

THE WORTH SOCIETY



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magazine

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Cover design by Jonathan Newdick.

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THE PETWORTH SOCIETY SUPPORTS THE
LECONFIELD HALL
AND PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM!

Constitution and Officers

The Petworth Society was founded in 1974 "to preserve the character and amenities of the town and parish of Petworth including Byworth; to encourage interest in the history of the district and to foster a community spirit". It is non-political, non-sectarian and non-profit making.

Membership is open to anyone, irrespective of place of residence who is interested in furthering the object of the society.

The annual subscription is £7.00. Single or double one Magazine delivered. Postal £8.00 overseas £9.00. Further information may be obtained from any of the following:

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Membership enquiries to Mrs Staker please, Magazine circulation enquires to Betty Hodson or Bill (Vincent).

Society Town Crier

Mr J. Crocombe, 19 Station Road (343329)

Note: The crier may be prepared to publicise local community events and public notices for you, even snippets of personal news such as births, engagements or lost pets. It is suggested that such personal and business cries be made for a small donation to a charity to be nominated by the crier himself.

Chairman's Notes

I hope this is a reasonably coherent Magazine; it certainly reflects a very busy three months. The Cottage Museum opens on May 4th and by the time you read this will have been in existence for about a month. I will put a progress report into the September Magazine. You will see several reports on Society events, well-attended as they always are. If your subscription is overdue you will have a final reminder with this issue where we have usually done this in September. Please pay on this reminder or let us know if you do not wish to continue. We've tried to rearrange things a little to avoid a minority of subscriptions trickling in over a long period.

Quite a bit going on in the Leconfield Hall too. You'll see the portraits in the Upper Hall and the Somerset Hospital pictures in the committee rooms. The upstairs portraits of present-day inhabitants of Somerset Hospital are by Chris Harrison while the black and white portraits are an aspect of George Garland's work that rarely receives attention. Functional they may be, and taken, many of them, in the stressful early years of the war, but they have, above all a sense of mystery. Who are these people and what happened to them? It is an impression heightened by the acetates on the window downstairs, their transparent almost luminous character gives them a ghostly quality. These figures from the 1940s are still in a sense with us.

You will have seen newspaper reports on the projected lorry ban. It seems to have a greater degree of support in the town than other palliative measures mooted over the years, but essentially it is for the town to decide. I think it is reasonable for the Society to adopt the same stance as the Parish Council and ask for more details and for the plan to be explained fully to the town. I give the Society's reply to the County Council below. The suggested reply was read to members present at the Real Tennis meeting and seemed acceptable to them:

The Petworth Society cannot take sides on possible bypass routes, a subject on which the Society membership is not agreed. A referendum held in 1992 indicated this and at present we see no reason to repeat the exercise.

The Society must however urge that any fresh suggestions receive a fair hearing. The W.S.C.C. proposals for a Petworth Lorry ban need to be carefully weighed and considered by everyone in the town and everyone in the town needs an opportunity to express their views on a matter which is of direct concern with them. At present however proposals are at a preliminary stage.

Lastly a big thank you to Les Howard who is standing down after cleaning Petworth for a number of years. A thankless task carried out with the utmost grace and good humour. Thanks very much Les!

Peter

25th April 1996.

Planted Bulb Sale for Petworth Cottage Museum. December 1996

If any Member has any spare containers in which indoor bulbs could be planted - either china, basket-ware or plastic, Alison Boreham would be delighted to receive or collect them in anticipation of a sale of planted bulbs planned for next year in aid of Petworth Cottage Museum. Please ring 01798 - 869258 or alternatively contact Peter or bring in to Anne Simmons at E. Streeter and Daughter.

'Oh Yea! Oh Yea!

On the initiative of Peter Jerrome and in memory of Arch Knight, who last "Cried" the Declaration of War in 1939, this is a try-out of the function of the Petworth Town Crier.'

With these words and the ringing of a fearsomely loud bell, on the 22nd February 1996 began the reintroduction of a "Town Crier" to Petworth. There followed a series of announcements concerning forthcoming events in Petworth.

The bell, which had at one time belonged to Arch Knight, was first rung at 10.00 a.m. in Petworth Square. As the only applicant to Peter's advert for a town crier, I was privileged to make this historical connection. Peter had previously rung the bell on a number of occasions particularly on the "Fair Day".

A number of genuine notices have been "Cried" since 22nd February and on the Monday after the weekend of the introduction of British Summer Time, the following announcements were made.

No. 1. In Petworth Square, Lombard Street, Golden Square and Hampers Green Industrial Estate.

"Oh Yea Oh Yea.

An emergency proclamation from Her Majesties Government . . . to all workers and bosses.

Because of the economic difficulties caused by the beef problems, the following action must be taken.

At 11.00 hours precisely all clocks and watches are to be retarded by one hour to enable one extra hour of work to be done at no extra cost.

Clocks to be advanced by one hour at 2300 hours.

Sig. A. G. ULLABLE-Jones.

Chief Secy to the Treasury.

I. M. G. OBSMACKED-Smith.

Chief Secy to the Dept of Public Works

Dated 01 04 96."

No.2. At the suggestion of Mr Joe Elliott, our excellent road sweeper, the following was "Cried" "Dog deposit, D.N.A. and Destruction Act 1996.

Street and Pavement fouling dog deposits will be future be D.N.A. tested. All dogs passing through Petworth will be D.N.A. tested and owners found in possession of dogs that have contravened the anti-fouling regulations will be fined £1000 or the dogs destroyed. Date 01 04 96."

Several people expressed the heartfelt wish that the latter "Cry" was not dated April 1st and in fact represented a tightening of local authority policy.

Apart from one or two people who have been pained by the noise, comments have been favourable. This initiative has been taken by the Petworth Society as a service to the community and to add a little more colour to the town.

Although the history of the "Town Crier" goes back a long way, this present reintroduction is still experimental. The main problems I have encountered are the transient nature of the audience, the noise of the traffic and occasionally a lack of courage. The odd sore throat has not helped either - I am considering writing to my favourite throat lozenge manufacturer for sponsorship. I feel that electronic amplification is inappropriate and I can easily stop mid-sentence if a lorry or bus passes. Repeated announcements would solve the transience problem but I have neither the time nor the voice for too many performances.

Several people have suggested that a full regalia is needed. I personally would not wish this for the following reasons. Arch Knight, the last Crier, used to leave his muffin making and go around in whatever he was wearing at the time. The function and the message are much more important than the image. I would have neither the time nor the inclination to change into some fancy gear every time I go to the town centre to "Cry". However, an ingenious idea has been put forward and all will be revealed in due course.

My rates of pay have been mentioned by some people! Thus far all "Cries" have been made on an entirely voluntary basis. In the future, personal and business Cries can be sponsored, the money going to a charity. Blasphemous, scurrilous or slanderous "Cries" will be rejected and all Cries will be at the discretion of Peter Jerrome or myself.

John Crocombe

[See Constitution and Officers page 2.]

It will be seen that we have anglicised the purist's "Oyez, oyez" (Ed)

Jim Stoner, Midhurst Grammar School and other matters

There were a lot of replies to the various enquiries in Magazine 83 and I append a selection of them.

Re Jim Stoner: Ron Hazelman writes:

VIDEO - for home entertainment only.

"THE MAKING OF PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM"

£10 (includes donation to Museum). £9 for stewards.

Order from Anne at E. Streeter and Daughter or from Mr. I. Godsmark, 38 Martlet Road, Petworth.
Cheques payable to Mr. I. Godsmark.

FAIRS and EXHIBITIONS

SATURDAY 6th JULY, SUNDAY 7th JULY

West Sussex Record Office "Roadshow" in the Leconfield Hall. Also stands by the Petworth Society, Petworth Cottage Museum and Midhurst and Petworth Observer. See Petworth Festival literature for details. 10 - 4 each day.

ANTIQUE FAIR in LECONFIELD HALL

SUNDAY 14th JULY 10 - 4. Admission 25p.

Proceeds to Petworth Cottage Museum.

Beginning 6th July and running through to 1st August

EXHIBITION

PETWORTH HOUSE

A PETWORTH GIRLHOOD

An exhibition of photographs and documents from the 1880s and 1890s about the life of Mary Wyndham at Petworth and elsewhere. Open to the public during normal National Trust opening hours.

This exhibition has been featured on television and is very highly recommended.

STEWARDING AT PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM

We are shortly arranging the stewards' rota for the second half of the year and feel sure there are members who would enjoy the occasional afternoon helping at the Museum. If you're not sure that you'd like it, simply ask someone who's already on the rota.

The Museum is open from 2 to 4.30 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Monday. There are always two stewards, perhaps three on exceptionally busy days. If you would like to try or even just ask about it please phone the Curator Jacqueline Golden on 342320 or Peter on 342562.

Notice:

Leconfield Hall Annual General Meeting

Thursday 27th June at 7.00pm Leconfield Hall

To be followed by meeting of Management Committee

Peter

23rd May 1996.

Please note final reminders with this Magazine. Please pay promptly.



Summer Programme. Please keep for reference.

Some of the following events are joint ventures with Petworth Cottage Museum.

June 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19

Somerset Lodge garden open 2.30 to 6.00 approximately. National Garden Scheme with teas sold in aid of Petworth Cottage Museum.

WALKS Cars leave Petworth Car Park at 2.15:

Sunday 16th June

Ian and Pearl's early summer walk.

Sunday 28th July

John and Gloria's "Roughly Pulborough" walk.

Sunday 11th August

Audrey's Burpham walk.

Sunday 8th September

Steve's "mellow season" walk.

VISITS

Sunday 23rd June Visit to Frith Hill and Frith Lodge. Gardens open in aid of Petworth Cottage Museum. Frith Hill 2 - 6, Frith Lodge 4 - 6. Courtesy of Mr and Mrs Warne and Mr and Mrs Cridland. Teas, Plants etc.

Entrance £1.50 but please make own way to Frith.

*Sunday 21st July Visit to the gardens at Hesworth Grange, Fittleworth. Courtesy of Mrs Brookfield. Cars leave Petworth Car Park at 2.15

Tea will be provided with proceeds to Petworth Cottage Museum.

Please bring some cash.

*Provisional date - please check with publicity first or ring Peter.

For your Diary

Saturday 21st September Elgar at Brinkwells - a dramatic presentation.

Sunday 13th October The Society visit Bookham Common.

Tuesday 22nd October "Smuggling in Sussex". Mike Smith gives the Garland Memorial lecture.

"I knew Jim and his wife quite well. At this time they were living in a cottage in Grove Street, the last cottage on the right before New Grove house. Jim worked at Quarry Farm, employed by a Mr Cooper the farmer who lived at the end of Percy Row. I can remember Jim, after the war, still delivering milk from a can with the measure on the side and small cans of cream hanging on the rim round the can.

I can't remember if Mr Cooper died or if he moved away, but after he vacated the farm it was amalgamated with Soanes, farmed by Oliver Cross."

Mr G.R. Ford writes:

"Jim Stoner was employed by two sisters who lived in Percy Terrace, their dairy being situated at the end of the terrace nearest the town. Jim was their roundsman and delivered milk from a hand utensil to a jug using a half pint measure and placing the milk on a shelf about 6 foot high inside the porch. The name of the farm the sisters had I can't remember but I do know that at the time the grazing yard was the whole of the Sheepdowns."

Re the Stenning family: Mr Don Foyle, like many others, has Stenning relations. He sends also this Elderberry Wine recipe from "Home Chat" September 10th 1904.

Elderberry Wine.

This, doubtless, will appeal more particularly to our country readers who have not yet lost the skill their grandmothers were so proud of in making their own wines. We of the towns will appreciate the result of their labours when, in due course, some of the rich luscious wine is offered us, very likely mulled and hot, on a cold day, or to aid in curing or warding off a chill.

Required: Half a peck of ripe elderberries.

One and half gallons of boiling water.

To each gallon of juice:

Three pounds of loaf sugar.

Half an ounce of ground ginger.

Four cloves.

Eight allspice.

One pound of chopped raisins.

One ounce of compressed or two tablespoofuls of brewer's yeast.

Brandy if liked.

Stalk the berries, put them into a large vessel with the fast-boiling water. Cover closely, and leave for twenty-four hours. Then pour off through a fine wire sieve, pressing the fruit well to get all the juice.

Measure this liquid to ascertain how many gallons there are, and pour into a large vessel for boiling.

Add the needed amount of sugar, spices, and raisins. Boil all gently one hour. Skim it well. Put it aside till only warm but not hot, then pour it into clean jars or a cask. For each *two gallons of wine* add two tablespoofuls of brewer's or one ounce of compressed yeast spread on a piece of toast.

Leave it for about a fortnight, or till it has stopped fermenting. Add, if liked, one gill of brandy to each gallon of wine. Cork tightly, and leave it for about three months.

Strain, bottle, and cork, and it is ready for use.

Re Midhurst Grammar School: Mr A.I. Grigor writes from West Chiltington:

Dear Peter

Mr E.G. Swann's letter in the March issue of your excellent magazine calls for a reply from a contemporaneous pupil (1925-1929) who does not accept his rather derogatory comments about the Headmaster and Staff of Midhurst Grammar School of those long gone days.

The Headmaster, the Rev. Bernard Heald aka "Big Bum Bernie" was indeed as your correspondent writes - a great bull of a man - and more of a sportsman than a scholar. However he had a thorough knowledge of every pupil and a shrewd idea as to their scholastic potential. When he did take a class himself his subject was Divinity. I was awarded the first prize for that subject in 1925. It was a leather bound edition of the Works of Robert Burns. My father was amused that the works of this far from religious Scots Bard was thought proper award for Divinity. As sport had a high priority the Headmaster was a formidable figure as he dashed up and down the touch-line roaring "Play up School".

Amongst well remembered masters were Mr Brown aka "Bogey" who taught History. His blackboard illustration of historic battles only interrupted as he threw a well aimed chalk at some nodding scholar. The English Master Mr Williams aka "Little willie" inspired, at least in me, a lifelong love of Poetry and the Classics. The Science Master Mr Cousins aka "Conk" was said by some not to read their essays. The boy who wrote in the middle of his essay "Here we go gathering nuts in May" was duly chastised. Monsieur Roti had the thankless task of teaching the language of "La Belle France" and must have thought at times that the Battle of Hastings was a recent event.

Remembered pupils of my vintage who came from Petworth were Penry and Ryan Price, Denis Moyer, Reginald and Albert Pellett and Reginald Spooner. Burningham whom Mr Swann mentions was a junior in my day. He like so many other Grammar School boys served, with my brother in the Sussex and Surrey Yeomanry in the 1939/45 War.

Looking back down the years and remembering the words of the School Song - We come from the pines and heather, from the shores of the sounding sea. From the Rolling Downs, and the peaceful towns of the brave old Countree. Where the Rother flows to the Arun, and grass grown Stane Street lies, and Hotspur's Halls and Cowdray's Walls in noble splendour rise - Old Grammarians must count themselves fortunate and privileged in their Old School and Schoolmasters.

Yours sincerely, A. I. Grigor.

Re fattening calves: Doug Dean recalls this being done at Bennyfold during the 1950s. "There was a barn with a tiled roof some 16 feet high, windowless with pitched black boarding. A pit some 4 foot to 4 foot six deep was excavated in the floor and a stone wall around the pit up to ground level. Weaned calves were put in and straw added after two or three years the level of the straw would come up to the wall, it would be about the time the calves were ready. Everything was under cover. The barn was severely damaged in a gale and never repaired."

Re Fisher Street farm: Phyllis Catt writes:

In 1929 after my father's sudden death, I needed to find some sort of a job. The question was what??

Then I heard that some friends at Fisher Street Farm were desperate for help with their two young children. They were Mr and Mrs Jack Garlick. Their 'Mother's Help' had been called home owing to her parent's illness. Mrs Garlick had been forbidden to lift her youngest, a sturdy little boy of eleven months, just starting to walk. I rang her up and she agreed that I should go over there for a month's trial. They told me later that they had been very dubious about having me at all!

Little did they know my Mother. She had brought up three daughters and each one of us in turn had been made to live at home for a year to become efficient at cooking, cleaning the house, and doing the shopping.

Off I went to that lovely farm-house, little dreaming that I should be there for nearly four years. There was a maid living-in, whose home was at one of the Petworth Park Lodges. A boy doing odd jobs on the Farm came in to clean all the boots, shoes and harness. I 'got along' with them all very well. Long ago our father had taught us, "Always be polite to everyone whether they be the Squire or the dustman."

In front of the house was a beautiful grass tennis court where, when they found I could play, I sometimes made up the number for a game.

The eldest child was a boy of four. He had a pony of which he was a bit nervous, it certainly could be very lively sometimes so I used to gallop it round the paddock before he would get on.

Mr and Mrs Garlick both had hunters, but as she had been ill she seldom rode. There again how lucky I was to exercise the mare with Colin on the leading rein.

Meanwhile the toddler grew and grew! He was a handful to manage. I remember very well pushing the big pram up the hill to Northchapel and down the next hill to the shops, where the boys were given a sweet each by the 'Cokelers'.

During the summer months we used to have the loveliest games of 'Hide and Seek' all over the farm. The eldest boy soon grew to five years old. He began morning school at Chiddingfold, where I was often required to drive him.

After nearly three years I was sad to hear Jack saying he was not prepared to go on losing his money in farming. This was true indeed, for the awful Slump of the thirties was continuing.

Saints and Satan, fantasies and Pharisees

David Tait, Chairman of the Shoreham Society and Elizabeth, his wife, gave us a fascinating insight into the folklore, customs and curiosities of Sussex. David showed the slides and gave the commentary. Elizabeth interjected with readings, often in the Sussex brogue.

We learnt how apparently mysterious, if not impossible events had their true origin "embroidered" through being passed on by word of mouth, most not being set down on paper until the 19th century. Why were fairies known as "pharisees" by the old folk? Because Sussex dialect used double plurals to many words: "bagses", "shoeses" - so, "fairieses", which became "pharisees".

We heard about three Sussex saints - Cuthman, Dunstan and Leonard - miracles of penning sheep by drawing a circle around them, of transmogrifying a farmer's wife a distance of five miles, of the help given by the Carpenter of Nazareth in building Steyning Church and, helped by the hermit Ursula, of foiling the Devil's plan to flood the Weald through the Devil's Dyke. This last also resulted in the formation of Cissbury Ring and the Isle of Wight from lumps of earth falling from the fleeing Devil's feet. St. Dunstan was well-qualified to see the Devil off, since he had first recognised him when he was disguised as a beautiful and seductive girl, enticing him in the Saint's forge at Mayfield. Catching a glimpse of a cloven hoof, Dunstan caught the Adversary by the nose with his blacksmith's tongs. Satan dived into a pond to relieve the pain giving it curative properties which led to the establishment of Tunbridge Wells.

Why write two lines on a gravestone upside-down? Guesses from the audience were more imaginative than what would seem to be the true answer - that the mason made a mistake which was buried when the stone was inverted with the correct version above ground.

A book would be needed to contain all the stories of murder, death by a rolling millstone, a dispute between neighbours over a cat and a canary, the Devil (again) moving stones, even whole churches, a monster living in a "bottomless" pond at Lyminster which is cold in summer and warm in winter. The monster, by the way, devoured not only a huge pie baked to tempt it out of the water but the horse and the cart carrying it. And the "pharisees"? No one could understand why a certain farmer's horses were so fat and fit. Then the fairies were spotted feeding the horses at night until scared off by a cat, after which the horses not surprisingly, became emaciated.

All this sent at least one member hurrying home to re-read "*Tales of Old Petworth*" and the speaker bought a copy (still available at £7.50 from Peter) for himself.

Meanwhile, what about the modern mystery of crop circles? David asked.

KCT

But . . . it's Victorian

Any prejudices we may have had about all Victorian pottery being over-decorated and fussy were soon dispelled when Geoffery Godden, a leading authority, gave us the benefit of his expertise.

The first slide, showing a simple vase of perfect proportions, with a restrained but finely-detailed painted band of roses, set the scene for a re-assessment of the general attitude towards 19th century tastes. Jugs, plates, teapots and tea sets, statuettes, figurines and ornaments, money boxes, pot lids, water purifiers and toilet sets illustrated the exquisite designs, fine workmanship and skilled artistry of the period.

While the industry in France and Germany had become static due to the Franco-Prussian war, peaceful prosperity in England attracted the best French artists to Staffordshire where

they produced excellent copies of earlier originals as well as fine works of art on what were otherwise unsaleable cylinders. These would cost the equivalent of 50-60 weeks' average wages and today, modern works in the same style are priced between £1000 and £6000. However, long working hours and cheap labour, which included very young children, enabled large quantities of inexpensive utilitarian ware to be produced. An amusing example was a set of plates with a moral story - cartoons illustrating the evils of drink.

Mr Godden went on to describe the harsh working conditions and the production processes in factories and studios. Wedgewood himself said that 10 tons of fuel were required to fire 1 ton of pottery, and some items went through four firings. The audience had further questions on this part of Mr Godden's subject, which he dealt with in the manner of one intimately acquainted with all aspects of a life-time's interest. We were even given the authoritative explanation of the duties of a sagger-maker's bottom knocker, remembered by many from vintage TV's "What's my line?"

There must be a considerable number of our members who will now use the term "But... it's Victorian" in an appreciative, rather than a dismissive, manner.

KCT

Real Tennis

Our meeting in late March took a different form from the usual when Brian Rich, a member of the Petworth House Tennis Club, gave an illustrated talk about Real Tennis, followed by a visit to the court for a demonstration game between the two professionals, Chris. Bray and Mark Coghlan.

Mr Rich's talk covered the history of the game from its origins at least as long ago as the 14th century, when it was played without rackets in monasteries and streets. There is a suggestion that shop blinds on which the balls bounced gave rise to the similar constructions in purpose-built courts. The net was originally a single line. As time went on and games were played for money (amounts of 15, 30 and 40 establishing the scoring system), disputes would arise, so the line was hung with tassels and finally the net was substituted. A 14th century French lady, Margot, introduced the backhand stroke (literally - no racket) but it was by no means adopted universally and later players were pictured using a racket in each hand. The term "love" appears to have arisen from the French "l'oeuf" - egg.

The game has seen a resurgence in the last 20 years, with new courts being built and old ones restored, not only in England, but also in France, Russia, the U.S.A. and South Africa. Brian showed photographs of various courts and described the rackets, balls and the intricacies of play.

Records at Petworth are the oldest in England, going back to 1588 when the court was next to the chapel. It was later re-located to the present Estate Yard, then back to near the house and finally to its present position (the sixth court) in 1872 at a cost of £2,000. Courts are being built today for upwards of £¼ million. The professionals are employed to make rackets,

re-cover balls and generally look after the court, which in this case is fully booked from 7.45 a.m. to 9.45 p.m. seven days a week.

A fascinating evening, and quite an achievement in accommodating ninety spectators around a court which normally seats fifteen!

KCT

Following in Father's Footsteps - memories of the music hall by Leslie and Grace Baker

Would the Petworth Society like music hall memories? Well there was a strong recommendation from Flora Thomas. April's not the best time for a monthly meeting, warmer nights (allegedly) and lighter evenings. With Keith away on holiday, Anne and I put out the chairs at half-past six. No slides, no central aisle. It didn't, we had to say, look Keith's normal tidy job. Still people were coming in, eighty perhaps, a few empty chairs. By 7.20 I was outside the hall looking for the speaker. I'd only spoken to Leslie Baker on the telephone. A man with a dinner jacket was about to abandon the idea of parking in an unusually crowded square. It must be him. It was.

There isn't a formal piano stool at the hall but Grace was happy enough with three chairs fitted together. No, I assured a worried onlooker, we hadn't forgotten to separate them. It was time to start and Leslie Baker had an extraordinary story to tell. He had been a headmaster at Angmering with no concern for the Music Hall except that his parents had both toured the halls in those far-off years between 1910 and 1925. Leslie had been largely brought up by foster-parents. If you thought about it, it was clear why. The Music Hall was no place for a child: his parents were endlessly on the move, endlessly in theatrical digs. It was a totally nomadic life and it was a very hard and unglamorous one - at least off the magic stage. Chesterfield and Nottingham, where Leslie had been brought up, were both theatres on the circuit. His mother and father parted in the early 1920s, his mother, a soubrette, marrying Bobbie Graham another circuit comedian. His father Chris Baker he had never known.

It would be only in later life that Leslie started to seek his origins. What could he discover about the father he had never seen? He received a lot of help from the British Musical Hall Society and by studying old magazines he could roughly map out his father's career from 1910 to an appearance at the Tivoli, Hull in January 1924. After that nothing. He spoke too to someone who had appeared in a revue with Chris Baker in 1917. Chris Baker was never a big star, always what the trade called "a wine and spirits" entertainer i.e. an artiste whose name merged with the advertisements at the bottom of the programme. What Leslie had managed to do however was to trace songs sung by Chris Baker and recorded by him, in some cases the sheet music survived. There was even talk of one of the records being extant.

THE SINGERS' RIGHTS
REFLECTION
A 25¢ SINGERS' POPULAR EDITION (NO DISCOUNT ALLOWED)

DOH, RAY, ME.

THE SINGERS' RIGHTS REFLECTION

WRITTEN BY
ALF ELLERTON.

COMPOSED BY
WIL MAYNE.



Sung by

CHRIS BAKER.

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and
COMPOSED
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SULLIVAN
and
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Sung by

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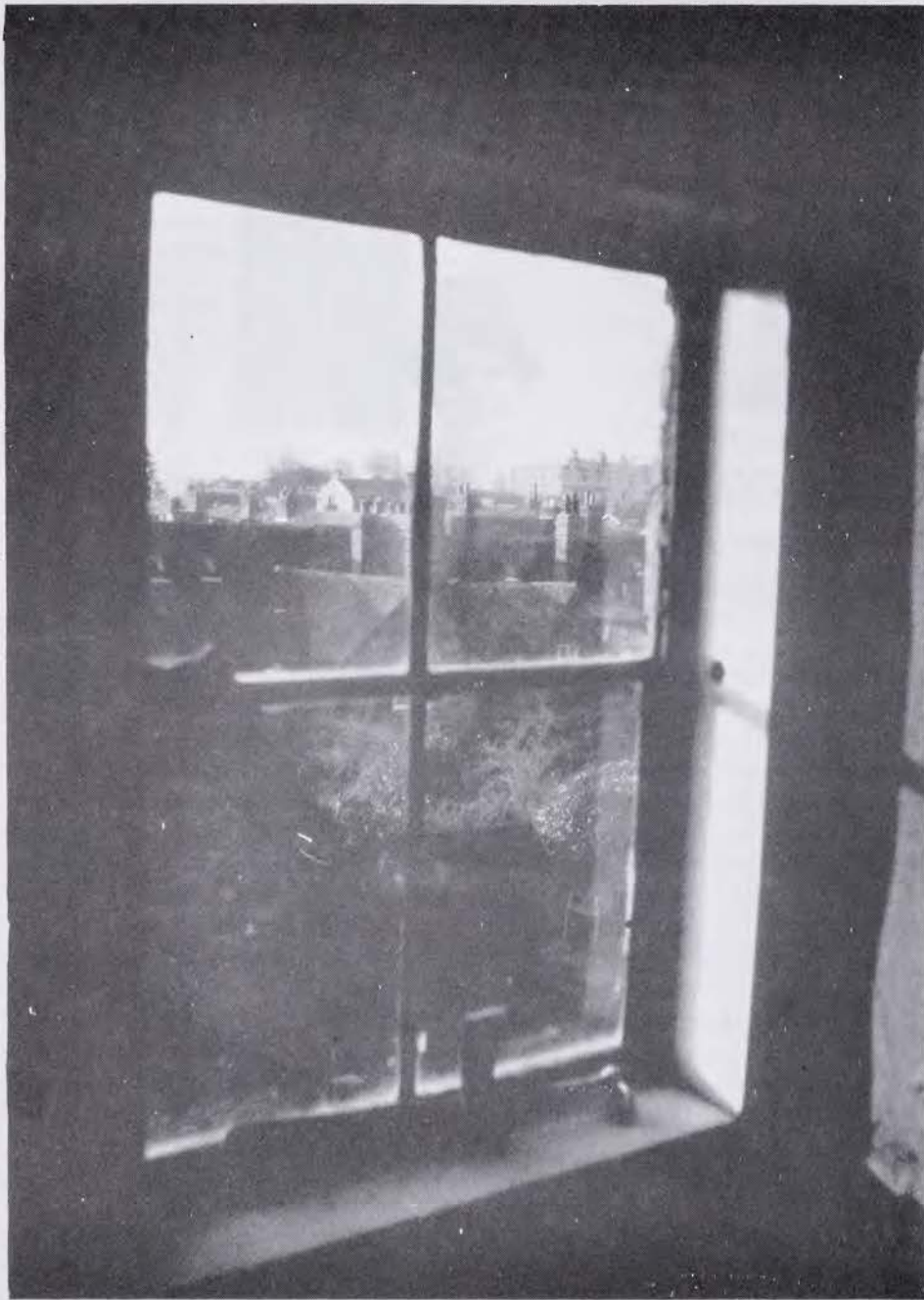
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All this was only an introduction. Time now for a quick look at some of the Music Hall greats and not-so-greats. Chris Baker had used his own name, Marie Lloyd had not. She took her stage-name from a hoarding proclaiming Lloyds Illustrated News. Things were as casual as that. Although Queen of the Musical Hall at that time her act was considered too risqué to put before the new King and Queen in 1912. She was popular enough not to bother overmuch. Like so many of the old stars her life was a sad one and she died poor, giving a lot of her earnings to less fortunate artistes and drinking too heavily. As a tribute Leslie obliged with "My Old Man said, 'Follow the Van'". The background to the song is a moonlight flit to avoid paying the rent. George Robey was known as the Prime Minister of Mirth but was also a straight actor: he appeared as Falstaff in King Henry V. Vesta Victoria was well known in the '90s for two songs, "Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-wow" and "There was I waiting at the Church". Max Miller started off as the "bottler", collecting money on Brighton sands - his two joke books for the audience to choose from, his tendency to overrun five, six, even ten minutes. He could do it because he was a top of the bill act and no one would dare put the traditional walking stick round his neck and drag him off the stage. Harry Champion with "Any Old Iron". He did an altered version in 1941 to aid the War Effort. Vesta Tilley doing her male impersonation at the Royal Command Performance of 1912 and Queen Mary shielding her face with the programme and the ladies in the audience following suit. "Following The Dear Old Dad". Harry Lauder, Will Fyffe, the sad story of Harry Fragson Leslie could have gone on all night and the audience would have been perfectly happy. Can I get Leslie and Grace back again? Dunno, but I'll try.

Peter



John Crocombe the Petworth Society and Town Crier.
From a slide by David Johnston.



*A view from Petworth Cottage Museum.
From a slide by David Johnston.*

Jumbo's Glatting Walk 18th February

Thirteen intrepid and shivering members of the Petworth Society (plus two honorary canine members) gathered by Jumbo's Landrover on a really cold and windy afternoon. Rain threatened but it stayed fine. No-one, except Jumbo and David, really knew where Glatting was, and we followed Jumbo's Landrover towards Chichester, left past Burton Pond, on to Sutton right by the White Horse and left towards the Downs and Glatting Farm where we disembarked. Further up the lane is Coldharbour Farm, former residence of Herbert Shiner.

Glatting Farmhouse is a fine old building, part sandstone, part flint with picturesque old farm buildings including a magnificent barn where underneath the corrugated iron roof the old wooden battens and some of the thatch were preserved far above the massive timbers. Drifts of snowdrops and aconites were blowing in the cold wind. Jumbo told us that the rents of the farm and woodland pay for the upkeep of Somerset Hospital — a nice thought. He also said there used to be a brickyard nearby.

We set off across a ploughed field at Jumbo's usual cracking pace towards Glatting Hanger. The ancient beech and yew trees gave us welcome shelter as we climbed the side of the hill. Halfway up we paused to look down the steep slope at a spring far below. This was "tamed" in 1898 by Peter's grandfather, the Water bailiff of the Leconfield Estate to supply the whole of Sutton village which it did until the mid 1950s. Even up to 20 years ago it still supplied the farm and farmhouse. Jumbo said there were a lot of fossils in this area including ammonites and the rare tektites small glassy objects supposed to have been formed by the melting of terrestrial rocks through the impact of large meteorites or comets.

We pressed on towards the summit and joined a sunken chalk lane with fine views of Chanctonbury Ring, Devil's Dyke and Wolstonbury away to our left above Sutton and Petworth. Catkins were shaking like lambs tails in the wind and Dog's Mercury was in bud. The well known landmark of the two radio masts guided us onwards — they have been there since the early 1930's.

At the brow of the hill we turned right towards Upwaltham, leaving the deep cleft of Scotcher's Bottom where there used to be a farm and house (and well looked after by Peter's grandfather) on our left. The fallen trees from the '87 hurricane are still there on the steep wooded slopes, too inaccessible to pull out. We struggled along against the wind past a group of tumuli, noting the catch crops of maize and kale grown for the pheasants. Fresh flinty molehills abounded, indicating a change of weather. Jumbo said there used to be red deer up here until the very cold winter of 1963/4 when they just disappeared.

We negotiated, with difficulty and some hilarity, a locked gate and barbed wire fence to enter Pitchurst Copse following a sunken track known as Puck Street, leading back down the hill to Glatting Lane. This is Manorial Waste and designated as Common Lane and Jumbo can remember when it was passable by horse and cart. The steep banks were clad in glistening ivy leaves and harts tongue ferns under the venerable ash and yew trees. Over to our left towards Barlavington Down and Duncton Down Jumbo pointed out a wooded area where two aeroplanes had crashed — a Spitfire during the War, and a Wyvern after the War. He also said

there were prehistoric flint mines in the area, as yet unexplored. Puck Street suddenly became a ford where the water draining off the Downs couldn't escape. We waded through, tasted the sweet fresh water draining off the hillside and re-entered Glatting Lane where we found some primroses blooming cheerfully in a sheltered spot - a heart warming end to a strenuous but very enjoyable walk, enhanced by Jumbo's great knowledge of the area and its history.

Jean Gilhooly.

Something about fishing-rods ... David and Sue's Northchapel Walk April 14th

Dave's suggested walk, starting from Ebernoe, seemed a little on the long side. Perhaps we needed another think. What about Wet Wood starting from Northchapel? Seemed like a good idea given that the forecast for the weekend was appalling. In fact, Saturday was a glorious day and Sunday cool and overcast but quite dry. Some kind of virus in the Met. Office seaweed perhaps, but no complaints from us. Out to Northchapel, daffodils in the Village Hall Car Park and dandelions pushing up through new Tarmac, a feeling of spring's power but not too many visible signs of it. White sheep set against green grass on a hill. Down the track with Hortons Farm on the left, David Wort asks the farmer about an egg fight. It doesn't materialize - probably a good thing. We bear left into Wet Wood, Don and Ann Callingham know this well; in fact Ann had lived down here once, a pair of isolated cottages in the woods, pleasant enough in Summer, a good deal less so in Winter. Gamekeepers were moved once very three or four years in those days. You could still see where the cottages had been, laurels just back from the track, then, further back, the moss-covered brick of standings. The cottages were gone now - what? Thirty-five years? Don and Ann still had a refectory table made from some of the floorboards. A few daffodils still bloomed in the wilderness. The surrounding woods were quite brown, no sign of green. A pussy willow had rotted at the bottom of the stem and broken off but the catkins bloomed on. Dave was setting a cracking pace. Did he think the Petworth Society were serious walkers? We caught up with him at the gate on the road to Pheasant Court. On down past the farmhouse, there was a small lake with willows and an island. But had I noticed the primroses studding the bank in the lane? Aud. seemed think that I saw all sorts of things that no one else had but nothing that was obvious. She could have a point.

On to the lake at Chaffold. Ann could remember it as wet meadowland - not much use for anything. Down an incline to look at the decaying brickwork of a culvert. A mill had stood here once. The old maps are clear on this, Chaffold Mill. Dave led the way back through the woods, the brown emptiness of spring, the occasional flash of gorse lighting up the dull woods. Linnets nest in gorse, Dave said. He hadn't heard the nightingale yet. Back past Hortons on the right. A relatively short walk in its truncated form but a good start to the new season - I'd missed the February one.

It's not easy to set the pace of a Petworth Society walk and Dave and Sue (not to mention Fred) had done well. Oh and there was something about fishing-rods, something to do with the headgear sported by Dave and the Chairman. Not in very good taste I thought.

P.

Byworth Bellringers

It were Byworth Bellringers annual Summer Holiday Outing. This year it was to be to Bognor Regis by the Sea.

The day dawned. A light mist over Shimmings meadows heralded a fine Summer day that would very likely be sunshine and hot weather, the right day to visit the seaside. By the time that they reached Bognor it was into the late morning. There seemed to be people, cars, lorries, 'buses everywhere, dashing hither and thither like there was no tommor! They wandered down to the beach. This seemed near full of beautiful young sun tanned ladies laying about, some of them hadn't got any bathin' costumes on .. t'were a grand sight, indeed. The sea looked marvellous. It was off with their boots, roll up the trousers and into the briny! .. good spot to look at the girls...

Time that they had a bit of lunch and a sit in the sun under the pavilion place. Alfred suddenly noticed that his friend had gone wandering off on his own. . "Ah well! hope he don't get up to mischief!" ... "I reckon I'll be off to that Fun Fair place, have a ride on the dodgems .. perhaps I can win a prize on the rifle range! Be nice to take 'ome .."

The day dragged enjoyably on .. another sit down in the pavilion, hot enough for forty winks, perhaps.

More and more people seemed to be dashing about. Cannot think what they all be doing .. but there, time seems to be gettin' on ...

He wandered back to the centre of the town. There was a fine looking policeman chap, conducting all that traffic, goin' in all directions as far as He could make out .. Dodging through the gaps in the cars ..

"Ave you seen the Byworth Bellringers?" The policeman gave him a superior glance, waving his arms the while ... "No Sir! ... and how might I reckonise this worthy group should I see them?" "He's wearing a 'at .. like mine!" "Ah! but Sir, you are not wearing a hat!" .. No cos 'E borrowed it when 'E went wanderin' orf at dinner time!" "Ah!" said the policeman, giving Alfred a superior stare, without the arm waving. "And what do you wish me to tell this august body in the event that I might see Them. Him?"

"Ah" said Alfred. "What time is it?" The policeman took out his notebook, took out his whistle, took out his watch. "Ten minutes to six o'clock, Sir!"

"Ah!" said Alfred .. "tell 'im 'E ad better get down to the 'bus station pretty quick, else we are goin' to miss the last 'bus back to Petworth and we will ave to walk 'ome!"

John Francis

A curious brand of elitism

You still hear people talking about the Petworth Festival as "elitist". We've done all we can to dispel this idea and I hope we're finally getting somewhere. I suppose it's a matter of forever working at it and never becoming complacent. It may be that there are people who just enjoy the "them and us" syndrome and are determined to see the Festival in terms of their own preconceptions regardless of any efforts we make.

For a start the Festival isn't expensive. The basic ticket price is £5. Think of £5 in terms of a London concert. Nor is the music outlandish or avant-garde. The orchestral music tends to be of the kind played on Radio 2 and Classic FM. Kenneth Alwyn's keynote concert in the Church on July 6th is light classical music with a good professional orchestra playing for the general public at a price that public can afford. Is that elitist? Only if you're playing about with the meaning of the adjective elitist. It's not "pop" certainly but does that make it elitist? Of course there are a few events with minority appeal, that's only sensible and an essential ingredient of any festival but such events are not the backbone of the Festival.

Let's have a look at this year's programme. The first concert is on Saturday lunchtime July 6th with a duo playing baroque music on mandolin and guitar in Duncton Roman Catholic Church. On this first Saturday and Sunday there is the West Sussex Record Office Roadshow in the Leconfield Hall, a local history exhibition in conjunction with the Petworth Society and the Petworth Cottage Museum and the Midhurst & Petworth Observer. The evening of the 6th sees Kenneth Alwyn in St Mary's with the famous Philomusica orchestra. On Sunday the 7th one of the world's great pianists, Bernard d'Ascoli plays Schumann and Chopin in St Mary's and there's the Kite Festival in Petworth Park, a day out for all the family. The Car Park is charged but entrance is free to pedestrians. Profits to charity. There's also a teddys' tea party, special guests Bearly Made It sky-Dive Squad and all sorts of extras, including model boats on the lake.

On Monday 8th the New Scorpion Band play popular dance and folk music of the last five hundred years on authentic instruments. It's in the Pleasure Grounds - bring a picnic if you like. On Tuesday Gabriel Woolf talks on the poetry of A. E. Housman. The festival is not simply about music. On Wednesday the tireless Peggy Syngé will lead a stroll through the Haslingbourne Valley to Fittleworth. The walk is free but optional tea at The Swan Fittleworth is not! Transport back to Petworth. Wednesday also sees trad jazz at The Cricketers, Duncton, with Ian MacLean and the Society Jazz Men. Tickets £1. On Thursday Hallam Murray is in the Leconfield Hall to talk of his travels with wife and infant son in Ecuador. On the Friday it's the turn of Bobby Wellins and his Jazz Quartet to play at the Leconfield Hall. He sold out last time he was here so be warned! Saturday sees a virtuoso organ recital by Evgenia Semeina, the thirteen year old Russian prodigy from St Petersburg who is on a European tour. On Friday the lively Brixton-based Pocket Opera Company perform favourite arias and ensembles in the Church. The traditional end of Festival Square Dance is in Market Square from 8pm. The band is the famous Bursledon Village Band. There is a Eucharist at St Mary's on the 7th of July and on the 14th a PACT Youth Service in the United Reformed Church and don't forget the Red Cross Gardens Walk on July 14th.

The essence of the Festival is that we're presenting events in Petworth that would not normally be viable simply because ticket prices would be astronomical. Professional orchestras and musicians are expensive and the Festival makes these available to those who either live in Petworth or are prepared to come to Petworth, at much less than the normal price and with a much greater intimacy.

How do we do it? We subsidise it. There are generous commercial sponsors who help us but there are also a host of smaller donors who help us, even as little as £5 perhaps. It all helps. We could not operate the Festival without such financial help. The Festival doesn't pay for itself. It won't and it probably wouldn't be doing its job if it did. That's just the whole point: events like these I have mentioned, put on in a restricted venue will always need to be subsidised. That's not the Festival's weakness, that's its strength. In a wider sense too, the Festival puts Petworth on the map. It's primarily for Petworth people but if it brings visitors into the town that's all to the good.

To finish on a personal note. I believe in Petworth Festival. I remember David Owen Norris putting on a performance of Holst's Planet Suite in St Mary's with a large ad hoc orchestra with many student musicians. They'd rehearsed it all day on the Sunday ready for the evening's breathless performance. No, it wasn't quite perfect but that was the whole point. It was raw and exciting. I'll never forget the sound it made, very loud, very daring and so much more lively than at a London concert hall, or I remember Beethoven's Choral Symphony, played to an absolutely packed church and received with a spontaneous standing ovation. That's what Petworth Festival means to me.

Tim Wardle was talking to the Editor. Tim is the Festival's Treasurer.

Petworth eighty years ago

I was born at Grove Street, Petworth on September 11th 1911, my grandparents had a iron-mongers shop in the High Street, Walter Stedmans. My father, at that time, was working at Otways. Soon after, my parents moved to Lancing and then to Worthing and my brother was born two years after me.

I remember, as we got a little older, our visits to Petworth, one being when World War I broke out and after my father was called up, my mother's allowance had not come through for months and she must have been really desperate for money and we went to our grandparents' at Petworth for some time until things improved and money came through.

After that we periodically visited Petworth and Fittleworth where my other grandparents lived at "The Terrace".

Upstairs in the house at Petworth a relative of my grandfathers had what we would term a bedsit and there was always a small bright fire going or a kettle on a trivet practically on the boil. There was a kettle holder worked in cross stitch by the fireside which said:

"Except the kettle boiling B, Wetting the teapot spoils the tea!"

I think she taught me how to read with that. When my son took me to Petworth I saw they have kept the little upper windows that I looked out from the window seat. In the centre of the room was a large four poster bed which always fascinated me, it was beautifully covered in red with an overlay of a white crochet bed spread, and with curtains to draw at night. It also had two steps up as it seemed very high with all those feathers to sink into. I never clambered up - didn't dare to, it looked like a throne. My mother told me her fiance drowned at sea and she never married.

When at Petworth one time, I didn't realise it but my grandmother who suffered with her heart was very ill and dying and they put straw down on the street so that the noise of the horses on the cobbles going up and down was muffled.

I also remember in the shop my grandfather had a tray of spectacles which I'm afraid I played with very often, then someone would come in and say, "I want a pair of spectacles, Walter," and would try them on until one pair suited and go away well pleased - what would opticians say today?

Next door were Mr and Mrs Tiplady, an aunt of my mother's who kept a sweetshop and made custardy ice cream of which I was very often the recipient. She was a little lady and always nice and bright, at least to me.

In Angel Street was Mr John Stedman, my grandfather's brother, the undertaker who made all the coffins. I remember them hanging on the wall outside the workshop. They lived next door to the Roman Catholic Church. He and his wife had one son, Frederick. He went into the army, also my mother's brother, Charles, and Reg Tiplady, they came back safely but Reg lost a leg. His sister was quite an accomplished pianist and when my uncles were home on leave they would give a family party. Singing Tipperary etc. I was allowed to stay up a little later, before being packed off to bed and then they would persuade my grandfather to sing "If those lips could only speak and those eyes could only see...." and so on. All very morbid I thought looking back.

I remember going to the Leconfield hunt on foot. Another older girl persuaded my mother to let me go. So, off we went with strict instructions not to paddle in the brooks. When I saw all the others discarding their shoes and stockings, off came mine. When mother questioned me I told a lie, but it worried me so much I owned up to it when I got home to Worthing. However, I can't remember being punished for it, too late I suppose. How we managed to get to the crucial moment at the finish of the hunt I just don't know but I remember Lord Leconfield bloodying a young girl with the fox's brush. Being a townie this was so new to me. I'm sure I slept well after all the excitement and fresh air.

My mother and father loved Petworth and Fittleworth, I did too. We always walked from Fittleworth to Petworth and though young legs were tired it was a lovely walk with ferns and sometimes hare bells and foxgloves on the way and just the hum of the bees.

Ruth Pierre



*Members of the Stedman and Tiplady families about 1912.
Photograph courtesy Mrs R. Pierre.*



George Garland. A cartoon from the 1930s by Harold Roberts.



Lord Leconfield. A cartoon by Harold Roberts (1933).



At Petworth Gymkhana 1935. Some of the faces are obvious, but not all.

An evening at the Cinema

The occasions of remembering occur more frequently in later life; easy to understand, for the days of youth and vitality are filled with the business of earning a living, with leisure interests, and of planning looking forward however unconsciously to a distant and seemingly endless future. This not unhappy state of affairs can continue for a while into retirement, until the inevitable slowing down occurs and casts the mind back into 'Remembrance of things Past'.

The last fifty years have seen changes greater, swifter and more far reaching than the centuries before; and of these changes Petworth has had its own very small share.

Not in its basic structure. The former Town Hall, now Leconfield Hall, firmly rooted in the Market Square, with the several narrow streets and awkward corners leading off, precludes that. It is the actual buildings, houses and shops, that have undergone changes in use, sometimes several times over, so that one day, one looks, sees and wonders, what was there before? What did it look like when I was a child? Then recollection comes gradually to mind.

Every street in this small ancient town has undergone some such alteration. In a previous article I described the difference in 'David's' in the Market Square, formerly Eager Bros, but it is the opposite and western side that has seen the greatest transformation.

Once 'The Swan' was a good class hotel. Its Public Bar had a separate outside entrance opposite the Town Hall. All that has now been swept away, and a small arcade comprising the Post Office and a gift shop has taken its place, while the remaining interior has been divided into several antique and fine art shops with flats on the upper floor.

It is all within the former environs and quite tastefully done, but a totally different scene for anyone visiting after a long absence.

Also, part of that former interior on the upper floor was the ballroom. This too had an outside entrance at the top of a flight of steps near the Public Bar. The steps are still there, but re-positioned - and the ballroom is now an antiques showroom.

The ballroom has nostalgic memories for those of us who grew up here, for in those far off days of childhood, it was something very different; and only those of my generation, having lived here as children would be likely to remember. We are told on TV and in the papers that this year 1996 is the centenary of the cinema and Petworth cinema sometime in the 1920's took place in the Swan Hotel ballroom.

Who ran it I don't know, whether in regular, or only occasional use I can't remember, or even how often - but those were the days of black and white and silent films.

It would all seem very primitive if shown again today - but then how different! Although at school, we were growing up and to us the 'Pictures' were exciting and glamorous. It wasn't long before, to our delight, a new albeit mundane but purpose built cinema was put up at the bottom of Pound Street behind the garage and adjacent to the bottom of South Lane.

The memories come crowding in. Free from school on Saturdays, several of us in the afternoon would gather outside the somewhat flimsy box office, clutching our sixpences, the price of admission, with maybe a few extra pennies for sweets or crisps. Films would only

be shown if there were sufficient prospective audience, I think the minimum number was twelve. There were rarely too few, and how we enjoyed it - especially the serials, which always left off at a real cliff hanger leaving us all agog until the following Saturday to wonder if, the Hero, having been firmly tied down in the path of an oncoming train, would be rescued in time, or the Heroine, lost in the jungle, would be found before the prowling leopard reached her! Such excitement! The only sound was the piano, played by a competent pianist, on whom depended the entire success of the atmosphere.

Suiting the melodies to the dramas being enacted on the screen, they would be soft, smooth and romantic for tender scenes, rapid crescendo for moments of intense excitement, or solemn crashing chords for those of fear and danger! It was really very clever. I, being taught the piano at that time, hoped I would be able to model my playing on the performance of that maestro!

Films were shown every evening, the main feature being changed at mid-week. My mother and I would go together, usually once a week. Seats then cost (in pre-decimal currency) ninepence, one shilling and threepence, or one shilling and ninepence. We would have to wrap up warmly in winter, for the heating was minimal, our feet would get stone cold, but we would not have missed it for anything.

There was a heightened sense of anticipation - an almost magical air of mystery and romance about those old silent films, and when the 'Talkies' first arrived, the audiences were handed a paper on leaving the cinema and asked to 'vote' for their preference, by ticking either the silent or talking space indicated. I remember thinking that talking would spoil it all, and marked my paper accordingly. However, voices won! How could they not? Since which time, sophisticated sound has reached astonishing and deafening levels. Even the youngest of us will not be here, but, one wonders what the next one hundred years have in store!

Then, sometime in the early thirties, our new 'proper' cinema was built near the bottom of the Midhurst road. It was real luxury compared to the former somewhat makeshift one, and was enjoyed by all for years. It is alas, no more, TV took over, and it eventually became the Youth Centre and swimming pool.

After being redundant as a cinema, the Swan ballroom reverted to its proper purpose, and dances were held there on many occasions. We all loved to dance and having reached age sixteen or thereabouts, were allowed to go, in two's or threes and little groups.

The Town Hall also had a ballroom with a good dance floor, and would be used for slightly grander occasions such as the annual Police Ball, or a New Year dance. At the latter, on the stroke of midnight, we would all dash downstairs and outside, to join hands in a large circle round the building and singing 'Auld Lang Syne'.

Dancing in those days did require some footwork, unlike the present day jigging about on a miniscule circle of floor! It was all great fun, and continued until the outbreak of World War II. There was still the cinema, and dancing in the old Iron Room (another bygone) and then with a large military attendance. But all that is another story!

Marjorie Alix

Kirdford Schooldays

I was born at Pound Common, Kirdford, in 1914 and I started school at Kirdford when I was four. In the old days the village seemed to belong to me: I knew everyone and I could go where I liked. We never missed school: my brother had got a medal for not missing a day for the whole year and we were expected to do the same. I remember hearing how when the family lived at Balls Cross before I was born, my brother Matt hid in a caravan to avoid going to school and Mr. Goodacre the schoolmaster came looking for him, armed with his stick. No, he didn't go to Ebernoe School, he walked into Kirdford. Once I went to Loxwood Fair instead of going to school, walking over the fields from Kirdford, Hollands Heath, Fountains, Dounhurst, Wephurst and then with a lift on my brothers motor-bike and side-car to Loxwood. The fair was effectively two fairs: an animal and a pleasure fair. It seemed big to me at the time but I don't think it could have been because it was right outside the pub, and looking at it now there doesn't seem to be any room. Next day at school I was told to sit at the bottom of the form. Parents were there I remember - perhaps it was May Day.

You never spoke in school. If you wanted to go to the toilet or have a drink of water you put your hand up. In the latter case you were given an enamel mug to get the water from a pump in the middle of the playing field. You handed it back of course, there being only the one. The teachers at this time were the two Misses Blight who lived at Black Bear. The younger was Headmistress and there was another teacher for the infants. You had the same teachers until you left school at fourteen. I was caught talking once and was sent to sit with the infants and do my knitting. I was so put out I pulled the needles out and unpicked it all. On another occasion however I knitted a jumper at school and I can remember the headmistress coming up to me and patting my shoulder and saying "very good". That really made my day. If you were caught talking you had a big tongue made out of pink blotting paper and you had to wear it like a bib and stand in the front for all the class to see you were a chatterbox.

When I was in the infants we had an open fire and I was told to clear the fireplace out after the summer, ready to get it lit up for the winter. There was a mouse in a nest in the rubbish. I picked it up and took it to the teacher but it bit me on the way. She just said, "Take it out and put it in the hedge". I was only four or five at the time. The school was mixed of course and you sat with the boys. You kept the same desk from when you came into the seniors until you left.

My sister "Mild" was away working at Whites in Guildford and she bought us for Easter a china egg with a little egg in it. We used the china egg at breakfast time with a real egg in it. We kept chicken on the common, letting them run loose during the day but shutting them up at night for fear of the foxes. I've still got the egg cup. Another sister, Win, emigrated to Canada when I was six and sent us a box of chocolate cockerels. We weren't allowed to eat them but they were put on the mantelpiece. I remember they were dark chocolate with vivid red beaks. Mild was a milliner and made us a new hat each every year; my Mum's drawers were crammed with all sorts of bits of material like cherries and flowers. Mild had to live in at Whites and only got a weekend off occasionally. Then she would bicycle home.

We always went to Kirdford church at six o'clock of a Sunday evening. Mrs. Pennicard would go with us. That was when I was very young. When I was a little older and living with my auntie at Plaistow it was morning service. I remember once I'd lost my hat so that I wasn't allowed to go. We found it in the garden later. We always felt Plaistow was rather more elite than working-class Kirdford but that may have been because my aunt had a certain social status at Plaistow. When we came home from church one of her tenants had cooked our dinner and brought it in from four doors away. Her name was Mrs. Ayling.

From notes made of Mary Lentner talking to Audrey Grimwood

Westlands Farm in the 1950's

Ralph ette Westlande, was at Westlands in 1296: the farm lying in a secluded hollow, half a mile north of Fox Hill. How familiar the old place is to me, its quaint stone cowsheds and huge tythe barn, grouped together, to enclose the yard; where once the dairy herd lingered for their turn to yield the twice daily milk quota. The old farm was where I first worked on leaving school in the late years of the 1950's.

Algie Moss, who farmed the land, was one of the old breed; a farming gentleman; a countryman to the core, who refused to give up the old methods of farming, believing they were the best. He detested the use of modern fertilizers, choosing instead the old fashioned way of enriching the soil, by using good 'old fashioned manure', spread about the fields by his men. He preferred to milk the cows by hand, and always used an archaic binder to cut the corn.

The machine would chatter incessantly round the field, pulled by an old petrol driven Ford Standard. Algie, always in the driving seat, would sporadically draw the rickety contraption to a halt to alter the cut of the blade or rethread the twine. Half a dozen laps would ensure a sufficient number of sheaves lay in rows to begin stooking. It was a labour that by the end of each day took its toll on bare arms, the thistle infested bundles having scored the flesh raw.

Yet, how fond my memories are of those days, - the splashes of scarlet poppies amidst the nodding corn. The stray straws caught by a warm breeze, rising in a flurry in the summer vortex and lifting the chaff swirling high in its vacuum. The whole air so wonderfully fragrant, full of country scents that are as old as time. Cold black tea, and cheese sandwiches snatched under the shade of a tree during the briefness of a midday break. The oaks that form those noble canopies, looking, as you lie under them, of a strong and emulous green against the blue sky. The last cut of the binder, when the fading light turns crimson over the brow of distant hills; and that tired yet peaceful feeling that comes over you, when another day is done.

The old style wagons were used to bring home the harvest; each one, lumbering in at regular intervals throughout the day, laden precariously to the hilt. We were always glad to see the 'last load' of the season; since old Algie always brought out a bottle or two of stout for the men to sup on this occasion.

The short, and often wet days of winter, hold perhaps, less fond memories, for a change of clothes, and drying facilities, were practically non-existent. How often have I endured the constant wet while working at 'Westlands'? Rising at four o'clock for early milking, I would make my way down the dark and sodden lane, where overhanging trees incessantly dripped from overnight downpours. The dense canopy, in addition, acting as a shield against any moonlight; during which, when without a torch, the land had to be blindly negotiated; each step presupposing a familiarity with the route. The drenching day would pass with clothes that clung to the body. The dismal trudge home of an evening, was a replica of the morning. On entering my lodgings, I would draw up to the fire, and vacantly eye the rising steam that evaporated from the clothes I wore. A sparse meal, never too long in arriving, was followed an hour or two later, by the routine candlelit trudge up the stairs, to the greater comfort of bed.

The little cottage in which I lived, was situated on the crest of Fox Hill, rather remote in the way it nestled in deep woodland. It was the end one of a terrace of three; two of which were derelict. There were no facilities for a bath, no convenient hot water, and no electricity; yet the old couple, Mr and Mrs. White, who rented the place, managed to survive in their strange and old fashioned way. The husband, in his late sixties, was a short stocky and rather jovial man, yet of simple mind, typical of the 'old country' labourers. His wife, of similar age, was white haired, and very thin, with sharp features.

She would scurry about the kitchen, wrapped up in her own private mutterings, giving those who did not know her the impression that age had affected her mind. Yet I came to know otherwise. For she had a deep knowledge of old country cures, that in her kind old way came out when most required. Like the time I had several warts that covered my hands. Her remedy, she told me, in her rather high pitched voice was to, - "Go out in the garden, turn over a few large stones, till I found a white slug. Then rub it over the ailment. Don't tell anyone; and don't wash the slime off." I carried out her instructions and within a week or two they had disappeared.

The cottage was never really warm, even in the summer months; no doubt the bare flagstone floor contributed to the discomfort, while the old woman's habit of daily scrubbing it, left pools of water swimming on the uneven surface, which did not improve matters. How I shivered on chill evenings while my elderly companions in the house, who had suffered such conditions for years, appeared not to notice the cold. Their slender means, did not allow them to move to kinder premises; so they remained in the dwelling, as if locked in a period more befitting the Victorian era.

The rent I paid for my lodgings, was a mere pittance; boosted a little perhaps by the daily allowance of one quart of milk, which I carried up the cottage in a traditional blue enamelled container; the old woman being as pleased as punch with the quota. For she would allow it to rest until the cream had settled, then skim the clotted curd, place it in an empty treacle tin, and vigorously shake it until the contents turned to butter. The resulting produce, as I recall, was quite delicious.

Old George White, although a countryman, strangely, never kept up the garden. It was always a mass of briars, with years of growth that had climbed up and over the brick shed and outside toilet, blocking all access to the rear plot. Perhaps he considered the beauty of the

woods his garden; for they were host to a profusion of wild daffodils and primroses during the spring.

How different it is today; the three cottages knocked into one and caringly restored, along with the gardens, now a single, well cultivated plot. Flowering shrubs and lush sweeping lawns having matured considerably since Algie Moss retired in 1974; the place being then sold, along with other tenements, and his beloved "Westlands Farm".

The once busy sounds about the old farm buildings are gone, an eerie silence lingers; sporadically broken by the shudder of a barn door, caught by the wind, or the groaning eaves in the cowshed. No more can the distinct rhythm of milk drawn from the cow be heard, flowing and filling the dairyman's pail. The clang of buckets, or the busy clatter of churns; the earthy voices of the men who frequently persuaded stubborn beasts to 'be still' or 'move over old girl', in the process of milking. The bustle of rural employment has long ceased. The neglect of buildings that overlooked through overwork, now decay through idleness.

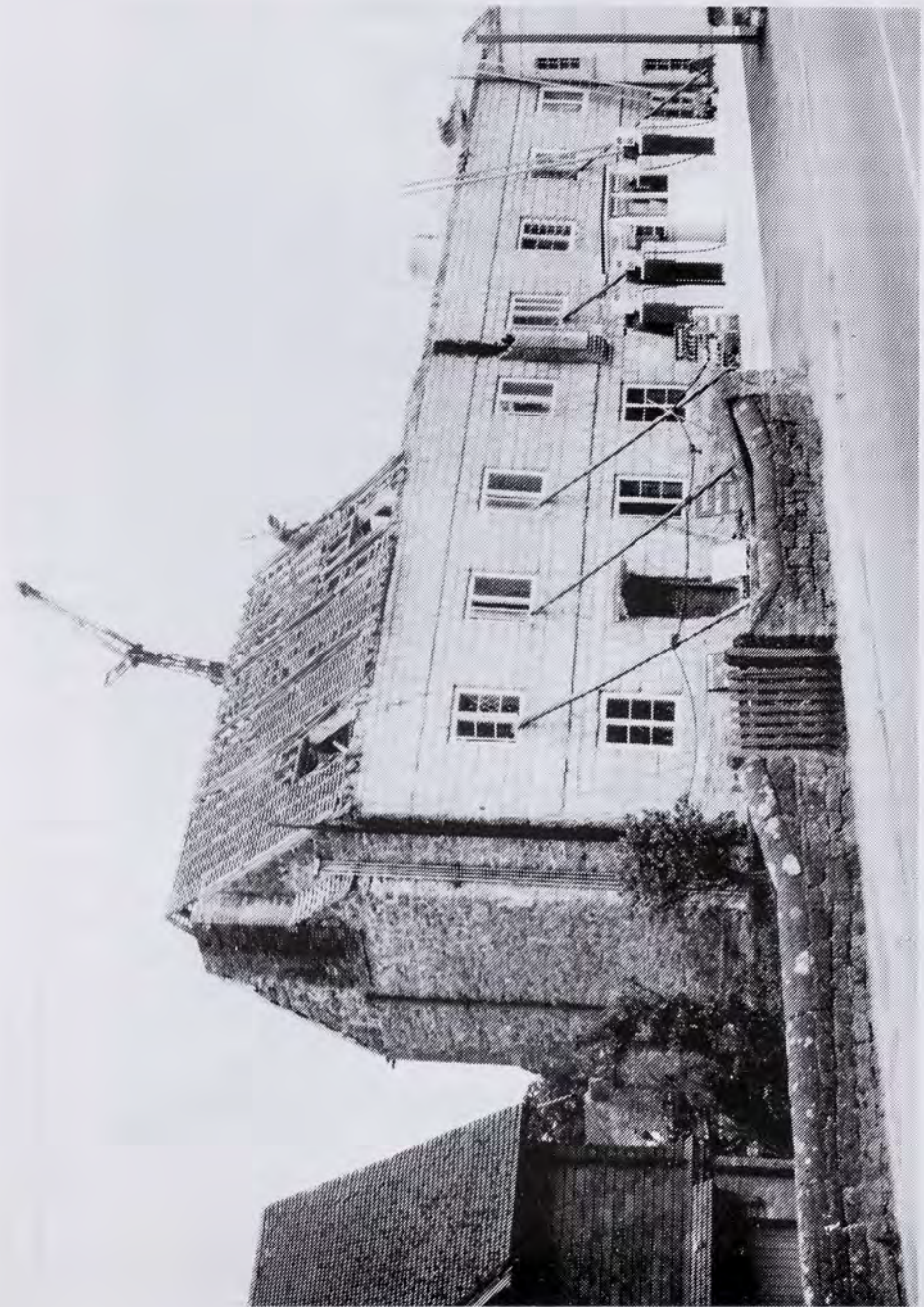
David Johnston

The Quintessential Petworth Cartoonist

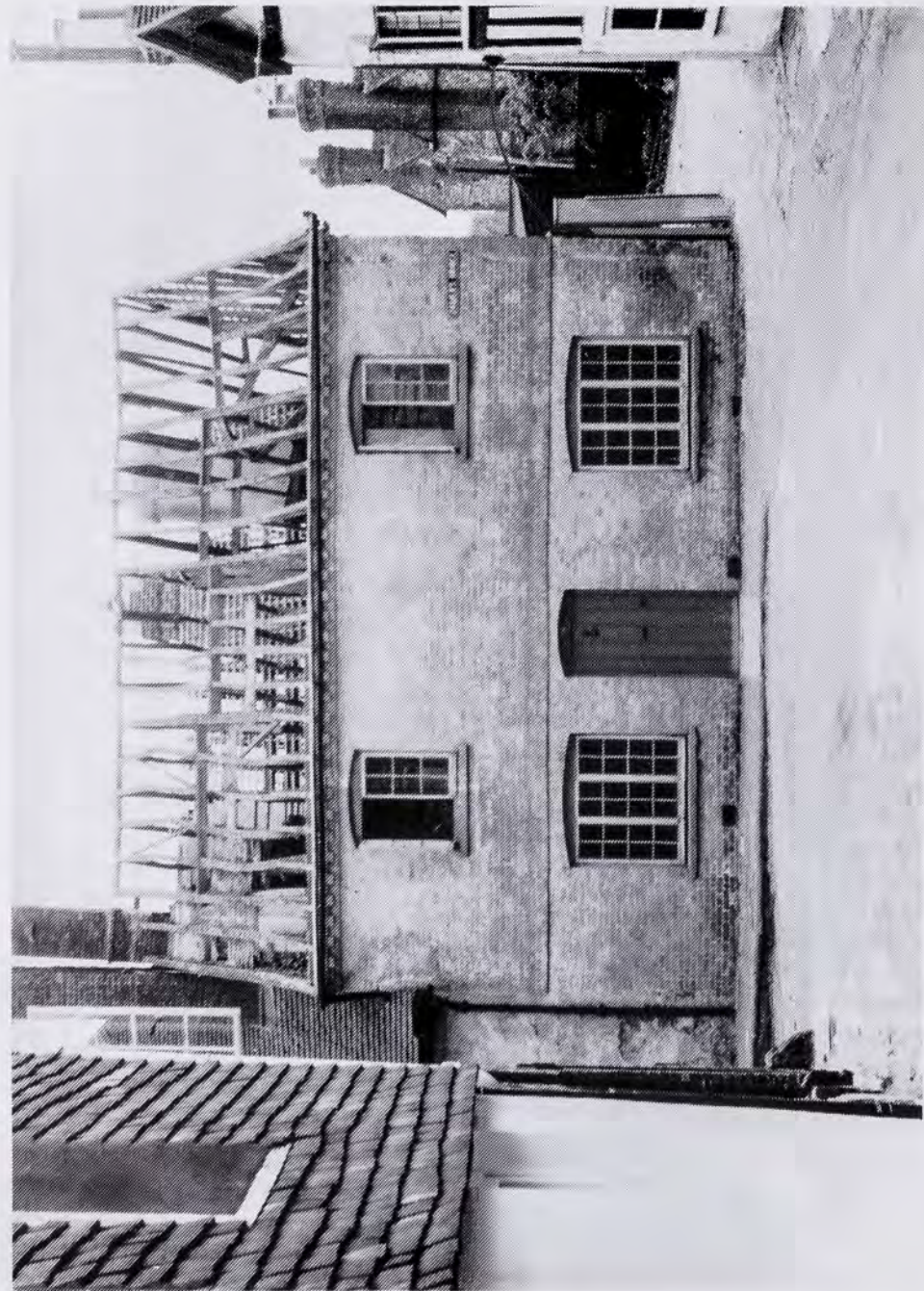
My father's cartoons and drawing appear in this Magazine from time to time and although some older members will remember him working at Newlands between the wars, he did not return to Newlands after the war and, living as he did at Wisborough Green, was much less in Petworth in later years. He died in 1956.

Harold Roberts was born in 1892. His parents were of an academic turn of mind and his father, John Major Roberts, came originally from Morley near Leeds. My grandmother too was from Yorkshire. John Major Roberts was by all accounts a very proficient teacher and became head of a school at Finchley in London. I don't really know what kind of school it was, but my grandparents appear to have been successful in their chosen field. The turn of the century was however a great age of emigration to the new world, whether to the Dominions like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, or to the United States. For some reason John Major Roberts elected to give up his position in Finchley and uproot to Canada, taking his young family with him. My father was the youngest of five and probably a boy of eight or more at the time, he had two brothers and two sisters. All the children except Harold would pursue academic careers of some kind or other in Canada in later years, but for the present they settled in an isolated farm within striking distance of Saskatoon.

Whether the upheaval of going to Canada upset my father or whether he had a sense of adventure and mischief that the rest of the family had not inherited I do not know, but he found it very difficult to settle. To put it bluntly he seems to have been considered a little wild. Certainly he was a precocious artist: I have a drawing of three men, dated 1903, when he was just eleven which shows considerable maturity for someone of that age. In fact when he left school he could always pick up work as a draughtsman, and a very good one he was too. When



*The changing face of Petworth.
1) Demolition of the old workhouse building in the late 1950s.
Photograph by Tony Whitcomb.*



2) Demolishing house in Damer's Bridge to make way for the Car Park 1950s.
Photograph by Tony Whitcomb.

he felt like it, and was in town, he might even work for a commercial studio in Saskatoon. Usually however he was in more adventurous mode, travelling in Canada and the United States, on horseback perhaps or riding freight cars. My grandparents sometimes went months, even years, without the faintest idea of where he was. In later years he used to talk about this period and so did they! I expect he coloured his experiences a little, but they were probably fairly colourful anyway. He would talk of the large gangs of Chinese labourers working on the railway and how he'd scrape a little keep money by drawing instant portraits. A useful addition to his repertoire was an ability to play the accordion. Very occasionally he'd come back to the farmstead but all too soon he'd be off again. Curiously, his over-riding ambition was to join the North West Mounted Police but he could never make it. Quite simply he was too short. As he was somewhat debonair both in dress and manner he acquired the nickname "Dinkee", a name that he frequently used as a pseudonym in his early work, although he dropped it almost entirely in later years. His brothers and sisters probably found Harold's attitude a little disconcerting: of his brothers, Scarfe was a mathematician and a farmer, the other, Luther, organist at the principal church in Vancouver and a Doctor of Music. The two sisters became teachers in Canada.

When war was declared in 1914 my father was 22 and at a turning-point. From this time his life would take on a new direction. He enlisted immediately in the Royal Canadian Mounted Rifles and was among the first Canadian troops to land in France. The Canadians were however disconcerted to find that, despite their gleaming spurs and polished rifles, time had passed the cavalry by. My father ended up not charging into action on horseback, but in the trenches as a member of a Field Ambulance unit, right up at the front line and entrusted with the task of bringing the wounded out. Whatever his earlier somewhat erratic behaviour, now was no time to be erratic. Harold Roberts was promoted to sergeant and went through all the major offensives like Paschendaele and Vimy Ridge. Such experiences could not but make him to some extent a changed man.

His perilous career in the trenches was cut short not through being wounded but through contracting double pneumonia. He was sent back to England and hospitalised at Bramshott Convalescent Camp in Surrey. It was here that he met my mother who was working as a nurse. My mother's parents, the Carns, farmed at Medhone, off Fox Hill, and were a long-established Sussex family. They had farmed at Bedham too and my mother was the eldest of a large family. Married at Petworth in 1917, my father stayed on in England as a P.T. Instructor but when the war ended decided to take his new wife back to Canada with him. There was a good offer of prairie land open to ex-servicemen, and he was allotted a holding relatively near his parents. It didn't work out: my mother found the winters horrific and probably agriculture was not my father's metier. After two winters he gave up the struggle and returned to England. At first he stayed with his in-laws at Medhone. It would be 1920, 1921 perhaps. I was of course very young but can vaguely remember coming back to England on the liner and one of the passengers having a black bear cub which he walked about on the deck on a lead, just like a dog.

My father decided to try to make a living as a freelance artist, not an easy thing to do at any time but even more difficult in those austere years after 1918. We moved about quite

a bit in those early days, rented rooms and similar accommodation in East Sussex. My father produced a large number of cartoons for the *Sussex County Herald*, circulating in East Sussex and on the Kent border, largely relating to agricultural controversies of the day. They survive, or some of them do, as browning newspaper cuttings in a scrap-book. As my father submitted the original cartoons for publication they were never returned. I don't imagine he was particularly well paid for them. I can, I think, remember Brede Manor and my mother taking me through the gardens. We moved several times but finally back to Amberley. I would be perhaps four at the time. We lived in Orchard Cottage, situated as the name implies in the middle of an orchard. I know I threw apples across to the schoolchildren, I wasn't at school yet myself. From Amberley we moved to Kirdford, my father still endeavouring to make enough by his drawing to get by: it can't have been easy. His forte was drawings with a humorous bent: those that survive have a great life about them but it is very difficult to think back into the forgotten controversies that they satirise. I suppose that is the general lot of cartoonists. We lived for a time in some rooms at the back of the Foresters Arms at Kirdford, approached by stairs at the rear. I remember it extremely well; the rooms being above a kind of rough outhouse for carts and carriages. Leading from the public bar at the Foresters was a metal tunnel which was used as a rifle range. The idea was that you would stand in the public bar and use the range at the same time. If you scored a bullseye a bell rang.

We remained some time at Kirdford and I went to school there but my father was finding it difficult to keep up the ideal of living by art alone; it was increasingly clear that he needed a secondary source of income. He began to work at home for the Inland Revenue. He had a good knowledge of taxation matters and was in great demand to fill in people's tax returns. Every evening, or so it seemed, someone would be at home with a tax return to fill in. My father would help them and charge a small fee. Logically enough, after a while he took a job in the Rating Office for the old Petworth R.D.C. at Newlands in Pound Street and went on working there until 1940. It was at this time in the 1930s that he became an integral part of the Petworth scene, and from this period that his best known cartoons and caricatures of Petworth people come. Some figures like George Garland, Lord Leconfield or Mr. Pitfield are instantly recognisable, the identity of others seems to have been lost.

From Kirdford we walked every Sunday to Box Cottage, Balls Cross to see my Carn grandparents and have lunch with them. When Mr. Carn died, some money left to my mother was enough to enable my parents to buy a plot of land fronting the road at Wisborough Green and build a bungalow. It was the first such home along the road although Andrew Smith's son-in-law had a kind of yard where he lived in a curious circular corrugated iron building. He was a tall thin man who went round collecting scrap with a horse and cart. Andrew Smith was often in the road with his distinctive black bowler or "blocker" hat. He invariably dressed all in black and my father sometimes drew cartoons of him, the captions reflecting the curious sing-song drawl that was characteristic of Andrew. The road at that time was of granite chips rolled with a steam-roller and filled in with marl and water. It became terribly dusty if it dried out in summer. The road from Skiff Farm to Loxwood had grass growing up the centre at this time and each side of the road was home to colonies of yellow-hammers.

About this time my father bought his first car, a blue Trojan which came from

Mr. Gravely at Wisborough Green. It had a lever you pulled at the front to start it. The car gave us a lot more freedom and we would go out most weekends to visit the Carn relations. We were often at Mill Park, Shillinglee and Shonks Farm at Northchapel.

Once we were settled in at Wisborough Green, my father began to work as hard as ever at his drawing, even though he was working at Newlands all day. It was again largely cartoon work, or country scenes for the *West Sussex Gazette*. Occasionally he'd have a cartoon in the *Farmer and Stockbreeder*; it may be that George Garland introduced him to this particular magazine, he regularly contributed photographs to it. My father knew Garland well and often featured him in cartoons.

By this time George Wakeford had had a bungalow put up next to ours, and even at this time was well-known as a bee-keeper. He had a huge number of hives out at the back and also rented a field which he used as a chicken farm. By occupation however George was a timber feller, travelling around with the Peacock family with the three battered black Austin saloons that housed their gear. Sometimes George took me with them tree-felling. It was my job to help burn up the frith, the small stuff lopped off when the timber was cut, they were still using the old cross-cut saw then. George was very much a part of my education: he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of nature which he was ready to pass on, and if I couldn't go on a tree-felling expedition, he'd be sure to bring me back something to think about, a goat-moth caterpillar, anything that was a talking point. With my father full-time at Newlands but still as keen on drawing as ever, we'd sit round the table, my father, my younger brother Luther and myself and draw, we did this most evenings. Eventually I left school and worked gardening for a while until I won a scholarship to study at Worthing Art College. My desire was to attend the Royal College of Art. It would be six years before I actually won an exhibition to study there.

My father was still relatively young in 1940 and he stopped working at Newlands in order to become a drill and arms instructor for the Home Guard. Eventually he became an R.S.M. and responsible for all Home Guard training in the area. He had a specially painted Morris staff car and looked very smart in his uniform. When the war ended he went drawing and painting with Mr. Powell, President of the Society of Sussex Painters of which organisation he became Secretary. The two of them went round making water-colours of mills and farms. Sometimes his drawings were featured in the *West Sussex Gazette*. As I said at the beginning, my father died in 1956; he did not return to work at Newlands after the war.

Bevil Roberts was talking to the Editor

Gleanings from The West Sussex Gazette 1869-1882

While looking through the files of the *West Sussex Gazette* at the West Sussex Record Office

I found these interesting sidelights on Petworth life over a century ago. Sometimes the headings are original, sometimes I have put them in. Up until January 1878 the *Gazette* correspondent was William Death, the New Street auctioneer, after that it was Walter Buckman clerk to Mr. Brydene the Market Square solicitor.

Peter

30th December 1869 *A Runaway Team*

On Friday last a team of horses started off at full speed from the turnpike gate and came up the North Street along East Street and turned the corner by the White Hart and continued their career to beyond New Grove, where they were stopped, the only damage sustained being the breakage of one of the traces. The team belonged to Mr. Matthews of Mitchell Park. It was wonderful their turning the corner at the White Hart without doing any damage, and it was fortunate, from the early hour of the morning (about seven) that there were no children in the streets.

16th June 1870 *A Jackdaws' Parliament*

On Monday morning, about three o'clock, a large flock of Jackdaws settled in the market-place, and so great was the screeching and noise they made that several persons were awoken out of sleep. After strutting about and fighting in the market-place for some time, they winged their way to some other locality.

29th September 1870 *Aurora Borealis*

The "northern lights" were so brilliant on Saturday evening about ten o'clock that it was thought by many that there was a large conflagration in the neighbourhood. An alarm of fire had been given, and some of the brigade men had donned their uniform before it was found out what caused the brilliancy in the heavens. We understand that at twelve o'clock the aurora was even more brilliant and beautiful than in the earlier part of the evening.

29th December 1870 *An Eccentric Lecturer*

Mr. William Lovell lectured on "Society - Good, Bad and Indifferent" before the members of the Working Men's Institute on Tuesday evening. The attendance was very small, which seemed to annoy the lecturer; for he remarked that if the bills which he saw in the hands of the audience had been put into shop windows instead of into their hands, he should have had a much larger audience - rather a rude (and certainly uncalled-for) censure. Another of his rude remarks was, when someone came in rather late, and people looked round, he told the ladies they need not turn their heads every time a person came in, as he would inform them when a good looking young man came into the room - but perhaps this was done to illustrate the "bad" part of his subject; it certainly was not in very good taste.

12th January 1871 *The Weather*

During the last week there have been a great many persons on the large pond in the park skating and sliding until the thaw on Saturday deterred many from going on, though a few of the more venturesome ones continued their enjoyment. Happily there has been no accident attending this healthy recreation...

30th March 1871 *An Unusual Occurrence*

On Friday last a swarm of bees settled on a post in a garden near the prison. A person hived them but they did not remain. We do not recollect ever hearing of so early a swarm.

6th March 1871 *In a Fix*

"We're in a pickle," said a man in a crowd. "A regular jam," said another. "Heaven preserve us," moaned an old lady.

13th March 1873 *Helmets for the Police*

Our police came out in helmets on Sunday, a great improvement on the old "chimney pot".

17th April 1873 *Spring Time*

The nightingale was heard near the town on Tuesday morning. The cuckoo was heard on Monday, we believe for the first time this year.

22nd May 1873 *The Tillington Road*

We never saw it in so bad a state of repair before, the footway being worked into holes down to the foundations, so that it has become dangerous to walk on it, and the side of the road is made the receptacle of cartloads of rubbish, broken tiles, old bricks, broken bottles, old tin kettles and other refuse. Our rates come high enough to allow of this road being in a better state of repair.

7th August 1873 *Goodwood Races*

We never remember this town being so full in the Goodwood race week as in the late one. Mr. Dempster had both the Swan and the Half Moon full, and in the evenings the town put on quite a spirit of liveliness. The band of the 6th Sussex R. U. played each evening opposite the Half Moon Inn.

31st December 1874 *The Weather*

Those fond of skating have been enabled to enjoy themselves on the lake in Petworth Park.

23rd November 1876 *Otters*

Two fine otters, each measuring nearly 4ft in length were recently killed in the neighbourhood of Burton. They have been admirably preserved by Mr. J. Peacock. Mr. Peacock has also in his possession a "white sparrow" which was shot at High Hoes a few days since.

27th June 1878 *Wombwell's Menagerie*

This well-known menagerie paid a visit here on Thursday last when it attracted a great many visitors. The collection of wild beasts was very good and they looked to be in prime condition. The band belonging to the menagerie played some excellent music.

15th April 1880 *Ginnett's Circus*

This celebrated troupe paid our town a visit on Wednesday the 7th Inst and gave two performances to a numerous company of spectators. The performances on the whole were very good, the most attractive parts being the elephants which were well trained, the walking on the invisible wire and the renowned Zazel (as the posters stated) fired from a cannon.

12th August 1880 *The Lancers*

A detachment of the 16th Lancers, consisting of about eighty men and ninety horses were billeted here on Tuesday night, being on their way to Woolwich from Portsmouth.

6th October 1881 *An Anecdote of Turner*

Lord Egremont once invited Turner to stay a week at Petworth and paint two pictures for him of some favourite bits of scenery on the estate. On the first morning of his visit, Lord Leconfield asked Turner what he should like to do and the great man replied that he would

go fishing. The next morning at breakfast Lord Egremont enquired again what it would please Mr. Turner to do; and he replied that having enjoyed himself so much on the previous day he would go fishing again. On the third morning Lord Egremont thought he would wait for Turner to announce his own plan and was quietly amused when he saw he was again going fishing. On the fourth morning Lord Egremont, unable to conceal his anxiety, said, "Well, Mr. Turner, I was only too glad for you to enjoy yourself, but you are going away tomorrow, and I feel anxious about the pictures." "Come upstairs to my room," said Turner "and set your mind at rest". Nothing could exceed the surprise and delight of Lord Egremont when Turner introduced him to two exquisite pictures painted as he had desired. The great man had risen early each morning with the sun and before breakfast had by close application earned his pleasure in fishing.

10th November 1881 *Guy Fawkes Day*

The fifth of November was very quiet indeed, the only thing being two or three effigies carried about the town, and a few fireworks let off in different places during the evening.

28th December 1882 *Carol-singers*

Most of the adult members of Petworth Church Choir gave some carol-singing on Christmas Eve. Starting after supper at Mr. Spring's house (the supper being kindly provided by Mrs. Holland), they proceeded to Petworth House, the Rectory and most of the principal houses and streets in the town. The carols sung were "Christus natus", "Good King Wenceslas", "Good Christian men rejoice", "The glorious song of old", "Bethlehem" and "Shades of Silent Night". The inhabitants much appreciated the endeavours of the choir, and we hope the midnight carol-singing will be repeated another year. Mr. Spring conducted the choir.

A conversation with Helen Zetter of the Doll House Museum, Petworth

How did I start with Doll Houses? Oh, everyone asks me that. There are many reasons but for now let's just say that I was lucky. Do I like Petworth? Well, that's something I *will* answer. Certainly I do, we're very happy to have the Museum here. Mind you, I'd rather Petworth didn't close up for lunch. We find people come here simply because there's nowhere else to go. Not the best of reasons I'll admit but once they're in here they're almost invariably glad they've come. I don't suppose the Petworth lunchtime will change, it's an idiosyncrasy we have to get used to. We stagger our lunch breaks at the Museum but, as you say, if you're operating as a one-man business it's difficult. The lorries are another thing. I'm very much in favour of the proposed ban from the town's point of view: the lorries are a nightmare for anyone who lives or works in Petworth. It probably wouldn't make much difference to the Museum itself; if people are set on coming here the odd lorry isn't going to deter them. The lorries affect the quality of life for those who live and work in Petworth, not so much those who come to visit and then go off again.

What sort of people do we get as visitors? Well, in a word, everyone. We've been open normal hours since March, that is Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, but before that we were open Sundays only in January and February: remember that we won't have completed a full year until early summer. Winter opening was a revelation: we were very busy. I think the people who came to Petworth were simply pleased to find somewhere open. If you like, some come to the Museum for the "wrong" reasons ie for want of something else to see. That doesn't worry us at all, we're confident enough in what we have here. Or, put it another way, whatever their preconceptions may have been, once they're in, they're usually hooked; it's not like anything they've seen before. People can come in the morning, go out for lunch, then come back for the afternoon and go away saying they'll be back. "Second visit, still have not seen it all, must come again," is a not untypical entry in the Visitors' Book. Don't assume that we're only talking casual visitors: we have coach loads of miniaturists coming just to see the Museum. York, Leeds, Norfolk, New York, Paris, Tokyo, they come from all over the place. And they bring trade into the town. Curiously children are less inclined to linger than adults: they haven't such a long attention span and they like something that's "hands on" - something they can touch. Well we can't do anything about that, we have to protect the houses and the myriad figures that inhabit them. Fencing posts and rails are used; simpler than plexi glass and probably giving a greater intimacy. The eye contact with the exhibits is simply over a short distance, not through a different medium.

What do people expect? I think they expect a collection of antique doll houses, with the implied expectation that everything will be prim and proper with anodyne, aseptic porcelain dolls. It's not like that: the figures may sometimes have a grotesque appearance but they never lose contact with ordinary life, warts and all. There is even the occasional "apple-head", a tiny dried wizened apple used as a head. They're not handsome but they're very effective. No they don't deteriorate, just go darker with age. Two little children were heard talking and one pointed to an apple-head and said, "I wouldn't want to sit next to him".

Unique is a much misused word and I'd be chary of using it in connection with the Museum but it is certainly difficult to think of a parallel. The Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood has six or seven older houses but isn't really like our Museum. The problem is that a collection of antique doll houses, even if you could muster it, would end up merely as a series of very similar variations on an identical theme, something that would appeal only to the rare connoisseur. Here we're aiming not only to please the connoisseur but also to share the doll house experience with a wider world, to proselytise if you like, spread the message that doll houses are fun, encourage people to try their had themselves, but also simply to give enjoyment to people who'd never dream of having their own doll house. The Museum isn't just a collection of doll houses; anyone can do that if you can find a hundred houses and the requisite space: it's still not a living thing, you have to breathe life into it. After all a doll house to start with is nothing more than an empty box, made to a certain shape and either ready-constructed or bought as a kit. Some of ours are made to particular specifications but not all. Take this one here. Alright, it looks like something connected with railways, a signal box perhaps with steps leading up at the left. It needs painting and it needs figures and it's the painting and the figures that will give it an independent life of its own. The empty box that is the first stage

of a doll house is a springboard into the unknown. It's like a work of art in that an idea will govern the eventual work. It might be to do with the railway, but that's just the whole point. It doesn't have to be what you expect. That's the challenge. No. I'm not telling you what my ideas for it are, only that because it looks like a railway building it doesn't have to be one. What about squatters say? Look at the possibilities there. Punks and dropouts, glue-sniffers. Why not? That's the way I like to look at things. To surprise.

In a way we've tried to turn the doll house image on its head; people's ideas of these houses reflect an idealised past but we try, within the limitations of the medium, to reconstruct an actual and unidealised present. The inhabitants of our houses are basically modern and living, with all the awkwardness, ugliness even, of ordinary people, and none of the brittle propriety of the porcelain doll. Obviously over a period of time, our modern houses will themselves become pieces of history and give some idea of how people lived today. There are, to name just a few, the Rovers Return, the Medical Centre, the Vines Day Centre for pensioners, the Showman's Caravan, Minishire Cricket Club, and Essex Man, the last with true Essex-style clapboard. Oh yes, and there is contemporary representation of history too. Two examples are H.M.P. Lochamin and Under the Arches both built by "Chapel Road". Lochamin prison has cells with inmates, an adjoining police station and top floor offices. Chained to the railing are suffragettes demanding the vote, whilst a lonely lady of the night loiters outside. Under the Arches is another grimly impressive factory scene. Our doll houses are densely populated; the figures are integral to the spirit of the Museum and so are the miniatures that go with them, plants, furniture, food, porcelain and silver. Some things like silver are the preserve of specialist makers but I do much of the work myself, as you can see I'm working on these miniature plants now. The Museum is a retail outlet for people wishing to buy doll house accessories like this. You'll note the use of puns: Lochamin Prison or the Fish and Chip shop at Mac Rell Place, Aubrietious Klein, the pawnbroker, (Klein is German for "little") or Mr. and Mrs. Spratt by the Cornish Quayside. All models are to scale. Perhaps the standard scale is 1/12" ie 1 inch to 1 foot, these models are basically in the lower of the two show-rooms. Upstairs there are some smaller scale 1/24" ie 1/2 inch to 1 foot or even the ultimate miniature 1 to 144.

Not all the houses are densely populated. One, the Bayleaf, a representation of the famous building at the Singleton Open-Air Museum, stands out simply because it is not peopled at all. Another almost deserted house is Panther's Harbourside Shed and Barge, this house is made largely of honed and shaped driftwood, then either oiled or painted or both. Panther lives on the South Coast so he has no difficulty with material! Perhaps in some way symbolic of our intention is the French Language School, its austere frontage kept resolutely closed. Nothing could look more prim and academic. All is a facade however. When the steward opens the house all is revealed!

It's not that I've been doing this for long, or that I had any expertise when I started. Doll houses are a considerable industry as I soon discovered; there are directories, magazines and a veritable army of enthusiasts in America, Canada and all over Europe. We attract a lot of them here to Petworth. Some work basically as hobbyists but many are full-time, often husband and wife teams. I was in fact a landscape artist until an illness affected my mobility

and I needed something that was an artistic outlet and yet would enable me to be less mobile than I was used to being. My husband gave me a doll house, knowing that it would evoke for me memories of a German childhood, when at Christmas children would be given a dolls' kitchen and allowed to prepare simple ingredients in it. As I was only allowed to play with it from Christmas Eve to Twelfth Night, there was never the chance to become tired of it. At the allotted time it was always remorselessly put away for the next Christmas Eve. There was, too, a miniature bedroom with beds to be made and a bathroom with running water dispensed from a tin at the back. As someone who had studied architecture at art school, and had an acquaintance with needlework, doll houses seem in retrospect a natural progression, but it still surprises me.

Without an initial awareness of the proliferating back-up to the world of doll houses, I began using cut-up pieces of wallpaper from Sainsburys Home Care but I learned quickly, and as the collection grew it began to take over the house, eventually moving to the second-floor flat below. The next stage is the realisation that it's not much good having all this and keeping it to yourself. It was time to open, by arrangement, at 10am and 2pm, three people at a time and what was effectively a guided tour of three hours. Clearly this could be no more than a half-way house, the "logical progression", if there is such a thing, would be to move in to more suitable premises and make the collection open to everyone. It would also allow for expansion.

And so we came to Petworth, first packing up everything, each house, each room, each item, having taken photographs at each stage of the "demolition" and I use the word advisedly. One thing was obvious: it was a joy to be situated in a free Car Park, as opposed to a situation where meters charged £1 for a quarter of an hour with the option of staying two hours and after that of being clamped or towed away. Tissue papered and bubble wrapped, it was time to set off to a new home, each separate plinth to be remembered and resited, each different electrification to reconstruct. A hundred houses and settings, and the builders behind schedule and the dust. Yes the dust.

And so we're settled in now - or are we? We're still in dispute with the District Council over the security shutters. They say they're out of keeping, we say we must have security. We can't exist without security. If we haven't adequate security we'll have to leave Petworth. I don't see a compromise here. Apart from that, Petworth is ideal. We always market the Museum as part of a more general "Come to Petworth" package and the new Petworth Cottage Museum will fit that package well.

I've said what I think about Petworth. What about the Museum itself? I love sharing my hobby. I like people visiting, coming back again or ringing with enquiries, an initial visit to the Museum starting them off perhaps with a narrow wall house that can be hung up even where space is very restricted. Every doll house is different, the taking of what is essentially a plain box and turning it into a new creation. I think as an artist that is what I like the most. Above all I like to make people think. Here I am using what most people would think a predictable medium in what I hope is an unpredictable way. And now, if you don't mind, I'll get on with my work!

Janet Austin submits this account by Vera Jones of life at Brick Kiln Farm, Loxwood. It is somewhat distant from us but we have many readers in Loxwood and I think is of such merit as to find inclusion in the Petworth Society Magazine. Certainly later extracts feature Lord Leconfield's hounds. In particular the initial house description has many similarities with what we are ourselves attempting to recreate at 346 High Street, although 346 reflects an earlier period.

Peter

At far Pallinghurst

I was second youngest of the six children of Jesse and Lucy Wait. There were two brothers and two sisters older than myself, and a brother who was seven years my junior. For many years of his life, my father was a farmworker for the MacAndrews. Mr MacAndrew lived at Pallinghurst House, which is now the Rikkyo School. He was a big landowner and his estate, the Pallinghurst Estate, stretched from the Loxwood/Rudgwick area as far as the borders of Cranleigh. Any farm property in the area that came on the market, Mr MacAndrew bought.

In 1928, when I was a year old, my parents decided to leave the farm where my father worked at Ellens Green, near Cranleigh, Surrey, to move right up into the back of beyond - to Brickkiln Farm, on Pallinghurst Estate near Tisman's Common. Because there was no transport to move us, and anyway it was right through dirty lanes and through woods, the whole of our belongings had to be moved by horse and cart. There were two ways to get to our house, one was via Tisman's Park owned by Mr MacAndrew, our landlord, and the other was from Pephurst Farm on the Loxwood Road, which I think he owned as well.

Our House and Garden

Our new home was a large old farmhouse. Parts of the building were still there in the 1970s but it has now been demolished, a builder bought all the bricks to renovate old cottages. All that remains are a pile of stones in the middle of a field near the junction of two footpaths in the middle of the woods. Our house, which had two staircases, had been two cottages at one time Mum and Dad told us, but when we moved there only one half was habitable. Our living quarters had three huge bedrooms. Each could take two double beds. One of the bedrooms was called the boys' room and another the girls' room. Our parent's bedroom was even bigger than the kids' rooms.

Downstairs the front door opened directly into a huge living room. There was also a small sitting room and a large scullery. We only used the sitting room on Sundays and at Christmas. The huge living room had an inglenook fireplace which contained a range for the cooking. In the centre of the room was a large kitchen table, big enough for the whole family to sit around. Hanging above the table from one of the beams was a big brass oil lamp. Also hanging from the beams by leather straps were Dad's guns. In the winter we would have to have curtains up to reduce the size of the living room in order to keep the heat in and the draughts, from the front and scullery doors, out. Off a corner of the living room was a walk-in larder with its own window. Mum kept all her food there and I can still visualise the orange cheese on a big cheese dish - because it was orange and not yellow! There was huge scullery which was used as a kitchen. It had a small cement sink and an old copper in the corner where Mum did her washing. Beside the copper was an old disused brick bread oven in the wall.

The stairs to the bedrooms were between the scullery and the big living room. There were steps leading down from the scullery into a smallish cellar where Dad kept his cider. There was also another flight of stairs, behind the backdoor of the scullery, leading up to a bedroom in the uninhabitable half of the house. Dad kept his potatoes in that spare bedroom and it was also where we stored the apples. The rest of the uninhabited part of the building was used as woodsheds and toolsheds.

There were no luxuries such as a bathroom. We kept an old tin bungalow bath outside which we used for baths in the scullery on Mondays after washdays. The privy, which was always referred to as 'going up the garden', had a nice pine seat, and was up the garden. The contents had to be emptied and buried in another part of the garden. Ern, my eldest brother would take a lantern in the evenings and a roll of comics under his arm and make his way 'up the garden', and after about half an hour Mum used to shout "Have you finished up there because Harold wants to come up there", and then Harold would go up with his roll of comics and take over the lantern.

All our water was drawn from a well in the garden. I suppose we were fortunate to have a well with fresh water. Near to our house was another small cottage called "Keepers Cottage". Another farm worker lived there by the name of Mr Buckman. Us kids called him Old Bucky, Bucky being the name by which he was known by the other workers. He was very deaf. He had a housekeeper called Mrs Bennett. They had no water at their cottage, so night and morning poor old Bucky had to come to draw water from our well. He carried two buckets at a time on a yoke across his shoulders. Sometimes, when someone went to draw water, there would be a frog in the bucket. Of course sometimes when the temperature was freezing, or it had been raining, we couldn't draw water. The chain would keep slipping.

Needless to say, there was no electricity laid on either. We would have to carry the paraffin for the lamps from Bucks Green Garage. We would also have to collect accumulators and batteries for our old wireless. The reception was not good. Snap crackle and pop would be the best way of describing the reception. We would have to be quiet, especially, during the war when Dad would want to listen to Lord Haw Haw, the propaganda spy, who was giving out the news about the building of Dunsfold Aerodrome.

We had an enormous garden like a field. My father grew most of our vegetables. However we used to have field swedes (because they were supposed to have more flavour than the garden ones). Mum peeled them and cooked them in big chunks. Dad did not grow tomatoes either because we were able to get them fresh picked from Mr Stevens' greenhouses by the Cricketers (Mucky Duck). Dad grew his own peas and beans. In winter Dad grew sprouts, savoys, leeks, carrots and turnips for the stews cooked by Mum in the great big iron pot. We always picked vegetables fresh from the garden whenever possible.

My mother had a lovely flower garden with arches where the rambling roses grew. In summer my mother did all her cooking outside. My father had built brickwork around an old kitchen range and put a corrugated tin roof over the top. We had a very large old table in the garden where we would all sit round and eat our meals. I suppose looking back it was like cowboy land, but cowboys were unheard of in those days - well to us anyway.

To be continued.



Does anyone recognise these two ladies or the background? Possibly Northchapel/Kirdford area.

New Members

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Miss R. Calvert-Smith | The Copse, Bury Gate, Pulborough. |
| Mr. and Mrs. H. Disley | Holly Cottage, 4, The Mews, High Street, Petworth. |
| Mrs. L. Etherington | Lower Lodge, Pitshill, Tillington, Petworth. |
| Lady Martell | 3, Linden House, Guildford Road, Loxwood, Billingshurst, |
| Dr. & Mrs R.G. Newberry | 75, Sheepdown Drive, Petworth. RH14 0SE |
| Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Parsons | 2, Bencubbin, Sadlier, Sidney 2168, N.S.W., Australia. |
| Mrs. Robin Phillips | Orchard Cottage, Upperton, Petworth. |
| Mrs. G. Ross | Park House, Upperton, Petworth. |
| Mr. and Mrs. J. Whimster | The Manse, High Street, Petworth. |
| Mr. and Mrs. S.C. Chapman | 15, Rothermead, Petworth. |
| Mr. and Mrs. J. Crocombe | 19, Station Road, Petworth. |
| Miss N. Hall | Turrells Cottage, North Bersted, Petworth. |
| Mr. and Mrs. C. Humphrey | 1, Grove Lane, Petworth. |
| Mrs. Laband | Swan House Courtyard, Petworth. |
| Major and Mrs. P. Laughton | Rectory Gate House, Rectory Lane, Petworth. |
| Miss S. Mitford | Manor of Dean, Petworth. |
| Mr. and Mrs. E.J. Swann | 10, Rodney Way, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3NY. |

