin daughters.

Eventually Jack sold his milkround to Lympos and Smees, and had his own house called Holly View built. Florence started a shop with her eggs and homegrown vegetables, which John and Sheila later took over. It was the first farm shop for miles around, and trade was so good that the whole family was called in to help over Christmas and other busy periods.

Jack and Florence celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in 1973. Jack died in 1979 but Florence reached 100 years of age - testimony of an industrious and happy life - before she sadly passed away in December 1999.

### The Heather Family



Albert Heather

Worplesdon Parish church has a distinction which is probably unique. Over the course of three generations, nearly one hundred and fifty years, a member of the Heather family has served as verger: Thomas Heather, his son Albert and most lately Clifford. Mr Albert Heather was a bell-ringer for over fifty years and at times his father and six sons would be ringing at the same time. When Clifford retired as verger, in 1977, he continued to serve the community as resident caretaker at the Memorial Hall - a post he held for fifty-three years from 1933. He was a member of

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the local football and cricket clubs, and was known as a kind and generous character.

### N B Ellis and Sons, Coal Distributors

The Ellis' coal business spans over one hundred years. It all started in 1892 when Mr Burtenshaw, publican of the Jolly Farmer, Whitmoor Common, Burdenshot Road established his coal business. Coal came by steam train from the Midlands and was stored at the coalyard in Worplesdon Station. The line was not electrified until about 1936. There is evidence from 1905 of customers sending in their order on a picture postcard with words to the effect "please deliver 1 ton coal and ¼ chaldron coke early tomorrow morning". A chaldron was a coal measure of thirty-six bushels. Such instant service was expected and carried out, in addition to the usual door-to-door deliveries, by horse and cart.

Sarah Elizabeth Buckle, Burtenshaw's niece, married Norman Bernard Ellis during the First World War, and Norman entered the coal business. Their first child Bernard was born in 1918. In 1929 they moved into their new house Oakview, next to the Jolly Farmer and raised three more children Susan (1927), David (1929) and Kenneth (1935).

It was a time of much change. The Second World War brought coal rationing and grading. In the 1960s fuel was delivered by road from the various pits, and offloaded at Oakview Coalyard. The railway company closed Worplesdon Goods Yard for freight in the mid 1960s. Loading was now done mechanically rather than by shovel.



The three Ellis sons eventually joined the coal business and, having married, produced six children. The coal business was made a limited company in 1956 and, after Norman's death in 1967, carried on until the retirement of the last of the Ellis sons in 1997.

### The Burch Family of Perry Hill



Perry Hill House dates back to the 1600s, and in later years became the home of Samuel Burch. Samuel was widowed in 1914 and later remarried Maggie Terry of Fox Corner. Staunch Congregationalists, the Burches had in 1890 allowed the Church Hall to be built in their grounds, where it stood until 1916. He also gave land for a manse to be built in 1915. Samuel Burch died in 1927, and in his memory his son Alfred installed the first electric light in the Congregational Church.

Alfred had married Bessie Freeman and they lived in a house named Hillcot, which Samuel had built on his own land, and where they had one child, Dorothy. After Bessie's death he remarried to Mabel Cobbett in 1908 and they had three sons Jack (1916) and twins Samuel (Sam) and Charles in 1918.

Charles recalls accompanying his father in the pony and trap to deliver milk and produce. In 1927 he remembers watching the solar eclipse through a piece of glass which his dad had smoked with a candle, to prevent damaging his eyes. Cubs, Scouts and Rovers met in the village, and there were folk dancing classes run by Miss Mackay and

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ballroom dancing run by the Arbuthnots of Merrist Wood. After a short spell working with his father, Charles worked for Arthur Kelly of Hockley Lands. When he left to join Jackman's nurseries, he received the following reference: "Charles Burch has worked in the garden here for two years. He is a well-behaved, industrious boy and interested in his work. He is perfectly sober and honest."

It was here that Charles met a fellow worker, Rose Baker, whom he married on Christmas Eve 1938. Between 1940 and 1945 he served with the RAMC, then he moved back to Perry Hill House with Rose and their two children Robert (Robin) and June. In 1948 they moved to Rose Cottage, Coombe Lane, where their four younger children were born, and where their own rose nursery, assisted by Mrs Delphia Gardener, started. They now have twelve grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Jack Burch, Charles' brother, married Kathleen. They made their home at Hillcot and had two children Irene and Christopher. Jack became well known for his horticultural prowess, as well as for his chickens and geese that inhabited the village green, and for his greengrocery deliveries.

Jack died in 1990 and is buried in Worplesdon churchyard.

Samuel Burch married Ethel Farris (nee Tissington). They were keen musicians, and played the organ both at the Congregational Church and St Mary's. Having remarried, Samuel now lives with his present wife in Shaftesbury.

### The Crosby Cook Family

Mr Raymond Crosby Cook and his wife, who painted under the name Elizabeth Porteous, lived at the Forge, Wood Street Green, during the Second World War. Mrs Crosby Cook specialised in portraiture whereas her husband's medium was mostly water colours and drawings. After service in the war he also painted inn signs, winning the brewers' exhibition competition at Olympia in 1947.



He painted the sign for the White Horse at Hascombe, and was also designer of the original Wood Street sign. They left the village in 1956/7.

### Mrs Olive Walker

Mrs Walker (nee Stacey) was born in 1897 in Shalford, and lived at The Retreat, Wood Street Green between 1939 and 1948.



She was Britain's only female chimneysweep, an occupation she began in 1940, and appeared to this effect on the television show 'What's My Line?'. She died in 1973.

### PC Gary Hyldon

PC 597 Edgar Wallace Hyldon (known as Wally to his brothers and sisters and Gary to

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everyone else) was born in Grimsby in 1919. After a wartime spell in the Coldstream Guards, he took up his career with the Surrey Constabulary, transferring to the Police House in Frog Grove Lane, Wood Street Village (now no 41) in 1950. He was village policeman there until 1973 and even following retirement in 1976 he continued to advise on the use and safe handling of firearms. He was awarded the police Long Service and Good Conduct medal. He was instantly recognisable for his deerstalker hat, white moustache and the twinkle in his eye. He died in 1998.

### PC Ken Tizard



After four years as an apprentice carpenter, Ken Tizard joined the Surrey Constabulary in 1960 as PC 240. Following his induction training and time on the beat in Guildford, Ken was allocated the Police House at the bottom of Pound Hill in Wood Street, where he remained for twenty-three years. He was part of a six man team of policemen who looked after the Parish of Worplesdon, another being Jack Berry. In the mid 1960s Ken spotted - and arrested - a convict who had just escaped from life imprisonment at Wormwood Scrubs.

Even when off duty, Ken would advise villagers who called at his home. In 1983 he and his wife Ann left the Police House and moved to the Village Green. He left the Force in 1984, and died in November 1993.

### Troy Kennedy Martin

Troy Kennedy Martin was living at Wood Street Green when he first thought of the idea for the police drama series 'Z Cars', which attracted an audience of fourteen million within two months of starting in 1962. The series lasted until 1978 and the cast included James Ellis, Colin Welland, Brian Blessed, Leonard Rossiter, Stratford Johns and Frank Windsor.

### Frederick Courteney Selous



Of all the famous people who have connections with Worplesdon, Selous is perhaps the most unusual. As a well-known big game hunter, he killed nearly a thousand head of big game, thirty-three of which are housed in the Natural History Museum. He was one of the few white men to be allowed by the Matabele Chief Lobengola to hunt in Matabeleland and Mashonaland, where he became the foremost European expert. Selous was also a prolific author, with thrilling tales of narrow escapes including 'A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa' and 'Travels and Adventure in South East Africa'. In 1890 he was recruited by Cecil Rhodes, to guide his Pioneer Column into Mashonaland, the first step towards the creation of Rhodesia. In 1893 he took part in the first Matabele War and was wounded in action.

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Selous was a fine cricketer and played for Worplesdon Cricket Club during the summers that he spent at home. He was made captain of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI and was club President 1910-13.

At the age of sixty, he joined President Roosevelt on a big game hunting expedition, and later received a visit from Roosevelt at his Worplesdon home, Heatherside.



Heatherside has since been converted into two properties, Norfolk House and Squirrels). During the First World War, Selous served as a Lieutenant and Captain with the 25<sup>th</sup> (Service) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (The Frontiersmen) in German East Africa and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. He was killed in action on 4 January 1917 whilst leading the attack on Bhubeho and is buried at Chogowali Military Grave, East Africa.

### Harry Pickup

Harry Pickup was born in Darwen, Blackburn in 1931, being one of two children whose parents kept a grocery and off-licence business. He was educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Blackburn and according to Harry himself, soon became more of a talker and mixer rather than an academic. He struck up many friendships with the Blackburn Rovers players, resulting in free tickets for matches. Harry was able to reciprocate with tickets for local cricket matches.

After two years of National Service in the RAF, Harry started work with Batchelor's

Foods in 1952 and was Regional Sales Manager covering an area from the Wash to the south coast (using his home as an office!) at the time of his retirement in 1989.

In January 1953 Harry moved to Guildford, and married Betty, his childhood sweetheart from Blackburn in May of that year. Their first home was in Woodlands Road, but in 1957 they moved to Jacob's Well. He soon became President and Chairman of Jacob's Well Residents' Association. Harry's passionate interest in local affairs caused him to adopt Jacob's Well and Worplesdon Parish as his top priority, regularly acting as a representative for the community.

Harry joined Worplesdon Parish Council in 1978 and was Chairman for ten years (1989-99). On his retirement from Batchelor Foods, Harry had said he "wanted to get his teeth into something else", so became both a County Councillor for Worplesdon and a Governor of Merrist Wood College. He is currently a Trustee of Worplesdon Memorial Hall. Keeping alive his love of cricket, Harry played for Guildford Cricket Club for twenty-five years and Worplesdon for three, being captain for two of them. He now plays bowls and captains the Burpham Bowls Team.

Harry and Betty have four children (Lynn, Valerie, Russell and Katy) and eight grandchildren. Their youngest daughter, Katy, and her husband are the present caretakers of Worplesdon Memorial Hall.

### Brigadier Anthony Cranstoun

Anthony Cranstoun was the younger son of Dr Cranstoun. After leaving Charterhouse in 1943, he studied medicine for a year before embarking on a career of thirty-six years with the Army. During this time, he commanded the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the Staffordshire Regiment, was Deputy Commandant of the School of Infantry, and spent three years as Defence Attaché in the UK Embassy in Athens. On retirement from the Army he joined the Defence Manufacturers Association, from which he retired in 1981.

From 1981 he lived at Hollow Trees, where his father had held his surgery, and entered fully into village life. He was a trustee of the Memorial Hall, and a member of most local societies. He died in 1991.

### Arthur Chuter's Reminiscences

Arthur Chuter's father, William, was born in one of the cottages at the foot of Jordan Hill, Worplesdon in 1878. William left Perry Hill School at the age of ten and went to work for Mr Christmas on his horse-drawn bread delivery cart. When he married Daisy Dyer, a local girl, they set up home in Newlands Cottage, on the Aldershot Road, which was owned by the Claydon family. At that time the Claydons were also employing William on Perry Hill Farm. It was in Newlands Cottage that Arthur's two brothers, George and Percy, were born.

In the 1920s, William found employment with Miss Evelyn Thompson and her sister, who lived in a house called Perry at the top of the hill. They owned Brooke Farm, further down the hill and opposite the bakery. From here William pulled the cart containing the milk churns all the way up the hill to the dairy at Perry where the Miss Thompsons made their own butter and sold skimmed milk to local villagers. At this time, Mr W Enever was the farm bailiff and Mr J Blunden drove a donkey and cart belonging to the two ladies.

The houses in Thatchers Lane were built in 1921 and William and Daisy moved there. Two further sons Arthur and David were born and all four boys attended Perry Hill School when Mr Brown was Headmaster. Arthur sang in St Mary's Church Choir and also went to the Congregational Sunday School - very ecumenical! Later Arthur took up engineering whilst his brother George became a local gardener, David was a nurseryman in Sussex and Percy moved to Derby after his Army service.

Alfred Chuter, Arthur's uncle, was well known as the manager at Rickford Mill for over forty years, and David Chuter, another uncle, with his wife Mary devoted much time

to the Congregational Chapel.

One of the great highlights of village life in Arthur's youth was the arrival of Pelham's Fair at the Memorial Hall grounds, when the Flower Show was in progress. We no longer see such a fair at Perry Hill, but the tradition is continued at Pitch Place when Carter's Steam Fair arrives for its annual visit.

At the outbreak of war in 1939, Arthur recalls that a battalion of Guards was billeted at the Memorial Hall before being sent to France with the British Expeditionary Force. Later Canadian and British troops were at Worplesdon Place and St Mary's on The Mount, the home of Miss Cunliffe. Also Whitmoor Common was used to test-drive tanks and lorries from the Dennis factory in Guildford. It was a common sight, says Arthur, to see Army trucks parked on the Village Green with soldiers queuing up for cups of tea and cakes from Mrs Philips' Tea Rooms.

A group of men was recruited by the verger of St Mary's Church, Albert Heather, father of Cliff, to cut the grass of the church grounds once or twice a year. A photograph from around 1936-38 recalls several Worplesdon names: Mr G Gardiner, Mr W. Balchin, Mr A. Heather, Mr J. Osgood, Mr A. Chuter, Mr C. Newman, Mr F. Carter, Mr W. Dyer and Mr W. Chuter.

Also in the Home Guard 1941-43, which used Worplesdon Place as its headquarters, were Mr R. Terry, Mr R. Gunner, Mr J. Renault, Mr J. Christmas, Mr A. Tubb. The old New Inn was also used by the Home Guard, who took roll call on the Village Green before their training exercises, while the Church Tower was used as a lookout when invasion was feared to be imminent.

Arthur's father and mother died in 1950 and 1962 respectively. William's grave is in Worplesdon churchyard.

### A Cameo of the Oddy Family at Ship Cottage

George Henry Oddy and his wife Alice Emily were born in Essex and Witley respectively. They met and married in London whilst working on a large estate there. They made their home at Witley Park, which had been built by the financier Whittaker Wright and provided employment to many people in Brooke Village and the surrounding area.

George held the position Head of Greenhouses and lived in a cottage on the estate. They began their family there, which would eventually run to five girls - Elsie, Evelyn (Wink), Ethel, Edith and Eileen (Peg) - and two boys - Albert and Ernest. When she was born, Peg weighed in at just three and a half pounds, but later won first prize at a baby show to prove that small is beautiful. At the age of two she also contracted polio, but made a full recovery.

When Sir John Lee, a racecourse owner, bought Witley Park, George found another gardening job in Guildford, whilst at the same time looking out for a likely place where he could set up on his own. In 1927 George's employer bought Ship Cottage, together with its land and two greenhouses and set George on his way. George repaid much of the debt to his employer by foregoing wages.

The cottage had previously been a baker's, a blacksmith's and an inn. Many old horseshoes were found when digging first began, and George had to shovel out a large sandpit. The white sand was supplied to builders and road-makers; particularly the firm Baldrey's who were building a road at Stoughton. The large hole left when all the sand had gone proved a useful place for the family's many empty Cow and Gate baby food tins, until it was filled with soil.

Gradually George became known for his carnations and chrysanthemums, his arum lilies that were supplied to the Church at Easter and his skill at grafting rose trees. He had fruit trees and grew soft fruit, much of which was enjoyed by the family. Customers

also came for tomatoes and cucumbers and George was helped by Alice in all his efforts. George found time to take an interest in the horticultural shows of Guildford, winning several cups and serving on the committee.

Unfortunately the onset of gangrene in the 1960s necessitated the amputation of both George's legs. But George was never a grumbler and he made the best of this unpleasant situation, living to the age of eighty-four. Alice reached her ninetieth year. They are survived by two daughters, Elsie and Evelyn, living locally, and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

### William Raymond Slade

William Raymond Slade, known to family and friends as "Ray" or "Bill" was born in 1931 at Henley Fort, Guildford. His father was a carpenter by trade and he had one elder sister.

In 1956 he married Thelma Gunner at St Mary's Church and they made their home in Rickford, Worplesdon. From here, his local work at Pirbright Animal Virus Research Laboratory made him a familiar figure on his motorcycle around the area. William and his wife were keen members of the Worplesdon Old Time Dance Club until its closure in the 1980s. He played cricket for Worplesdon and was Club Secretary in the 1960s. He also played badminton with the Worplesdon club and refereed for local football clubs. His interest in local affairs was apparent when becoming a member of the Commons Committee in the 1970s, a Parish Councillor from 1970-94 and a Trustee of the Memorial Hall. On his retirement from Pirbright, he went to work in the laboratory at Merrist Wood.

His carpentry skills can be seen in the local United Reformed Church, the Pulpit being a product of his craft, as is a beautiful Nativity scene that is used every Christmas. The "Slade" kitchen attached to the Church Hall is so named to honour his love of all things gastronomic. Worplesdon lost a good friend upon his death in February 1994.

## The Old Houses of Worplesdon (and which is the oldest?)

Worplesdon is rich in old buildings. Some lie cosily in a line behind the Village Green in Perry Hill. Others are peppered across the fields and by-ways of the parish. Often they are farmsteads, with equally old barns and granaries. Curiously, some of the oldest are almost secret, hiding in the commons and approached by no tarmac road. Where are these houses? How old are they? We can enjoy all of them regardless of their age, but it would be interesting to know which is the oldest of all. Let us take a walk back into history.

chimneys, lots of tile hanging and timbering, porches and pillars. A huge bay window illuminates a grand hall with sweeping beams. Another fine 'Arts and Crafts' house is Gooserye, on Gooserye Road. This is said to have connections with Lutyens himself. It is more reticent than Merrist Wood, friendly and traditional, with tile hanging, porches and a prettily complicated roofline.

Perry Hill School, now converted to houses, is pretty Victoriana, dating back to 1861.

### Our Georgian Houses of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The 18<sup>th</sup> century corresponds roughly with that architectural period known as 'Georgian'. Worplesdon has some pleasing examples of the fine door-cases and vertically sliding sash windows, often symmetrically placed, grand brick frontages and roofs with a cornice or a parapet. Starting in Wood Street, there is the simple but graceful Billhurst Farm, close to The White Hart. The symmetry is enhanced by the bridge over the pond in front. Nearby, on the Green, is Nightingale Old Farm, which used to be called 'ffrenches'. This is even simpler, but nonetheless pleasing. There is an older, timber-framed building behind it. Around the corner on Frog Grove Lane, is Frog Grove House, which presents itself well, with particularly lovely windows.

In Perry Hill, Sundial Plain peeps over its conifer hedge a few paces to the north of the Village Green. Astonishingly, this was once the parish workhouse. The frontage has been altered in all sorts of ways but is still rather grand, with its sundial basking against the salmon coloured bricks.

Rickford Mill, almost hidden in the trees at Fox Corner, could well be the site of the mill mentioned in the Domesday Book. Fewer people notice The Old Mill House, directly opposite. Presumably the miller lived here, rather than in the mill itself. It could be straight out of a textbook on early Georgian architecture. It has symmetry and sash windows, a stringcourse round its middle and moulded bricks under the eaves.



The beautiful little church of St Alban's in Wood Street, with its striking roofline and graceful simplicity, is perhaps our best 20<sup>th</sup> century example. Back into the 19<sup>th</sup> century we have more to boast about.

### A Century Ago



Merrist Wood, built by Norman Shaw, a forerunner to the great Edwin Lutyens, in 1877, is homely 'Arts and Crafts' architecture at its best. There are tall

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages



Rickford Mill

There is a fine door case with a round-headed window over it. Next time you buy bread at Christmas's, walk a few steps up the road to admire this classic little house. With the Mill over the road, it seems to guard the northern entrance to our parish.

About 1700 or a little earlier, there was a strong Dutch architectural influence. This showed itself in fine brickwork and fancy gables with arcs and steps.



Pitch Place House

Pitch Place House, on the Guildford Road, is a fine example. Littlefield Manor, off the Aldershot Road past Fairlands, is just as striking. Easier to find is Hollow Trees, just north of the green in Perry Hill. The 'Dutch' part is only a wing but highly ornamental with both blue and orange bricks and plenty of pretty detailing.



Hollow Trees

### Timber Framing in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

Reaching back into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, we see the changeover from timber-framing to the later brick. A good example is White's Farm, on the edge of Fairlands, overlooking Broadstreet Common. This is still timber-framed. Much of this framing can still be seen, in spite of a more recent brick frontage, but the house is taller than most of the other timber-framed cottages and farmhouses that are dotted throughout the parish. Its main support seems to come from a massive central brick chimney. Before chimneys came into use, fires were open hearths, in the middle of rooms, or, later, contained simply by 'smoke bays' which stretched across the whole width of the house. There was little glass before this time either - just shutters. Perhaps the draughts at least helped to disperse the smoke as it curled upwards towards a simple hole or louver in the roof! Brick was also used at White's Farm for the admirable two-storey porch, obligingly dated 1670 in the brickwork itself. These two-storey porches are called 'Surrey Porches', although they are rare enough even in Surrey.

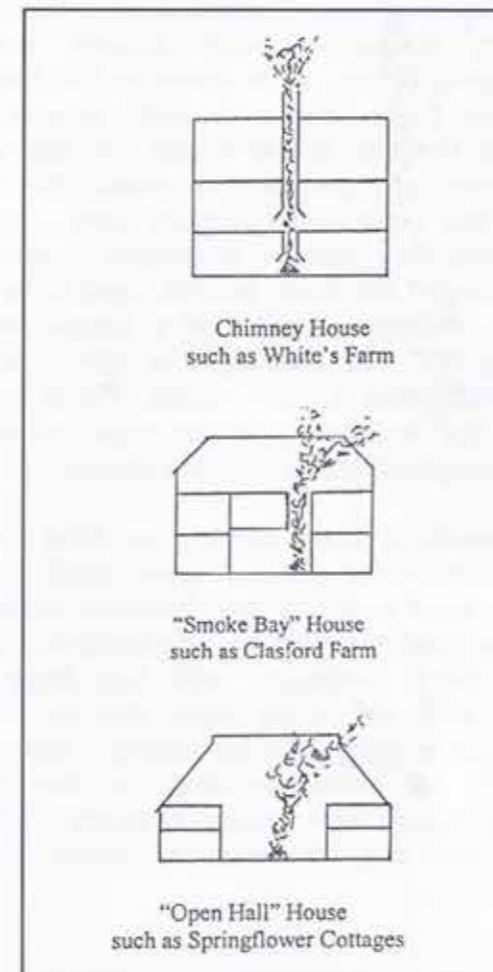
White's Farm has yet another unusual feature. Behind the house is a stair turret - a little tower-like structure built just to hold the staircase. Before this time ordinary houses often made do with ladders but it was to be some time before staircases were properly framed into the structure.

## The Old Houses of Worplesdon (and which is the oldest?)

Houses built at this crossover point between timber and brick are not commonplace in the parish. One more is at Burpham Court Farm. The older of the two houses on the site is a mixture, with bits from every period you could think of. Its main, central portion is higher than most old cottages, as first floors throughout were by then the rule. But timber framing was still being used and much of this remains, particularly at the rear of the property.

### Elizabethan 'Smoke Bay' Houses

Another fifty years or so back into Elizabeth's reign, 1600 or a little earlier, most houses were entirely timber-framed and built with 'smoke bays'. At Clasford Farm, just beyond Fairlands on the Aldershot Road, vertical posts in the framing divide the house into five bays. The middle bay is narrower than the others. This is where the smoke bay was, containing the fire within the partitions, but otherwise open to the roof, with no chimney.



There are other smoke bay houses in Worplesdon although they are not always so easy to spot. You need to climb into the roof to see if the rafters are sooted if you want to be sure. Norton Farm, nestling cosily in the fields just north of Perry Hill could be one such. Almost next door, but closer to the road, Old Rickford could be another. Nearby, just north of the Green, Crown Cottage had a smoke bay where the chimney now stands. Now it is fronted with mellow bricks. The timber-framed wing to the right was added in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a 'parlour wing' - somewhere for the owners to enjoy a little privacy, away from their retainers!

Moving to Jacob's Well, we find Watts Cottage on Jacob's Well Road. This had an 'end smoke bay', that is to say one at the end of the house rather than in the middle. This is now incorporated into the house, a fine 'Dutch' chimney having been added to replace the functions of the smoke bay.



Froisbury Farmhouse

Froisbury Farmhouse on Gravetts Lane also had an end smoke bay. This was on the left as you look at it, later to be replaced with the soaring Jacobean chimneys. But the glory of this house is the Elizabethan porch. This is another example of a 'Surrey Porch'. It has lancet windows and an interesting overhang (known as a 'jetty'). Froisbury has even older work behind the front wing, but don't be fooled by the barn and granary. These were quite recently moved, one from Billingshurst, the other from near Salisbury. One of the best barns in the parish is next door at Froisbury Farm. This dates from about 1600

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

also but the outside gives little indication of the fine trusses inside.

### Henry VIII and 'Hall Houses'

Can we reach back to 1500, the halfway point of the last millennium? Certainly the house builders were busy during these Tudor years, particularly during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, building 'open hall' houses. These had open hearths - fires in the middle of the main room, with the smoke escaping as best it could. Once again the telltale evidence is the soot caked on the rafters - this time most of them, rather than just a portion, as in a smoke bay house.

There are quite a few of these 'hall houses' around the parish. Where better to start than Worplesdon Village Green? Look at the three cottages abutted against each other on the left-hand side. The middle part, The Green, between the two porches, was a hall house, not particularly early, about 1550. It has a big chimney now but the sooted rafters inside give the game away. This house still contains the remains of a 'bacon loft' where hams were hung in the smoke from the fire. (There are other bacon lofts in the parish - Frosbury Farmhouse has two!).



*Cottages on the Green*

Inglenook, on the right, is almost as early. Rosendene, on the left, has timber framing round the back but the front has posh brick, to keep in the latest fashion! It always had a chimney. It probably dates from late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

A near neighbour on the green is Perry Hill House. Like many of the houses we are talking about, it may not yet have been historically surveyed, but is probably of a similar age, late Tudor or Jacobean. As can be seen so often, it has a very obvious 'new' brick frontage, erected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to remain in contemporary vogue! Then, just down the slope from the Green is another hall house, Perry Hill Farm, dated about 1550. It was later converted, first into a smoke bay house and then a proper chimney was added in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The other hall houses in the parish are scattered about, some well off the beaten track. Towards the boundary with Normandy, Littlefield Manor has the remains of one behind its beautiful Georgian front. Whitley Manor, on top of a nearby hill, is another. There is a fine barn there, very similar to the one at Frosbury Farm. The same man could well have built them. At Willey Green, prominent on the Z-bend, Chapel Farm and The Old Homestead could be hall houses also. Nearby is an interesting building almost nobody knows about, Passenger's Farm. It is down at the bottom of Bailes Lane, along a path across the common towards Wood Street. It has seen many developments over the years. The 'hall' was in the centre and is early 16<sup>th</sup> century. There are fine ogee - S-shaped - curving braces round the back (which used to be the front) - another example of a house owner showing off! To the right is 18<sup>th</sup> century work, including a stair turret. This sticks out to the front and is the most viewable local example of this curious feature.

Back towards Wood Street, on Frog Grove Lane, Comptons Farm House and Tudor Cottage were probably hall houses, although from the road they are much changed. Their largely brick frontages look fine from the front - and the crazy roof line of Tudor Cottage is particularly appealing - but both are rich in timber-framing to the rear. Circling round the parish towards Jacob's Well, there are yet more of these Tudor houses.

## The Old Houses of Worplesdon (and which is the oldest?)



*Tudor Cottage*

There is Tangle Cottage, on the Guildford Road near Pitch Place. As well as some fine timbering, this has yet another of those stair turrets that are supposedly quite rare! On Saltbox Road, we pass Stringers Barn, which was a hall house before the nicely proportioned Georgian front block was added. The big barn by the side is actually two barns stuck end-to-end, both earlier than the Georgian house we can see. Burpham Court House, on the Woking Road, was another hall house but most of the imposing timber framing here is of a later date, about 1600. Then, in Jacob's Well proper, there is Jacob's Well Cottage, on the Z-bend.

We have so far not mentioned Broadstreet Common, which has an intriguing clutch of houses right in its heart, with only rough tracks to reach them.

Springflower Cottages was once a rich hall house, with hefty timbering and good, curved braces that can still be seen. This is another of those houses with a crazy roof line. A stone's throw away, Hook Farm is about the same age and has timbering that is just as good, although some of it is modern. See if you can tell which is which.

Worplesdon's lost cottages are intriguing. Also on Broadstreet Common is Hunt's Farm, with another of those nicely timbered 'parlour wings'. Then, on Whitmoor Common, behind The Jolly Farmer on Burdeshott Road, are Woodcorner Farm and Whitmore Hatch. These could all be

Tudor, at least in their origins. They would have used the Commons for their farming, even if they had a little of their own land. It is poor sandy soil and one wonders how the owners could afford to build houses which, in their day, would have been considered quite grand.



*Springflower Cottage*

### Medieval Houses

Queen Anne Farm, on Jacob's Well Road, is something of a landmark on our journey, as it probably dates back to the 1400s. It was a hall house and there are certain features in the framing that make it, to the expert, a little older than usual. Now it is much enlarged and little is visible outside. It is worth noting Queenhythe, across the road, a typically attractive Tudor cottage, with a massive rear chimney that looks as if it is holding up the whole house.

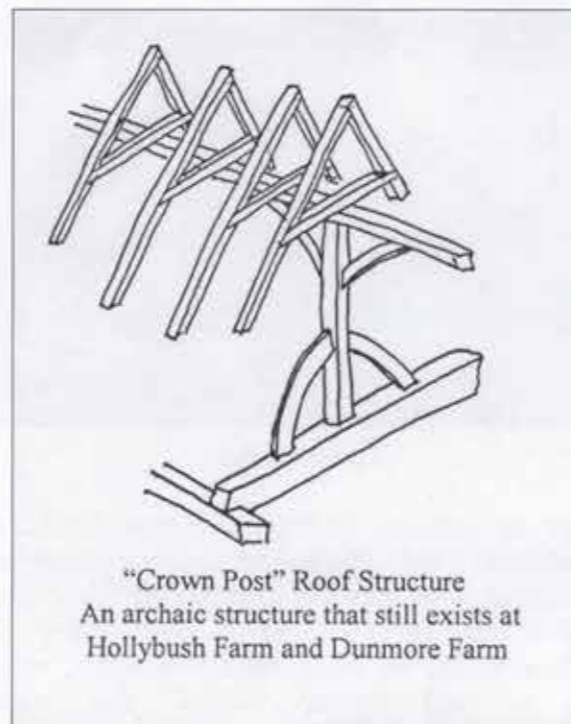
So we have Queen Anne Farm, built a little before 1500. A fair guess would be 1480. Can we get any earlier? Probably we can, in three houses at any rate. Willow Grange, the home of the Bishop of Guildford, has often been said to be the oldest house in Guildford, let alone Worplesdon. This is unlikely, but it is certainly old. It lies across the Woking Road from Burpham Court House and is, as usual, a mixture. Looking from the road, it is a confusing house. The wing on the right is a 'cross wing', added early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The old house is the nearest part of the remainder, running in a line north-south. Beyond are more modern additions, nicely in keeping with their

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

predecessors. The old house is unique in the parish for at least one feature. All the other open halls seem to have been just one bay, three or four metres wide. Willow Grange had a two bay hall, so its main, prestige room would have been twice the size of that in other houses. It had a stylish 'open truss' spanning across it, necessary for the construction but also very picturesque. Various aspects of the structure date this part of the building to 1450, possibly even a little earlier.

Pink's Hill is another of those strange enclaves reached by no tarmac road. It is part of Broadstreet Common, and reached via a track by the side of Wood Street Village School. It has a number of old houses. There is Old Gables, a beautiful Georgian house fronted with pink brick - perhaps the clay of Pink's Hill made pink bricks? It has a much older rear. But the most remarkable house in this lost corner is Hollybush Farm. This is a modest little place, with almost no timbering visible from the outside. Only the steep pitch of the roof gives a clue as to its great age. Inside, there are giant timbers in archaic structures. The best is in the bathroom. This is a fat 'crown post', rising proudly from the middle of a crossbeam to support a forest of timbers under the roof. This building's original purpose is anyone's guess. Some say it was an inn, placed along one of the old roads said to run through this ancient tract of land, with its Roman vestiges and royal hunting connections. Whatever the origins of the building, crown posts are unusual around here, and the quality of the one at Hollybush Farm indicates a date probably no later than 1450.

Before we continue our search for the oldest house, we may pause to consider which is the oldest farm building in the parish. Here there is no doubt. It is Inholms Barn, almost on the pavement on Wood Street Village Green. It has a new roof but the strong, timber-framed walls, behind the cladding, can be dated to about the same period as Hollybush Farm, 1450 or so. Its survival is remarkable for such a humble farm building.



"Crown Post" Roof Structure  
An archaic structure that still exists at  
Hollybush Farm and Dunmore Farm

*Crown Post*

### The Oldest House?

So the grand Willow Grange and the humble Hollybush Farm are tied for the title of the oldest house in Worplesdon. Or are they? There is another candidate. Once again, we must take the track into the middle of Broadstreet Common, where there is a third old house in this extraordinary group. It is Dunmore Farm.

*Dunmore Farm*

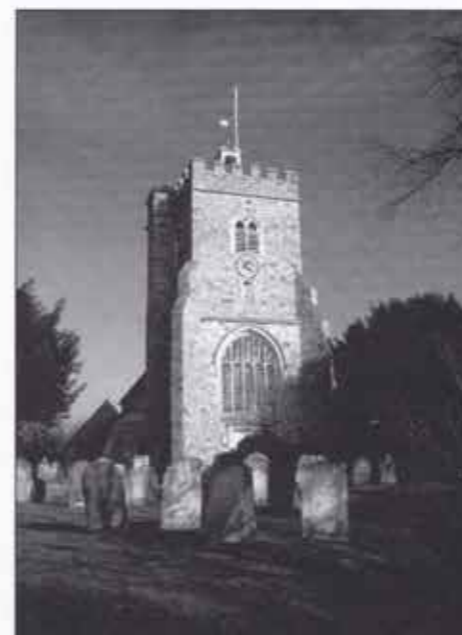


Originally this was a tiny place, just two bays, one of which was the hall, with an open fire in the middle. The rafters here are

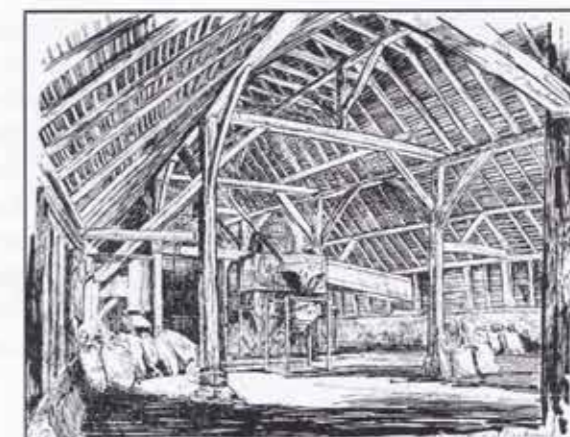
## The Old Houses of Worplesdon (and which is the oldest?)

very heavily caked with soot, an indication of age. There are crown posts and these are unusual in standing straight up on their own, without braces to either side. This is another indication of age. A reasonable estimate for the date of this building is 1400, or perhaps soon after. The timber framing now visible on the outside is 200 years later. The house would have been a humble little place, possibly a farm, but without land of its own. It would have farmed on the Common and the owners would have been Commoners with Commoner's rights. Whatever its history, it has stood there for some 600 years, most of the last millennium!

Can we get any further back? There is the fine church of St Mary, much of which is 13<sup>th</sup> century.



But as far as houses and simpler buildings are concerned, we must cross into neighbouring Wanborough. This we can do with some justification as Wanborough was once part of Worplesdon parish. Here we find the Great Barn, now in the care of Guildford Borough Council and open to the public at certain times. It is said by many to be the finest timber framed building in Surrey.



*Wanborough Great Barn*

Outside, it looks huge, thirty-four metres long to be exact. Inside, it is even more impressive, magnificent in fact, with truss after truss of massive posts and beams. There are crown posts galore, the old type without downward braces. Tree-ring dating places the building of the barn at soon after 1388. Some of the main posts are even older, having been re-used from some previous function. Two are octagonal and may well have originated from Waverley Abbey. They are dated 1309 -1354. Some of the posts are older still. From the door in the end wall, go to the far end and put your hand on the last free-standing post on the right. This is also re-used. It is massive, some five metres high and thirty centimetres across. It was once even larger before being cut down for its 'new' use. It has the remains of various archaic joints, now unused. A study of these joints shows that the post was perhaps a metre higher and ten centimetres thicker than it is now. It must have come from a king-sized building indeed! It is thought that it could well date back to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, let's say about 1180. In touching this post, we are almost back into Norman times and the beginning of the millennium. The man who cut the joints would have heard, as a child, of the time when King William's commissioners came in their flowing robes to carry out the Domesday Survey.

These old houses carry a human story. They may look as pretty as a Helen Allingham water-colour but they would hardly have been comfortable and, for the most part, life

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would have been hard. Taking the Tudor houses as an example, we have heard already about how smoky they must have been, with nothing but a hole in the roof for a flue. Apart from the main hall with its smouldering fire, kept going mostly for cooking, there would have been little or no heating. There would have been no glass, only shutters to keep out the worst of the wind and weather. As to the floors, Erasmus wrote in 1530:

*"The floors are commonly of clay, strewed with rushes, under which lies, unmolested, an ancient collection of beer, grease, fragments, bones, spittle, excrement of dogs and cats and everything that is nasty."*

The daily life of the owners and occupiers would have been harsh by our standards. Bread would have been made daily in a bread oven, a brick affair heated with embers from the fire. This would not be too onerous a task, but threshing the corn would have been hard, manual work and repeated frequently. Most of the hours of the day would have been taken up with the necessities for life and survival.

Be that as it may, we have been left with a marvellous heritage. Worplesdon has forty-five listed buildings and plenty more of interest. We can't mention them all and there is much research still to be done before we know their stories. Each one is beautiful and a piece of history. As has been said many times, we are merely custodians for these treasures. We owe it to our successors to look after them and to hand them on in good order, much loved and admired.



A Wood Street May Queen



Coronation Party at Wood Street 1953



*New Inn - Perry Hill 1930*



*Perry Hill Chapel 1905*



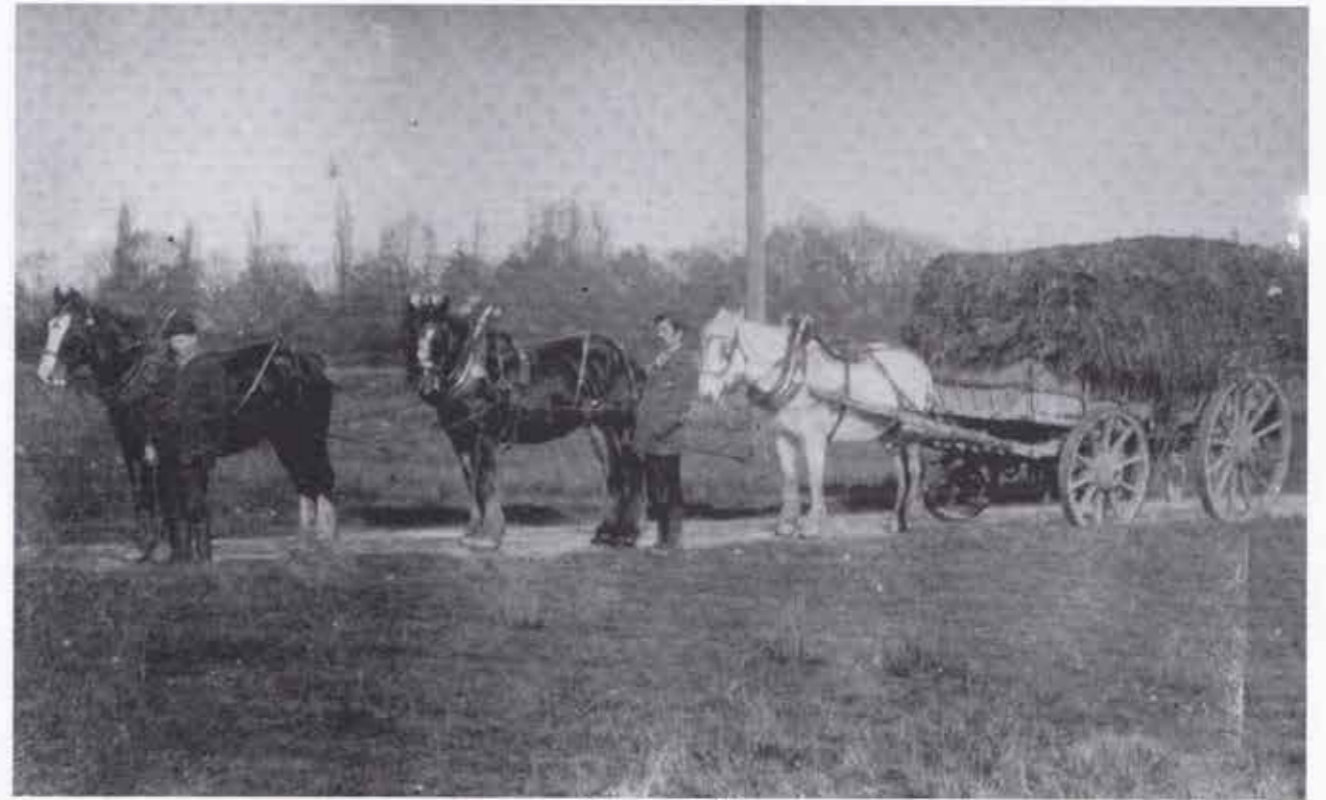
*Mr Burtenshaw - Publican at the Jolly Farmer*



*Wood Street's Old Church*



*Hill Place Farm, Wood Street*



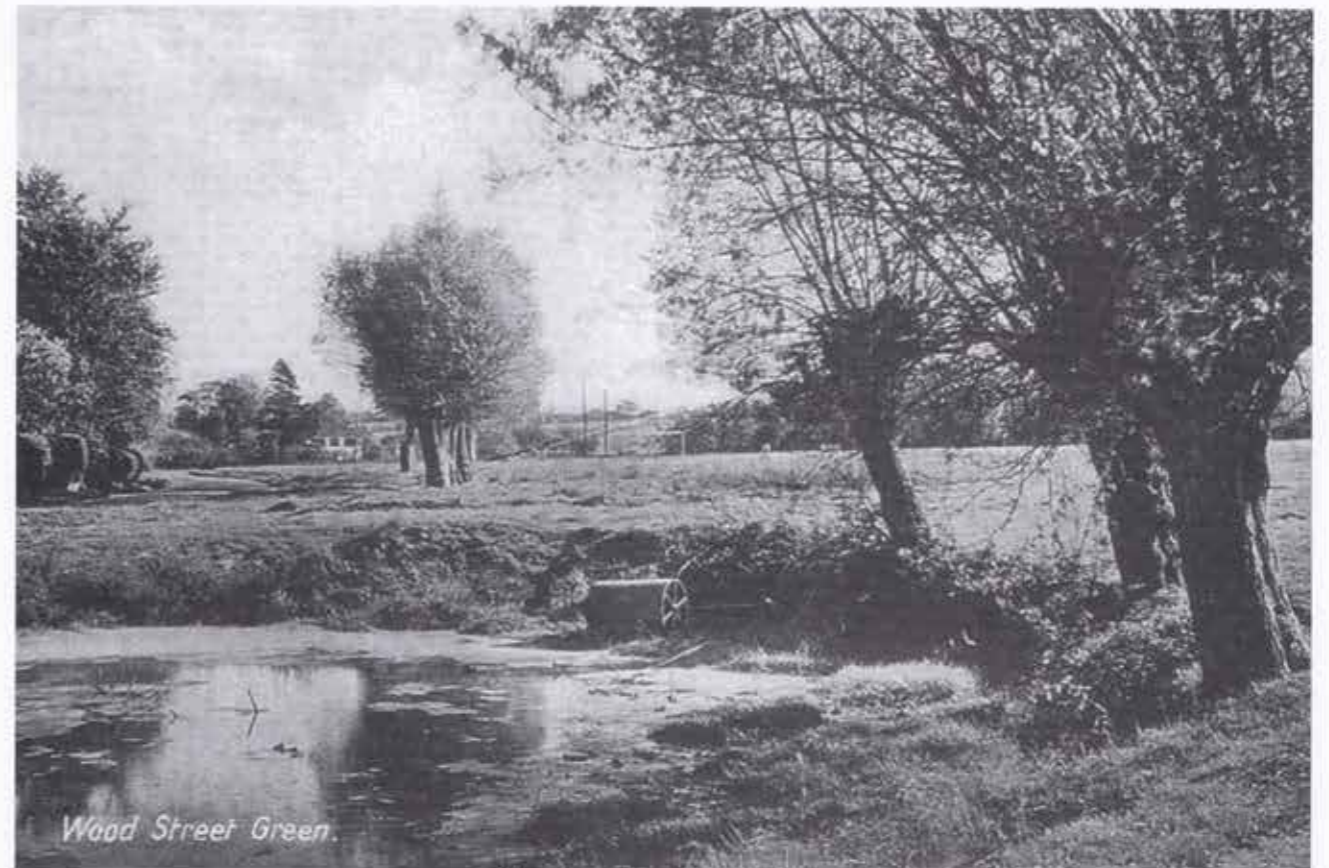
*Country Life*



*Local Wood-Cutters*



*Granny Cobbett of Perry Hill*



*Wood Street Green.*

*The Pond at Wood Street*



*Broadwood, Wood Street.*

*Broadwood, Wood Street*



*Broad Street Common.*

*Broad Street Common*



*The Locals on Wood Street Green – May 2000*



*Frog Grove, Wood Street.*

*Frog Grove Lane, Wood Street*



*Celebrating the end of the War - 1945*



*Above: Perry Hill School circa 1909 - Below: Perry Hill School circa 1970*



*The Forget-me-Nots Band*



**Schools in the Parish**

Most people know the two schools that continue to thrive in Worplesdon: Wood Street Infants and Worplesdon Primary School. However at one stage there were five schools. The one in the village of Worplesdon was called Perry Hill School and was founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a church school, finally closing in the 1970s. On the extreme fringe of the parish were Barnwood School, a very modern open-plan primary, and until its recent closure, St Mary's Roman Catholic School.

**Perry Hill School**

Perry Hill School first opened its doors in 1861 as St Mary's National School. There is no written record of the first fourteen years, but since 1875 its recorded history covers more than 1,600 pages. In 1882 the School Board was set up, and the name was changed to Perry Hill School. At its peak, as many as 150 children attended. Having seen so many changes, the school itself became a victim of change, and closed in 1977.

**Worplesdon Primary School**

Worplesdon Primary School was built when the Fairlands Estate was developed in the late 1950s, and it opened on 8 November 1965. Although at one point there was talk of its becoming an infant school it has always catered for children up to the time they enter secondary education. Situated in the heart of Fairlands it has some 300 pupils from within the parish and from farther afield. It has been extended several times and, thanks to the efforts of the parents, a swimming pool has been added.

**Wood Street Infants School**

Wood Street School was designed by the well-known local architect Henry Peak, for sixty children. It opened on 8 April 1878 with just eighteen pupils, increasing to forty-six by July. The photograph opposite was taken in 1917 and shows the separate building for the infants which was built in 1913. The school now has seventy-three pupils. In around 1918-19 the caretaker Mr Lopez lived in the house at the right end of the main building. It was next occupied by Miss Hogg

and Miss Robinson, then Mr and Mrs Goddard.

Mr Goddard was Headmaster from 1932 to 1951. He was said to be very strict and caned the boys regularly. The children tried to hide the cane but he simply went outside and made another one from the school fence. Another 1930s character was the teacher Miss Barnes, who rode her bicycle to school. In the bicycle basket travelled her Pekinese dog, Chum.

By all accounts, the school had to compete quite hard for the children's attention, as the surrounding area had so many other attractions. In the late 1930s and 1940s there was swimming in Pinks Hill Pond, which at that time had diving boards at either end and a clean gravelly bottom. There were large carp in the pond near Hollybush Farm, where a local farmworker used to spear the fish with a pitchfork. Swans regularly nested by the Village Green Pond. The eggs were so large that the local boys did not steal them because they were too big to eat. They did however catch rabbits to sell for sixpence at Guildford market. Local orchards at Pinks Hill were favourite places for apple scrumping, and the sum of two old pennies bought a bushel of acorns to feed to the farm pigs.

The school did not have a tuck shop, but the muffin man used to call round. A local man regularly sold fresh cockles and mussels, which he brought by bicycle from his shop in Guildford.



## Medical Care in the Parish

In Guildford House there hangs a portrait of Dr Samuel Villiese of Worplesdon painted by the celebrated painter John Russell in 1793. The doctor is dressed in a simple coat and felt hat, suggesting that he was not wealthy. He is pointing to a bottle of medicine with a label tied to its neck "take a teacup three times a day" which seems rather excessive.

Modern scientific medicine did not really start until the discovery of the tuberculosis microbe in 1882. Until this point there probably wasn't much doctors could do except dispense comfort and confidence and most illnesses ran their course whatever anyone did or took.

Apart from his portrait we know nothing about 'The Worplesdon Doctor', and there is no record of doctors in Worplesdon until the last century. The parish was sparsely populated and it is doubtful whether a doctor could earn much of a living. It is probable that doctors in Guildford provided medical care for those in need, and who could afford it. There is mention in the congregational church records of an unnamed Irish doctor in the village from 1900. Dr Fleming came to Pirbright in 1906 and there are still people in Worplesdon who remember seeing him in the 1930s and during the war.

### Dr Cranstoun and Hollow Trees



The next doctor we know of was Dr Gordon Cranstoun who moved to Perry Hill Lodge in 1922 and set up a surgery. He had been an assistant to two practices in Guildford and

saw an opportunity to start a practice in the village, possibly with an eye to the increasing population of Stoughton. He rapidly made a name for himself and patients came to see him from Wood Street, Pirbright, Jacob's Well, Wanborough, Normandy and of course Guildford itself. Prior to the developments in the 1920s, the population of the parish was not great and a significant number of his patients were in Stoughton. Although patients came to him, he would visit many of them in their homes. When he first came to the parish, his transport was an old Douglas motorcycle but he soon graduated to a car. Towards the end of the last century there were still people who claimed to have been visited by him on that motorbike.

At Perry Hill Lodge his patients had to use the conservatory as a waiting room, which was uncomfortable and draughty. Sir Laurence Halsey, a considerable benefactor of the village and the church, who lived at Worplesdon Place (now a Beefeater Hotel), told him that he was losing custom because of this and suggested that three old cottages opposite Worplesdon Place be converted to a proper doctor's house and surgery. This row of cottages had served as the laundry, bakery and dairy for the big house and Sir Laurence engaged an architect to do the necessary alterations and additions. Cranny, as everybody called him, moved in with his wife and two sons in 1928, (the eldest son was killed serving with the RAF during the war) renting the house from Sir Laurence. After Sir Laurence's death in 1945 he bought it from the executors at a generously reduced price. On the wide verge, which is still outside the house, were two old elm trees, so the house and surgery were called 'Hollow Trees'. The name survives, but the trees do not.

The medical facilities were very basic by today's standards, but comparable with most GP's surgeries of the day. The entrance was on the Fox Corner side of the house leading to a waiting room at the front. This had a low ceiling and contained about a dozen wooden chairs grouped round a central table, scattered with back numbers of 'Punch' and other magazines. A short corridor led past

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

the entrance to a spacious consulting room at the back which had a very high ceiling. There was a desk, a couple of chairs for the patients and a couch. The patients' records were kept in 'Lloyd George' envelopes of the type still used to this day, named after the politician who introduced National Insurance. These were kept in a heavy oak case with partitions, made by Ebenezer Terry, the wheelwright and general carpenter. He and his partner Len Primmer, a blacksmith, inevitably had close professional connections with Cranny, as they were the local undertakers!



Hollow Trees

Leading off the consulting room was a small room with shelves and a sink. There was a Bunsen burner for testing sugar in urine (the modern test papers did not come into use until the 1960s). From this tiny dispensary a limited range of medicines was measured out from very large bottles ("Winchesters") into small ones with corks. These medicines included 'Gee's linctus' for coughs, rhubarb mixture for constipation and kaolin and morphine mixture for the opposite. There was a fairly simple range of ointments and tablets. Senna looked remarkably like Digitalis leaf tablets. An old man in Pirbright misread the labels and regularly took Senna tablets for his heart and half a dozen Digitalis tablets when he got constipated! This mistake was eventually discovered with no serious harm done. More sophisticated dispensing was done by Mr Hibberd in Stoughton, whose name lives on in the pharmacy there despite several changes of ownership.

The small dispensary room had another use. Cranny used to relate how, when he got particularly exasperated with a patient, he resisted the temptation to be rude, but would excuse himself for a minute to the dispensary and "have a jolly good swear to myself" and reappear in a better humour.

There was no receptionist and no system of appointments. Mrs Cranstoun would take telephone messages in the house while her husband was consulting, and at other times. Secretarial help was minimal and most letters were hand-written. Some patients paid fees, others were covered under National Insurance. Others couldn't afford fees or medicines and he would either not charge them, or accepted gifts such as eggs or fruit. Those who remember him do so very fondly. He was the epitome of the old-fashioned family doctor and friend to many, competent, knowledgeable and wise.

### Dr Moir



As the parish grew in population, so did the practice. By the time the war came in 1939 and building more or less stopped, Dr Cranstoun was very busy indeed but had to remain single-handed for the duration of World War II. He was more than ready to have a partner when Dr John Moir joined him in 1946.

Dr Moir had served as an anaesthetist in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC), and had local connections, being married into the

## Medical Care in the Parish

family of William Willett of Willow Grange, who was the inventor of 'daylight saving' - now *British Summer Time*. He was not, perhaps, as great a help in the practice as Cranny had hoped, because he got involved in giving anaesthetics for dentists and at Woking Victoria hospital and Mount Alvernia. He gave anaesthetics for difficult home births and carried his chloroform equipment in an old metal .303 ammunition box. Despite these distractions he was well established as a GP when the NHS started in 1948. He was a very tall man, 6' 9" and "big with it". Dr John was no beanpole! Despite his rather forbidding appearance he was approachable and gentle, particularly with children, and he had a devoted following of patients, although some found him a bit rough in his manner. To some he was known as 'John Blunt' and they were satisfied that "you knew where you were with him". Being a full-time GP was busy enough; with the added work of his anaesthetics he dashed around in a succession of cars which were usually prematurely worn out or occasionally crashed. He was often seriously short of sleep and tales of his nodding off when visiting patients were not uncommon.

### Dr Harwood and Dr Hillard

With the rapid post-war growth in the parish and beyond, another partner was needed.



Dr Harwood

Dr Robert Harwood joined the practice in 1950. His parents lived in London but had a

country retreat in Normandy, so he knew the area well. After his National Service in the RAMC he decided to start a practice. As the Worplesdon doctors already had a lot of patients in Normandy, it seemed sensible for him to come into the partnership. He built a small extension to his house with a consulting room and waiting room, seeing patients there and at Hollow Trees.

Back in the 1950s and 1960s many patients could not get to the surgery, which meant a much greater number of home visits than today. Pressure on consulting time varied with the seasons, and few practices, certainly not rural or semi-rural ones, had appointments. Throughout the 1950s the population of the parish grew due to new building, particularly on Fairlands. Cranny, now in his late sixties, was looking forward to retirement and the practice was becoming ever busier. In 1958 they took on Dr Anthony Hillard as a locum for the summer.



Dr Hillard

He was conveniently staying with his in-laws at Willow Grange after three years in the RAMC. (It is curious how Willow Grange recurs in this account). He became a partner in 1960, on Dr Cranstoun's retirement. This surely marked the end of an era and prompted an editorial in the 'Surrey Advertiser'. Cranny continued to take an active interest in the practice for some years and died at Hollow Trees in 1972.

## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

### 21 Fairlands Road



By 1959 it was obvious that a move from Hollow Trees was imperative. There were four doctors working out of one consulting room designed thirty years earlier for one village doctor. In any case Dr and Mrs Cranstoun wanted the centre of the practice removed from their home in their retirement. More secretarial help was urgently needed. For some years the practice secretary was Mrs Pat Trotter of 25 Fairlands Road. She came up to the surgery most afternoons when the doctors were on their rounds and typed letters from a dictaphone, one of which is probably in a museum somewhere. The only afternoon she didn't come was when there was a Women's Institute meeting which always took precedence, possibly because Mrs Cranstoun was branch president!

The newer roads in Fairlands were being occupied and it seemed the obvious place for a new surgery. It was geographically as central as anywhere to the existing practice area and on the bus route from Guildford to Normandy. The problem was that all the plots had been sold. However there was one space left for which there was no planning permission. This was a narrow plot adjoining 23 Fairlands Road, which had been built in the 1930s, and backing onto its orchard. Mr Robertson, the builder of the post-war phase of Fairlands considered donating it to the Scouts, but in the meantime it was occupied by the usual builders' huts.

The planned site-lines did not give room for any sort of house, but because it was going

to be of benefit to the community the planners permitted a small shift in these and allowed enough room for a three-bedroom detached house like most of the others. £300 was asked for the site and a cheque for £30 as deposit was delivered to the site hut. The doctors employed an architect who was constrained by the plan of the standard houses already built. However he was able to modify the interior and generally supervise the building. He claimed that the new surgery at 21 Fairlands Road would not fall down until about ten years after the rest of the estate.

The original building cost £6,000. Downstairs there was a waiting room with padded benches directly accessed from an unporched door which let in frequent blasts of cold air in the winter. This led into two consulting rooms with no soundproofing. Raised voices issuing from either one riveted the attention of those waiting. The rest of the small ground floor was the office, where the notes were kept. It was connected to the waiting room by a small hatch. Upstairs was a two-bedroom flat for the resident receptionist. Attached to the building was a cheaply built garage that was never used for a car, but was useful storage space. When expansion was needed its very existence eased planning approval for a large extension containing the reception office, accessed from a new car park laid in the orchard of No 23, which the doctors had bought. This reception area eventually had offices built over it, and later still the waiting room was enlarged at the front, giving the building its present appearance.

The three doctors moved into No. 21 Fairlands Road in 1961. Pat Trotter who now only lived two doors away, continued her secretarial work for a couple of years. The one and only resident receptionist from 1961 was Olwyn Hughes-Jones ("Mrs H-J"), who was Dr Harwood's mother-in-law. She was the widow of a pharmacist, had worked in a senior position in a department store and was highly efficient. In the first two or three years of her working there she more than earned her salary by identifying errors in the doctors' list of patients. There were literally

hundreds who thought they were patients of the practice; the doctors treated them as if they were, and yet they were not officially listed as such, so the doctors got no payment for them from the NHS. She was ably assisted in this by Patsy Rice of Pirbright, whose youth brought out all of Mrs H-J's motherly instincts.

Mrs H-J worked very hard indeed. She was a large lady and presided benignly over the waiting room like an empress, completely filling the small hatch as she called out "next please". Her ample bosom was always decorated with marcasite and cigarette ash, smoking being still socially acceptable. Her son-in-law smoked heavily all day long (his consulting room needed almost annual redecoration), and it was another ten years or so before some patients voiced their distaste at the habit.

With continued growth in the practice and wider car ownership the numbers attending the surgery increased so that some regulation was necessary and appointments were gradually introduced in the late 1960s. They were not the first practice in Guildford to do this, and by no means the last. Strange as it may now seem, this was a fairly new concept for GPs and their patients. This called for more secretarial help and more space, hence the additions to the building already mentioned, and converting Mrs H-J's flat into three consulting rooms, making five in all. Climbing the narrow steep stairs was not ideal, but if a patient entered for a consultation out of breath, unable to speak, and maybe a bit blue, at least the doctor had a hint that they were not well! Wasting no space, the flat's bathroom was changed to a very small office by removing the bath and basin, the heated towel rail remaining as a reminder of its original use.

Mrs H-J moved to a bungalow in Brocks Drive where she was truly retired, moving from there only just before her ninetieth birthday to be near her granddaughter. She died aged 93 in 1990. In 1976 Patsy, now Mrs Burch, left to have a baby. Mrs Margaret Spowart of Cumberland Avenue succeeded her. Some folk had difficulty at first in

understanding her Scottish accent, but that was no great handicap and she ran the reception with efficiency and tact. She also coped with the increasing complexity of running the practice for nineteen years until she retired.

The role of the doctors' wives gradually changed. For years Mrs Cranstoun alone had been on almost permanent telephone duty outside surgery hours, but as the partnership increased so the wives were needed to be by the phone when their husbands were on call, maybe several nights a week and every two or three weekends. In the first ten years of the new surgery some of them came in to help out in the reception as well. A variety of factors caused this to be a thing of the past; these include spouses having their own jobs, the development of pagers and mobile phones, and most significantly the enormous increase in out of hours calls which has taken place in the last ten to fifteen years. Since that time, practices in Guildford, as elsewhere, have grouped together to answer such calls on a rota basis, and it should now be unusual for a GP to have to do a full day's work, making important decisions, having been up most or even all of the night before.

### More doctors and a Branch Surgery

Soon after moving to Fairlands Road it was clear that another partner was needed. Dr David Luxmoore-May came in 1964, but left in 1966 to become a gynaecologist. He was replaced by Dr Hugh Foster. Dr John Nichols, the present senior partner, came in 1973. Dr Moir's anaesthetic work diminished in the 1960s but his work as a GP continued. He was somewhat slowed by a heart attack and other troubles, and in the ten years prior to his retirement locums were needed at intervals. He was eventually persuaded to retire in 1982 aged 70 and died the following year. Robert Harwood had died in 1981, thus two new partners were needed and Drs David Laurence and Jonathon Norris both came in 1982.

By this time it was recognised that patients in Normandy, Wanborough, and Ash would

be better served by a branch surgery which would reduce the growing pressures on Fairlands Road; Dr Harwood had long ceased to use the small extension to his house. It was about nine years from the first ideas to the opening of the Normandy surgery in 1988, much of the time taken up in negotiations with Guildford Borough Council, who were both vendors of the site and the planning authority.

The arrival of the Normandy surgery did lessen the number of patients coming to Fairlands (about a fifth were covered by the new surgery), but it brought its own problems with extra staff being needed and the same number of partners spread between two surgeries. Dr Hilary Trigg, the first woman partner in the practice, had joined in 1987, and Dr Chris Lukaszewicz replaced Dr Foster upon his retirement in 1991. Dr Hillard retired in 1993 and Dr Tim Arnold took his place. It had not been possible to have trainee GPs during the time of Drs Moir and Harwood, but in the 1980s the practice was approved for training; and Dr Arnold had been a trainee who fitted in especially well.

### Fairlands Medical Centre



By the late 1980s it was clear that the increasing role of GPs in the NHS ('Primary Health Care') required a proper Medical Centre, rather than a standard house adapted and extended. All the sites considered were in the Green Belt. There was a very positive vote in a public meeting and poll organised by the Parish Council, under the chairmanship of Harry Pickup, and the

planners were persuaded that it would be in the public interest to build a Medical Centre next to the Fairlands Community Centre. The deal involved purchase of some adjacent farmland from John Tangye to more than compensate for that part of the playing field taken up by the new building. The doctors also built a new pavilion. It was opened by Harry Leeder, a long term Fairlands resident active in that community, and bears his name. The practice moved into the Centre in 1998. Some of its facilities are somewhat underused, but the building will doubtless be here when the NHS is reformed yet again, and its value to the community can be fully realised.

### Nurses

Guildford, after London and Liverpool, was one of the first towns in the country to have a district nurse organisation. The Guildford Queen's District Nurses Association was formed in 1905, partly comprising the Bible Nurses who can be traced back to 1862. We don't know whether they attended the sick in the parish, but by early in the last century there was the Worplesdon District Nursing Association. This was an entirely voluntary body run by a committee of highly dedicated ladies. Their Honorary Secretary was Miss Evelyn Thompson who lived at Perry Hill. There was a Surrey County Nurses Association to which they were affiliated. In 1925 they appointed Nurse Hope who was to stay for thirty years.



A State Registered Nurse and midwife, Nurse Hope trained at Bristol where she had been chosen as the best probationer of the year to be in a guard of honour when Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) visited the Royal Infirmary there not long before she died. Her salary of £200 per annum, considered quite a good sum at the time, was raised by annual subscriptions to the Association and by the occasional jumble sale or bazaar. At first Nurse Hope did her rounds by bicycle, but after some years she was given a car by a grateful patient. She worked closely with Dr Cranstoun, delivering babies, doing dressings, and performing other duties. Apart from four weeks' holiday a year, when cover was arranged, she had no official time off, but could usually manage a few hours "between babies". Her daughter, Mrs Stella Fletcher, still lives on Fairlands.

In the 1950s increased mobility led to the introduction of a more centralised organisation. Unmarried nurses lived in the tall building in Stoughton Road which is now NHS offices next to the Jarvis screening unit. The doctors phoned daily for their practice's nursing requirements. From the 1970s nurses were attached to practices, a sensible arrangement that continues today. The new Fairlands Medical Centre gives them their own proper office for the first time. At Fairlands Road they needed to make do with a pokey little room. There was no room for Health Visitors there but now they too have the space to do their work properly and liaise with the doctors.

### Other Doctors

Although Dr Cranstoun looked after most of the central population of the parish, as it developed and people were more mobile, some residents of Jacob's Well tended to go to the surgery in Bellfields (now part of the Guildown practice), or further into Guildford. Those in Wood Street had always had the choice of the long established practice on Woodbridge Hill where Dr Clive Evans, who still lives in Worplesdon and is a Trustee of the Memorial Hall, worked for forty years from 1953. Some of those who moved out of Guildford to the new Fairlands development

in the 1960s stayed with their Guildford doctors.

### Hospitals

The main Guildford hospitals have always been important to residents in Worplesdon as it is mostly to these that the GPs refer their patients when necessary. The Fairlands practice had many patients in Mayford and Dr Moir had links with the Woking hospitals so many referrals were made in that direction as well.

The original Royal Surrey County Hospital in the Farnham Road was opened in 1866 by the Bishop of Winchester whose name is well known to members of the Mothers' Union as his wife Mary Sumner was its founder in 1876. The new hospital with the same name opened in 1980, immediately taking over the work of Farnham Road, and in 1991 that of St Luke's. This hospital in Warren Road was opened in 1896 as the Guildford Infirmary attached to the workhouse. Much enlarged by the hatted annex built in 1939 it was taken over by the NHS in 1948 and demolished in the 1990s. During the 1950s and 1960s there were many patients who remembered its Poor Law origins and disliked going there.

Another real bogey was "Going to Brookwood", a typical large Victorian asylum opened in 1867 with (in 1948) 1,760 beds for the insane. Happily, from about 1960 there has been a greater understanding of mental disorders and development of drugs to treat them. This has resulted in the eventual closure and redevelopment of the hospital site, with appropriate facilities for such patients provided elsewhere.

There was one hospital actually in the parish. This was the Whitmoor Hospital, opened in 1900 despite much local opposition as it was to take smallpox cases. In fact it never had to deal with any large outbreaks of smallpox, and was vacant for many of the twenty years prior to its closure in 1936. The doctor's house survives as 'Pine Copse' and the gatehouse is 'Pine Copse Bungalow'. The hospital laundry building is

now used as a pottery. Graffiti on its walls refers to scarlet fever, confirming that other infections beside the dreaded smallpox were isolated there. The hospital building, which does not survive, was a single storey situated on what is now a lawn.

### Maternity Services

Childbirth was a hazardous business a hundred years ago, though the use of chloroform introduced in the middle of the previous century could make it a less painful ordeal. Deliveries were done at home by a midwife and sometimes a GP. The old Royal Surrey had no obstetric department but from 1919 its gynaecological department was able to provide Caesarean sections. In 1930 a small maternity unit opened at what was later called St Luke's.

A great improvement in care came with the opening in 1937 of the Jarvis Maternity Home, the gift of Sir John Jarvis, MP for Guildford (1935-50), and Lady Jarvis. An associated antenatal clinic was given by Cow and Gate the Guildford-based baby food firm. Cranny, his partners and successors, made full use of the Jarvis and there are plenty of those aged twenty-five to sixty-something who first saw the light of day there.

Other Worplesdon babies were born in Mount Alvernia, (in Bethlehem Ward, of course!) or at Woking Maternity Hospital, now the site of Woking Community Hospital. The Jarvis had always been linked with the St Luke's obstetric department, and in 1975 it closed and its work was absorbed into St Luke's, which in turn transferred its obstetrics to the present Royal Surrey in 1991.

### Beyond 2000

In recent years politicians have stressed the important role of Primary Care, which is a new name for what older residents will recall as family doctoring. This emphasis is likely to continue. In the Fairlands Medical Centre the parish has an excellent facility, and there are others not far beyond the parish boundary. It is fortunate that the Royal

Surrey with a full range of specialities is conveniently near.

However, all is not well with the NHS, as many people know from first- or second-hand experience. At the turn of the century there is just a glimmer of hope that even the politicians are beginning to realise this.



## The Women's Institute in Worplesdon

### Worplesdon Women's Institute

In 1915, submarine warfare threatened Britain's food supplies, and it was in this year that the Women's Institute movement, founded by Mrs Alfred Watt MBE, began. Essentially a countrywomen's organisation, its immediate aims were to increase food production and prevent waste, with special emphasis on the village and the improvement of rural life.

Worplesdon W.I. was founded in 1920 and the first President was Mrs Adeline Thompson. Other founder members included Miss Adeline MacLean, Miss Evelyn Thompson (also Surrey County President from 1930 to 1935), Mrs Selous, Miss Heald and Miss Spens. Miss E. Thompson and Miss A. MacLean were joint editors of the Surrey Cookery Book, which was published in 1932. Membership was by nomination and eligibility also depended on being resident in the parish.

Records of activities are available from 1925 and it was during the years of the Second World War that the skills and ingenuity of these ladies proved to be invaluable. Wartime activities included the preparation of swabs and bandages for hospitals; making and dispatching socks, bedjackets, night and day shirts, women's and children's nightgowns and dressing gowns to the central Hospital Supply Depot; giving magazines to the Woodbridge Isolation Hospital and articles to the Finnish Red Cross; collecting eggs and vegetables to help feed patients in the Royal Surrey Hospital; Red Cross work parties, sending gift parcels, fruit and cigarettes to St David's Home for Disabled Soldiers; prayers for fighting forces; and assisting children at the Pitch Place Home.

The Memorial Hall was taken over for use as a school and W.I. meetings were conducted in the Hope Hall. An organisation known as American Seeds for British Soil was sponsored by Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt and administered by the National Federation of Women's Institutes of England and Wales. The first consignment of seeds consisted of one pint of peas, the same quantity of dwarf

french beans and half an ounce of both carrots and onions. The intention was ultimately to supply enough seed for the whole country. The seeds were planted and grown in a W.I. allotment and a record book 'Worplesdon Operation Produce 1948' shows how serious the ladies of the parish were about the efficient production of food. It notes attendance at lectures on "Drying and Salting of Vegetables" and "Pig and Poultry Feeding". Cockerels could be purchased for four old pennies each. July was the month of jam making and September for utilising apples and blackberries.

An Australian W.I. at Euroa, Victoria, frequently sent parcels of food, including meat and dried fruit, during the war years which were distributed by draw. Reciprocal Christmas parcels still continue between the two Institutes. Knitting for the needy was also done by the ladies and many comforts were sent to HMS Hood and minesweepers at the time. Records show that even the vacuum cleaner had to earn its keep, being hired out at the rate of one shilling per day.

Although the work must have been arduous it was done with good spirit. There were parties, dances and charabanc outings and a choir and drama group for entertainment. These talents brought acclaim from festivals and competitions, including a Gold Star at the County Drama Festival in 1949 and two cups from the 1966 Godalming Music Festival.

In the 1930s an Institute banner was embroidered by four founder members, made in four joined sections depicting parts of Worplesdon Parish: St Mary's Church, the old Village Greens, Workers and the Countryside. A frame was made by Mr Ken Ball, son of a founder member. Mr Ball also made an oak table to commemorate the W.I. Golden Jubilee 1920-70 and is used as the President's table at club meetings. In 1965 a commemorative oak tree was planted in the centre of the Village Green and a red acer in the triangle linking The Avenue with Bagshot Road.

The W.I. has its own residential adult education college, Denmans' College, near



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Oxford. Most of the money needed to buy, develop and maintain the college over the years has been raised by the W.I. itself. Every year over 6,000 members attend some 500 short courses on anything from car maintenance to quilting, bookbinding to yoga. Each alternate year Worplesdon W.I. awards a bursary, by lucky draw, for one person to attend the college on a course of her choice.

Members derive fun and companionship, are able to visit new places and re-visit old favourites, to walk, talk and lunch together and to play an active role in an organisation which has a national voice.

### Jacob's Well Women's Institute

The W.I. was first formed in Jacob's Well in 1947, and met monthly in the Horticultural Hall on the corner of Woodlands Road and Woking Road (now the entrance to Slyfields Industrial Estate). It moved to the Jacob's Well Social Hall in the late 1950s to early 1960s, but moved on again when the new Village Hall was built.

Each W.I. had within its main body, a Produce and Homecraft Guild, and extra monthly meetings were held for members to learn and improve on skills such as cookery, gardening, flower arranging and all kinds of crafts to which ladies of the village were invited to attend. Members were extremely accomplished at arts so diverse as toy making, hat making and leatherwork.

In 1972 the W.I. celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday in style. But as the membership grew older it was felt that the time had come to start an evening W.I. to attract younger women. However, it grew harder to fill the posts of Secretary and Treasurer and so, in 1980, the afternoon W.I. was sadly closed.

On 27 November 1975 the committee of the evening W.I. was formed with Jeanne Ward as the first President. At first the meetings were held in the bar lounge of the Village Hall, with around forty members - and numbers are similar today. A fund-raising lunch was held on 24 April 1976, supported by nineteen local W.I.s and many local

people. Jacob's Well W.I. Market began in April 1985 and is held at the hall on Friday mornings.

In 1995 the W.I. banner was made by Pam Soley and Mary Brown. It was paraded around Guildford Cathedral to celebrate seventy-five years of the national W.I. and is now on permanent display in the Village Hall.

The evening W.I. still thrives, offering interesting and varied activities for its members, whose ages span across fifty years.

### Fairlands Women's Institute

On 21 October 1964, thirty-five ladies met at the new Fairlands Community Hall, where, with the help and guidance of County President Mrs Pain, County Chair Mrs Everington, and Miss Milner, they voted to form a new branch of the National Federation of Women's Institutes.

More than fifty ladies attended the inaugural meeting, at which Mrs C. Brownjohn was elected Branch President. Mrs Adey was elected Hon Secretary with Mrs Ditcham as her assistant; Mrs J. Brownjohn became Hon Treasurer with assistant Mrs D. King, and the rest of the committee comprised Mrs Morgan, Mrs Grey, Miss Swan, Mrs Cater and Mrs Huggett.

The first proper meeting was held on 8 December 1964, when a talk was given by Mrs Tanner on 'Making Christmas Decorations'. A musical entertainment was provided by the choir of Worplesdon Women's Institute and £7.13s was raised towards the Institute's funds through the bring-and-buy stall. Another twenty new members were enrolled and a cordial welcome was extended to any lady of seventeen years upward who wished to attend future meetings.

The new branch proved to be very popular and it was not long before the Fairlands membership exceeded one hundred. Members could also bring a visitor to meetings "on payment of one shilling for tea

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to the doorkeeper". In 1965, a baby sitting service was offered by the W.I. at the bargain price of one half-crown up to 11.30pm, plus an additional half-crown thereafter.

A Drama Group was formed in January 1965, which met on the second and fourth Tuesday in each month. The group flourished, eventually becoming independent of the W.I. and calling itself the Fairlands Players.



The Players have since managed two major productions every year and are still going strong at the start of the new century.

Mrs Huggett, one of the founder members, began in 1965 a scrap-book of the Fairlands Women's Institute activities in which their achievements are documented.

### Wood Street Women's Institute

A original W.I. group in Wood Street closed in the mid-1960s. Attempts were made to re-establish a W.I. during the 1970s. However, 1989 saw the reformation of the Wood Street group with Eileen Alderman, Janet Block, Grace Elliott, Susan Fisher, Margaret Hamilton, Vera Pritchard, Hilary Strong and Pauline Tobias comprising the Committee. After some six years this renaissance of the W.I. in Wood Street was regrettably foundered due to falling attendance. Some of the remaining eleven members at that time joined the Rydes Hill evening W.I.

## Sports in Worplesdon

### Football

Organised football was recorded as first being played at Worplesdon at the Memorial Hall Ground in 1919. All games were of a friendly nature as there were no local leagues existing at this time.

The first mention of a Worplesdon team being part of any league was in the 1920s when it was one of the founder members of the Woking & District League. The team competed annually in this league until they disbanded in 1954. Representatives of well-known local families such as Heather, Primmer, Terry and Christmas played in the sides over these years. In 1954 the Club reformed and joined the Guildford & District League where they enjoyed success as League and Cup winners for the next two years, after which they re-joined the Woking & District League for a further period.



In 1968 after considerable success in this League they decided to join the Surrey Combination League, to play their football alongside such sides as Crystal Palace, Wimbledon, Aldershot, Kingstonians and the Metropolitan Police. Unfortunately after two or three years, due to the withdrawal of many of the top sides, the League deteriorated, and Worplesdon decided to join the Surrey Senior League where they remained until 1984. During this period they amalgamated with the then groundless Guildford City and were known as Guildford & Worplesdon. Local well-known families such as Heather, Terry and Cater were represented during these times.

In 1985 the Club reformed as Worplesdon Football Club joining the Guildford & District League once again, in Division III.

Between 1986 and 1996 Worplesdon progressed from this League to Division I of the Surrey Intermediate League.

1997 saw Worplesdon relegated to Division II, where they remain to date. (Interestingly they still retain six of the players who played in the first games on the rebirth of the Club in 1985).

The Club has won honours in all the Leagues in which it has participated. In 1960 the team also won the then famous Woking six-a-side tournament that used to be held annually at Woking's Football Ground on Good Fridays. All the games were played on a knockout basis, on the same day, with over 100 clubs participating, so to win Worplesdon had to play six or seven games.

Humorous moments have included the occasion when, whilst playing Kingstonians, one of the Worplesdon players knocked off the opposition's goalkeeper's glasses, trod on them accidentally and smashed them to pieces. Worplesdon went on to win 10-0. Whilst playing Metropolitan Police at Worplesdon, the Police turned up with only ten men. Living up to their friendly reputation, Worplesdon lent the Police a Worplesdon player who had not been picked in their XI. The Police went on to win 9-1.

### Cricket

Earliest records of cricket in Worplesdon refer to the Farmers of Worplesdon playing the Publicans of Stoke & Guildford at the Artillery ground in Stoke during 1788. The game was reported in the Reading Mercury and the Farmers won by an innings and 152 runs, we wonder how long the game could have lasted, at least a whole day out for the family?

During the first few years after its inception in 1890 the Worplesdon Cricket Club played its matches at Merrist Wood, the former



Worplesdon Cricket Ground



1890s Worplesdon

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home of its first president Mr S Brotherhood. The groundsman at the Oval prepared the pitch, and visiting County sides were occasionally entertained there. Since this period, cricket has been played continuously in Worplesdon by the Club, with the exception of two periods coinciding with the two World Wars.

The Club moved to Rickford Common some time before the turn of the century, the pitch being situated on the common at the foot of the hill opposite the house called 'Perry'. The area is now so overgrown with bushes and silver birch trees that it seems impossible for cricket ever to have been played here.

In 1912 the Club moved to its present location at the Memorial Ground at an annual rent of one pound. A further fee of ten shillings was charged for allowing sheep to graze on the ground to keep the grass short. This move was made possible by the generosity of Sir James Walker who donated eight acres of land for a war memorial and recreation ground where both football and cricket continue to be played, along with the relatively new tennis facilities. In 1919 the cricket square was moved a hundred yards or so down the field to allow football to be played on the site.



Records concerning the Club's history show that many prominent village people played for the club, from the famous big game-hunter F.C. Selous, to Worplesdon names that can still be found in the parish and can be traced back over the centuries, such as Christmas, Terry, Primmer and Heather.

It should be remembered that modern Worplesdon is a far smaller parish in acreage than it was when the Cricket Club was first formed. It has been depleted by the loss of the areas of Wyke, Normandy, Burpham and most of Stoughton. These places now of course support their own cricket teams, as do both Fairlands and Wood Street, who still remain within the parish of Worplesdon.

Several extracts from the club records over the years make interesting reading:

1919: The task of being responsible for the square and ground fell to selected players. A number, who perhaps let the grass grow under their feet, were asked to resign.

1928: Practice nights were getting out of hand as several members attend practice to only bat or bowl as they like, with no orderliness whatsoever. On future practice nights a committee member was to be put in charge to stop this "ungentlemanly practice".

1929: One of the stars of this year was 'Snow Ball' Neal. Clad in his blue serge trousers and wide belt, he was a demon fast bowler. Assisted by at least eight pints of New Inn beer before each match, he bowled straight as a die!

1946: Lord Swaythling joined the club. He used to turn up to matches in full cricket attire with his pads already on, as he used to open the batting and keep wicket. He was never seen without them, as he also went home in them.

1962: The secretary's report for the season referred to the wicket being the talk of the year, even making headlines in the local paper. Much had been said and written about the rise at one end of the wicket. However, our three local experts, Messrs McLean, Madgwick and Mount maintained that this rise totally vanished after four pints of Club Ale.

1967: A memorable occasion was the Club dinner this year. Ladies were invited for the first time, despite the dismay of some members. This was indeed a landmark in the

## Sports in Worplesdon

Club's history! It marked the end of an era of "I'll be working late tonight dear" occasions held by the men of Worplesdon. Obviously the tenor of the evenings changed somewhat, to save the men's blushes.

The first centuries were recorded for the club in 1934 by H Wakeley and L Collins, and cricket dinners have been held annually since the 1940s. Guest speakers at these events have included such celebrities as the Bedser twins, Peter May, E.W. Swanton, Gubby Allen, Pat Pocock, Ingleby McKenzie and Humphry Ellis, the editor of 'Punch'. In 1954, resulting from delays caused by sending players to the New Inn for performance improvers, it was decided that the club should apply for a liquor licence.

The success of this move was apparent one year later when Worplesdon Cricket Club achieved its greatest victory. A crowd of over 3,000 saw one of the closest and most entertaining Flora-Doris finals played at Guildford Sports Ground, between Worplesdon and the favourites Farncombe. Worplesdon graced their first ever final with a grand display of cricket and came out winners by fifteen runs in the last over.

In 1965, the completion of the new pavilion was celebrated by an official opening marked by a celebrity match against the Lord's Taverners' XI. In 1972 League cricket came to the area and the club was amongst the founder members of the Murrants Three Counties League, providing two league officials. 1974 saw the club join the very popular Woking Review League which was played on Tuesday evenings over fourteen overs-a-side. The club enjoyed a good deal of success over the next ten years in this league with several individual awards going to Worplesdon players.

The homemade teas at Worplesdon have been widely acclaimed over the years as the best in the area, entirely due to the ladies who supported their menfolk in the age-old tradition of providing the food between innings.

In 1990 the club celebrated 100 years of cricket at Worplesdon. The celebrations included many special events organised throughout the year, with its main feature being the Club's first ever cricket week at Worplesdon.

The week was an unqualified success with Sunday being the *coup de gras* when the President's XI, comprising past Worplesdon players assembled from all over the country, played the present team. All players dressed in the style of a hundred years' ago, which added considerably to the atmosphere. It proved to be an extremely colourful occasion, thoroughly enjoyed by the hundred or so spectators formed from ex-members of the Club and their families.



Times have changed over the last 110 years. No longer do we experience the quiet sleepy days of horse-drawn transport, but amid the noise and pollution, pleasant, restful sounds of leather ball struck with willow bat can still be heard on most summer weekends at Worplesdon.

### Golf

Although Worplesdon Golf Course, established for over one hundred years, and the venue for the National Mixed Foursomes Championships on several occasions, bears the parish name, it is no longer within the current parish boundary. This has been caused by numerous boundary changes over the years. However Worplesdon now possesses two very fine new golf courses, one at Roker Park, Holly Lane and one at Merrist Wood College.

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Roker Park Golf Course is a picturesque, challenging nine-hole course that was created on existing farmland, mainly due to the decline in agricultural profitability. Tending land, which for centuries had been farmed in various ways, had become a non-viable proposition. Mr 'Bunny' Roker, the owner, spent many a sleepless night thinking of ways to use the land more profitably and one of his better ideas proved to be the provision of a golf course. The idea resulted in work beginning on the construction in the spring of 1991.

The design was Bunny's own work, ably assisted by his family and senior members of his staff, who subsequently carried out the majority of the construction work during the long summer months. Work was completed in May 1992 and the course was opened to the public for play soon afterwards.



The clubhouse was built later that year on the site of an old cowshed. Many of the existing bricks and timbers were incorporated in the rebuild, giving the clubhouse an attractive older look. Jamie Spence officially opened it in March 1993.

The finished clubhouse and course, now becoming quite mature, will provide the public with an avenue of recreational sport for many years to come.

Merrist Wood Golf Club situated in the grounds of the College also provides the superb escape from the pressures of the working world. The site was ideal for the creation of a championship golf course, having all the natural features required. In

addition to mature and meandering streams and ditches, four artificial lakes were created for effect. Part of the course is designated as a nature reserve, to enhance and protect wildlife habitats. A lucky golfer might catch sight of the blue-green flash of a kingfisher, see shimmering damsel flies, observe a hovering kestrel, marvel at the wheeling acrobatic lapwing displays, or spot roe deer, badgers and foxes whilst hearing the uplifting song of a skylark during a round of golf. A wide variety of flowers, blooming throughout the year, add colour and scent to the scene.

The attractively styled clubhouse, envied by other local golf clubs, along with the 6,900-yard, par seventy-two course was opened in September 1997. The adjacent college offers a unique range of golf-related courses that include green-keeping, golf studies (P.G.A.) and countryside management. This educational aspect, together with its own championship course, makes Merrist Wood the first of its kind in Europe to benefit from everything being on the same site.



Merrist Wood Golf Course will undoubtedly provide the parish with an exceptional sports attraction for this century and beyond.

### Rifle Shooting

Just beside the Ship Inn at Pitch Place, near Perry Hill, is the site of Worplesdon Rifle Club. Founded in 1906 the early members built themselves a fine rifle range in the old sandpits. Membership over the years has fluctuated from today's twenty-odd to well over one hundred at its peak. The club has

## Sports in Worplesdon

provided county and international representation during its lifetime, and is well known throughout the country.

### Tennis

A pair of hard standing tennis courts was constructed at the Memorial Hall ground in 1976, sponsored by the Parish Council for the use of its parishioners, and was opened up to the general public on a pay-and-play basis. It is now also the home of a thriving Tennis Club who are able to use the courts daily throughout the year with the addition of floodlights provided with financial help from the National Lottery.

### Badminton

The Memorial Hall at Worplesdon, with its high domed ceiling, is an ideal place to play badminton. For two or three nights every week, various clubs have played matches there over the years.



*The Millennium Parish Council*

### The Parish Council

A parish council is the most ancient type of Local Government and has been in use in England for some civil purposes since the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

The council is a statutory elected local authority. It acts as a voice for local opinion by keeping in close and regular contact with their electorate and provides a focus for voluntary organisations in the area.

The Worplesdon Parish Council was constituted in 1894 and during the past 100 years there have been eighteen Chairmen, including two lady Chairmen, one of whom, Sandra Morgan, is still a serving member of the Council. Mr A.J. Kelly, OBE, JP was the longest serving Chairman, remaining in office for twenty-five years. Bob McShee currently holds the post, having been elected in 1999. He is ably supported by Vice-Chairman Harry Pickup who held the chairmanship for the preceding ten years.

The Millennium Parish Council comprises:

Fairlands  
Dr Alan Dillon  
Mrs Sandra Morgan  
Mr Roger Welch  
Mrs Valerie Wild  
Mrs Mick Wilson

Jacob's Well  
Mrs Leslie Pickering  
Mr Harry Pickup  
Mrs Sheila Routh

Perry Hill  
Mr Terry Cater  
Mrs Stella Harris  
Gp Capt Richard Stephens

Wood Street  
Mrs Marion Choate  
Mr Robert McShee  
Mr Ralph Pomphrey  
Mr Norman Sherwin

Since 1894 there have been six Parish Clerks, the longest serving being Mr and Mrs Christmas who were joint clerks for a period

of fifty-two years from 1894 to 1946. The present clerk, Gaynor White was appointed in 1999, succeeding Carole Tester who had served for twelve years.

The Worplesdon Parish Council will continue to represent the people of the parish as it has done during the past two centuries. With this book, each household will have a lasting souvenir of the history of Worplesdon at the start of the millennium as we enter the future together.

### Parish Charities

The trustees of the Worplesdon United Charities comprise the rector of St Mary's and four residents of the parish. Together they administer the income from five charities, four of which derive their revenue from investments held in the COIF Charities Investment Fund. The greatest income arises from the fifth charity, the Henry Smith Gift.

Smith died on 3 January 1628 and his trustees were directed to invest in land and property to earn rent that could be distributed to each parish for *"the relief of the aged poor or infirm people, married persons having more children born in lawful wedlock than their labours could maintain, poor orphans, such poor people as should keep themselves and their families to labour, and should put forth their children as apprentices at the age of 15, and not to or for the relief of any persons who are given to excessive drinking, whoremongers, common swearers, pilferers, or otherwise notoriously scandalous, or to any persons that have been incorrigible or disobedient to those whose servants they have been, or to any vagrants, or such as should not have inhabited the parish for five years next before the distribution, or being able, should refuse to work."*

Worplesdon parish is entitled to 4/160<sup>th</sup> part of the net annual income from the portion of the Smith's Charity Estates known as Warbleton Estate. In 1998 this was £1,600.

Legend has it that Smith was known as 'Dog-Smyth', since he kept no house himself,

but dined at friends' and then requested food to take away for his dog which he later ate himself. It is also said that he was whipped out of a particular parish as a poor boy, and he excluded that one from his will to the further benefit of Surrey's other parishes.

In his will of 3 April 1605 Thomas Shawe gave £5 to the poor of Worplesdon, derived from his house in Guildford, which became the Nag's Head and had been converted into a grocer's shop by 1786. The will stipulated that fifty shillings should be distributed on Christmas Eve and the same amount on Good Friday, at the discretion of the parson and churchwarden, with the proviso *"none to the idle poor or to maintain any bastard, but to the aged feeble and weak"*. At some later date this investment was given to the trustees. In 1998 the amount available for distribution was £15.31.

William Stringer, who was buried in Worplesdon on 20 October 1706, left a small legacy to the parish. This realised an income of £24.01 in 1998.

The Worplesdon War Relief fund, established after World War I, provided an income of £63.33 in 1998.

The Frederick Lewis Philps and Amelia Philps Bequest set up in 1958 has two aims *"(i) for assisting poor persons resident in the Ancient Parish of Worplesdon within one mile of Worplesdon Parish Church preference being given to such persons within the foregoing category as are Old Age Pensioners or persons dependent primarily upon National Insurance Contributory Retirement Pension or Widows' Pension; (ii) without prejudice to the Trustees' discretion to afford such assistance in time of necessity to any such persons at the Christmas season to enable them to purchase Christmas fare and generally relieve loneliness and distress amongst such persons at the Christmas season."* For 1998 the income from this bequest was £203.38.

The income from the charities is distributed in the form of vouchers that can be exchanged for food, clothing or fuel. Notices inviting applications for the vouchers are displayed during October each year at

Fairlands, Pitch Place and Wood Street Post Offices, Worplesdon Memorial Hall and the churches of St Mary's and St Alban's. The trustees meet in November to consider the applications and agree how the distributions are to be made for that year.

## Acknowledgements

This book has been prepared with reference to a wide range of sources and with the kind assistance of many individuals. In an expression of our gratitude for their help with this project, we have tried to include as many names as possible in this section. Some names are bound to have been omitted and our thanks are extended to far more people than are listed below.

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- A Brief History of St Peter's Bellfields Shared Church.
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- Wood Street, the Growth of a Village  
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- Worplesdon and St Mary's, a brief history  
David Brian RICS
- Worplesdon Old and New  
Joan Tingle and Joan Tovey

### Research Facilities

- Domestic Building Research Group (Surrey)
- Reports on several buildings
  - Wills and Probate Inventories, transcribed by Marion Herridge from original documents at the Hampshire Record Office
- British Map Library
- Surrey, Ordnance Survey 1801-1938
  - Surrey, John Rocque 1754
- Surrey History Centre
- Census records 1841-91
  - Deeds, leases and mortgages 16c-20c
  - Electoral Rolls, Chertsey Division 1895-1915
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## Worplesdon: A Tale of Four Villages

- Land Tax assessments 1780-1831
- Manor of Burgham:
  - Burgham Rentalls 1610
  - Rent Roll 1800
  - Minute Books 1840, 1858
  - Court Book 1866
- Manor of Worplesdon
  - Parish Registers 1538-1854
  - Tithe Apportionment and map 1841
- Map of 'Land belonging to Mr William Crosse of Worplesdon' by Daniel Sarll 1686
- Sales particulars, various 19c-20c

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**A gift to the residents of Worplesdon  
to commemorate the year 2000**

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