



Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group NEWSLETTER

Volume 9 – April 2022 Editor: Sue Tatham

The Chairman, Ben Tatham writes ...

We enjoyed only one event in 2021 due to Covid, this was the highly successful Newdigate walk, but our research activities have continued.

After almost two years of the Covid pandemic, we hope that we can now

re-start our normal events which are listed further on in this newsletter. Do come and support our events.

Have you had a look at our website recently? It has become a valuable source for the history of Mickleham and

Westhumble and attracts queries from many people, from the UK and abroad.

Have you got a query about some aspect of our local history? If so, do please get in touch and one of us should be able to help.

Task Group Report: The Village Archives

Many of our enquiries come from family members researching their past history, as you will see from Judith Long's report on the churchyard, but we do get some unusual ones, such as the search for a mother-in-law's birthplace in Norbury Park with the only information being that she was born in Southerly Hut, Mickleham, or possibly an air-raid shelter. We came up with a number of theories but had to admit defeat.

This year we have been particularly fortunate in being given a wealth of material from Christopher Jeans who has been organising the arrangements for the Jeans' archive. He has passed on much material that relates to Cleveland Lodge, the family home for many years from where Lady Susi Jeans organised musical festivals and concerts, which some residents may still remember. There are records of the Cleveland Cottages built in 1938 and many interesting letters concerning the blue plaques which were unveiled in 2000. Thank you to Jonathan Blake for putting us in touch.

Some may also remember Frank and Wendy Chapman as the owners of Norbury Park House before

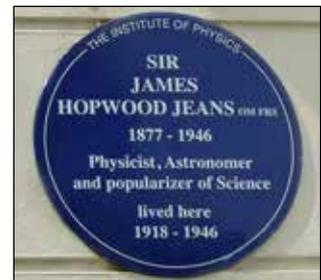
the fire in 2005, after which they moved to Hampton. Thank you to their daughter Susie and Richard Gowenlock for allowing three of us to visit the Hampton house and to see the collection of paintings and etchings that Frank had acquired about Norbury Park and its past occupants, especially research into the restoration of the renowned Painted Drawing Room. We know how much he loved that house and gardens, and we are grateful for the material that they have kindly passed on already with more perhaps to come when the house is sold.

Following a query about a young man who died at Fredley Lodge, we were led into the common confusion concerning Fredley Farm (or Cottage on some maps) now called Fredley Manor, and Fredley House, now St Faith's. The Lodge residents were the gatekeepers to Fredley House as a remaining post testifies and were gardeners on the estate. Enquiries into the Fredley Estate led to Fiona Roberts-Miller passing on some maps and papers before she moved.

We have made several acquisitions of photographs, plus two paintings: one of Flint Cottages (above the A24) and

another of the Swanworth Post Office as it used to be. Thanks to Mark Day for his readiness to take part in E-bay auctions on our behalf including his success in buying an early 19th indenture concerning Fredley. Angela Ireland has written an amazing account of the Village Hall using the early minute books which will be appearing in the parish magazine in instalments – a real labour of love. Judith Long has as ever done the brunt of the research throughout the year for which we are heavily indebted.

Judy Kinloch



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www.hugofox.com/community/mickleham-westhumble-local-history-group-13483/

Manager: Roger Davis

PROGRAMME 2022

AGM with talk about Chuter Ede – Friday 1st April
 Juniper Hill visit – Wednesday 15th June
 Beating the Bounds – Saturdays 24th September (Westhumble)
 and 15th October (Mickleham)
 Visit to Reigate Caves – TBA



Chapel Farm before it was sold in 1998

Task Group Report: The Churchyard

The recording of the inscriptions on an Excel spreadsheet is now complete but there are some updates needed on the churchyard plans where gravestones have been moved, errors were made on the old hand-drawn plans or new information has come to light. We have also begun taking photos of all the gravestones. We have had several enquiries about graves in the churchyard. In June we were contacted by a professional genealogist on behalf of a Canadian client who was visiting England and wanted to see the grave of his ancestors. These were members of the Sturgis family who are buried in Mickleham. Russell Sturgis, born in 1807, came from a family of Boston merchants who had a thriving trade in China and the Philippines. After travelling extensively for the family business, Sturgis settled in England where he became a partner and later the head of Baring Brothers. He divided his time between his residence in London and his country house, Givons Grove, where he died in 1887. His son Henry Parkman Sturgis married George Meredith's daughter Marie.

In September we received an email from an aviation enthusiast who had visited the churchyard and was particularly interested in the grave of Douglas Graham Gilmour, an aviation pioneer who died in a flying accident in 1912 and whose family had lived

at Mickleham Downs House. The grave must have also attracted attention in 1946 when, according to *The Bognor Regis Observer*, a Mr Venables laid a wreath on the grave which was paid for by a group of Bognor residents to commemorate the 35th anniversary of Gilmour's flight over their town.

The grave has an unusual stone with a vitrified glass coating bearing a detailed image of Gilmour in his plane. Our visitor noticed from photos taken on a previous visit in 2015 that the coating had deteriorated considerably. This was surprising as it had only recently been repaired in 2015. Mark Day offered to take on the task of having the stone restored a second time (with longer lasting results we hope!) which is complicated by the need to obtain a Faculty from the Diocese. The grave is one of only two in Mickleham listed on British grave memorials (the other being that of Richard Bennett the former Canadian PM). As part of a new Government scheme to identify



The Sturgis Grave

local heritage assets we have applied to Surrey County Council to have the grave listed as a 'non-designated heritage asset'. SCC has received more than 900 applications so we may have quite a wait to find out if ours has been successful. Judith Long.



Newly restored Gilmour stone 2015

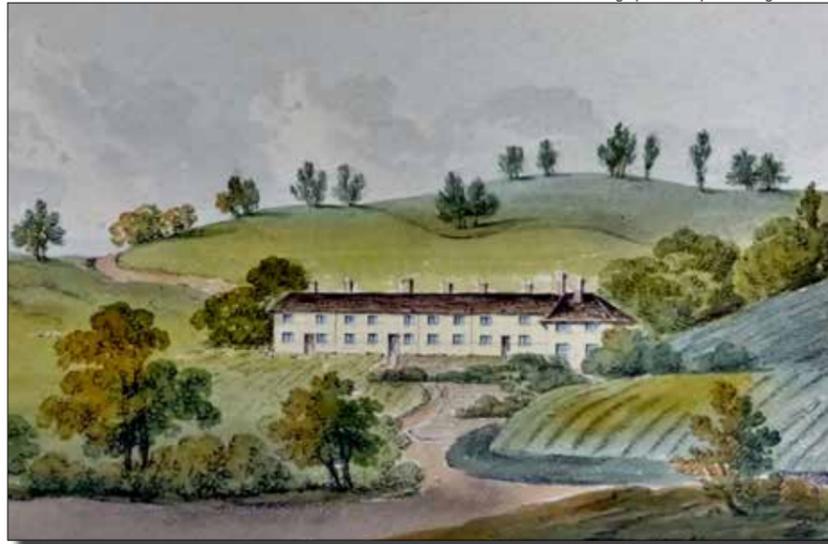


Gilmour stone 2021

Photographs: Judith Long

Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group History of the Mickleham Almshouses

Photograph courtesy of Dorking Museum



Watercolour of the original Almshouses by John Hassell 1823

Having read Trevor Haylett's piece on the almshouses last month I had a look through the file in the archive and thought it would be interesting to fill in a few historical details.

The first almshouses were built about the turn of the 18th century on land that was donated by Sir Charles Talbot, then Lord of the Manor and living at Mickleham Hall. It was strictly speaking a workhouse or poor house, built by charity, and supported by alms collected by an Alms Collector. However, after the passing of the Poor Law Act in 1601 it became the sole responsibility of the parish to provide relief. This was levied on the chief householders by the Overseer of the Poor or churchwarden who was responsible for distributing the rate to the 'settled poor' but not vagrants. John Hassell, a watercolour painter of many local landscapes, painted them in 1823 as shown in the March magazine. They are a row of plain two-storey cottages towards the bottom of Byttom Hill, probably providing eight dwellings in all. It was not all law-abiding however as in 1816 the vestry book records some abuse by a few inmates who were clearly 'undeserving poor' as they were able-bodied and earning wages which meant they were not eligible for free places. Notice was served on them to pay a rent of 1 to 2

shillings a week.

This arrangement carried on until 1834 when a rapidly rising poor rate led to the passing of a new Poor Law in which individual parishes were merged into unions and managed by a board of guardians which they elected. Mickleham was one of seven parishes to come under the jurisdiction of the Dorking Union and a workhouse where male and female inmates lived separately was built on the site of what later became Dorking Hospital. With the poorhouse no longer funded and no decisions made for its future it inevitably fell into a poor condition. A Mr Hart was called in by the Reverend Alfred Burmester in 1845 and a vestry note records his desire to have repairs made because of the 'present dilapidated and disgraceful state of the Almshouse property' and the 'indifferent characters who lodged there'. Repairs totalling £20.15s.4d were eventually made but it would seem by this time that more drastic action was needed and an indenture was drawn up in February 1846 whereby Sir George Talbot, Lord of the Manor and owner of Mickleham Hall, demised unto the Rev Burmester and a number of other churchwardens and overseers (and their executors and heirs) 'all those tenements lately used... for the habitation of poor persons of the said parish at Bittom Hill [sic]...together with the forecourt and garden ground in the rear and surroundings for a term

of 999 years'.

In addition to the site, Sir George undertook to 'defray the necessary expenses of repairs, alterations and additions to render the buildings suitable for the reception and comfortable abode for four single persons and four married couples.' These premises, refurbished, were from now on to be called the Mickleham Almshouses. Governors and visitors were to be appointed who would have full power and authority to establish rules and regulations and also to see to it that inspections and necessary repairs were carried out. In addition to those in the indenture, the 'resident inhabitants' of Norbury Park, Burford Bridge and Ashurst Warren (actually in Headley parish) were included, ie the great and the good.

All went smoothly until the morning of Monday, 1st August 1864 when disaster struck the eight poor men and women of the almshouses. The National School Master, Caleb Howard, merely records 'some disruption' close by the school. In fact a fire had all but destroyed the almshouses. While awaiting the arrival of the fire engines from Leatherhead and Dorking, nearby villagers and scholars attempted to douse the flames and to save the old people's belongings. By the time a fire engine arrived the local newspaper reported the building 'little better than a ruin'. The cause was the ignition of fuel at the mouth of the hole for a copper in the washhouse at the rear of the workhouse. Fortunately, there was little financial loss as the building was insured but the reporter expresses the hope that the 'hapless condition' of the inmates would not be forgotten by the wealthy residents of the neighbourhood.

They moved fast in those days and by 4th August the Rector was writing to 'the Inhabitants of Mickleham and charitably disposed persons in the neighbourhood'. It begins 'Dear Friends, Awful Calamity – destruction by fire of my Almshouses, the gift of the late Sir George Talbot, Bart. (What does the 'my' tell us?) He writes of what a boon the houses have been for 20 years and asks for sympathy and support

Photograph: Ben Tatham



Byttom Cottage (left) and the Almshouses viewed from Norbury Park

for their restitution for his 'suffering parishioners'. His appeal was successful. The Church of England and the Misses Talbot (Sir George's daughters) donated £400 each and most of the remainder came from the owners of the big houses, such as Thomas Grissell of Norbury Park and George Cubitt of Denbies among many others. Amounts donated varied from £5 to £100 and a total of £1,310 was raised. The contract for the rebuild was awarded to Charles Driver, a well-known architect and auctioneer in the district, and by 13th October the Schoolmaster records the laying of the cornerstone of the new almshouses in his logbook. The occasion was marked by the attendance of the school children and was followed by a dinner in the schoolroom. This would have been a great treat.

'Opening of the New Almshouses at Mickleham' is the headline in the *Surrey Herald* on 26th August 1865 and what a high festival it was. It began with divine service at the church with all the principal residents present and continued at the Almshouses which was decorated with flags. Present were the Rev'd Alfred Burmester and his curate, the clergy of the neighbourhood, the trustees of the charity, the surviving occupants (six in number), the schoolchildren with banners and Mr Rose with his harmonium to accompany the singing of the 100th Psalm. A benediction was pronounced on the building by the Rector before he called on Henry Peto Grissell who had superintended the erection of 'such a beautiful building' and presented him with a silver cup as a memento of the occasion and their gratitude and esteem. Henry Grissell

declared it to have been a 'labour of love' and complimented the contractor, Mr William Spicer, on the way he had carried out the designs. Mr Spicer too received high praise and a silver cup before the National Anthem was sung and three cheers were given for the Queen and Royal Family followed by three for the venerable Rector, Alfred Burmester.

The newspaper continues for a full column more describing the substantial dinner that was served to the almspeople in the upper apartments while visitors had lighter refreshments downstairs and the children ate in the schoolroom. Speeches were again the order of the day, the children being addressed

in turn by the Rev'd Burmester, the curate Mr Smart and Caleb Howard, the Master of the school. Finally, the children sang 'God bless the Prince of Wales' and everyone dispersed congratulating themselves on the excellence of all the village institutions and agreeing that Mickleham stood first among surrounding parishes.

Judy Kinloch.

PS With £280 left over, the trustees decided to build Byttom Cottage as an investment to benefit the Almshouse Trust. To begin with it was occupied by the curates of the parish but was then let out to various tenants who added to it. By the early 1930s it had been sold.

From Mickleham Parish Magazine March 2021

The London and Sporting Chronicle – 27 August 1826

CRICKETTING: A return match was played on Wednesday, the 23 instant, in Sir Lucas Pipp's [sic] Park, near Dorking, Surrey, between eleven gentlemen of Westhumble and eleven of Mickleham, which was won by the former, with ten wickets to go down.' I should imagine there is no greater margin of victory possible. I know

the burghers of Mickleham consider themselves one notch higher than those of Westhumble. They constantly need to be reminded of their past.

Robert Dyson

Editor's note: Sir Lucas Pepys (1742–1830) lived at Juniper Hill. He was physician to George III.



Detail from a drawing of a 1820s cricket match

The Almshouses, Byttom Hill, Mickleham...



The original Almshouses



The almshouses today

Lockdown is not a great state to be in but many years ago restrictions of the kind we are all becoming used to were a permanent way of life for some Mickleham residents. From October to March they were required to be inside their homes by 9 pm, and 10 pm for the rest of the year. In addition they were expected to be 'always clean in their persons and of civil behaviour, abstaining from all uncharitable language or conduct'.

The rulebook was a forbidding proposition in the mid-1800s for the inhabitants of the Mickleham Almshouses but it is not hard to imagine that they were only too happy to conform. When the alternative was the Poor House it would not have been too great a hardship to shut out the world when the clock struck nine.

Today, life in the Almshouses, a striking building standing proud a hundred yards or so up Byttom Hill and affording its residents spectacular views across Norbury Park, is a good deal more relaxed. It is home to eight residents, the latest generation to benefit from the great and the good of Mickleham circa 1864 who rallied to the cause when fire destroyed the original Almshouses building (converted from a Poor House thanks to the generosity of the lord of the manor, Sir George Talbot Bart) and funds were needed for a replacement.

Following an appeal from the parish rector and notable Victorian reformer, the Rev Alfred Burmester, history records that George Cubitt Esq (Denbies), John Evelyn (Wotton House) and Lady Caroline Cavendish (Camilla Lacey) all gave donations.

The Almshouses are administered today by The Mickleham Almshouses Charity under the chairmanship of John Banfield. There are four other Trustees with Graham Brown deserving of special mention. Frozen pipe or blocked drain? Graham is the man who gets it fixed.

The Charity comes under the umbrella of The Almshouse Association which provides guidance and support to more than 1,600 independent almshouse charities and which this year celebrates its 75th anniversary. It is

also an appropriate year to remember the origins of the Mickleham Charity which was founded by a lease dated 13th February 1846 – exactly 175 years ago.

The rules might have eased a bit since then but residency is no easy handout. Applicants have to show a connection to Mickleham, or to the Mole Valley area, and finances are scrutinised to make sure there is a genuine need. Residents pay a weekly maintenance contribution which is similar to rent but different in law, and less than a commercial rate.

John Banfield has been chairman for more years than he cares to remember and advocates a defined term of office for Trustees to enable a regular flow of new blood and new ideas. 'As Trustees we have to ensure the Charity Objects [the beneficiary group] are adhered to and also the demands of the Charity Commission, such as health and safety requirements, safeguarding etc.

'At Mickleham we make it clear that we do not provide a warden or nursing facilities. The residents have to demonstrate that they can live independently but at the same time we have a responsibility to make sure they are well and point them in the right direction should they need help. An almshouse charity is not only about housing but about providing a community.'

... and who lives there

Deanna Darnell is a perfect example of the role that almshouses can play in turning people's lives around.

When her husband 'Nobber' passed away in April 2010 she not only had to deal with the shock and grief but also the worry of where her and daughter Anna were going to live. 'Nobber', a former jumps jockey, had worked as manager of the stud farm in Mickleham since 1990 and their cottage came with the job.

They were difficult days and at first Deanna was struggling to know where to turn. A chance conversation with

the Reverend David Ireland alerted her to a vacancy at the Almshouses and a possible solution to her housing dilemma.

'My husband always used to say 'No need to worry, something will turn up', and in this case it did,' Deanna said. 'The flats are really designed for one person but we cope well enough. The community runs itself really, we try and sort out our own problems and if not we get the Trustees involved.'

It is easy to hear the word 'almshouses' and immediately think of a group of elderly inhabitants living out their

last days in a sheltered environment. Mickleham does not conform to the cliché in respect that it sets no minimum age restriction although the joke locally is that the steepness of Byttom Hill ensures that those of a certain age are forced to look to other almshouses in neighbouring parishes.

Potentially those occupying the eight flats can stay a long time. Another resident, who has lived there for more than 20 years, is as happy there now as the day she moved in. 'It's a stunningly beautiful location and I love living here,' she said. Trevor Haylett, Parish Clerk

Pannels of Pales – The Old Churchyard

We know that there was a church at Mickleham circa 1080; the Domesday Book records 'there is a church and two acres of meadow' and it is this meadow that was the beginning of the well-tended churchyard space that we enjoy today. It was, of course, not always thus and in times past churchyards might be invaded by flocks of sheep being driven to other pastures or cows going to be milked. In some areas farmers were required to maintain fences while in Mickleham the vestry accounts show that the church was responsible for repairs to its fabric and the enclosure of the churchyard which is consecrated ground.

In 1640 the parish paid out for 'workmanship about ye church gate and barres' and the cost of timber and iron, all of which came to 16s 11d (not quite 85p) the money being found from a rate of 8d (a little more than 3p) in the pound. A hundred years later, in 1761, this expense had been transferred to local householders and the vestry records note that the churchyard's 'pannels of pales' should be maintained 'in order as they are in the churchyard by designated local households. For example, the parish was responsible for the 'lock

bars' (the stocks opposite The Running Horses or The Chequers as it was then), whereas Arnold 'of ye pound' (at Byttom Hill) had two panels to maintain. Thomas Tooth of the Old House had two for his house and a third for Franks (wherever that may have been), while Norbury, Burford and Fridly (sic) were unsurprisingly listed too. In all 24 people or houses are named. This system was probably in operation from 1700 as the original vestry entry was copied later by the 1761 churchwarden and farmer, John Hall, his note still existing in the old vestry minute book.

The pales, literally stakes, were 'ganged' side by side although, as the (undated, circa 1800) drawing shows, this duty was not always kept to the letter. Interestingly, this pencil drawing also shows steps leading up from the road in the same place that the lych gate now occupies. In 1780 new posts and rails were erected on the street side of the church but on the north and much of the east side there was hedging, as seen in an etching of 1798, which has a group of travellers resting outside the boundary, probably not



having a picnic as we know it but taking sustenance!

White picket fencing along Eastwick Drive and the churchyard walls came later, as did the Burmester Gate and the Lych gate at the end of the 19thc. Currently we have no records in the archive of the construction of the walls other than a detailed specification and estimate drawn up for the wall fronting the London Road. It is not dated but the writing has that distinct florid Victorian style and there is an early photograph said to be taken in 1899. The red gates have retained the same style for many years and certainly go back to the 1930s. So our churchyard is now secure from marauding animals unless you count canines!

Judy Kinloch

Task Group Report: Oral Histories

We had to suspend our recordings of oral histories for a large part of the pandemic, although we entered a lot of an hour's oral history recording in the St Michaels Church Community Group's charity auction on Easter Monday 2021. The successful bid was by Sue Tatham and a few months later, when the covid situation allowed, we recorded an interview with Sue. Over the course of an hour, she recalled her early life from childhood in Ohio to her arrival in the UK to take up a nursing post just outside Horsham. This interview, isn't in the public domain, but it did make us realise that there is an enormous wealth of knowledge in the recollections of our long-term residents. With this in mind, we have

put our St Michael's School oral history project on hold while we conduct a series of interviews under the title 'Recollections of Village Life'.

It seemed sensible to start with the Tathams as they have been at the centre of our community for more than 60 years. Over three one-hour interviews, we covered a vast range of activities including Ben's 41 years as our local councillor, his more than 50 years as a governor of St Michael's School and of course, Sue's 36 years at the helm of our Parish Magazine. Other topics included their ongoing involvement in the running of Mickleham Village Hall, the Friends of Box Hill, Mickleham Choral Society and not least as founding members



of this Local History Group – the list goes on and on. These recordings, and accompanying précis, will be kept in our archives for future generations to get a unique insight into our community over several decades. Thank you, Ben and Sue.

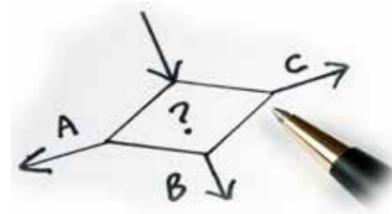
We intend to continue with our 'Recollections of Village Life' so if you, or someone you know, would like to contribute we would be very happy to hear from you.

Roger Davis and Anne Weaver

Website Triage

If you are as old as I am then the term 'triage' will either remind you of a black and white movie about the medical services in the trenches during World War I or perhaps the 1970s TV series, MASH. Nowadays, of course, it is applied to all sorts of situations, from phoning the AA to getting an engineer round to fix the dishwasher. Not wanting to miss out, the M&W Local History Group decided to have our own triage system, but not to sort the seriously wounded from the merely injured – we are not that sort of group. Our triage system is to make sure that all the various enquiries we receive regarding local history are logged, dealt with efficiently and the outcome recorded. As many of the enquiries come via our website,

my first job is to record the nature of the question, for example, does it relate to family history or perhaps to a local building? Next, I acknowledge the enquiry and forward it on to the members of the group best able to answer it – very often to one or both of our amateur but gifted archivists, Judy Kinloch (buildings and people) or Judith Long (family history and the churchyard). Fitting in the research needed to answer the question takes time but we endeavour to answer promptly and, if there is a delay, we will let our enquirer know so that they don't feel that it has been forgotten. Of course, not all the questions come in via the website and we have notified anyone, or any organisation, that might be on the receiving end of

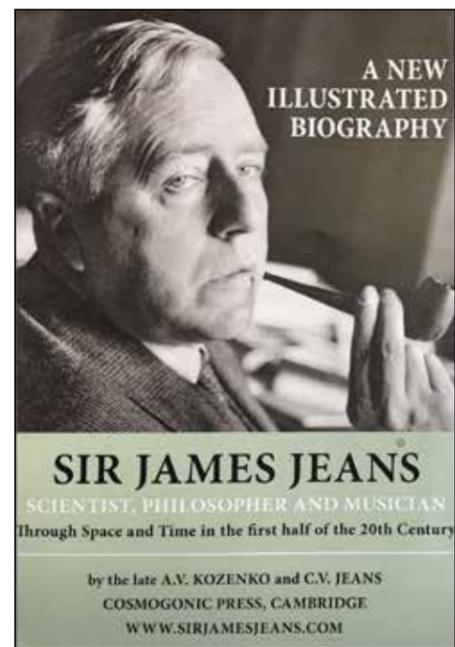


a local history enquiry, ranging from the churchwardens to other local history groups, to contact me to set the wheels in motion. If you want to give it a try then you can either use the contact form on our website (www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk) or email me directly at rogermdavis@icloud.com. Hopefully, the triage system will work as intended and you won't be whisked off to the operating theatre to have some shrapnel removed!

Roger Davis, Website Manager

From Mickleham Parish Magazine June 2021

A new biography of Sir James Jeans Scientist, Philosopher and Musician



musician, through space and time in the first half of the 20th century is written by his son, Christopher Jeans and the late A. V. Kozenko, a famous Russian astronomer. It is 'profusely illustrated using contemporary photographs, many set in the Dorking area, from family albums and other sources.'

Sir James Jeans, although a shy and very private man was the Professor Brian Cox of his day. He was described as 'mathematician, astronomer, physicist, musician, a brilliant writer and lecturer, one who could truly be described as a Renaissance man'. He helped

lay the foundations of modern astrophysics and fascinated the world with his popular books explaining the physical nature of the universe. He stimulated future generations with an enthusiasm for 'The Mysterious Universe', a system of which the planet earth is but a minute speck.

This biography describes Sir James' contribution to science – astrophysics

in particular – and the major role played by his two wives, Charlotte Tiffany Mitchell (1877-1934) and Suzanne Hock (1911-1993). The book brings together three families: the Jeanses with their newspaper background, the Tiffanys of New York jewellery fame and the Hocks, a notable Viennese family. It describes Jeans in his different settings: upbringing, education, marriages, his wilderness years, the Royal Society and Royal Astronomical Society, stellar dynamics, popular writing, his musical talents and WW2.

After Sir James' death in 1946, his widow, known locally as Suzi Jeans, an accomplished harpsichordist, developed Cleveland Lodge as home to an international music centre and established the Box Hill Music Festival. This biography includes the most comprehensive bibliography of Sir James Jeans' writings, published and unpublished. For more information see: www.sirjamesjeans.com

Stephanie Randall

Marie Stopes

From Mickleham Parish Magazine September 2021

Palaeobotany is the study of fossil plants, add to that the study and promotion of contraception and sexual techniques and you could say that sums up the life of Marie Stopes. But that would be completely wrong.

There have been few books written about the life of Marie Stopes, the authors of two of these, Aylmer Maude's, (1924) Keith Briant's, (1962), were probably too close to their subject not to be influenced by personal feelings. The third by Ruth Hall (1977) is a much more balanced and objective account of this most extraordinary woman.

Marie was never close to her mother, Charlotte, but she had a warm relationship with her father. Charlotte had very strict views on bringing up her two daughters, on religion, dress and smoking amongst other things. But she was sexually ignorant, as many wives were at that time, so of course Marie was as well.

Her academic achievements at a very early age were manifold and she became the youngest Doctor of Science in the country. In Munich to study botany,

she met Kenjiro Fujii, a botanist, but also an atheist, married and Japanese. She was appointed a junior lecturer and demonstrator at Manchester University, a first for a woman, but her intense relationship with Fujii foundered when she eventually went to Japan.

There were to be other romantic attachments, but her failed marriage to Reginald Gates, a Canadian, prompted her book 'Married Love', which dealt with the 'plain facts of marriage' in which she set out the whys and wherefores of a physical relationship. She eventually found a publisher, and inevitably she received letters of disgust, repugnance and even hatred after publication.

Following her marriage to Humphrey V Roe she moved out of London to Leatherhead, and it was to Givons Grove their son, Harry, was taken when he was born. Finally, she bought Norbury Park. Before he met Marie, Humphrey was aware of the need for birth control clinics from his knowledge of the slums in Manchester, and together they opened the first clinic in Holloway, to be followed by the Whitfield Street clinic, which is still there.

It is fair to say that Marie spoke her mind which usually resulted in an angry response with whom she was engaging. She was a name dropper, a collector of friends in high places, and being an egoist had a very high opinion of herself, maintaining she was always right. This led to several court cases both by and against her, and usually her bank balance suffered whatever the outcome.

She was excessively possessive of her son, Harry which led to a gradual



estrangement from Humphrey. In her eyes, Harry was the cleverest and most intelligent child that ever lived but she dressed him in knitted breeches and sometimes skirts! (She considered trousers to be too warming of the nether regions.) When Harry announced he was going to marry Mary, Barnes Wallis' daughter, Marie refused to attend the wedding, one reason being that as Mary was myopic she could have shortsighted grandchildren!

At Norbury Park she tried to get the great and the good to promote her message of birth control, but her neighbour, Lord Beaverbrook, refused to include her ideas in his publications. There is no doubt that her ideas, books, papers and lectures were instrumental in bringing the necessity for birth control and contraception to many people who either did not know or did not want to know about them. But the manner of her promoting her ideas was unfortunate to say the least.

She bequeathed all her papers, including bills, research notes, letters, law suits and notes on sex and religion to the British Museum, and it needed a three-ton lorry to move them there.

Marie was indeed a truly extraordinary woman who had a marked influence on women's health and happiness, but her antisemitism, endorsement of eugenics and dogmatic demeanour makes it difficult to admire her as a person.

Frances Presley

PS Apparently, when Marie lived at Norbury Park the staff had to collect the mail from Mickleham Post Office, as the postmistress of the day refused to deliver her post.



Marie Stopes at Norbury Park 1952

Forgotten Fredley?

The Manor of Fredley came about in 1327 or thereabouts when Margery de Micklam married John Dewey and her father gave her part of the Manor of Mickleham as a wedding gift. Their son changed his name to John de Fredlee and Fredley Manor was born. It did not have a manor house, however, and the earliest building with the Fredley name on a map is Fredley Cottage which was built in about 1597. It was then described as a 'tiny cottage with a few meagre outbuildings' and an acreage that stretched at least from Box Hill to the Mole to Juniper Hall. Acquired by Cecil Bisshopp (later Sir Cecil and inheritor of Parham House in Sussex) in 1762, he intended to build a grand house on a nearby knoll but was distracted by the Royal Oak Ale House which he expanded into what we now know as Juniper Hall.

At the turn of the 18th century the cottage or farm as it was also called was rented and ultimately bought by 'Conversation' Sharp as a rural retreat. He entertained many of the eminent artists, philosophers and scientists of his day including William Wordsworth who is reputed to have carved his initials on a tree in the grounds. It sounds idyllic: 'alight with glow-worms' and 'nightingales in chorus'. The flaw was the accommodation, which was exceedingly limited and in 1815 Sharp carried out numerous alterations and extensions to house his guests, although even then his ward Maria Kinnear and her aunt were obliged to stay at nearby Flint Cottage. Maria inherited the estate on Sharp's death as well as a considerable fortune. She married Thomas Drummond, Under Secretary of State for Ireland (and one Englishman for whom a statue was erected in Dublin) and they had three daughters: Fanny, Mary and Emily. Thomas died in 1840, aged 42, but Maria lived on until 1881 during which time she had built Fredley House (in 1865) on the same knoll that Cecil Bisshopp had contemplated, together with a lodge that fronted on to the Old London Road. This would have housed the gatekeeper to the estate.

Fredley Cottage/Farm became the home of John Tweed, her trusted bailiff and farmer who was also a churchwarden for many years, and his wife described



Fredley Farm in 1832 watercolour by Hassell

as 'a dairy woman' in the census while Maria lived in what was now 'the big house'. On her death the estate passed to her eldest daughter, Mary and her husband Mr Joseph Kay, QC and then to Emily, the youngest who did not marry. Before Mary's death in 1924 the sisters entertained weekend guests, inviting men and women from the East End to tea in their garden. Emily was a skilful landscape gardener and a great lover of nature; even in London, where she had a house in Hyde Park Gardens, she would go for long walks on her own and knew the Thames from Oxford to Richmond. On her death in May 1930, aged 92, her will bequeathed portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds to the National Gallery in London and in Dublin as well as £500 to her farm bailiff.

Fredley Estate was put up for auction by Emily's executors on 4th November 1930. As well as an estate of 79 acres it included Fredley (the house), Fredley Cottage, the Lodge and extensive garages and stabling plus a farmery.

At this time, there was growing unease among planners about the increasing loss of open space and the uncontrolled ribbon development of the countryside that was taking place (eg locally in Bookham and Fetcham). Plans had also been in the pipeline for some years to extend the Leatherhead bypass through the Mole Valley and to bypass Mickleham village, which was inundated with traffic at weekends in particular. Events coalesced when Norbury Park Estate was also put up for auction in 1930. The sales particulars promoted 'its very great value for development' and this aroused the attention of the Special Town Planning Committee. It was a Councillor, W M Willcocks who on his own initiative bought the Fredley Estate for £11,350 plus expenses and in 1931 the SCC opted to take up his purchase in order to preserve the amenities afforded by Box Hill and the views over Norbury

Park, and to acquire the land necessary for the construction of the by-pass at the Burford Bridge end. This amounted to something over 30 acres and included the strip of land that is now Ryka's. In 1931 the remainder was put up for auction. Lot 1 consisted of Fredley, house and grounds, the picturesque entrance lodge and stabling, etc. with 20 acres. Lot 2 was Fredley Cottage with an adjoining old-fashioned cottage and the farmery which housed a range of loose boxes and cowsheds, etc, 15 acres in all. This left about 42 acres of land. Unfortunately for the SCC neither lot reached its reserve. Bidding for the estate as a whole reached £6,300, Fredley £3,500 and the Cottage £3,400. This left the council in something of a quandary and there was much discussion about the future of Fredley which was considered suitable for a residential children's home by some councillors but disputed by others. It was put up for auction again in June 1933 and I am assuming bought by the St Faith's Home for 'orphan or destitute girls' as the home was open in Fredley by 1935. Miss Corbet Hue (who lived at Pinehurst) was one of its most important benefactors and bequeathed the residue of her estate to the scheme on her death in 1954.

A solution to Fredley Cottage was found when George Lloyd Jacob bought Fredley Cottage with nine acres for £2,600 and renamed it Fredley Manor to the confusion of many who have thought it actually was the old manor house. A new carriage drive was built for him from the London Road for direct access. A further nine acres were sold to the National Trust.

The remainder was authorised to be sold for building purposes either in one lot or plots. There were restrictions: only one house per every two acres was allowed and homes at a cost of £1,500. And thus it was that between 1930 and 1935 the Fredley Estate became Fredley and Fredley Park. Judy Kinloch

Newdigate Walk

Photograph: Judith Long



St Peter's Church

We met our guides, John Callcut and Jane Lilley, at the Six Bells Barn which dates back to the 16th century and is now the home of John and his wife. They bought the barn 25 years ago when it was in a state of almost complete collapse, partly because it had been moved several times in the 20th century alone. Over coffee, we looked at two large display boards, one with more information about the barn and the other showing a timeline of the history of Newdigate.

Setting out on our walk, we crossed Village Street to arrive at St Peter's Church with its distinctive timber tower containing approximately 10,000 oak shingles. The current tower was built in 1525 although the nave and chancel are much older, built c.1200. Like St Michael's in Mickleham, St Peter's has undergone several alterations and renovations. Inside the church we admired the numerous wood carvings. Many of these, including the roundels on the pews and the angels on the choir stalls, were created by young men of the village who attended a wood carving class set up by Mrs Janson of Newdigate Place. Newdigate is fortunate to have its original Parish Chest, made from a hollowed-out log in the 1530s and kept in the chancel. The parish registers and valuables were stored in the Parish Chest which was required to have two (and later three) different locks. One key was for the priest and the others for the churchwardens so that at least two people had to be present in order to open it.

Along Church Lane we passed Dean House Farm, dating from the early 17th century and originally a smoke bay house (where a short bay was sealed off from the upper part of the house to let smoke escape). The house has end jetties which allow the upper floors to extend beyond the lower ones. More commonly seen in towns, this was a way to show the status of the owner in rural locations. John told us there were rumours of underground passages connecting the farm and the Six Bells which were used by smugglers years ago. Further down the road is the old cart pond where farmers would drive their carts to soak the wheels. Since the wheels were made from numerous

pieces of wood if they were allowed to dry out the wood shrank and the wheels fell apart. The old brickworks were at the end of the road and the site is now a nature reserve.

Back on Village Street we turned north, passing the Infant School which shares an Executive Head with St Michael's Infant School in Mickleham. The original school was built in 1600 by George Steere, then Rector of Newdigate. Across the road is the unusually named Wirmwood, now a private house. The right-hand side had at one time been a butcher's shop and in Victorian times the left-hand side became a general store. We were very envious to learn that Newdigate still has a thriving village store called Bob's Shop with a post office on the premises. Near Wirmwood stood the old Bakehouse which had fallen into disrepair by the 1980s. In 1989 it was dismantled brick by brick and put into storage at the Weald and Downland Museum where it remained for almost 30 years before being reassembled and opened to the public in 2018.

For the last part of the tour, we walked up Kingsland where the village hall stands. It was built in 1901 and given to the village by Mrs Farnell Watson in memory of her husband who had died recently. This was remarkably similar to the way Mickleham acquired its village hall a year later; Sarah Evans

of Dalewood donated it in memory of her late husband David who had died in 1901. Although the Farnell Watsons' wealth had come from the Isleworth Brewery there was a covenant preventing the sale or consumption of alcohol in the new hall. To solve this problem a social club was built next to the hall in the 1930s with a licence to serve alcohol. The recreation field behind the hall is known as the Brocus. It was bought by a group of parishioners in 1945 when Mrs Farnell Watson decided to sell her Newdigate properties. Still owned by the village residents, the field is regarded as an additional war memorial and is now home to a variety of sports clubs and a children's playground.

Our walk ended at the Six Bells pub where we were able to purchase some of the Newdigate History Society's publications. Many thanks go to John and Jane for a really enjoyable morning.

Judith Long

We are always keen to acquire information and photographs for our archives. Please let us know if you have any items of local interest that we could scan/copy for our collection.

Air Raid Shelter at the Bottom of the Garden

Well, part of one anyway. Many older Westhumble residents will be familiar with the Anderson Shelters from World War Two which were erected in a pit recommended to be dug 4 feet deep and the soil then heaped on top of the shelter. Perhaps there are relicts at the bottom of some Westhumble gardens even now. Then there was the Morrison Shelter which was a stout wooden 'table' with wire mesh along the sides. It was erected indoors and often doubled as the kitchen table. One slept in it and if the house collapsed one might be safe and rescued in due course.

In either corner at the bottom of the garden at Fairfield, just up from Box Hill and Westhumble station, were two reinforced concrete arches lying

on their sides and forming open, tall horseshoe shaped enclosures that were used as compost heaps. When my parents first moved in in 1948 one was filled with sand and became my sandpit. I was four or five at the time.

I never remember anyone mentioning that these horseshoes might have had anything to do with air raid shelters. When my Mother died last March David and I began clearing the bottom of the back garden. We broke up and removed one of the horseshoes and as we did so, it occurred to us that stood up on end they would have formed sturdy arches and bolted to other arches they could have been part of an air raid shelter.

In a quiet moment at Christmas I googled 'air raid shelters' and read about the Anderson and Morrison

Shelters. Also mentioned were Stanton Shelters built by the Stanton Ironworks in Ilkeston, Derbyshire. Pre-war they were making spun-concrete lampposts but turned over to making concrete air-raid shelters, principally for the Air Ministry who installed them on RAF Stations.

Any length of shelter could be built up from the pre-cast reinforced, concrete segments which were 20 ins wide. Two of them, bolted together at the top, would form an arch 7 ft high and transverse struts were provided to ensure rigidity. Partly buried into the ground this simple bolted shelter provided protection against blast and splinters. Like the Anderson and Morrison Shelters they would probably not have survived a direct hit.

Barbara Jones



Left: The last remaining half arch of a Stanton Shelter at Fairfield, Westhumble. Above: A slightly more complete example of a Stanton Shelter.

Flint Cottages, London Road

Last November we received a query from Andrew Camper who wanted to locate the house in this painting he had inherited. He thought it was in Mickleham and the birthplace of his grandmother, Mary Olive Mercy Sanders born 12th June 1897. We easily identified it as Flint Cottages and following searches by Judith Long were able to send him quite a lot of information about her family.



Lest We Forget: Walter Douglas Cullen

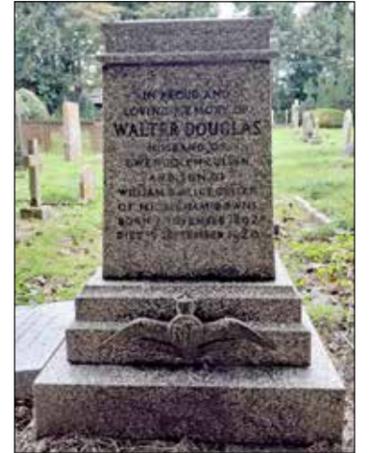
A few weeks ago, an aviation enthusiast contacted the Local History Group after a visit to St Michael's churchyard. He had spotted the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) insignia on the grave of Walter Douglas Cullen who died in 1920 and wondered if we had any information about Walter's military service. Although we had recorded all the inscriptions on the Cullen family grave, we knew very little about Walter. With Remembrance Day approaching it seemed an appropriate time to find out more.

Walter was born in Stonebridge Park, Willesden in November 1892, one of the five children of William Henry Cullen and his second wife Alice (William already had six children with his first wife who died in 1889). William was the founder of the well-known grocery company, W H Cullen, which had stores throughout the south-east of England. By 1910 the Cullens had moved to Mickleham Downs House and soon established themselves in the community, the Cullen name appearing regularly in local newspaper reports of church and village events.

On July 11th 1914 'Mickleham was all excitement', according to the *Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser*, on the occasion of the marriage of Dorothy Cullen, Walter's half-sister, at

was no indication in the newspaper that the wedding was in any way unusual. The couple must have moved to Germany soon after their marriage because their son Christian was born in Heidelberg in December 1915. Another son, Robert, was born in Mülheim in 1917 and was serving in the German army at the time of his death in January 1939. Whether Hermann was exempt from military service in WW1 is not known. We do know that Hermann and Dorothy came back to live in England because Hermann's death was recorded in the Chichester registration district in 1950 although he was buried in Heidelberg. Dorothy's probate record tells us she died in Bognor Regis in 1986 leaving an estate worth £157,839.

By October 1914, just three months after Dorothy's wedding, Walter was already serving in the 5th Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment (one of the Regiment's Territorial battalions) and was promoted to 2nd Lt. In July 1916, by then a lieutenant, he was seconded to the RFC and the following April obtained his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate at the Military School in Ruislip. Walter had married Gwen Thompson in February 1917 and their first child, Charles, was born ten months later. Walter would not meet his son until after the war ended because he



of his brother-in-law, Hermann Hettner, had lived. Walter was repatriated on December 14th 1918 but would have only a brief time to enjoy post-war life with his family at their new home in Leatherhead. He died suddenly on September 16th 1920 after an operation, less than a month after his second child Peter was born. Whether his death was in any way connected to his war service is unknown at this time.

Walter's younger brothers, Hugh and Roy, had also joined the army and fortunately both survived the war. Hugh attained the rank of captain in the South Staffordshire Regiment and was awarded the Military Cross while Roy served as a lieutenant in the Dragoon Guards. Sisters Louie and Margery worked as VAD nurses, Louie in London and Margery in Aldershot and Leatherhead. Sadly, Louie's husband, Captain Kenneth Gill, died in a flying accident in France in October 1918 only six months after their marriage.

Margery remained at Mickleham Downs until the late 1930s after the deaths of her parents. She was honorary secretary of the Leith Hill Musical Festival from 1939 to 1964 and conductor of Mickleham Choral Society for many years. During WW2 the house was occupied by employees from the Charing Cross Branch of the Sun Insurance Office Ltd and demolished soon after they returned to London.

Walter's widow Gwen married a schoolteacher in 1923 and gave birth to a daughter two years later. After living in Leatherhead for several years the family moved to Somerset where Gwen died in 1983. Judith Long



Mickleham Downs House 1939

St Michael's Church. A list containing more than 120 'costly and handsome presents' was also included in the article. However, it was a surprise to discover that Dorothy's new husband was Hermann Felix Wilhelm Hettner, an engineer from Trier in south-west Germany. Less than a month before Britain declared war on Germany there

was taken prisoner in August 1917 and spent the remainder of the war in German POW camps. He was sent to a camp in Karlsruhe from where his family received the message 'I am quite alright send parcels Karlsruhe. Love to all'. In November Gwen was informed that he had been moved to Trier, by a strange coincidence the town where the family

History in a Drain Cover

In the garden at Fairfield, which we are currently extending and renovating, there are three drain covers with Wilkinson Builders Dorking cast into them. The deeds to the house record that Nathaniel George Wilkinson built the house and sold it to Walter Kottersch, a company secretary, in 1938.

Wilkinson was the great grandfather-in-law of Rose Spence whom long established residents will remember. Rose told me recently that Nathaniel Wilkinson was Chairman of the Dorking Urban District Council and Surrey Council. He lived at Fairways in Dorking on the site of the newish nursing home by the Cockerel roundabout.

Wilkinson built many of the houses in Westhumble including Fairfield and Woodbury on the east side of Pilgrims Way where Rose used to live. Perhaps you have Wilkinson drain covers, or any other named covers, in your garden. If so I would love to hear from you as I am slowly, very slowly, trying to compile a history of the building of the Westhumble estate. Email me at davidandbarbaraj@btinternet.com phone 07801 951 946, drop a note through the door or knock if you are passing and our black car is in the drive. Any information about the history of your house would be most welcome.

Of course there are also drain covers in the roads around Westhumble including

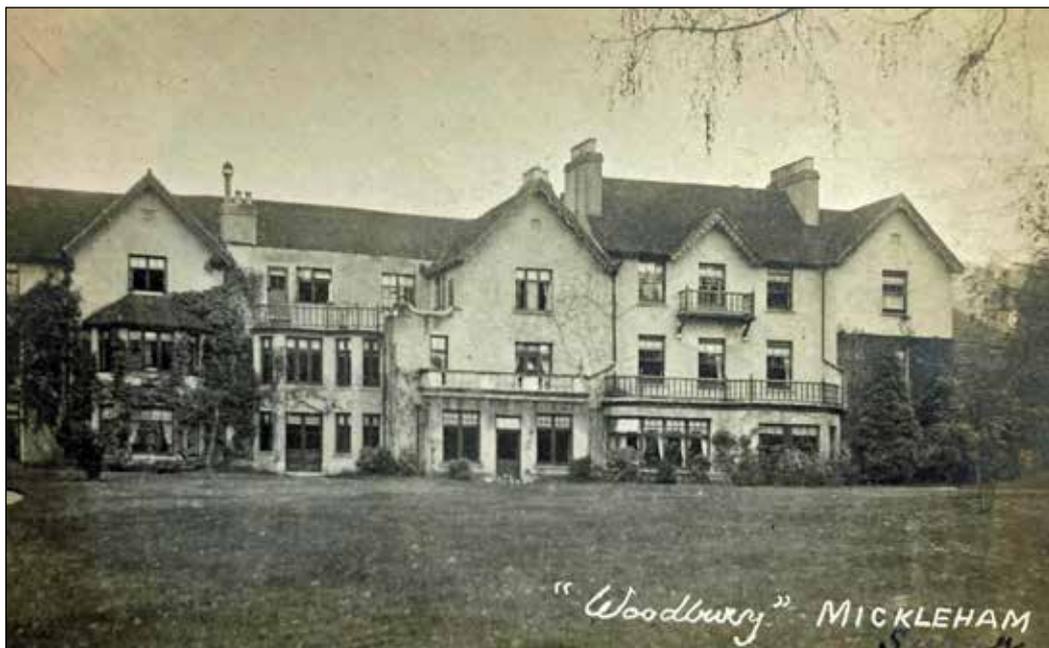


those of Long Humphries, Chertsey and Dorking Foundry along Adlers Lane; DF along Chapel Lane. Others include Frank Harris Bros of Guildford, Morrison Roads Ltd of Woking, and Sutton & East Surrey Water Company.

Barbara Jones



Newly acquired archive photograph Woodbury, Old London Road



Between 1784 and 1796 this was the home of Fanny Burney's sister Susan and her husband Captain Molesworth Phillips. It stood on the corner of Old London Road opposite Mickleham Cottage and The Old House. Its original name is uncertain, but for a time after the Phillipses moved out it was called Belledawe. It is listed as Carriden House on an 1830 map, and then became Woodbury at the turn of the century. It was demolished in 1930, but its gate can still be seen in the wall along Old London Road.