

Hamble Farms

11th September 2014 - Roy Underdown Pavilion

Since the Society was formed in 1999 it has covered the history of most aspects of Hamble life, but not Hamble Farms. This was remedied at this meeting when Committee Members Christine Smith and Ian Underdown gave an illustrated talk about the farms which had made a very important contribution to the village's life in the past.

The talk started with a brief description of farming in the early years under the control of Hamble Priory and then the Lord of the Manor, Winchester College. Over the centuries Hamble has had three main farms which were Manor Farm, Satchell Farm and Sydney Farm, although Satchell Farm was within Hound until a boundary change in 1902 when the tithing of Satchell became part of Hamble.

Manor Farm and Satchell Farm were on several occasions operated by the same farmer or sometimes neighbouring Hound Farm. During the 19th century the important Hamble Bradby family had some fields in the parish and farm buildings adjacent to the Village Green. In this century it is recorded that Hamble produced wheat, barley and oats.

In the 20th century the main farms were dairy farms, with most of the fields used for pasture and growing feed for the animals. In 1910 there were 124 cows, 86 pigs and 28 horses in Hamble.

Manor Farm was Hamble's main farm and details of most of the farmers who occupied it during the 19th and 20th centuries were given. In the early 1840s some old farm buildings were demolished and the house adjoining the High Street was built. At the end of the 1800s Charles Brown leased the farm and kept 300 sheep on the fields which were to become the airfield. At the beginning of the 1900s he moved to Hound Farm and passed Manor Farm on to his daughter and son in law, John Henry Bartlett.

In the 1900s the Bartlett family operated Manor Farm as a dairy farm. It had its own farm shop where the 'Harrier' pub is situated today and a milk delivery service with a horse and cart until it closed as a working farm during the Second World War. After this Manor Farm workers moved to Hound Farm, which was mostly arable. The Bartletts subsequently stopped farming at Hound Farm in 1954. Manor Farm was only used after the war for private domestic interest, e.g. heifers, pigs and poultry. Older Hamble residents remember buying eggs from the farm or at Christmas poultry, such as geese and ducks for their festive meals.

Satchell Farm was owned by the Chamberlayne family and their tenants farmed the fields of Satchell tithing for centuries. At the beginning of the 1900s it was the

home of 6 to 8 farm work horses and 20-30 cows were kept in the east side buildings which had marshes all around them and Satchell Pond. When it closed in the late 1930s these farm buildings on the east side of Satchell Lane became the home of sailmakers after the war.

Christine Smith who lived with her family, the Burdons, at Sydney Farm after the Second World War described what life was like there when it was the last working farm in Hamble. Sydney Farm was built at the end of the 1700s to support a new large house, Sydney Lodge, which was the home of the Yorke family.

The Burdon family were tenants of the Chamberlayne Estate and the farm had cows, pigs, chickens and a pony. When two of the large fields were sold for building Grantham Close prefabs and Westfield Close they had to diversify into market gardening and they had a farm shop and a delivery round. Her father was among the first to use arks for the free range pigs and battery cages for his chicken.

As well as describing life on the farm, Christine included some amusing stories, such as her father being run over by his own delivery tractor, childhood adventures relating to icy weather at the farm and a complaint about smells. The shop owner over the road complained to her father about the awful smell while he was cleaning out the chicken house. He replied "What about me? I am on the other end of the shovel".

When Sydney farm closed it was replaced by Grantham Avenue in the early 1960s. At the end of the 1980s the last Manor Farm meadow was sold for housing and is now the home of Meadow Lane, Farm Close and The Bartletts residents.

This meeting was surprisingly well attended with some bringing along memorabilia from the farms. The Society also gained its youngest member when a mother from Satchell Lane brought along her newly born baby. The Society always welcomes new members, especially well behaved ones such as our youngest member!