



# Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group NEWSLETTER

Volume 11 – February 2024 Editor: Sue Tatham

## The Chairman, Ben Tatham writes ...

This has been an eventful and productive year for the group. Our churchyard project is nearing completion, and the History of Mickleham Village Hall's Building and Grounds is being finalised. We were visited by several members of the public who had contacted us for information via our website. The Group's researchers have been busy as you will see from the reports on our activities which follow. We have included various articles of historic interest which have appeared in the

parish magazine during the year. In addition are accounts of recent activities and events which will be of interest to future historians.

In November we suffered a great loss with the sudden death of Judy Kinloch, a founder member and our librarian. Judy lived in Norbury Park for 68 years and was our go-to person for all sorts of information. Her friendship, wise counsel, humour and immense knowledge of the local area will be much missed. We have included her obituary

from the magazine. It was written by the family who used information from Judy's oral history which had been recorded by the group.

We would welcome more people to help with our work. Are there particular things in our local history which interest you? If there are or you would just like to help with our on-going activities, please get in touch.

I look forward to seeing you at our AGM meeting and at our other events.

## Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group The Vanishing River Mole 2022

Many of you will have enjoyed Pete Brown's article about the vanishing River Mole in the September 2022 Parish Magazine. We were delighted that he was able to give a talk on this topic after our AGM in February. More than 50 people came to hear about the mysterious phenomenon of the disappearing river. Reports of the river vanishing underground in one place and then reappearing further downstream have been in existence for centuries. In 1849, Brayley's *A Topographical History of Surrey* included the first eye witness account, with an illustration of the river going down a swallow hole near the Burford Bridge. Although suggestions that the name 'Mole' comes from the river's habit of burrowing underground are appealing, they are unlikely to be correct.

Christopher Fagg of the Juniper Hall Field Centre saw the river disappear into a swallow hole at Ham Bank in 1949 and

there were similar occurrences during the drought of 1976. Pete explained that the geology of our local area is responsible for this behaviour. As the river flows over the permeable chalk of the Mole Gap, and the water table drops, water begins to leak through swallow holes into underground streams before resurfacing near Thorncroft where the water table is higher. During periods of normal rainfall the river also flows over the riverbed, but in drought conditions all of the water goes underground and part of the riverbed is left dry.

Last summer's drought prompted more searches for swallow holes and, as the river ran dry, for the spot where it vanished. This location changed as the drought continued. Several local residents, including Ben Tatham, Nick Bullen and David Kinloch, took photos of the river when it was underground for about one and a half miles. It was fascinating to

*From Mickleham Parish Magazine April 2023*

Photo by Ben Tatham



*Dry riverbed near Young Street bridge*

watch David Kinloch's video of the water disappearing down a swallow hole near the Mickleham Bends. Pete's talk generated numerous questions and several members of the audience were able to share additional information about the river.

Further information can be found in Pete's book: *The Vanishing River of Box Hill*, available at <https://dorkingmuseum.org.uk/dorking-museum-books/>

Judith Long

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The Group's website  
[www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk](http://www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk)

Manager: Roger Davis

## PROGRAMME 2024

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February – AGM followed by talk by Lorraine Spindler  
*Over Here – the lives and legacy of wartime  
Canadians in Surrey*

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April – Tour of Slyfield House

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June – Visit to Centenary Wood, near Langley Vale

September TBA – Guided tour of Little Bookham Street



*Old House Cottage 2002*

## Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group Brookwood Cemetery

On the 12<sup>th</sup> April, Kim Lowe, chair of the Brookwood Cemetery Society, gave our group an introductory talk about the cemetery before our guided walk in May. Brookwood, near Woking, is now a Grade I listed Historic Park and Garden and is the largest cemetery in the UK with an estimated 235,000 people buried there, covering all levels of society.

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century London was running out of room to bury its dead and a serious cholera epidemic made the situation worse. A plan for a large metropolitan cemetery in the suburbs was conceived and the London Necropolis Company purchased more than 2,000 acres of heathland near Woking. Roughly 400 acres were planted for use as Brookwood Cemetery which opened in 1854. The cemetery had its own private railway station in London, The London Necropolis Station, next to Waterloo and trains arrived at the two Brookwood stations on a dedicated branch line. Brookwood's North Station served the non-conformist side of the cemetery while the South was for the Anglicans. Trains had first-, second- and third-class carriages for passengers, with Hearse Carriages reserved for the coffins. The railway service ended in 1941 after the London station was bombed.

Those who could afford to pay for a first-class funeral were able to choose a grave site anywhere in the cemetery, rather than being assigned a numbered location. Kim is involved in a project to map the graves in the cemetery which is a quite a challenge as record keeping was often minimal at best. Grave positions described as 'next to the large rhododendron at the end of the path' are not very useful a century later! There have also been many reburials in Brookwood after various churchyards in London were demolished during engineering projects in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and, most recently, from St James's Gardens as a result of the HS2 work. The HS2 memorial is due to be completed by the end of June.

The talk ended with an aerial video of the cemetery which gave us a much better appreciation of the enormous area it covers. A month later 20 of

us met Kim in Brookwood's North Cemetery, ready to explore what could only be a small fraction of the cemetery in our allotted two hours. Several people remarked on how impressive the trees are, a reminder of the large numbers of redwoods, pines, cedars and sequoias originally planted.

Our first stop was Actors' Acre, reserved for members of the Dramatic, Equestrian and Musical Sick Fund Association which was set up in the 1850s by the actor John Anson. Brookwood was unusual in allowing burials on Sundays, making it a popular choice for actors as theatrical performances were banned on Sundays at that time. There are more than 500 graves here including that of Willy Carson, a costume designer and wigmaker who was involved in the Dreadnought Hoax in 1910. He disguised members of the Bloomsbury Group (including Virginia Woolf) as a delegation of Abyssinian Royals who then persuaded the Royal Navy to show them around HMS Dreadnought. This caused huge embarrassment to the Navy when the perpetrators owned up soon afterwards.

We moved on to the grave of Charles Bradlaugh, founder of the National Secular Society. Although elected to parliament in 1880 he was not allowed to take his seat until 1886 as he refused to swear an oath on the Bible. With Annie Besant (a social activist and theosophist with several connections to Mickleham) he republished the 'Fruits of Philosophy', an American pamphlet advocating birth control. As a result, they were prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act although their conviction was quashed. More than 3,000 people, including Gandhi, attended Bradlaugh's funeral in 1891. A large bronze bust on top of the grave pedestal was stolen twice and has now been replaced by a resin copy. Nearby is the grave of Charles Drysdale, first president of the Malthusian League which was founded to promote contraception after the Bradlaugh trial. His partner, Alice Vickery, was the first British woman to qualify as a chemist and pharmacist and one of the first to obtain a medical degree.



Top: John Anson, actor  
Above: Charles Bradlaugh, founder of the National Secular Society.

On the way back to our cars, Kim pointed out numerous interesting burials, including the grave of Dr Robert Knox, an Edinburgh anatomist who obtained the bodies he needed for dissection from the body-snatchers Burke and Hare. He died in London and was buried in Brookwood because the heather growing there reminded him of Scotland. The tour ended with a quick glimpse of the South Cemetery from the lodge where refreshments were served. The Brookwood Cemetery Society also offers guided walks to the public on a regular basis, with themes as varied as Victorian Symbolism, Geology, Unsung Heroes and Mausoleums. For anyone with an interest in cemeteries or social history I can highly recommend them.

Judith Long

# Judy Kinloch

## 1939 - 2023

Judy Kinloch was a much-loved and respected village resident, who lived in Mickleham for nearly all her life, from the age of twenty-five to her death last November. Her home, for all that time, was Lodge Farm in Norbury Park.

Judy moved to Mickleham in January 1965, with husband David, and four young children, Charlotte, Adria, David and James. They were looking for a country home away from London, where they lived in a small flat above the offices where David worked. They chose to rent a near-derelict farmhouse, Lodge Farm, which needed major work, electrics, plumbing, and conversion back from two cottages into one home. The family moved in in January 1965, a bitter cold winter in a house which wasn't to enjoy central heating for another 40 years!

This wasn't the first time Judy had lived in the area though. Aged seven, she went to a boarding school called Stanway in Dorking and remembered walking to the Chapel at Westhumble along the bypass in crocodile formation for services. Also, she rode along the bridle path behind Lodge Farm, unaware that the house in the valley below was to become her home for most of her life.

Her first real experience of gardening was tackling the garden at Lodge Farm. It was a wreck, completely overgrown with brambles and dead trees and a hedge that ran down the middle. Her husband was also a keen gardener and, at this time in the late sixties, all the garden at the back and at the bottom was laid down to vegetables, and there was a rose pergola, herbaceous border, and a rose bed with tea roses from a cereal packet offer.

Sadly, David died of cancer in 1969, leaving Judy as a widow with four children at the age of twenty-nine. It would have been very easy for Judy to give up Lodge Farm then, a large rambling old house and a big garden, but this was never an option. Having moved around so much in her childhood, she was determined to stay on in this place that she had come to love. For her children this was the



perfect place to grow up, with Norbury Park as our playground. As a parent, Judy gave us love but also freedom, and we used to disappear off for hours, only returning for meals when she hooted her car horn to call us back.

She needed to work and went into teaching, originally as a practical solution for childcare arrangements. She went on to become a dedicated and inspirational teacher for many years until her retirement in 2001. Old colleagues from school remember Judy as 'open minded, accepting and gentle,' as a 'literary and gardening guru, as 'sailing on calmly,' and as 'unflappable and always working on piles of exercise books in the smokers' staff room'. She was redoubtable and supportive, which meant she was first choice on educational trips at home and abroad including the WW1 battlefields, the French exchanges year after year, and even a couple of trips to Russia.

Those who only knew her in later years may be surprised to hear that Judy was very sporty when younger. Competitive and focused on first base for sixth form vs staff rounders matches, woe betide any student who missed the ball, as she would stomp them out in a flash. Judy's ball sense was no less impressive in the batting where she could whack it way over the field.

After her retirement from teaching in 2001 Judy was busier than ever and took the opportunity to be more involved in village affairs. Some people may remember the gardening business she ran with a friend, appropriately named 'The Rake's Progress.' Their

itinerary when working on Mickleham gardens, was carefully planned to avoid the need to reverse her car with the trailer on the back. Her gentle Alsatian, Maddie accompanied her everywhere.

Judy was a long-standing chair of the Horticultural Society and a keen competitor at the village shows. She had just accepted the role of President, which she was looking forward to as having no duties whatsoever, but sadly had little time to enjoy.

She was a parish councillor for several years, with a particular interest in the stewardship of Norbury Park. Other members of the council recollect her judgement and well-balanced opinions, based on her evident love and guardianship of the local countryside.

As a founder member of the History Group, she had an astonishing breadth of local knowledge. Judith Long remembers working with her to produce an archive catalogue on an Excel spreadsheet, saying 'at times this was a tedious process, but Judy's sense of humour meant we always found something to laugh about, including the antics of her cat, Orlando, who would appear on the table, sit on the documents and refuse to move'. She also recollects 'fond memories of Judy from the hours we spent together in the churchyard, often on our hands and knees, both of us determined to decipher the grave inscriptions. Sometimes we resorted to watering the headstones with a watering can in the hope of making them easier to read, which meant we got very strange looks from

people walking past. Another source of amusement.'

She produced an amazing amount of copy for the magazine, both on horticultural issues and on the history of our area. Her articles were always expressed in an interesting way.

Everyone who worked with her talked about how much fun she was to work with, and her sense of humour. She was always very generous, with her time and caring support, and in sharing her expertise. Visitors were always welcome to Lodge Farm and often went away with donations of plants and seeds from the garden.

Apart from village life she continued to have many interests, including poetry and literature, and others remember her poetic sensibility, and her wonderful observations, but also her kindness, and how she was always interested in what other people had to say. Family was always at the heart of her life, not only her children and much-loved grandson, but her wider family. She made a point of keeping in touch, embracing Zoom in lockdown when visits were not possible.

Several years ago, she was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). While it never diminished her energy and enthusiasm, it gradually limited her more and more physically. Despite this her death when it came was sudden and unexpected, and she will be very much missed.

After the death of her close friend and neighbour, Vi Bullen at Swanworth Farm, Judy wrote,

'One of the phrases Vi was fond of saying was, 'People are so interesting'

and that is one of the reasons people were drawn to her. She listened and took in the wide variety of experiences that the people she met had, always with sympathy and attempting to understand, however different their life experience might be. She liked to think about things, and we could talk for hours discussing what motivated people. She had no time for pretention – a spade was definitely a spade! She could have been talking about herself.

Judy's family and friends



Show prize entries 2011

## Task Group Report: Oral Histories

Very often, when we ask someone to contribute to one of our Oral History projects, a look of dread appears, followed by "Oh – I really don't have anything interesting to say". The truth is it's the seemingly uninteresting things that are worth recording. There's no shortage of information available on major historical events such as coronations or elections but very little on how the good people of Mickleham and Westhumble spent their days. With this in mind, we have continued with our series of interviews

called Recollections of Village Life, hearing tales of local life ranging from Elizabeth and Barry Moughton's arrival in Westhumble in 1959 to how Mick Frost developed an interest in farming which would eventually lead him to take over at Norbury Park Farm. We have also recorded an interview with former Headteacher, Jenny Hudlass, as part of our project on St Michael's School and hopefully will speak to other members of staff to complement the interviews we already have of pupils dating back to Bernard Burbidge

who attended the school from 1937 to 1942.

So should the day ever come when we ask you to contribute to one of our oral histories, there will be no need for long faces or to make excuses – we are keen to hear about everyday life and we also believe that people enjoy sharing their own unique stories with us. Or of course, you could always tell us if you would like to take part before we come knocking!

Anne Weaver and Roger Davis

*From Mickleham Parish Magazine November 2023*

## Mickleham Workbooks in Dorking Museum

Recently, we have put on exhibit two delightful sewing workbooks, the work of Edith Marjorie Child and Marion Elizabeth Child who attended Mickleham National School (left). They each consist of a lined exercise book, one with covers strengthened with cardboard and covered with material. Both contain practice pieces

of needlework with various kinds of stitching, and samples of one-dimensional outfits, buttonholes, letters of the alphabet, gathering and pockets. Donated to the museum by the family, they were made by the sisters between 1907 and the First World War.

David Burton, Dorking Museum



# Task Group Report: The Village Archives

How we will miss Judy Kinloch's enthusiasm for local history and her expert knowledge of the subject, of which the material in the Village Archives represented only a fraction. It has been a great pleasure to work with her on the History Group projects.

As in previous years, requests for information have come from a variety of sources including our website, St Michael's church and, most recently, a message on the Mickleham WhatsApp group. Enquiries covered a diverse range of subjects with the most unusual one relating to the Widenham Fosbery Silver Hen trophy, awarded at the Leith Hill Music Festival since 1925.

In May we welcomed Michelle and Tim Wood from Arizona who had contacted us in 2022 for help locating White Down in Fredley Park. This was the house where Michelle's mother lived after she left the Netherlands at the end of WW2 and before she emigrated



Michelle Wood at Coppermead

to the USA in 1953. A list of former residents of Fredley in the Archives soon identified White Down as the house now called Coppermead (sometimes Coppermede). The current owners very kindly invited Michelle, Tim and me to look round the garden and have a tour of the house.

In August, Tessa Lee, a descendant of the Rev William Henry Harke who was Rector of Mickleham from 1867-97, contacted us with the news that she had a variety of documents relating to Mickleham in her possession which she was happy to donate to us. As Tessa lives locally, Judy, Roger and I, along with Churchwarden Catherine Diffey, met her in St Michael's. Many of the documents concern Thomas Grissell, owner of Norbury Park, and his son Henry Peto Grissell who lived at Pixholme Court. The 1906 auction particulars for Pixholme Court, following Henry's death, describe an old-fashioned, comfortably-arranged house with 13 bed and dressing rooms set in about 10 acres. Tessa has many more documents relating to St Michael's which she will donate at a later date.

A few days after Tessa's email, we received one from someone interested in the 1874 marriage in Ranmore Church of the Rev Ernest Letts to Mary Isobel Ferrier of Dublin, who was resident in Mickleham at the time. The local connection was made when we found a Manchester newspaper announcement of the couple's Silver Wedding, noting that Mary was the niece of James Wylie of Camilla Lacey (who was living there by 1874). There was also another Dublin connection with Mickleham. Maria Kinnaird, the adopted daughter of Richard 'Conversation' Sharp of Fredley married Thomas Drummond in 1835, the year Thomas was appointed Under Secretary for Ireland. The Under Secretary's Lodge in Dublin, where Thomas and Maria lived, was in Phoenix Park. This was remarkably close to

By order of Trustees.

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Announcements of this and other Auctions appear weekly in *The Times* and *Standard* newspapers.

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Knockmaroon House, located just outside the gates of the park and home to the Ferrier family for many years. We would like to think the Drummonds knew the Ferriers but there is no proof as yet.

Mark Day and I continue to find eBay a useful source for archive material. This year's purchases include a postcard of Cleveland Lodge sent in 1917 and one of Fredley House in the early 1900s (coincidentally, home to the surviving Drummond daughters at the time), printed for G L Rose of Rose's Stores.

Judith Long



Cleveland Lodge circa 1917



Fredley House (now St Faiths) early 1900s

From Mickleham Parish Magazine April 23

## The Widdenham Fosbery Silver Hen

Photo by Ben Tatham



The Widdenham Fosbury Silver Hen

Recently a committee member of the Leith Hill Music Festival asked us for information about the donor of one of the festival's trophies, the Widdenham Fosbery Silver Hen. He had been told that there was some connection with Mickleham. We were able to tell him about Lucie Widenham Fosbery née Evans who lived at Dalewood, now Box Hill School. Readers will recall that the village hall was built in memory of her father David Evans.

Lucie was a singer and her name frequently appears in accounts of local musical entertainments reported in parish magazines of the day. She was also an active member of the Choral Society and in the *Dorking*

*Advertiser's* report of the 'Leith Hill Musical Festival' in 1909 she sang in the female trio section with Miss Lawrence and Miss Grissell.

Elizabeth Moughton recounts that 'Mickleham Choral Society has won the silver hen at the LHMf in numerous years since Barry and I have been singing and it is quite everyone's favourite trophy. It is a delightful little piece of silverware and infinitely preferable to the Mary Carey Druce Memorial Medal REPLICa, which is on offer somewhere in the LHMf trophies.'

Each year the name of the winning choir is engraved on the base of the trophy and indeed MICKLEHAM appears many times.  
Sue Tatham

## Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group

# Reigate Caves

Tunnel Road in Reigate was built in 1823 to improve the route from London to Brighton (then known as Brighthelmstone) and is the oldest road tunnel in the UK. The caves to the west were dug for the sand, laid down in the Cretaceous period when *Tyrannosaurus rex* roamed the land. The almost pure silver sand was used to make fine quality glass. The caves on the east side were specifically dug to store wine and beer and used by the Blackiston family, landlords of the Swan Inn in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The huge kegs contained about 1,000 litres of wine and were called tuns, thought to be the origin of the word 'tun' as used in pub names and derivation of the word tonnage used in shipping. Our guide explained that the wench from the inn above would have come down directly into the cave to fill her jug. When the tun was empty it was dismantled, transported back to France, reassembled, filled with wine, then shipped back. Adams the beer bottlers later took over, but sadly the inn was lost to history.

Another chamber has a small museum about the caves and the CMGIR (Croydon, Merstham and Godstone Iron Railway) which transported the sand and hardcore. There is a short length of recreated track and a *trompe l'oeil* showing where the track went. The history of the area, however, is much earlier as there is evidence of Roman activity with a Roman tile kiln and examples of original box flue tiles, which are 2,000 years old, used as central heating ducts in local Roman villas. The northern parts of the caves were used as a beer cellar by local brewer, Mellersh and Neale, and the site of their brewery is now Morrison's car park. Part of the

underground tunnels show its use as an air raid shelter in WW2. The men and women's latrines are still on view as is a Morrison table shelter and an Anderson shelter.

The second part of the tour involved a short walk along the High Street where there is a separate entrance to the Barons Cave. It was so named as it was thought that supporters of King John would gather to make their plans prior to Runnymede. Our guide, Peter, showed us a small amphitheatre with a ledge for seating, which was supposedly where they met. To support this legend, there is a canon-ball sized rock (sadly the original was stolen at some point over the centuries), which our guide threw, with some force, into a basin-shaped hollow formed by numerous previous 'throwings'. The sound this made echoed through the caves which was startling and somewhat eerie. The caves are known for their graffiti and the earliest example dates from 1644 and another 1677. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries visits to the caves were popular with day-trippers from London, who travelled down in their carriages, at a time when conservation meant nothing, but to advertise one's visit was *de rigueur*. There are many examples of caricatures, animal carvings and portraits, some more flattering than others. Despite the name, Barons Cave was mainly used as a wine cellar.

Coming out of Barons Cave was like walking into an oven: the outdoor temperature that day was 29°C, a rapid change from the ambient 12°C in the caves. It is a short walk to the Castle gardens with rose beds and a lovely spot for a picnic lunch.



From the top: the group check out Barons Cave; the Beer Cellar; and the graffiti

Thanks to Judith Long from Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group for organising the trip and our excellent tour leader, Peter. For more details and how to book a tour, go to [www.reigatecaves.org.uk](http://www.reigatecaves.org.uk) Stephanie Randall

## Website Report



It seems that enquiries to our website are like buses – nothing for ages and then several arrive together. All enquires are triaged and sent on to the members of the history group that are most likely to either know the answer, or more likely, have the research skills to find the answer. Most often this has been Judy Kinloch, sadly no longer with us, or our expert in genealogy and all things

churchyard related, Judith Long. All enquiries are promptly acknowledged and we keep a log of the question asked and the information gleaned for future reference. We always attempt to reply within a reasonable time-scale although occasionally the timetable can slip if the buses all bunch up!

Roger Davis

# Task Group Report: The Churchyard

Drone photograph: Roger Davis

During 2023, the final updates to the churchyard plans, burial information and inscriptions were made. This process became easier when the plans used by Roger Clark's team for recording graves in the 1980s unexpectedly turned up, thus enabling us to identify previously unknown burials. Brian Wilcox and Carole Brough Fuller have provided much-needed assistance with more recent burials and ashes' interments recorded in St Michael's current Burial Register. Many thanks also go to Ian Wright for his patience with my frequent requests to add or change names, dates and grave numbers on his plan of the churchyard. We hope to have the finished spreadsheets, containing all the information recorded, available on the History Group's website in 2024. These will include a link for each entry to the relevant section of Ian's plan. The History Group became involved in this project in 2014 and never imagined it would take a decade to complete.

As in previous years, there have been requests for information about burials in the churchyard and the drone photos taken by Roger Davis have again been invaluable in pinpointing the locations. We have sent a photo of the grave of Ernest Arthur, licensee of the Railway Arms (now the Stepping Stones), and his wife Susannah to their grandson, James McMillan, together with one of the CWGC grave of Percy Bodman, who was married to Ernest's sister



Daisy and is commemorated on the Mickleham War Memorial. We also helped Oliver Probyn locate the grave of his grandparents and aunt who lived in Westhumble.

In February, Hugh Odhams and his sister Anne Louise, the children of David and Fay Odhams, came to Mickleham for the interment of their mother's ashes. David was the son of Ernest and Frances Odhams who lived in several houses in Mickleham from 1938 until Ernest's death in 1947, first at The Glen

(now Ilex Trees) and finally at April Cottage, Fredley. Ernest and Frances are buried in the grave next to the CWGC grave of their son, Peter, who died in a flying accident in WW2 and is also commemorated on our war memorial. Although Peter's siblings only lived in Mickleham for a short time, two of his sisters, in addition to David and Fay, have their ashes interred in their parents' grave, perhaps because Mickleham was the last place the family spent time together. Hugh and his sister were grateful to discover more about their family's life in Mickleham.

We recently learned of a Church of England project which aims to survey the 19,000 Anglican burial grounds in England and create a free digital map of each one. This is expected to take about seven years, which sounds quite an ambitious target. Further details can be found here, including the results for St Giles, Ashted in the second link: [Nationwide digital churchyard mapping project begins | The Church of England CURRENT PROJECTS – AG Intl](#)

At the moment there is no date set for surveying St Michael's, but it will be interesting to see how the results of this future survey compare with ours.

Judith Long



*Odhams family grave*



*Peter Odhams' grave*

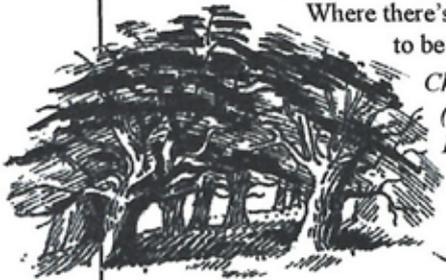
# Mickleham Village Pageant Script

Written by A A Gordon Clark for Coronation Celebrations 1953

## I

Ladies and gentlemen! We wish to show  
Some of our village long ago;  
Portraits of those who flourished here before us,  
With a few doggerel lines by way of chorus.  
We start in early times, when, safe to say,  
The village was not what it is today.  
No railway-line our green slopes tunnelled under,  
No motor road our valley cleft asunder.  
Of all the scenes that now our audience views,  
Alone unchanging stand our ancient yews.  
Though history in those days was fairly fluid,  
Where there's a yew, there's sure  
to be a DRUID.

*Characters: Druids  
(two or more).  
Possibly a young  
woman for human  
sacrifice?*



## II

Let's skip some centuries of wars and woes  
And come to something everybody knows:  
Ten sixty-six! The Norman conquerors come  
And fairly make our little parish hum.  
Like rate collectors, everywhere they look  
And write down all they see in Domesday Book.  
They find a chap called OSWOLD living here,  
A simple Saxon, rather fond of beer.  
He keeps two bondmen, does the dirty dog,  
And in the wood he pastures just one hog.

*Characters: Oswald; Two bondmen (? on a  
dog lead); at least two Normans (suggest a  
knight and a priest or scribe)*

*Properties: One pig; one large ledger;  
quill pen*



## III

Well, Oswald went where all good Saxons go,  
His pig was pork these many years ago.  
Once more we quickly turn our history's page,  
Just pausing at the Merry England stage.  
We don't know when that was, but writers say  
England was merry once upon a day;  
Which leaves us free to choose as we think best

The date for fun and  
games and all the rest.

Now when the  
first Elizabeth was  
Queen

Be sure the children  
danced upon the  
green.

To mark a new  
Elizabethan reign

We've brought  
them here to  
dance for us  
again.

*Characters:  
Children  
in Tudor  
costumes.*



## IV

So quickly pass the ages in my rhyme  
That here we are in good King Charles' time.  
Sir Francis STYDOLF, that stout Cavalier,  
Comes next upon the scene before us here.  
When next to church for worship you repair,  
You'll see his banner and his helmet there.  
But not of men alone the tale we trace -

'Tis time the fairer sex our scene should grace.

Here comes her ladyship. She looks a treat!  
Holding, you will observe, a joint of meat.

Our records show, this lady innocent  
Just could not stomach eating fish in Lent,  
And since in those days the laws were strict  
She dodged the sumptuary interdict  
By pleading that her health was delicate  
Upon a medical certificate.

Next Lent, our true historian reports,  
Found all the Stydolfs sadly out of sorts.  
The nature of their illness is obscure -  
But something off the ration was the cure,  
The Doctor's palm was adequately oiled  
And Lent was one sweet song of roast and boiled!

*Characters: Sir Francis Stydolf, Lady Stydolf, Two  
children (or more - either sex) in Charles I costumes.*

*Properties: Fish - perhaps an unattractive looking  
haddock, or a pair of kippers. Meat - in any quantity  
available.*

**V**  
 Another century our rhymes disclose -  
 The age of wigs and hoops, of fops and beaux.  
 Good Mr Lock, that pattern of propriety,  
 To newly-built Norbury bids the best society.  
 Sweet Fanny Burney often comes to stay,  
 To write the books that no one reads today.  
 But while at home we live in peace and quiet,  
 Frances is ablaze with wild revolt and riot,  
 And all at once in great surprise one sees  
 Mickleham is full of foreign refugees.  
 Here's D'ARBLAY, TALLYRAND, DE STAEL,  
 NARBONNE,  
 Who shock the village with their goings on.  
 But one there was who took the strangers' part.  
 'Twas Fanny Burney, bless her kindly heart!  
 She pitied D'Arblay, when the yokels harried him,  
 And took him quickly off to church and married him!

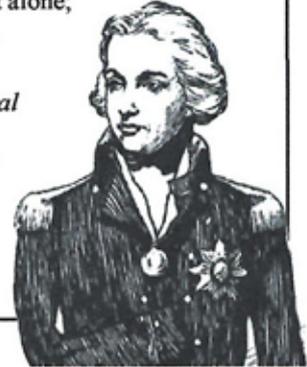
*Characters: Mr Lock, Mrs Lock, Fanny Burney,  
 (Possibly other members of the best Society),  
 Madame de Stael, Narbonne, Tallyrand, D'Arblay,  
 (Suggest also yokels to bait the foreigners)  
 in late XVIII century costume*

**VII**  
*The hero passes to the battle's din.  
 Another stranger lodges at the inn.  
 Young and obscure, impoverished and ill,  
 He walks by moonlight on our well-loved hill,  
 Or on the bridge lingers an evening long  
 To seek the inspiration for a song,  
 No friendly eye the lonely poet greets -  
 But immortality awaits JOHN KEATS.*

*Character: Keats in black clothes,  
 open shirt and floppy tie*

**VI**  
 Now war approaches: England is at bay  
 Against the tyrant of that distant day.  
 The Fleet of England is her all in all,  
 And England's hero is her Admiral.  
 One-armed, one-eyed, great NELSON of the Nile.  
 Tarries at Burford Bridge a little while.  
 He leaves his shining trace upon our story  
 Then takes the road to Portsmouth and to glory.  
 And being Nelson he is not alone;  
 Here by his side is EMMA  
 HAMILTON.

*Characters: Nelson in Naval  
 uniform,  
 Lady Hamilton in Regency  
 dress, Possibly the same  
 yokels as in Scene V to  
 cheer the hero on his way.*



**VIII**  
 To bring our short procession to a close,  
 A later poet now our pageant shows.  
 GEORGE MEREDITH, no passing stranger he,  
 But one grown old in our community.  
 He found an inspiration for his muse  
 In Mickleham's hill and vale and ancient yews.  
 Those yews again! They span a mighty age  
 From heathen Druid to Victorian sage.  
 Shades of the past in effigy you've seen  
 Restored to life in honour of our Queen.  
 Now all the periods mingle, hand in hand,  
 And join to praise the sovereign of our land.  
 With them let us make merry and rejoice -  
 Then listen, silent, for the Queen's own voice.

*Characters: George Meredith, Groom  
 attendant  
 Properties: Bath chair, donkey or pony.*



# Coronations

Above is the text of a pageant staged in Mickleham in 1953 to celebrate the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Participants then included Robert Butcher and his sister Rosemary (now Robinson), whose father was then proprietor of Rose's Stores in Mickleham.

The pageant was repeated in 1971 to celebrate the Millennium of St Michael's Church. Participants then included Ben and Sue Tatham who appeared as Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton. The Choral Society including Barry and Elizabeth Moughton sang madrigals in Tudor

costume and members of the WI appeared as the French émigrés from Juniper Hall.

The picture to the right (provided by Dorking Museum) is of West Street at the time of the Coronation of George V and his wife, Mary, as King and Queen of the United Kingdom and the British Dominions, and as Emperor and Empress of India, in June 1911. Later the same year, the royal couple travelled to India for the Durbar. In British India this name was specially attached to formal imperial assemblies called together to mark state occasions.





# Coronation Parish Council and



What a great Community Day we had on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May as Mickleham and Westhumble welcomed our new king. It was great to see the results of the planning and hard work of the team from St Michael's Church, the parish council and community and the coming together of such a lovely group of volunteers who helped on the day. I think one of the best parts of the planning was having to sample the cakes, sandwiches, and jellies before we settled on the menu, as well as the laughs along the way! The biggest concern revolved around finding enough cake stands and teapots.

Sunday the civic service in church was a real opportunity to celebrate, reflect together and pray for a new era both as a nation and as a community. The singing was lovely, and it was surprising how much people knew about King Charles in the quiz. We all found David Ireland's words about the symbols of Coronation both informative and an encouragement to serve those around us in the love and power of Christ.



On the day of the Coronation hearing our church bells ringing from 10 to 11am, joining in with many around the country, was a reminder of the national significance of the event. On the

During the previous week souvenir teaspoons had been given to children at our Infant School and Community Nursery, then the remainder were sold for charity. There are still a number which can be purchased at £5 each. Please contact Feena Graham on [clerkatmpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerkatmpc@gmail.com) if you are interested. The sale of teaspoons, and the generous donations of those in





# Celebrations

## St Michael's Church



church, meant that we have raised to date £800 for the two chosen charities; the Leatherhead Youth Project and Juniper Hall Bursary Fund.

In the afternoon more than 125 people of all ages gathered at the village hall, which looked amazing with the bunting from the Jubilee and the decorated tables. The food was lovely and abundant, and the supply of tea seemingly never ending. There was a great buzz of conversation as people caught up with old friends and made new ones. The children enjoyed their activities, and the Mickleham Choral Society sang beautifully with the finale of Land of Hope and Glory, which everyone joined in with waving Union Jack Flags provided on the tables.

Thank you to all involved on behalf of the church and community; every

contribution was valued. Particular thanks go to Michael Tester, our photographer, and to those who sponsored the event or donated towards it including the parish council, the Parochial Church Council and our friends Mark and Kuan of 51 Degrees North, who provided many of the essential ingredients such as tea bags and milk.

The challenge will be to find new opportunities to come together to eat, chat, laugh and sing together. Your suggestions are always most welcome.

Sandra Faccini and David Ireland

*Editor's note:* Enormous thanks to the Parish Council, St Michael's Church, the Community Group and the numerous volunteers. Their hard work and eye for detail made this such a successful and memorable event.



# Restoration of the Altar Frontals



*Some of the altar frontals laid out*

What do a baby's hairbrush, a hand held vacuum cleaner, a pair of tights, a magnifying glass, Japanese glue and a big bath have in common? They have all been used to clean and restore the altar linens at the church and chapel.

We are fortunate to have several beautiful altar frontals in a variety of colours to reflect the different seasons within the church liturgy. Sadly, some were looking rather worn and even torn and we needed help to restore them. Members of the local Arts Societies very kindly came forward with the skills, equipment, and time to do this.

At our first meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January all the frontals were laid out in church, a wonderful sight, and time was taken examining each one and agreeing what work was needed. In some cases, this was nothing more than a light clean, hence the use of a baby hairbrush and a gentle vacuum, with tights over

the nozzle so that any fine decoration would not be lost (photo 1). At the other extreme, plans were made for the replacement of fabric. Many of the fabrics are not suitable for washing but the cleaning of stained backing linens is where the large bath came in. They had to be carefully unpicked from the decorated parts (photo 2), washed in liquid soap by hand, rinsed then washed again with a gentle stain remover and left to dry before being gently ironed and stretched to minimise shrinkage. After all this the decoration was carefully re-attached. Other frontals had missing embellishments and embroidery and time was taken to secure suitable replacements (photo 3). Sadly, a particularly beautiful cream frontal was beyond repair and permission was granted by the diocese, after approval by the PCC, for it to be disposed of. Time was spent removing all the exquisite embroidery (photo 4) which

was then carefully sealed with Japanese glue (photo 5) and mounted on linen from the original frontal. Another piece of church fabric that has needed a lot of work is the purple frontal, which had faded significantly over the years and was damaged in places. Following approval, again from the PCC and diocese, new background fabric was purchased following a donation from Sarah and Jonathan Blake in memory of their parents. The original velvet panels, fringing and embroidery were removed and transferred to the new fabric. Linen from the redundant frontal was also used as backing fabric so that there was minimal waste, and the integrity of the linens was preserved as much as possible. Interestingly the design on the fabric for the purple frontal carries a motif of a passionflower, also seen on the cream frontal from many years ago (photo 6). This motif traditionally represents the passion of Jesus, culminating in his crucifixion. As part of this year's Heritage events, there will be a display of all the church and chapel frontals in the church on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September, details of which can be found opposite. A huge thank you goes to Ann, Annette, Bernie, Beverley, Frances, Pam and Sheena for their dedication to this task and to Mary Riley for helping to organise it.

*Made by the people, for the people  
to the glory of God.*

Catherine Diffey



*1 Sheena and Pam vacuuming*



*2 Annette and Frances unpicking backing*



*3 Bernie and Ann replacing gemstones*



4 Example of embroidery



5 Beverley sealing the embroidery



6 Comparison of motifs

## Peter's Little Island

Not to mention his little house... In the early years of WW2 my parents and my much older brother Peter, lived in what is now Cottars on Pilgrims Way. Then it was called Five Trees. There was a small island in the River Mole down in the Oxbow Field. It was about half way along from the oxbow towards the wood. On the bank was an oak tree opposite the island.

Shortly after I was born in 1943 the family moved to Nottingham. In 1948 my parents bought Fairfield, in Chapel Lane and we returned to Westhumble. Peter's Little Island and his house were still there and in due course I and my friends used to play there.

It was just possible for one small child to squeeze in under the roots of the oak tree. This was Peter's little house. A step below the house, formed by a sturdy root made a comfortable ledge to lower oneself into the water to wade, calf- or knee-deep across the sandy bottom, to the island.

The island was indeed little, perhaps 10 by 5 metres and very low lying, barely above water level much of the time. I seem to remember quite tall vegetation, maybe rosebay willowherb, rushes and willows with gravel round its edges.

One happy occupation was fishing for minnows. In the early days a jam jar would be lowered on a string – baited with bread? – and after a short wait up it would come with a good catch.



*This photograph was taken recently when the river was running very high. It shows the location described in the article.*

Later we used a wine bottle with a hole knocked into the bottom of the hollow at the base of the bottle. Bread would be inserted and the cork replaced. Having been lowered horizontally, by strings, to rest on the bottom, it would be pulled up after 20 minutes or so crammed full of minnows unable to escape from the lobster pot type hole they had swum in through.

Both the island and the house are now gone. Despite walking round the field many times over the years I have no recollection of when the island was washed away or when the oak fell. Looking at old Ordnance Survey Maps on the internet it looks as if the island had been getting steadily smaller since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (It

appears on maps dated 1894, 1913 and 1934).

Why did the island finally disappear? I suspect that river maintenance policies in the past, which aimed to keep banks and stream beds clear, to encourage rapid discharge downstream, probably caused it to finally wash away. Or maybe the works at the oxbow area carried out in the late 90s were the final straw. Can anyone remember its presence post, say, the late 1950s?

Personally, I prefer the more recent thinking that allows nature to take its own course and leaves fallen trees in the river to create new habitats and to slow the current. A steady controlled discharge should result in less flooding.

Barbara Jones



Fruit Tree	Varieties	Quantity
Apples	26	83
Pear	11	47
Quince	3	16
Plum	7	84
Cherry	3	9
Fig	1	10
Cobnut	2	20
Walnut	1	9
Mulberry	1	10
Medlar	2	10

*Quantities and varieties of trees planted.*



*The lower three photographs were taken by Roger Davis, using a drone from a garden in Burney Road, by kind permission of Keith and Cathy Lee.*

# Chapel Farm Community Orchard Project

As we said goodbye to meteorological winter, it was lovely to see an enthusiastic band of volunteers led by Federico Ghittoni, Lead Ranger with Surrey Hills East National Trust, make excellent progress towards establishing our new community orchard.

The National Trust is committed to helping reverse the loss of traditional orchards, which has happened over many years in the UK, by planting over million blossoming trees by 2030. Orchards have many benefits, not only to vital ecosystems but also to our enjoyment of the natural environment. For centuries, orchards have been a defining feature in many rural communities and part of local culture, history and tradition. As we all know, they are also spectacularly beautiful in blossom and when they are heavy with fruit, as hopefully ours will be!

The Westhumble orchard occupies a 1.2 hectare (about three acres) site on tenanted National Trust land in the field south east of the chapel ruin, close to the North Downs Way. Some 300 heritage trees have now been planted, with the majority being apple, pear and plum, although cherry, cob nut, fig, medlar, mulberry, quince and walnut

are all represented. Heritage varieties tend to withstand drought better than commercial ones, a relevant factor given local climate and soil conditions. Other benefits include creating a living seed bank, enhancing biodiversity and helping achieve carbon capture.

The work so far has consisted of planting the trees, staking them, mulching and watering in (a new supply has been created to the site, including a water trough). The trees require substantial guards, consisting of chestnut posts, railings and wire mesh to prevent damage from the livestock which will graze the area. At the end of the first week about half of these guards had been constructed, with the National Trust estimating that another five to six days of work would be required to finish this task. Further work has been scheduled over the next two weeks. Following this, the National Trust are offering to organise a barbecue to celebrate the completion of the establishment of the orchard.

We are very fortunate that Westhumble has been chosen as a suitable site for this exciting project. It was clear to all of us from the local community who volunteered our help, just how much



Photo by Graham Crawforth

planning and resource goes into a scheme of this ambitious nature. In addition to local helpers, the National Trust have been able to call upon considerable numbers of their own volunteers from the Surrey Hills area and beyond. The various activities were ably coordinated and led by Federico and his team of rangers, from whom we all learned some valuable knowledge and skills. There were also plenty of opportunities to chat to local friends, as well as with the National Trust rangers and volunteers, and a sense of achievement in a joint enterprise was certainly felt by many of those present.

This project is ongoing at the time of writing and further updates will be provided.

Graham Crawforth

## From the Village Archives

Photograph: Ben Tatham



2007 Photograph of Westhumble taken from Box Hill, showing Cleveland Court under construction. The arrow top right shows the site of the Pickering Plantation described on page 26.

## Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group

# Dalewood and the Evans family

Photo by Ben Tatham



Lucie married Captain Charles Widenham Fosbery from Westmeath in Ireland in 1902, not long after the death of her father and sister. When her mother died, Lucie inherited Dalewood and the couple made it their home until 1937 when Charles died at Leatherhead Cottage Hospital. It was during this time that Lucie relinquished some of the estate to Surrey County Council for the construction of the by-pass south of Old London Road. In 1938 she had the reredos depicting the Last Supper erected in St Michael's Church, possibly in memory of her husband or of her mother. This is recorded on a plaque which lies on the floor of the chancel inside the altar rails as well as a memorial to Sarah. (These are covered by the altar carpet.)

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mickleham and its surrounding area contained at least ten 'big houses' or mansions that were home to wealthy families. Many of these families played an important role in our village's life whether by donations of money, land or community involvement. Hardly any of these estates are left and some of their mansions have been transformed into schools, hotels, and retirement homes, while others have been divided up or totally demolished.

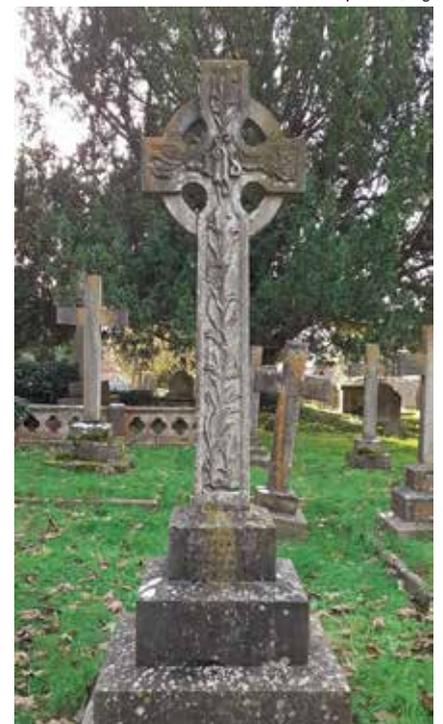
Our community owes a debt to many families who once owned large estates, but the one who I think represented the last of them in a major way in Mickleham was the Evans family. Late comers to the village and far from being landed gentry, their fortune had been made in the silk printing industry in Crayford and Tring. David Evans, son of the founder, bought Dalewood in 1890 and lived there with his wife and children until his death. He must have made himself immediately welcome when he allowed the village cricket team to continue to use the cricket field on what was now his land and to enlarge the pitch. He was a devoted churchman and had a flag erected on the tower of the church, took a close interest in the school and was elected to the parish council in 1895 where he

served for three years. His generosity and kind disposition were recognised by all who knew him.

His wife, Sarah Evans neé Brown, who David had married in 1858, remained at Dalewood after his death. She made the most welcome gift of the village hall to the community in his memory. The silver trowel (now in Dorking Museum) she used to lay the foundation stone was presented to her in gratitude by the trustees. A noted harpist, she was known for her kindness of heart and great courtesy, although she experienced much sadness too. Her son Gerald (bapt.1868) died in Oxford in 1889 from a scratch on his lip while playing football, which developed into blood poisoning soon afterwards. Her second daughter, Marion, married James Tomkin in Mickleham in 1897. They had three children, although Marion died in the same year her youngest daughter was born (1902), probably following childbirth. She was buried in Mickleham and when Sarah died in March 1915, she was buried in the same grave as her daughter. In memory of her sister, Lucie Gwendaline, the eldest of the children, had the organ in the church rebuilt and augmented. It was dedicated by the Bishop of Guildford and there is a dedication to Sarah carved in the wooden surround of the organ.

Dalewood was requisitioned by the British Army for the Canadian Pay Corps in 1939. It is not clear where Lucie went at this point but by 1945, she had established herself at The Glen in London Road, which she renamed Ilex Trees. In March 1949, the contents of the house were put up for auction by Cubitt & West in 600 lots, an event

Photo by Judith Long



Evans family grave

that must have preceded the sale of Dalewood and the end of its residential life – and its first transformation into the school it has now become.

Lucie died in August 1950, aged 81, having lived in the village for 60 years. Among her bequests were a cow and a greenhouse to two of her gardeners, her car and the use of Ilex Trees as a residence for life to her secretary Anne Mackay, as well as financial benefits. Her will describes Anne as, ‘my real and devoted friend in sorrow and in mirth, in sickness and in health’, so she

was clearly more of a companion than a secretary.

Lucie, as I imagine her, was very much a lady of her era. One newspaper obituary describes her as living ‘a life of quiet usefulness doing kindly acts’ and belonging to the ‘gracious days of the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century’. This may be true, but fails to mention her active and abiding interest in the Mickleham Choral Society. She sang in many concerts in the village hall (and she was one of the first trustees for the charity that ran the hall).

The Mickleham Group, and its prize-winning performances at the Leith Hill Music Festival, were frequently mentioned in the local press. On one particular occasion, the female trio selection consisted of Lucie, Miss Lawrence (Burford Lodge) and Miss Grissell (Norbury Park) – family members from three of our big houses, one still privately owned.

Sarah, Marion, Charles and Lucie are all buried in our churchyard.

Judith Kinloch

*From Mickleham Parish Magazine February 2023*

## MWHS Jubilee Oak Planting

***In the bleak mid-winter ... we planted a tree!***

The ground stood hard as iron on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022, when members of the Mickleham and Westhumble Horticultural Society gathered in the Westhumble bonfire field to plant a native oak, *Quercus robur*, to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of our late Queen.

The tree was chosen and ordered in the summer, but trees prefer to be planted when dormant and so we had to wait patiently until winter finally arrived in mid-December before our tree could be lifted and delivered. Winter then arrived with a vengeance! The temperatures plummeted and the ground froze which meant that we had to seize our opportunity with a thaw in sight and get digging on a snowy, freezing cold Sunday just before Christmas. Armed with pickaxe, mattock and shovel, David Kennington, Will Adshead and Stuart Leake broke through the frozen crust of the field to dig a hole fit for a royal

oak and, assisted by a stalwart party of hardy tree planters plus a group of Nick Bullen’s curious young cattle, our Jubilee oak was placed, planted and protected with a sturdy cattle proof tree guard. Since then conditions have been perfect and there has been plenty of rain and milder weather, which will help the tree to become established ready for a burst of growth in the spring.

This Platinum Jubilee oak joins the oak planted by the Horticultural Society ten years ago in 2012 to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, which is now looking well established. Later in 2023, the Horticultural Society will plant another oak tree to mark the coronation of King Charles III. As this also will be a bare root tree, the planting will have to wait until the autumn/winter dormant season but we hope that even more people, particularly children and grandchildren, will come along to join us for this historic occasion. Details will be circulated once we have a tree.

Lucy Adshead



*Above Lucy and Sophie Adshead with tree  
Lower L Stuart Leake, Will Adshead,  
David Kennington  
Lower R MWHS admire the tree*



# The Editor Retires...



Sue at Guildford Cathedral in 1992 when MPM won the diocesan prize for parish magazines

In the October 2022 edition of Mickleham Parish Magazine (MPM) Sue Tatham wrote about its origins and its development into its present form. If you have thrown away your copy (perish the thought) you can see it online on either the church or parish council website.

For more than 38 years since it was launched, Sue has been the mastermind and has embraced new technology. In some respects that has made life easier for those involved in its production but it has also made her more ambitious about what can be achieved. Keeping up is not always easy!

As Sue said in her article, the magazine provides a record of life in the parish: 'Early magazines featured occasional articles about old Mickleham by Mo Chisman who had a collection of bound copies of old parish magazines – some dating from the late 1800s. These proved most interesting and helped us to appreciate the important role parish magazines play in recording social history. This realisation became a factor when it came to choosing content for our monthly issues. It also spurred us on during low points when we wondered if it was worth all the time it consumed. Today when local papers are in decline and most communication is digital and transient, much of today's social history will be lost unless publications such as ours continue.'

Now Sue is retiring. 'Now' for Sue is a moveable concept; over recent weeks and months she has been working even harder than ever to spread her load across as many people as possible and

it has been wonderful how residents have responded. It seems they want to keep the show on the road.

Sue will continue to support the team with advice and guidance; and will be the official Archivist. Copies of all the magazines from October 1984 rest with the Surrey History Archive in Woking and in the village archive here. Imagine the whoops of delight when future historians find this goldmine of information when researching life here in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Sue has been supported throughout by Ben, Andrew and Jenny and her family. Ben has been the official photographer (sent out in all weathers to record events or provide a picture to fill a space) and final reader before the copy is sent to the printer. He may have been exasperated about the time spent with the magazine but he must be very proud of Sue's unmatched achievement.

Sue Tatham BEM, all those who are involved in producing the magazine and all its many readers join to say thank you very much and to wish you a well-deserved and happy retirement.

The appeal last month for memories and retirement tributes brought forth the following heartfelt contributions:

*Rose Spence, a former Mickleham resident who moved to Dorset writes:* Stan and I were involved at the start of the new parish magazine and we had many an enjoyable evening with friends rushing round our table collating the pages and stapling them. We did get into trouble with Sue if the stapling was not up to scratch, probably due to the liquid refreshment! Sue's vision of producing such an excellent magazine with information relating to the whole of the parish was so well done and the one produced where I live now does not compare. Enjoy your retirement, Sue. It is very hard to give up.

*Frances Presley writes:* I have known Sue for the last eight years, and I was so pleased to be asked to join the panel for the magazine. I have come to respect, among other things, her patience, her wisdom, her knowledge particularly of the church, and her wry sense of humour. We shall all miss her, but I suspect that many of us will still be

going to her for advice. Thank you Sue for guiding the magazine over all these years, but I do blame you for making my bookshelves overloaded with all the books you have suggested I read!

*David Kennington writes:* When we arrived in Mickleham in 1988, Sue was already three years into her 38-year stint as editor of the MPM. Always a font of local knowledge the magazine has been the steady pulse of the community, recording events of joy and sadness, set against the backdrop of what is happening in the wider world. One of my favourites is the monthly crossword, compiled for so many years by Richard Roberts Miller, the answers often reflecting his views on the seasons or his particular local bug bears and now more eclectically but no less entertainingly carried on by Sue's son Andrew. Sue seems to have been interested in every facet of community life and her editorship has been a constant reflection of her dedication to this aim; her perseverance, ability to innovate and legendary powers of organisation will be missed, but long may her legacy remain!

*Liz Weller writes:* Sue's dedication to instigating and developing our community magazine to what it is today is truly legendary. I had never anticipated writing anything worthy of being published, so when Sue first approached me to contribute an article soon after the 'new mag' was launched, I was incredulous, but how could I refuse, when Sue was making such an enormous effort herself? So I buckled down and put my mind to it, doubtful that it would see the light of day. My utter surprise was indescribable when I saw my name in print for the first time! Sue instilled confidence which is a great tribute to her skills and inspired me to become a regular contributor. I am sure this has happened to many other people who could not believe at first that they could ever write anything publishable. Sue has been a great inspiration to many of us over the years and we have much to thank her for.

*Will Dennis writes:* I have always enjoyed working with Sue. She is an unusual example of an American who has a complete understanding of the

English, including our bizarre sense of humour. Perhaps that comes of having Ben as a husband and Andrew as a son! More seriously, we have got used to having one of the best-produced parish magazines in the land. As well as being beautifully laid out and printed on high quality paper with colour pictures – none of your black and white, quarter-folded A4 sheets here – it is refreshingly long on village news and features, and short on evangelism. And it's delivered on time each month to every household in the village. Not even Covid got in the way of the Mickleham Parish Magazine, at a time when churches, restaurants and theatres were closed across the country.

This brilliant product is entirely of Sue's making, and long may it continue as her legacy. Additionally, it is no surprise to me that, in an era where advancing technology often means that one person can do a job that three people used to do, it has taken at least three people to replace Sue's role on our parish magazine.

Respect! And may I dare to ask that, well-earned retirement notwithstanding, we will still be permitted the occasional punchy article with the Sue Tatham byline. I do hope so.

Mark Day writes: I have lived in Mickleham 30 years, well before WhatsApp communication, and the magazine was always a vital source of information about events, new arrivals, church and shop activities: indeed all it does now but in monochrome and on

basic paper. The subject matter was less varied then and it is a credit to Sue's openness to new ideas, that it has become the force it is today.

The magazine remains a vital community centrepiece, with the balance of advertisements never overcoming content, which seems always to be an issue in other, lesser magazines the information gets lost in the ads. It is this balance and the sheer quality of the writing which has kept the mag as a critical part of the life of our community. Sue has been open to new ideas, such that when I submitted my first 'Grumpy Old Mickleman' article, the first solely humorous irregular series which ran for a few years... Sue may have been dubious, but she gave it a chance.

I was, coincidentally, present when Sue received her British Empire Medal. It was so thoroughly deserved! Thanks for all you have done to tie this community together. It remains a central need despite WhatsApp etc.

Stephanie Randall writes: One day long ago, Sue looked woefully at a folded sheet that was the parish news and thought to herself, 'We can do better than this.' And so it began, in her spare room, which was not actually spare; there were times when we were facing a deadline that Andrew would wander in and plead to be allowed to go to bed. Each page of the magazine, the hard copy, was typed on a single sheet, which was used as a stencil for printing: Tippex correction fluid was a boon, (who remembers Tippex?). Sue and



*Sue at Loseley House when she received her BEM for services to the community at the same time as David Ireland*

I would spend hours wading through special copyright-free books looking for suitable illustrations. Headings were rubbed down in Letraset® and I remember Ben, who read the proofs for us, pointing out that I had left the 'r' out of Christmas. In these days of desktop publishing, digital photography and emails I find it hard to believe that we ever produced a magazine in the time available. Yet, through all that, Sue was so determined to continue her odyssey, despite all the calamities. She was awarded the BEM for her services to the community, which seems scant reward for so many decades of unassailable dedication of which we are honoured to be the recipients. Sue has created for us four decades of social history, which otherwise would have been lost. How can we ever thank her enough?

Photograph: Ben Tatham

## MPM Millennium Photographic Project

Between 1999 and 2001 the magazine team undertook to make a photographic record of Mickleham and Westhumble at the turn of the century. We set out to record village activities and celebrations as well as notable weather events during this time. We also photographed houses, buildings, fields and countryside views.

These photographs have matured under my desk for nearly 25 years. I hope that now that I have retired I will finally manage to catalogue them.

Sue Tatham



*Break time for the churchyard working party 2000. From left: Stan Spence, Sue Tatham, Peter Curran, Janet Curran, Rose Spence and Marianne Sloan*

# Mickleham's Creative People

First in a series of occasional articles about creative people connected to Mickleham included in Sue Tatham's recent Heritage Open Day talk.



John Keats by William Hilton

## John Keats 1795 – 1821

As the eldest son, John felt fierce loyalty to his younger brothers and sister throughout his life. Their maternal grandparents had left them a considerable legacy, but their guardian was either incompetent or dishonest and dispensed the children's money grudgingly. Money was always a great concern

influential people including Leigh Hunt, a close friend of Byron and Shelley.

In 1816 John published his first book of verse, *Poems*, which aroused little interest. However, John's friends recognised his potential and introduced him to many prominent people, including William Hazlitt a powerful literary figure of the day. Charles Brown one of Keats' most loyal friends recalled, 'Everyone who met him sought for his society, and he is surrounded by a little circle of hearty friends.'

Keats gradually established himself in the public eye as a member of what Hunt called 'a new school of poetry'. Lockhart of *Blackwoods' Magazine* used the defamatory term the 'Cockney School of Poetry' for Hunt and his circle, which included both Hazlitt and Keats. The dismissal was as much political as literary, aimed at upstart young writers deemed uncouth for their lack of education, non-formal rhyming and 'low diction'. They had not attended Eton, Harrow or Oxbridge and they were not from the upper classes.

By this time Keats had given up his medical career. He had become disillusioned, fearing he might not be good enough to avoid inflicting needless suffering. Furthermore he wished to devote himself to poetry. He had moved to a house in Hampstead with his two brothers, George and Tom, who was becoming ill with consumption.

In the spring of 1817 Keats decided to write a long poem on a great theme, which he had found produced his most serious thought. He chose the Greek myth of Endymion, the shepherd beloved of the moon goddess Selene. It was to be in four parts of 1000 lines each. He aimed to write forty lines a day and finish it by the autumn. This proved to be an unrealistic target and after completing the first two parts found himself completely bogged down. He was distracted by family worries as well. George was out of work and Tom's consumption was worsening. When

John Keats was born in Moorgate, the eldest of four children. His father, Thomas was an ostler and later became manager of the Swan and Hoop Inn owned by his father-in-law. Thomas Keats appreciated the importance of education and sent John to the best school he could afford. This was John Clarke's small progressive boarding school in Enfield.

Tragically Thomas Keats died after a riding accident on his way home from visiting John and his brother George at school when John was eight. This, and his mother's subsequent disastrous second marriage, brought an end to this close-knit family's happy early life. His mother died of consumption (tuberculosis) when he was 14. At this time there was considerable stigma associated with consumption as it was linked to suppressed sexual passion and moral weakness. It was not until 1820 that tuberculosis was recognised as a disease caused by a single organism.

At school John was an able and diligent pupil. He was outgoing, made friends easily and fought passionately in their defence. The school encouraged wide reading in classical and modern languages as well as history and science. Clarke encouraged him to turn his energy and curiosity to their library where he became a voracious reader. Throughout his life his friends remarked on his industry and generosity. The headmaster's son Cowden, became John's life-long friend and mentor.

for Keats as he struggled to stay out of debt and make his way independently. At the time of his death Keats was unaware that about £2,000 had been withheld from him. This would have made a great difference to his life as at that time £100 a year would have provided a comfortable existence. It was not until 12 years after his death that his sister Fanny managed to regain the family money via a legal settlement.

At the age of 14 John left school to be apprenticed to a respected apothecary and surgeon. After the five-year apprenticeship he became a medical student at Guy's hospital. His medical aptitude was quickly recognised and within a month he was accepted as a dresser, assisting surgeons during operations. At this point John was very enthusiastic about a medical career which would provide financial security for him and his younger siblings.

In 1816 he received his apothecary's licence which made him eligible to practise as a surgeon and apothecary. (He was not eligible to call himself a physician as he did not have a university degree.) However the long hours and heavy responsibilities left him little time for writing poetry which had become his passion.

Throughout his medical training he had continued his study of literature and started experimenting with verse forms, particularly sonnets. His friend Cowden Clarke had introduced him to various

it was planned that Tom would go off to the Continent for his health, Keats' friends advised him to leave London to finish *Endymion*. Hazlitt suggested the 'pleasant suburb' Burford Bridge. Keats took a room overlooking the garden at the wayside inn by the bridge, then called the 'Fox and Hounds' in Mickleham.

*Endymion*

*A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:  
Its loveliness increases; it will never  
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and  
quiet breathing ...*

Keats' epic poem was published in 1818 and met with ferocious criticism from Lockhart and other 'old-school critics'. According to the Poetry Foundation, 'The poetry of *Endymion* varies widely from some thoughtful speeches and lovely description to some of the most awful and self-indulgent verse ever written by a mature major English poet. Most of Keats' circle, including Keats himself, recognised its weaknesses. Yet as a long, sustained work that would broach Keats's most serious concerns, it was a breakthrough for Keats' career.' In the years that followed it was common to believe that these attacks had shaken Keats' resolve and broken his health. However, he had written to a friend 'I was never afraid of failure; for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest'.

The winter of 1818-19 saw the beginning of his most mature work such as *Ode to Psyche*, *Ode to a Nightingale*, *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, and *To Autumn*. It was a sad time as well. His brother George had emigrated to America, leaving Keats as sole carer for Tom who was gravely ill. Tom died in December 1818 and Charles Brown invited Keats to live with him at Wentworth Place, now the Keats House Museum, Hampstead. A widow, Mrs



*Early 19<sup>th</sup> century drawing of the Fox and Hounds (later Burford Bridge Hotel) showing it beside the Old London Road on the left and next to the River Mole on the right*

Frances Brawne lived next door and Keats fell in love with her daughter, Fanny. They became engaged in 1819, but decided they could not marry until Keats' future was more secure.

Keats had enjoyed robust health except for the occasional cold or sore throat, but in 1819 he began displaying symptoms of the 'family disease'. At that time, however, diagnosis was not clear-cut and he was thought to be suffering from mental exhaustion. The disease progressed rapidly and during the early part of 1820 he experienced several severe haemorrhages. He was nursed by Fanny and her mother, but his health had deteriorated to a point where moving to a warmer climate was his only hope for recovery. He left for Rome in November 1820 accompanied by his friend the artist, Joseph Severn.

Even at this late stage his doctor in Rome did not diagnose tuberculosis, and thinking he was suffering from a stomach complaint, placed him on a very strict diet which increased his weakness. Keats died in February 1821, aged just 25.

At the time of his death his poems had been in publication for less than four years. He published only fifty-four poems... in three slim volumes and a few magazines. They were indifferently received in his lifetime, but his fame grew rapidly after his death.

According to the Poetry Foundation '... Keats today is seen as one of the canniest readers, interpreters, questioners, of the 'modern' poetic project (which Keats saw as beginning with William Wordsworth) to create poetry in a world devoid of mythic grandeur, poetry that sought its wonder in the desires and sufferings of the human heart... he developed with unparalleled rapidity, in a relative handful of extraordinary poems, a rich, powerful, and exactly controlled poetic style that ranks Keats, with the William Shakespeare of the sonnets, as one of the greatest lyric poets in English.'

Although he spent only a few months in Mickleham, let us hope Keats was inspired by our beautiful countryside and the peace and quiet it provided.

Sue Tatham

We are always keen to acquire documents 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.

# 1 Dell Close Cottages, Mickleham



It is with regret that Mary Tobitt has left 1 Dell Close Cottages after 68 years living in the same house. The Tobitt family have lived there since 1935.

The houses were built in the 1920s, and the Tobitt family moved into No 1 in August 1935, moving from Hall Cottages, just behind the Running Horses pub. Maurice Tobitt paid the princely sum of 10/- (50p) to secure the tenancy of No 1 for May, Maurice Jr and his new baby brother, Peter.

Maurice and May continued to live at No 1 and both took an active part in village life. Maurice was a painter and decorator and May belonged to the WI, the Mothers Union and other village organisations. Maurice Sr became the local fire warden during WW2. During his tenure, he was also the caretaker at the village hall opposite Dell Close Cottages.

Maurice Jr, 13 years older than Peter, was a mechanic and had left home by the time Peter started at the village school. He trained as an upholsterer and carpet fitter at Granthams, Leatherhead. His mother May died in 1955 but by that time, Peter had met Mary Hatter, a local girl from Dorking. So in 1955 on Peter's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, they were married at St, Michael's Church, Mickleham. Mary was 19 when she moved in to look after 'Grandad Pops' and Peter. Two years later, David was born followed by in 1959 by Michael who was born at home at No 1. Like their father, the two boys also attended St Michael's primary school and then Sondes Place School (now known as the Priory). After Grandad Pops died in 1963 Peter and Mary took on the tenancy from the council. In 1972, under the Thatcher 'right to buy' policy the couple purchased the freehold of their council house from Mole Valley District Council. They built a garage and pond and modernised the inside of the house, replacing the Ascot water heater for gas central heating and over time refurbishing the rest of the house.

Both David and Michael met and married local girls and moved out of No 1 in the 1970s and 80s. In 1983 Mary's father moved in with Peter and Mary and for the next 14 years until his

death in 1997. During that time he was able to enjoy the company of his great grandchildren. They all loved coming to see Nana Mary and Grandad Peter and stay for the fabulous Sunday lunch or enjoy Mary's delicious cakes, as she was so good at baking.

David and Michael's families continued to visit regularly and enjoy the house and the garden. Following Peter's sudden death in 2007 Mary carried on living there maintaining the house and garden and entertaining the Tobitt family.

Following an injury earlier this year Mary was no longer able to remain at No 1. After 80 years the Tobitt family decided with great regret to leave Dell Close. The great, great, great grandchildren of Maurice and May have also been enjoying visiting Nana Mary at No 1.

We, the Tobitt family – all have so many happy memories of life at 1 Dell Close. The best Sunday lunches, sleepovers, Mary's fundraising events in the garden, Easter egg hunts, Sunday afternoon teas, badminton in the garden in summer, and many, many more enduring memories of this happy, family home. We are all sad to see it leave the family, but we wish the new owners many happy years in this lovely house. It will always have a special place in our hearts.

Linda Tobitt

From Mickleham Parish Magazine June 2023

# A Right Royal Restoration

Originally funded and donated to the village by the Mickleham Parish Council to mark the turn of the Millennium, the distinctive signs at either end of the village were in dire need of a little TLC. Twenty-three years of everything mother nature could throw at them had left them a little ragged around the edges. Some of the lettering needing re-doing and a couple of decades of grime from the A24 traffic had tarnished the beautiful metalwork.

If you have ever seen BBC's *The Repair Shop*, you'll know that Will Kirk and Dominic Chinaea are their resident experts in woodwork and metalwork respectively. But who needs them when we've got Tim Garbett living in the village. Ably assisted by his

henchmen, Nick and Jake Presley, and foreman Jim Evans, Tim has spent the last few weeks lovingly and expertly restoring both signs. Tim's efforts came to head on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May, when his erection team managed to lift the freshly restored signs (showing no fear of the traffic careering along the A24) using a homemade winch, fashioned out of an extension ladder and a couple of pairs of Mrs Garbett's old stockings.

The results are fabulous. The signs were given a right royal clean-up, just in time to have the village looking at its best for the Coronation weekend. We all owe a great debt of thanks to Tim for his efforts, and rumour has it that BBC have already been on the blower to book him for a guest spot in the next



Repair Shop series. Thanks too to the Runners for providing the pints of Pride that not only lead to the inspiration for the project, but also the celebratory and well-earned refreshment afterwards.

Nick Presley

# Mickleham's Creative People

Second in a series of occasional articles about the creative people connected to Mickleham included in Sue Tatham's Heritage Open Day talk in September

## James Clavell 1921–1994

Rotten Tomatoes



His novels were meticulously researched and written. He wrote at his own pace, refusing to be controlled by publishers' advances and deadlines. When he had completed a novel to his satisfaction, he would send the first 200 pages to the publisher. He reckoned that would be enough for them to judge it. One of his novels was auctioned for a record US\$5m.

In 1970 James bought Fredley Manor. Over the years this late 16<sup>th</sup> century cottage had been extended and renovated and, by 1970, was quite a sizeable country house, which had been renamed Fredley Manor. For the following 20 years it was used by the Clavell family for short breaks as they had houses in London, the USA, France and Austria. It was sold in 1990 and James died of a stroke in Switzerland in 1994.

Sue Tatham

One of the more recent creative people to live in Mickleham was novelist, screenwriter and director James Clavell. He was born in Australia where his father, a Royal Navy Commander, was posted. The family returned to England when James was nine. When WWII was declared, James left school early and joined the army. After the attack on Pearl Harbour in December 1941 his troop was sent to Singapore. Their ship was sunk *en route* and James and other survivors were rescued by a passing boat and taken to the nearest port in Java. Wounded in the face and weaponless, he was captured and sent to a Japanese prisoner of war camp in Java. Later he was transferred to the notorious Changi Prison in Singapore. Aged just 20, he was to spend the next four years in prison.

Later James recounted: *Changi became my university instead of my prison, Among the inmates there were experts in all walks of life – the high and the low roads. I studied and absorbed everything I could from physics to counterfeiting, but most of all I learned the art of surviving, the most important course of all.* In the end he believed that he would not have survived had the dropping of the atomic bombs not shortened the war.

Needless to say, his experiences had a profound effect on him afterwards with

bad dreams and stomach problems. For a long time, he carried a tin of sardines in his pocket. Like many of his fellow veterans he did not talk about this period in his life.

James' military career ended after a motorcycling accident. He then enrolled in the University of Birmingham where he met his wife, the actress April Stride. He developed an interest in films and filmmaking after visiting his wife on film sets. He worked in distribution in this country for a time. Then in the early 1950s he moved to Hollywood and started writing screen plays, moving on to film production and direction. He became very much in demand as a filmmaker. Many of his films were critical successes and very popular at the box office, see the list below.

In 1960, when the Screen Writers' Guild went on strike and James had no work for three months, he wrote his first novel *King Rat* based on his experiences in Changi. The book was published in 1962 and sold well. In the latter stages of his career, he focussed on novel writing, choosing the Far East as the setting for most of them. This might appear surprising considering his wartime experiences, but he had developed a life-long love of the Far East from his father. Richard Clavell was stationed in China before WW1 and had regaled James with Chinese legends and stories throughout his childhood.

### Films

- The Fly 1958 writer
- Watusi 1959 writer
- Five Gates to Hell 1959 writer, director and producer
- Walk Like a Dragon 1960 writer, director and producer
- The Great Escape 1963 co-writer
- 633 Squadron 1964 co-writer
- The Satan Bug 1965 co-writer
- King Rat 1965 based on his novel
- To Sir, with Love 1967 writer, director and co-producer
- The Sweet and the Bitter 1967 writer and director
- Where's Jack? 1968 director and co-producer
- The Last Valley 1970 writer, director and producer

- Shōgun TV mini-series 1980 executive producer, based on his novel
- Tai-Pan 1986 based on his novel
- Noble House TV mini-series 1988 executive producer, based on his novel

### Novels

- King Rat 1962 set in a Japanese POW camp in Singapore in 1945
- Tai-Pan 1966 set in Hong Kong in 1841
- Shōgun 1975 set in Japan from 1600 onwards
- Noble House 1981 set in Hong Kong in 1963
- Whirlwind 1986 set in Iran in 1979.
- Gai-Jin 1993 set in Japan in 1862
- Escape: The Love Story from Whirlwind 1994 a novella adapted from Whirlwind

Courtesy of Wikipedia

With thanks to Martin Burgess who looked after the grounds of Fredley Manor for the Clavells for 15 years.

# Pickering Plantation, Norbury Estate

One hundred years ago my grandfather, Wilfrid John Pickering, joined the Surrey County Council and became the first County Planning Officer. He loved the countryside and woodlands and worked tirelessly to preserve the beauties of Surrey from urban sprawl. His work ensured the preservation of the North Downs, the Hog's Back, Leith Hill, Devils Punchbowl, the Mickleham Valley (now all known as the Surrey Hills) and the opening to the public of the riverside meadows at Ham for us to enjoy today.

When Norbury Park Estate was broken up and sold in 1930, my grandfather persuaded Surrey County Council to purchase the parkland to protect the land from development and so it remains Council property today. In recognition and as a tribute to grandfather's foresight and enthusiasm in preserving the Surrey countryside and its amenities, a plot of land named 'The Pickering Plantation' was created on his retirement with a rustic wooden fence surrounding it and a bench. This plantation is on the north-east side of Crabtree Lane about 250 yards north of Box Hill railway station. The site selected overlooks Mickleham Valley and Box Hill to the east.

Thirty Deodar cedar trees were originally planted in 1953. The idea of establishing the plantation came from Mr A E Aitkins, the County Forestry Adviser, who much admired Mr Pickering's pioneering work

in tightening up the green belt, and hoped it would become a monument upon which future generations would look with admiration and appreciation. Over the years sadly most of the Deodar cedar trees died because of storm damage, drought and thin soil. In 1993 my mother Bettie Pickering and aunt Joan Tod approached the County Planning Officer, Mr Jim Bailey, requesting the Plantation be restored. The ranger for Norbury Park, Graham Manning, chose cherry and field maple trees instead because they thrive on thin soil and provide colour and interest all year round. These were duly planted.

Surrey County Council have periodically in the past renewed the rotten bench and post for the lectern with Mr Pickering's plaque, but recently the area fell in disrepair again.

However a chance remark to Wendy Tickner one evening, which was passed on to her neighbour, Ben Tatham, who contacted County Councillor Hazel Watson, who in turn asked Lesley Patrick. As a result I am delighted to say and am very grateful that The Pickering Plantation has now been tidied up and restored. The rotten bench and post have been replaced together with a lectern where the plaque has been reinstated. Some of the large fallen oak has been logged up, but the last two cedar trees have been left in situ to provide a rotting log pile for mini beasts



Top: the plaque; centre: 1953 WRP with SCC officials – JR is second from right; bottom: 1993 Lisa Creaye & Graham Manning with Wendy's mother Bettie and aunt Joan Tod née Pickering

and insects, and the nettles provide a good habitat for species of butterflies. The family are very proud of our grandfather's connection to the beautiful Surrey Hills and the recognition of his work in the form of The Pickering Plantation, and we hope it will be continued to be maintained in his memory.

Vicky Wheeler (née Pickering)

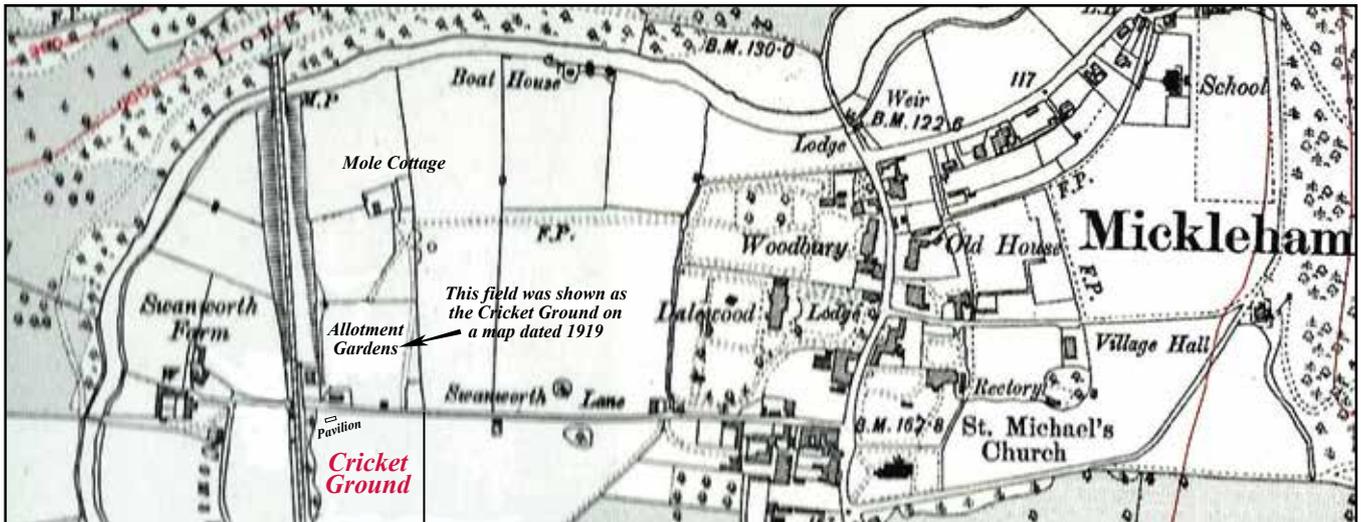
Village Archives



View of Mickleham and Box Hill from Norbury Park from a glass-plate photograph date unknown

# Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group

## Mickleham Cricket Club in the 1930s



Location of the cricket ground near the level crossing in Swanworth Lane in 1934

Recently Nick Bravery sent a message via the LHG website asking for information about his grandparents who were buried in Mickleham churchyard. The Bravery name appears several times in our archives and we were able to send Nick a photograph of the 1937 Mickleham cricket team which includes his grandfather, Charles.

The archive folder for the Mickleham Cricket Team also contained a fixture card for 1933. I was amused to see that Mr W Dennis was the groundsman. (Hasn't he aged well!) Of course this was not our Will Dennis, but Mary Dennis' late husband Ian's grandfather, Walter.

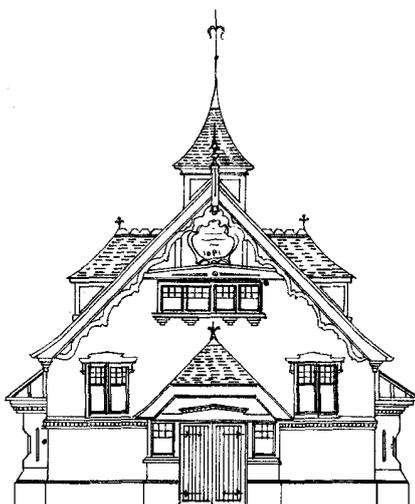
The folder also included a cutting from the *Dorking & Leatherhead Advertiser* dated 1937.

*The Mickleham Cricket Club's ground – one of the many beautiful cricket grounds in Surrey – is passing into the devastating hands of by-pass road constructors. The new Mickleham bypass road is planned through the club's ground and the Surrey County Council has promised to secure and prepare another ground for the club. Their promise has not yet materialised but negotiations are in progress. The club, through the kindness of Mr H H Gordon Clark, has used its present ground off Swanworth Lane since just after the war*

*[WW1] When the ground was first used as a cricket field a good deal of work had to be done in the way of preparing and levelling it, and in the cost of this work the club was generously helped by local residents. Prior to the war the club, for many years used another ground in the same neighbourhood and during the war it was ploughed and used for potato growing. The club has been in existence for well over 50 years Mr George Moore has been its captain for a good many years.*

Surrey County Council's proposed provision of a new ground never materialised.  
Sue Tatham

## The History of Mickleham Village Hall and Grounds



Original drawing of the north elevation

Soon after the local history group was formed a task group was set up to document the history of Mickleham Village Hall. Sue and Ben Tatham have now compiled a comprehensive account, including maps, drawings, building plans, the record of land acquisitions and numerous photographs. Also recorded are the dates when various fixtures and fittings were installed. It is hoped that this will be useful to future custodians of the hall.

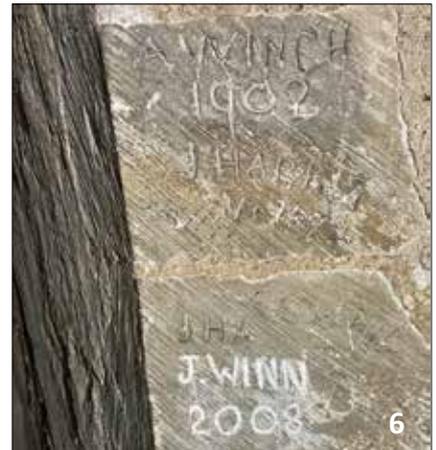
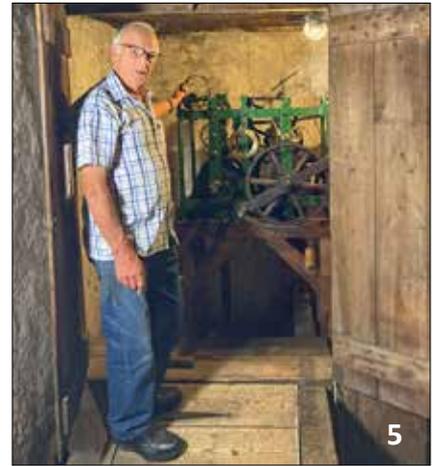
There has been a Tatham connection with the village hall for nearly 55 years. Ben's mother, Patricia was its treasurer from 1967 to 1984. In 1984 Sue became

a trustee. (The same year she started editing the parish magazine.) She was a trustee for 25 years and chairman of the management committee from 1999 to 2008. Ben became involved with the hall during the 1987 building works and subsequently joined the management committee. He became a trustee in 2008 and has been chairman of the management committee since 2016. He plans to retire at this year's Village Hall AGM.

A copy of the history will soon be available on the Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group's website [www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk](http://www.micklehamwesthumblehistory.co.uk)

# The Church Clock

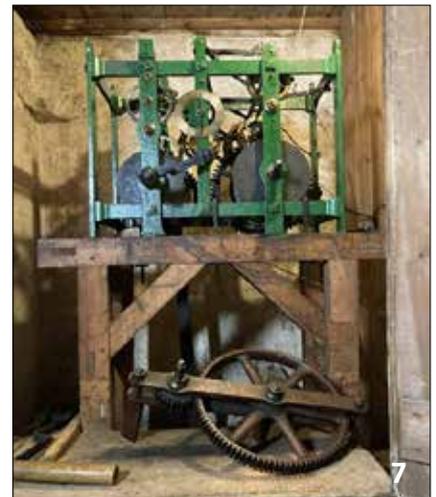
After a church was built, it was the practice to install a bell as soon as possible, which could summon the parishioners to services, add to the solemnity of funerals, and also toll the curfew at dawn and dusk. With the advancement of technology, bells were later accompanied by a clock which ensured that everyone in the local village could see as well as hear the time. The church of St Michael and All Angels had its current clock installed in 1850 and for the past 173 years it has kept regular time through the seasons every year. The clock was made by Thomas Hawley and Co who were based at Regent Street in London (see picture 1), although it appears that H Stanley, the horologist in Dorking may have visited to service or repair the clock and chose to leave his mark too. The clock has a bed frame with recoil escapement and a wood rod pendulum beating one and a half seconds (2). The strike is of the locking plate type. The driving weights, over a hundredweight in the case of the strike, are suspended on wire cables (3), which also shows where the window was before it was blocked to make way for the clock face. The five-foot copper convex face (4) is in the traditional colours following Henry VIII's edict that church clocks should be '...blew with the signs upon them gilt...' following God's command to Moses (Exodus 39) to make Aaron the priest 'garments of blue with gold bells'. The weekly winding and care of the clock is currently in the very capable hands of Mickleham resident John Winn (5) who



has kindly been carrying out this service since January 2008 and he too has left his mark in the belfry (6).

The ascent to the clock is not an easy one with an almost vertical metal ladder from the gallery and then not one but two trapdoors. This little visited part of the church is a thing of beauty with an intricate web of ancient joists and beams supporting the steeple and our six bells and I would encourage anyone who feels able to cope with the limited accessibility to arrange a viewing with one of the churchwardens. The winding of the clock takes strength, concentration and reliability as the winding handle itself weighs 40kg (picture 7) and must be turned exactly 27 times for one part of the clock and 62 times for another part, any less and the clock will stop before its next scheduled winding, any more and the weights will come off their pulley and are extremely difficult to remount.

With the progress of time and needs of loved ones we know that we cannot call on John indefinitely to perform this essential duty for the church and so to ensure that the church and village continue to have such a wonderful central timepiece, the PCC have agreed to the installation of an automatic winding system and pendulum regulator. The project will



aim to minimise any changes to the clock workings themselves, which may at some point revert to manual winding if required and the regulator should ensure that the clock keeps accurate time and will carry out the winter and summer time changes automatically. Diocesan approval will be needed before any work can commence, and for that to happen we need to have secured at least 85% of the total cost of £10,000. If you feel that you could support 'Time for the Future' and help to ensure that this iconic part of village life continues then please contact me, Catherine Diffey, on [mickleham@diffeyme.uk](mailto:mickleham@diffeyme.uk)



# Homes for Heroes in Mickleham and Westhumble

On the day following the WW1 Armistice, Prime Minister Lloyd George made a speech which initiated a countrywide initiative of providing appropriate homes ‘...fit for heroes who have won the War’. This initiative was led by local authorities; in our case Dorking Urban District Council (DUDC). The need in Surrey, at that stage, was housing for low-wage agricultural workers, and this was respected by the provision of small schemes scattered across the, then rural, areas.

In our Parish, the outcome was 12 properties in Dell Close, and four properties in Westhumble (Moleford Cottages), facing the A24 and Box Hill, both built in the 1920s.

Lloyd George’s speech resulted in the ‘Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider Questions of Building Construction in Connection with the Provision of Dwellings for the Working Classes’! This report made recommendations for the design of ‘Homes for Heroes’. It set some minimum standards, such as a bath in every house, three bedrooms and a garden, together with recommendations for layout and design. Only larger houses had a larder (NB: no refrigeration in 1920s). One

suggestion was to build in cul-de-sacs, in order to reduce road-building costs.

By 1919, five recommended designs had been drawn up (A-E), not very imaginative, but they set minimum standards, and were very useful as a guide for Councils and for cost minimization. Building materials were scarce and expensive, as was skilled manpower. Government subsidies were available to Councils, although these were withdrawn in 1921, to be reinstated in 1923. Councils varied the designs in minor ways, and decided the mix of designs in each location. The properties in Westhumble were to be of two different ‘designs’: with gables and without. Similarly, there was intentional variation in those on Dell Close, with front or side entrances.

The houses in Mickleham and Westhumble were constructed in the years after that: aerial photographs show the Mickleham group, in their cul-de-sac, under way by 1925/6. The Westhumble houses appear to be in occupation by 1923. Other houses in the DUDC area were built in Westcott, Abinger, Holmwood, Newdigate, Capel, Forest Green, Effingham and Parkgate. There were two ‘urban’ schemes in Dorking. Other Councils made similar



Above: one of the houses on the A24 in Westhumble. Below: Dell Close, Mickleham provision across Surrey. The design guidance is recognizable throughout. (For more detail, including the Layouts of the Type A-E Designs, see Surrey in the Great War: Homes for Heroes, by Martin Sitwell, on-line.) Mark Day

From the Village Archives



Dell Close in the 1930s

## From the Village Archives



1920s Aerial view of Mickleham from the west showing Dell Close Cottages under construction. Note the allotments above the school.



1937 Aerial photograph showing the Mickleham Bypass under construction