



THE PETWORTH SOCIETY
magazine

No. 140, June 2010



PETWORTH COTTAGE MUSEUM 1910-2010



PETWORTH SOCIETY ACTIVITIES SHEET

Summer Programme – please keep for reference

Tuesday 15th June:

Visit to Royal Courts of Justice. Depart Beaufoy Centre car park at **8.15pm**. One or two seats remain, to check availability ring Andy on **343792**.

Sunday 18th July:

Linda's mid-summer walk. Cars leave Main Car Park at **2.15pm**. See local posters for detail.

Saturday 21st August:

Debby and Gordon's visit to Rural Life Centre at Tilford – see separate sheet.

Wednesday 8th September:

Annual Dinner at Petworth House – see separate sheet. Early booking advised.

WINDOW PRESS NOTICE:

"We don't do nostalgia . . ."

Petworth Cottage Museum from its foundation in 1996 to 2010.

100 individually numbered copies only, featuring text by Peter Jerrome and twelve original drawings by Jonathan Newdick. Each copy signed by Peter Jerrome and Jonathan Newdick. **£15**. Available direct from the **Window Press, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0DX**. Copies are also available at the Petworth Bookshop – or during normal opening hours at the Cottage Museum – 2.00pm to 4.30pm Tuesday to Saturday.

To the **Window Press**
01798 342562

Please supply _____ numbered copy(ies) of **"We don't do nostalgia . . ."** at **£15**.

I enclose a cheque payable to the **Window Press** and will collect from Trowels. If ordering by post please add **£2.50** postage.

Name (BLOCK LETTERS) _____

Address _____

Telephone Number: _____

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY BOOK SALE

2010

2ND SATURDAY IN EVERY MONTH

**WE NEED
YOUR BOOKS**

June 12

July 10

August 14

September 11

October 9

November 13

December 11



**TO DONATE BOOKS
TELEPHONE:**

PETER - 01798 342562

or

MILES - 01798 343227

VISIT TO THE RURAL LIFE CENTRE AT TILFORD, NR FARNHAM

We will be visiting the Rural Life Centre nr. Tilford on Saturday 21st August. We will be travelling by coach, leaving the Sylvia Beaufoy car park at 10.15 a.m. and arriving at Tilford by approx. 11 a.m. The coach will depart from Tilford at 3.15 p.m., arriving in Petworth at approx. 4.00 p.m.

The Rural Life Centre is situated in beautiful countryside, surrounded by the RSPB Farnham Heath Reserve. It has a wide range of outdoor and indoor exhibits with displays on country and village life from the Victorian age to the 1960's. There is a working smithy, wheelwright's shop, village schoolroom, Victorian laundry, chapel, gypsy caravan, 1945 prefab (with period furnishings and fittings and an Anderson shelter in the garden), and a cricket pavilion with sporting displays, to name just a few! There are approximately 40,000 artefacts in the entire collection. Subjects covered include agricultural implements and waggons, shepherding, engineering and carpentry displays, an old garage, toys, a Romano-British pottery kiln and lots more besides. The exhibits are all within comfortable walking distance from one another in a pleasant, shady area.

The Old Kiln Cafe offers very nice and reasonably-priced homemade lunches and snacks, morning coffee and afternoon tea. There is also a picnic area and a small gift shop.

If you would like to visit the Rural Life Centre, please complete the booking form and return it, with your remittance, to Mr. Andy Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth, GU28 0BX, by Saturday 24th July.

Total costs including travel by coach and admission charges are as follows:-

Adults	£16	Over-60s	£15
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.....
I/We would like to visit the Rural Life Centre on 21st August

Name/s

.....
No. of Adults..... No. of Over-60s..... No. of Children.....

Telephone no.

I enclose a cheque for (made payable to Petworth Society)

If you would like to buy lunch, please tick below.

N.B. To assist with catering, you are asked to go straight to the cafe on arrival and order your meal/snack from the menu.

I/We would like to buy lunch in the Old Kiln Cafe No. of lunches required

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY

Annual Dinner – 8th September 2010

The Annual Dinner of the Petworth Society will be held once again in the Audit Room of Petworth House on **Wednesday 8th September**. There will be an opportunity to access the rarely opened Chapel balcony. National Trust staff will be on hand to answer questions. Those wishing to do so should be at the Church Lodge entrance by **6.45pm**. If not, drinks will be served for all in the Marble Hall at **7.15pm**. The meal is timed for **7.45pm**.

The total cost will be **£18.00**, inclusive of gratuities. Hitherto, the cost of the drinks at reception has been taken from Society funds. As part of our strategy to balance our books, the Committee has decided to include the cost of pre-dinner wine and elderflower pressé in the total, which we hope members will agree still represents excellent value for a convivial evening in a prestigious setting.

As in the past, wine, etc., may still be purchased at the meal.

The menu is as follows:

Main Course

Venison Cottage Pie	[A]
Vegetable Hotpot with Herb Dumplings	[B]
Sussex Smokie (Smoked Cod with a Prawn and Cheese Sauce) with Mixed Salad	[C]
Chicken and Mushroom Pie with a Pastry Crust	[D]

All with fresh vegetables

* * *

Dessert

Steamed Syrup Sponge and Custard	[E]
Black Forest Roulade	[F]
Pannacotta with Blackberry and Apple Compote	[G]

* * *

Coffee and Mints

As indicated above, the total will be **£18.00**.

Please complete the form below if you wish to attend the dinner. A maximum of 88 members can be accommodated and acceptances will be on a 'first come' basis.

I should like to attend the **Annual Dinner on 8th September 2010**.

My/our Main Course selection is **A** **B** **C** **D**

My/our Dessert selection is **E** **F** **G**

☐ (PLEASE ☒) I should like to bring a guest (maximum 1) and enclose £

Cheques made payable to **The Petworth Society**.

Name(s) (BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

Telephone Number:

Please send this slip and cheque payable to **The Petworth Society** to:
P. Jerrome, Trowels, Pound Street, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0DX

No telephone orders, please.

THE PETWORTH SOCIETY magazine

No. 140, June 2010



Invoice from Alfred Knight 1881.
See Bognor Mills article in magazine 139.

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NEW MEMBERS

Mrs Sheila Atkinson, 23 Rosvara Avenue, Westergate, Chichester PO20 3RB
 Ms J. Charman, 20 Rectory Walk, Storrington RH20 4QH
 Mr and Mrs C. Ennis, 4 Dolby Road, London SW6 3NE
 Mr G. Holden, 29 Valentines Lea, Northchapel, Petworth GU28 9HY
 Mrs A. Mason, 18 Willow Walk, Petworth GU28 0EY
 Mrs J. Mottram, New Cottage, Bartons Lane, Petworth GU28 0DA
 Ms S. Newsom-Davis, Cobblestones, High Street, Petworth GU28 0AU
 Mrs P. Payne, 1 New Cottages, Barlavington, Petworth, GU28 0LG
 Mrs S. Puddick, 57 Sheepdown Drive, Petworth, GU28 0BX
 Ms J. Renshaw, 7 Thompsons Hospital, North Street, Petworth GU28 0DL
 Miss T. Turland, 49 Hampers Green, Petworth, GU28 9NP

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 objects of the society.

The annual subscription is £9.00, single or double, one magazine delivered. Postal £11, overseas £15. Further information may be obtained from any of the following.

CHAIRMAN

Mr P.A. Jerrome, MBE, Trowels, Pound Street
 Petworth GU28 0DX.
 Telephone: (01798) 342562.

VICE CHAIRMAN

Mr K.C. Thompson, 18 Rothermead, Petworth
 GU28 0EW.
 Telephone: (01798) 342585.

HON. TREASURER

Mr A. Henderson, 62 Sheepdown Drive,
 Petworth GU28 0BX.
 Telephone: (01798) 343792.

COMMITTEE

Mr Stephen Boakes, Lord Egremont,
 Mrs Carol Finch, Mr Ian Godsmark,
 Mr Philip Hounsham, Mrs Celia Lilly,
 Mrs Anne Simmons, Mrs Ros Staker,
 Mrs Deborah Stevenson, Mrs Patricia Turland,
 Mrs Linda Wort.

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

Mr Henderson, Mr Miles Costello,
 Mr Thompson, Mrs Simmons,
 Miss Callingham, Mrs Stevenson,
 Mrs Angela Aziz, Mr Turland, Mr Boakes
 (Petworth), Ray and Valerie Hunt (Byworth),
 Mr P. Wadey (Sutton and Bignor), Mr Bellis
 (Grafham), Mr Derek Gourd (Tillington and
 Upperton), Mr Poole (Fittleworth),
 Mr David Burden (Duncton).

SOCIETY SCRAPBOOK

Mrs Pearl Godsmark.

COULTERSHAW BEAM PUMP

REPRESENTATIVES

Mr A. Henderson, Mr T. Martin.

SOCIETY TOWN CRIER

Mr Mike Hubbard
 Telephone: (01798) 343249.

For this magazine on tape please contact
 Mr Thompson.

Cover drawing of a pair of shoes at Petworth
 Cottage Museum by Jonathan Newdick.

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 Hampers Common Industrial Estate, Petworth
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The Petworth Society supports The Leconfield
 Hall, Petworth Cottage Museum and The
 Coultershaw Beam Pump.

Chairman's notes

This new look magazine 140 may take you a little by surprise. Some changes, like the alteration of paper size from foolscap to A5 represent a nod toward economy, while the slightly slimmer, taller magazine is intended to help with postage. We shall see. At any rate Jonathan has taken the opportunity to redesign. What we have not done is to compromise either in actual size or on quality. Change is in no way alien to this magazine as a glance at the typewritten Bulletin No 1 (May 1974) will show. I have a copy beside me as I write.

Midhurst and Petworth Printers have done a marvellous job for us since 1974 and it is a wrench on either side for them to relinquish responsibility for this magazine, now a quarterly ritual. I have no doubt our relations with another Petworth firm, Bexley Printers, will be as cordial, although whether they will look to match their predecessors' thirty six years remains to be seen! Anyway our grateful thanks to Ian and Pat for their long service.

The absence of colour in the present Magazine has nothing to do with the change of printers: the images needed for PSM 140 are adequate in black and white. Colour will resume no doubt for issue 141.

You will have seen a newspaper report of significant local housing development in Petworth over a extended period. These are early days and opinions will differ. Is this a dilution of Petworth's essential character or a necessary blood transfusion? One thing is certain, as Colonel Maude insisted, on founding this Society in the early 1970s, Petworth will change, and nothing, certainly not this Society, will prevent that. Nothing is exempt, not even, as you see, your magazine!

Peter
24th April

"We don't do nostalgia . . ."

2010 sees the theoretical "centenary" of the Petworth Cottage Museum. "346" has only been in existence since 1996 but 1910 is the notional date of the reconstruction. As a personal contribution to mark the centenary, I have reprinted a series of Magazine articles on the Museum which offer an oblique look at its development over the period from its foundation. The title is "We don't do nostalgia . . ."

The print will be limited to 100 copies, each individually numbered and signed by myself and Jonathan Newdick who has contributed twelve original drawings. The price is £15, more or less the cost of production, but in the event of all books selling, there will be a small donation for Museum funds. There is an order form on the Activities Sheet that accompanies this magazine. If ordering by post please add £2.50.

Peter

Second to Nun

Mrs. Beeton, Richmal Crompton (the Just William lady), Charlotte Bronte, Katherine Parr, the Shakespeare Ladies Club; Hildegard of Bingen. Who?

Well, everyone who packed into the Leconfield Hall for Alison Neil's sixth portrayal of women in history now knows.

Hildegard lived in the 12th century, was a visionary, prophet, administrator, healer, biographer, theologian and, as a woman, a first in the realms of composers of music, poetry, art, science and preaching.

Alison acted out her life as she battled with abbots, bishops, archbishops, kings and popes against injustices, greed and corruption as she emerged from anchorite seclusion to establish her own convent and a right to be heard.

Those are the facts, but to experience Alison's performances is something else. Her mastery of a script lasting 1¾ hours, her attention to every detail of costume, properties and body language, involves everyone in the audience with the character depicted. Solid oak furniture and drinking vessels in medieval authenticity, made to order, the actress's voice and posture 'ageing' as the story progressed, Hildegard's own music, 'Celestial Harmonies', recorded narration by actor Alister Cameron, together with sensitive lighting and continuity by Alison's assistant, Jonathan, combined to create the atmosphere in which the action takes place.

Second to none: the nun Hildegard of Bingen and the actress, Alison Neil, which may go some way to explain the title of this piece – not a printing error after all!

KCT



Alison Neil on stage at the Leconfield Hall. Photograph by David Wort.

Witches, Warlocks and Wellingtons

We all know about witches, may even have known one as a child. They can put a spell or a hex on you, inflicting disease or discomfort. In days gone by, a woman (usually) suspected of witchcraft might be placed in a ducking stool by the village pond. If she sank and, presumably, drowned, she was innocent, unfortunately. Floating, she was guilty and could be executed, by burning at the stake at one time. That's the common understanding.

It was therefore prudent to protect one's home, stables or dairy from witches and other inexplicable misfortune, such as lightning and it was the ritual protection of the home that Dr. Janet Pennington came to talk about at our March meeting.

Lost in the mists of time, the origins of the many devices employed will never be known. The horseshoe over the door can be traced back to Celtic times, but who first thought it would work? And what was the reasoning behind it? Which way up remains a matter of argument even today. Looking around ancient houses and inns, one can find symbols carved on beams and in stone. 'Witch bottles' are found, bearing an unpleasant face and now proved to contain urine, supposedly infected by a witch to bring similar symptoms upon the unfortunate victim or to nullify them.

Carvings of heads, often with contorted features, mummified rats, mummified or sculptured cats, often with a bird or a rat in its mouth – the mysteries are endless.

Chimneys and rafters, as well as hearths, were favourite hiding places for many objects aimed at avoiding misfortune – a fork with the prongs pointing upwards would ward off witches. A stone-age flint hand axe would similarly protect a house from a lightning strike and, one carried by a fisherman would avoid death by drowning. House leeks growing on the roof have some ritual significance and our own Cottage Museum has them. One continues to ask, "When did it start? Why?"

So we come to shoes. There are numerous examples of well-worn (never new) shoes, usually a single one, not a pair, dating from the 17th-19th centuries placed on a rafter in the roof loft or in the space between the chimney and surrounding floor supports. The discovery of 11 pairs and 44 individual shoes in a house in Nutley, East Sussex, poses yet more questions without answers. There has even been one example of a Wellington boot found in a flue. These may seem less of a matter of anti-witch protection than good luck symbols, but what is the reasoning behind it all and when does superstition evolve into tradition?

Where did the warlocks come in? They didn't. Sorcery and magic: perhaps that's a subject for another interesting and yet, in the face of so many unanswerable questions, frustrating talk, both for the researcher and audience.

KCT

Round the world with a hot-water bottle

John Bartlett spent his childhood in Petworth, the elder son of the then Postmaster Jack and his wife Margaret, both popular figures. Since then, John has had a career in the R.A.F. and now lectures and advises on health and safety issues. He was number 3 on the admissions register of the Herbert Shiner School when it opened in 1961 and one of his classmates, Alan Young and the first Senior Mistress, Daphne O'Hanlon (then Taylor) were in the audience when he came to give a personal overview of his participation in the Joint Services entry in the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Race.

The first of the races had been in 1973-4, but there had been a lapse while international sanctions had prevented stopovers in apartheid South Africa.

The Joint Services entry in 1989 was a brand-new yacht funded by a German-born businessman, which explains why its name, British Defender had the commercial title inserted: British Satellite Defender. Commercial and political pressures were evident before and during the event.

John went through a rigorous selection process at Aldershot before being appointed engineer.

The audience was disappointingly small, no doubt affected by a reception for the Friends of Petworth Festival on the same evening. But for those present, it was a convivial and absorbing evening, illustrated with film sequences shot on participating yachts and stunning slides. There was noise, movement and beauty – crashing waves, menacing icebergs, leaping whales and glorious sunsets.

Life on board was cramped and often cold and wet. At first, John was laughed at for packing a hot-water bottle, but said he could have "sold it for a million pounds" when they reached the Southern Ocean. He even devised a way of warming his feet with a hairdryer!

Discipline was strict, as was to be expected in a crew of sailors, soldiers and airmen. Often, speeds exceeding those of ocean liners were achieved and there was always pressure to go faster. There were the misfortunes and even tragedies experienced by other boats. There were the tensions and frustrations as British Defender gradually moved up into fifth position, but always, considering the distances covered, the time margins between the leaders were frequently a matter of minutes; amazing, on legs of thousands of miles covered in little less than a month of a theoretical total of 32,932. In the nature of sailing, far more would be covered.

And so, the final leg, Fort Lauderdale to the Solent, was under way, but then, the greatest disappointment. For no apparent reason and in relatively calm weather the mast broke and the yacht limped home under makeshift rigging in last position of those finishing.

John was outspoken yet tactful and sensitive in his account and the audience reacted with appreciation, especially for the achievement of a 'Petworth lad'.

KCT

Deep dried ruts – Kingley Vale April 25th

Kingley Vale, replicating last May's visit. A failure of imagination? Not really, last year's visit was at once distinctive and poorly attended so we thought it worth a second try. A good decision as it turned out. A very respectable attendance and new territory for most. With Station Road still closed we went via Midhurst, turning right on the bend at Lavant and going on through West Stoke village. The car park almost full and that long walk to the reserve. Grey skies and reticent sunshine, a change after several days of bright warm weather. We were a good month later last year and the car park was virtually deserted; this year it's crammed. Someone says there's an unusual fritillary this year but, if so, we saw neither the butterfly itself or much trace of the occupants of the cars.

Deep dried ruts testify to an unusually dry April and a harsh winter. Dark blue heads of bugle under the cover, and dog's mercury waving in the breeze. There's a fair wind even under the trees. And then the grotesque boles of immemorial yew, some growing a stubble of bright green shoots, and the barkless trunks, surfaces worn smooth as a children's ride. There's a dualism here: a solitary lady, a stranger lingering in the glade, points out candle grease and some tiny stones or pebbles tied to the fallen trunks. This children's playground could be an eerie place by night. That tree over there could almost be a crocodile.

Out of the wood, it's almost impenetrable in parts, and onto the open grassland. It's nothing like the glorious day we had last year. A steep track winds away uphill. There's a hint of mist today, but it's possible to look back to the sea, and on a clear day you can see the spire of the cathedral. We're between seasons, violets and some stunted cowslips, this turf will be alive with harebells and other plants during the summer. A dewpond, someone has thrown a piece of jarring yellow plastic into the mud at the edge and the water's green and slimy. Newts? We can't see any. Back along the path to the car park – it's five o'clock already. Some of the party go off to see West Stoke church. We've seen the reserve again – in a slightly different light.

P.

For last May's visit see PSM 137 (September 2009) page 5-8.

On summoning the Green Knight – the March book sale

It's book sale day and we're nearing the end of a long winter. Evenings drawing out, mornings a little lighter. The miniature daffodils I had from Chris Howkins 'aboard the Iona' in August are in tight bud. August seems a long time ago. And there's a new

magazine to consider; Jonathan's cover for the year has been much admired. It's time to consider Issue 140.

On such occasions I sometimes think of King Arthur as he appears in the fourteenth century alliterative epic *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. It's new year at Camelot and the knights and ladies are sitting at table. But Arthur waits till all are served. Even then he cannot settle, he is too much on the go, "somewhat childgered" in the poet's words – a little childlike. He wouldn't eat until he'd heard some adventurous thing, "an uncouth tale." Fortunately for Arthur's peace of mind, if not, perhaps, for Gawain's, the alarming figure of the mysterious Green Knight lumbers into the hall out of the mists of a new year. No, we're not talking heated plates here.

You may think that a comparison between the Editor of this magazine and King Arthur is a little stretched but there are definite similarities at least in the situation. Issue 140 at the moment consists of a substantial article by Raymond Harris and a short piece by Cecily Carroll. No Green Knight; the Editor will have to summon up his own version.

But you wanted to know about the Book Sale. Jekyll and Hyde as ever, morning and afternoon. Frantic in the morning, eerie in the afternoon. That said, March is always a good sale and this one is no exception. Even King Arthur himself would have been reasonably happy. But did they have book sales at Camelot? Well our poet doesn't say they didn't, but the argument from silence can be a precarious one.

P.

"I've got a cat you could have . . ." Good Friday at the Cottage Museum

Good Friday and the second day of a new season. The wind driving round every corner and it's too wet to hoe the pansies. Last year's dahlias are still sensibly underground. The strawy remains of last year's stems are saying nothing. Dahlias were much in vogue a hundred years and more ago. For 1900 Thomas Rogers at Fernbank, Lodsworth was offering "a splendid collection including all the best varieties in cultivation – Show, Fancy, Pomponne [sic], Single and Cactus varieties" at four shillings to six shillings a dozen, Master Rogers was also offering a selection of annuals at a halfpenny each, sixpence a dozen: Asters, Balsam, Cornflower, Golden Feather, Indian Pinks, Lupins, Marigolds, Perilla, Phlox Drummondii, Scabious, Stocks, Summer Chrysanthemums, Sunflower and Zinnia. What, we may ask, was a perilla? The worm-eaten handle on the museum hoe has finally broken and we'll need a replacement.

Corinne's stewarding today for the first time and already seems to have been doing it for years. We've some very enthusiastic visitors this afternoon, surprised at the museum's informal combination of history and sociability. Two quite separate pairs of visitors have picked up leaflets at Petersfield TIC, and today's group all go off with leaflets to spread the

word when they get home. And the April museum's fresh in two senses – a fresh experience for people who have never seen it before and also approach it with a sense of surprised discovery, and, from a steward's point of view, fresh after the great spring clean. Fifteen years of gas lamp, coal fire and the tramp of thousands of visitors imposing eventually a kind of unwanted patina. A new visitors' book for a new year. Yesterday's visitors certainly appreciated Ros and Jean their stewards and were more than prepared to say so.

But there's something untoward in the attic. A mouse has nibbled, of all things, a bar of Wright's Coal Tar Soap. Now if there's one thing we've never had in the years since 1996, it's a rodent. I suspect that Mrs Cummings would reckon we'd had a good run. Preventative measures needed, but it's not a case of finding an incumbent for the empty cat basket in the parlour. We had an offer once, "I've got a cat you could have, it's a ginger tom". "Is it stuffed?" "No, but the way it's going on it soon will be". We didn't take up the offer.

To jump through the usual hoops. Mrs Cummings was trained in Dublin as a milliner. The skylight wouldn't have been there in 1910 and the kitchen would have been desperately dark – to say nothing of its being cold. The three girls on holiday in 1919 comparing the ever-flowing crystal water of the Virgin Mary Spring with the grudging output of the new mains tap. The over-elaborate gas fittings in the cellar, but the alternative is candles. Petworth as a centre of clock-making – or at least home to several generations of clock-makers. Not playing the polyphon on Good Friday. Different things for different people, over an afternoon what you say changes slightly, as if to guard against repeating yourself – quite illogical really.

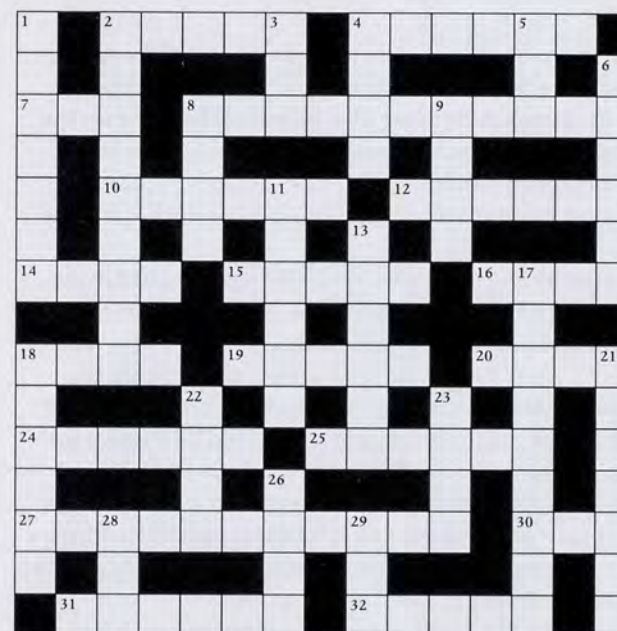
And then the new guide book. The text much as before but the whole redesigned by Jonathan, and a shuffling of pictures, some new, some of the old ones dropped. And that new cover, Jonathan seeing the possibilities of an apparently run of the mill early century postcard – cropping the sides to suggest High Street leading inevitably to 346. The top floor window looking down the street, Mrs Cummings' castle if you like. And the photograph itself. Every single window wide open, the boy with the violin case crossing the street, the Queen's Head pub sign, the strategically placed children and, out of sight to the right, out of mind too, the slum of the Red Lion Yard.

On Wednesday I'd been photographed with the new guide book, held out fan-shaped. Newspapers always insist on the personal touch, myself I'd prefer to remain anonymous. Still, anything to aid publicity. Standing in the road outside Windmill House and thinking of George Garland, sent in there to buy seeds from Mrs Butcher the seed merchant, little thinking some half a century on this room would be his kitchen, and Mrs Cummings some ten years into her long sojourn across the road at 346.

It's gone four o'clock and our last visitors are preparing to leave. The bleached copper stick, I think it really is an old chair leg, the skylight wouldn't have been there in 1910 – but now I'm repeating myself.

For Mrs Butcher the seed merchant, see Old Petworth Traders (3) in this magazine.

DEBORAH'S COTTAGE MUSEUM CROSSWORD



- 5 Make a little go a long way (3)
6 see 12 ac
8 Cleans the scullery floor (4)
9 Type of 31 ac, used in Ireland (4)
11 Place to store fuel, tools and preserves (6)
13 Means of advertising the Museum (6)
17 Tall men to turn round in Mrs. Cumming's vegetable garden (9)
18 Create a pattern perhaps (6)
21 See 1 dn
22 Patch or darn (4)
23 Confused Vera wants to give an opinion (4)
26 Delicate trimming on clothes and linen (4)
28 Chopper (3)
29 Stand 31 ac on it (3)

ACROSS

- 2 Entertainment from the Polyphon (5)
4 Mrs. Cumming's beans might have been preserved this way (6)
7 Nothing to be seen back in 2 dn (3)
8 Ten mice leap about above the range (11)
10 You need to make one when using 12 ac & 6dn (6)
12 & 6 dn Handy tool for cleaning flooring (6,6)
14 Changed colour (4)
15 Flourish – like Mrs. Cumming's garden (5)
16 Rags and hot tongs gave it style (4)
18 The Cottage Museum takes you back to the old ones (4)

- 19 Sew the meat? (5)

- 20 Mrs. Cumming's might have made one for the tea table (4)
24 Musical sewing machine? (6)
25 Iron bracket for 31 to stand on (6)
27 Elderly relative counting the hours (11)
30 Old measure of cloth (3)
31 The pot might call it black (6)
32 Stay healthy? It would be appropriate (5)

DOWN

- 1 & 21 Tingling sensation in Mrs. Cumming's workbox (4,3,7)
2 Hat making – Mrs. Cumming's first occupation (9)
3 Food container (3)
4 Boiled pudding ingredient (4)

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD 139

ACROSS

- 2 Palm, 4 Sunday, 8 Ark, 9 Garlands Day, 11 Plover, 13 Simnel, 15 Epic, 16 Ascot, 17 Chic, 19 Egg, 20 Penny, 21 Stem, 25 Friday, 26 Staler, 28 Spring Clean, 31 Sol, 32 Bounds, 33 Buns

DOWN

- 1 Beat The, 3 Mar, 4 Slab, 5 Add, 6 Skipping, 7 Cyclic, 9 Good, 10 Dais, 12 Easter, 14 Bonnet, 18 Hot Cross, 19 Elf, 22 Marbles, 23 Dawn, 24 Flan, 27 Acts, 29 Rho, 30 Ebb

Old Petworth Traders (3) – F. Butcher the Seed Merchant

Printed commercial billheads are unusual for Petworth in the early nineteenth century; invoices tend to be handwritten with the trader's name at the top. London invoices for goods collected and delivered by the Petworth carrier tend to be printed from the earliest years. The firms would be prestigious and their clients well-to-do. By the 1850s, larger Petworth concerns, like Challen Brothers in Golden Square, have distinctive printed billheads and, as the century advances, handwritten invoices became largely the province of very small enterprises.

F. Butcher appear to have been one such, a small retail outlet for seeds situated in the left hand portion of what is now Windmill House in High Street, almost opposite the Petworth Cottage Museum. Kelly's directory for 1907 offers Mrs Frances Butcher, seed-dealer High Street, she is still there in 1918. George Garland, who would later live at Windmill House, once told me that, as a boy, he had been sent up to Mrs Butcher to buy seeds, he was served by an elderly lady, no doubt Mrs Butcher; he would later reflect that he had never dreamed at the time that he would one day live at Windmill House.

At least in 1897, Mrs Butcher was still using handwritten invoices. To what extent she sold prepared commercial seeds or grew and harvested them locally is not clear, perhaps a combination of both. The invoice indicates that larger seeds were weighed out from bulk, a practice still obtaining to some extent today.

Miss Blagden, living at what would later be Boxall House in East Street, clearly had a large kitchen garden and the paid labour to cultivate it. Flowers seem to have been at something of a premium; quite likely she would buy in plants from a local nurseryman like Thomas Rogers of Lodsworth. Two mentions of asters may suggest an initial sowing failure. Two items are difficult to read, perhaps zinnia and cuphea. There is no suggestion that Mrs Butcher sold plants but it is, of course, possible. The business must have been highly seasonal and, as George Garland recalled, conducted out of a room in the house – with no shop window display!

P.

Miss Blagden		1. d
1897	To L. Butcher	
Feb 17 th	1/2 lb Peas	4 1/2
	2 lb Sweet Peas	8
	Mustard & Cress	1. 2
	Carrot	4
	Corn & Impionette	6
March 1 st	Lettuce & Parsley	4 1/2
	Parsley	1 1/2
8 th	Spinach & B. Sprout	4
10 th	Asters & Zinnia	1. 5
19 th	Celery & Cauliflower	5
24 th	1/4 lb Peas	9
April 6 th	1/4 lb Broccoli	3
	Lavoy & Kale	8
	Spouting Broccoli	8
	1/2 lb Beetroot	4
	Asters	3
June 8 th	Peas & Lettuce	7 1/2
Aug 12 th	Cabbage seed	8. 5
		3
		8. 8
Paid Aug 21/97		
F. Butcher		
With Thanks		

Invoice from F. Butcher 1897.

Book Review

1. Twenty five favourite walks in West Surrey and Sussex.
Revised January 2010 £5.50
2. Another 25 Favourite Walks in Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire £5.00

Perhaps we're all getting old – certainly walks are less regular than once they were and we now tend to avoid the winter months in a way we never did before. Remember those November outings into a muddy Weald followed by tea with Ruby and John at Langhurst? Another point is that excursions are relatively new: we try to keep a balance between doing too much and too little. One event a month – less than that and we're on the skids, more and we're hyperactive. If you feel you'd like to supplement our ration these are the books for you. Published by the Godalming and Haslemere Group of the Ramblers, each walk is personalised eg James and Elizabeth's walk or Olga's walk, which gives a feeling that they've been individually crafted. And, so it appears, they have. The first book took in West Surrey and Sussex, the new book also takes in Hampshire. The books are sturdily produced and will stand up to extended use. If many are bolder than the traditional Petworth Society amble, there's no harm in that. Some abut very closely on the local area, some are a fair way off, all are circular. Into the unknown! takes in Petworth, No Man's Land, Wilderness and Limbo – Richard's walk. Both books can be unreservedly recommended.

Ask at local outlets or order online at www.godalmingandhaslemererambles.org.uk or directly from Jean Harker at 17 Sapte Close, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 7HA.
Telephone 01483 276680.

P.

Petworth Library

In May 1949, aged 23, I was appointed Regional Branch Librarian for the rural district covering Pulborough, Storrington and Petworth. Based in the Church Room, Pulborough, I travelled around my area by Southdown Bus or bicycle, keeping an eye on the three main centres and the village libraries run by volunteer Hon Librarians. Unlike Worthing and Littlehampton which were independent boroughs with their own Victorian premises, West Sussex had no purpose-built libraries whatsoever at that time. The library in Shoreham was in an old shop, in Horsham it was in the Church Room next to St Mary's Church and in Chichester it was a Georgian terrace house in West Street. In Petworth the library was upstairs in the Red Cross Rooms. On the same floor there was a room where a

physiotherapist saw patients and where, she told me, X-rays and other medical procedures were sometimes carried out. Our windows faced the street and were still covered in the glued-on netting put there during the war to prevent flying glass splinters should a bomb be dropped on the town. This made the library rather gloomy but I noticed the netting began to disappear gradually as occupants, including myself, with time on their hands got their fingernails under an edge and picked another bit away.

In village libraries the books were kept in large flat, lockable wooden boxes, opened up on Library days and exchanged for new, or at any rate different, stock at regular intervals by the County Library van staff. In the larger centres with County Library staff the books were properly shelved round the room, coverable with removable metal grilles if the premises were used at other times by different organisations. The tops of the bookcases at Petworth were adorned with glass cases of stuffed birds and butterflies, with a picture of Sir Walter Scott and one of Jane Austen to lend a suitably literary atmosphere. There was a coal fire in the grate, warming the room once it got going. The shortages of those post-war years are mostly forgotten now although there has recently been more interest. Rationing was even worse than it had been in wartime. The cups of tea, bread and butter and cake sometimes brought in by the caretaker making up the fire were an unbelievable joy. My mother grew a few stalks of something she called 'perpetual spinach' in the garden at home and I remember being reduced to making sandwiches of the stuff for my lunch.

I don't think I was ever very busy at Petworth. I tidied the shelves endlessly, checked the quarterly figures of the Hon Librarians, and sometimes received a visit from one or other of the village librarians. The Northchapel librarian I remember was a splendid lady, 70 years old and a science graduate of University College, London, where she had been Treasurer of the Student Union. I kept in close touch with my colleague at Midhurst, Kathleen Burfield. We covered for one another when the occasion arose. Midhurst library, much busier than either Petworth or Pulborough, was housed in a beautiful Tudor house in Knockhundred Row. I discovered that I could use my railway season ticket on the branch line to Petersfield which served not only Petworth but also Midhurst. If I managed to close the library on time I could sprint down the main road to Petworth Station, which was almost in Duncton, and catch the train there.

The journeys on those steam trains remain one of my most abiding memories of my short time at Petworth. They were like something out of a Will Hay film. On dark, foggy evenings a figure waving an oil-filled lamp would appear on each platform through the gloom and the steam as the train pulled in, calling out the station name in ponderous, sombre, Sussex tones – Fittleworth, Petworth, Selham, Midhurst, Elsted, Rogate, Petersfield – pure Betjeman, or Flanders and Swan.

Joyce Steyning
2010

Keeping in touch

As the youngest daughter of Stephen Rapley I was brought up in what was then called Langmead, the house behind the garage at Heath End. My grandmother, Florence Rapley, had died four years before I was born. I was the only member of my family who did not go to Duncton School, starting at Petworth Infants at the age of four and moving on to Petworth Girls School in East Street. At ten I went to Chichester High School, travelling by train and changing at Midhurst. I went with Iris Court (later Robbins) and we kept in touch over the years.

At Duncton I attended Sunday School, the Missionary Guild and sang in the choir. There were country dances in the village hall and trips to the Cricketers and, during the war, ballroom dances. It was there that I met my future husband who was stationed at Goodwood.

I left school at seventeen and did a year's hairdressing at my brother-in-law's salon, Pelletts in the Market Square. In 1939 I had to leave to help my father in the garage at Heath End, selling sweets and other items in the shop as well as serving petrol. I also did the office work and drove the garage taxi, picking up the Upwaltham children and taking them home at the end of the day. I also collected accumulators to take back to the garage to be charged. They were used, of course, for the wireless. On one occasion I took a schoolteacher to Tangmere and there, sitting on a gate, was Douglas Bader, I got out of the car and had a word with him.

When the war came one of our petrol pumps was requisitioned by the Army, so we saw all manner of different military vehicles at the garage. I was also an ambulance driver on night duty in Pound Street, Petworth, working with Jeanne Courtauld. She let me have friends to play on the Burton Park tennis courts.

In early 1942 I went to live in Lincoln but often came back to Sussex, sometimes staying at the Swan Hotel in Petworth, sometimes in the villages. At one time we had a caravan and stayed at Graffham or at the Goodwood race course but I have not been down since 1996 and am unlikely to do so now. The Petworth Society magazine keeps me in touch.

Edited from a letter written by Margaret Thimbleby to John Mayes regarding the Duncton Village Archive initiative.

Winter Memories in West Sussex in 1943

Hearing of all the school closures recently caused by the heavy snowfalls reminded me of a similarly harsh winter during the war years – I think it was 1943. I was 18 at the time, living with my parents in a cedar wood bungalow at Ifold near the small village of Loxwood in West Sussex and working three miles away for Carter Bros. at Newpound – their first female employee! I normally cycled to work, but that winter there was a very

heavy snowfall, and my bicycle wouldn't stay upright, so I abandoned it and set off to walk the three miles to work (it didn't occur to me not to go!).

After about a mile, as I was trudging through the deep snow at the side of the road, the school bus en-route to Wisborough Green or Billingshurst pulled up beside me driven by Fred Kilner, a fatherly man who owned the local bus service, who offered me a lift. So, I was very happy to be dropped off at my office door at Carter Bros. "Reliance Works" (now Bellman's Auctioneers) in good time. At 12 noon I joined Mr & Mrs Norman Carter for a hot lunch, and the men in the works who couldn't get home ate their bread and cheese (and a raw onion!) in the canteen.

At around 4.30pm that afternoon, my friendly driver Mr Kilner popped his head round the office door and asked if he could give me a lift home? "Fraid not" said my boss – she finishes at 6 o'clock"! So, at 6, off I set in the dark to walk the three miles back home. I had absolutely no fear, and I knew that I could have knocked at any cottage along the way if necessary. My walk was enlivened by the sight of a ghostly shape floating over the fields at Roundstreet – my first sight of a barn owl, 'quartering' the fields in search of prey.

Sometimes my father walked part-way to meet me – at that time he was working alternate 24 hour shifts in London with Civil Defence Heavy Rescue. The Sussex countryside must have been calm relief after his work in the London suburbs. On his "off" day, he would walk a mile or so to meet me – was I pleased to get home!

By the way . . . does anyone remember the extra ration of meat allocated to agricultural workers during the war? This applied to the agricultural engineers, carpenters and paint shop men (who painted the unique elevators etc.) at Carter Bros. where I worked. The meat (probably stewing steak) was delivered to Mrs Carter at "Newfields", who opened up the old bread oven in the kitchen. Someone in the works made the traditional tool (a peel?), and the oven had a lighted faggot early in the morning. By the time I arrived at 9am, the oven was good and hot, and a lovely aroma of stewed meat coming from the kitchen. There must have been a ration of fat for the pastry, and the kitchen was busy with several local ladies working hard. A 7" plate pie was made for the men with families, and I think single men got a large pasty.

On baking days we knew what was for lunch at Newfields, and very good it was. I remember too having semolina pudding courtesy of Mr Gwillim at Coultershaw Mill, who secretly milled this grain, which apparently wasn't allowed at the time. Carter Bros. looked after his mill!! Milk for the pudding was delivered to the door, and Mrs Carter's cans were filled. Water at the kitchen sink came via a hand pump, as it did at my home at 'Sunflowers' at Ifold.

Happy memories!

Cecily Carroll
18, Perkin Close, Sudbury.

“You can’t have that, Sir . . .”

“I was particularly interested in the double wedding photograph in the last magazine, interested because I knew the two Wadey girls. They were quite a bit older of course, marrying in 1930. And there, propped up against a post, was George Garland’s motor-cycle. I suppose he’d just left it there. You can see the claxon horn on the petrol tank. It’s definitely George’s motor-bike but I can’t now remember the make. Mr and Mrs Wadey had the shop at Upperton, on the right as you came out of the village towards Lurgashall. It was rebuilt in the 1930s, the old shop lying a little further back than its successor. Mr Wadey sold more or less everything, including Amey’s ales, the shop probably belonged at that time to the brewers. George Wadey set up an old cart seat, rather like a bench, opposite the shop – no need to worry about traffic in those days. The premises were an off licence and no one could consume alcohol in the premises. The old men of the village would sit on the bench drinking their beer, even passing the bottle round. Sunday was very much the day for this. The Wadey’s had a smallholding on River Common, where George Wadey grew apples for cider. Old Mrs White, the two girls’ grandmother lived on the Common. Later the Wadeys left the shop and moved to River Common altogether.

I saw quite a bit of George Garland, after all, the studio in Station Road was more or less next door. On occasion in the 1940s and 1950s I’d “warm up” the audience for his yokel act. The act itself was a development of a similar act by Mr Blackman from Arundel

but as Mr Blackman did it, it didn’t stand on its own, being part of a wide-ranging variety show put on by the whole family. The Blackmans were a very musical family, one joke I particularly remember: Old Mark Cooper was (rather surprisingly) in an expensive London restaurant where the menu was all in French. After a long look at the menu, Mark pointed to an item at the bottom. “You can’t have that, Sir,” said the waiter, “that’s what the orchestra are playing.” The Garland yokel jokes tended to merge with Harry Knight stories. I knew Harry well enough. He wore the old wide leather belt with a brass buckle. When we were putting up the new cinema in Tillington Road he commented on the new building. “It’s a darned sight bigger inside than it is out.” Like many of Harry’s sayings it had its own logic. For a relatively small building it seemed surprisingly capacious inside. For Harry, George Garland was invariably the “geographer” not the photographer.

George came up to photograph my wife’s mother on a landmark birthday. He had a glass of wine or two then found that his lenses had steamed up. All ninety candles on the cake had to be blown out to allow the photograph to be taken.

Fred Streeter? I never really came across him before he became famous. When he did, people would come to Petworth on the assumption that the Gardens were public property. It was something of a shock for them to find they couldn’t just stroll about at will.

When I first went to work I was a few months at Petworth Engineering Co. in East Street (now an Antique Market). Then I worked for Mr Whittington next to the present Cottage Museum. Jack Slee, Cecil Sadler and Bill Vincent were other employees. Mr and Mrs Jeffries lived at 346 High Street then; they would have taken over from Mrs Cummings who was a little before my time. Mr Jeffries worked for Mr Howard the Tillington builder but also as steward at the British Legion. I imagine that 346 High Street was rented from Leconfield.

Hilda Harnett? Yes, we did a certain amount of work at Barnsgate. I always liked her. In latter years she’d have her meals at the Star and I’d often see her making her way there at midday.”

Jack Holloway and the Editor were mulling over magazine 139 and other magazines past and pending.

Petworth and the Battle of Britain

This is the story of the part played near Petworth during the Battle of Britain.

During the summer of 1940, the Battle of Britain was fought with intense ferocity by the RAF, magnificent in thrashing the German air forces. On one particular day, soldiers stationed near Petworth took up arms and participated.

To the east of the town, near the Welldiggers Public House, a searchlight detachment was sited. It consisted of nine gunners with a bombardier in charge. It was part of B



Mrs. Fanny Wilson (89) is pictured cutting the cake at the Tillington Darby and Joan Club Christmas party at the Village Hall, Tillington, last week.

Newspaper photograph from the 1960s. Courtesy of Jack Holloway.

Troop, 461 Battery, 70 Searchlight Regiment, Royal Artillery. It was a territorial unit from the Chichester area.

I was nineteen years of age, a gunner, and a member of that detachment. We had been mobilised on the 24th August 1939, and considered ourselves well trained in the operation of the equipment. This consisted of a 90mm searchlight with a range of some 20,000 feet, a sound locator, a generator, a Lewis gun, and our small arms. We were a pretty informal crowd, knew each other well, shared duties, and were reasonably contented with life, except for a lack of sleep. We lived in a wooden hut, had a cookhouse made of corrugated iron sheet, a radio tent, and water from the nearby cottage well.

We had been sited at Petworth for some months. Local people were very good with the younger element bringing us eggs, cakes, etc. We enjoyed bantering with the girls over the field gate, but, as we were only allowed singly off site for two hours at a time, our social activities were somewhat restricted. We enjoyed local chat in the single bar of the Welldiggers, but, on fourteen shillings a week, with deductions for boots, and national insurance stamps, we were not wealthy!

Life was somewhat unusual. The searchlight projector was manned at dusk, and remained as such throughout the night. We longed for inclement weather with 10/10th cloud when we were stood down, and could sleep. On this particular site we had moderate success in locating night raiding aircraft.

We had breakfast at midday, trained and maintained the equipment throughout the afternoon, and looked forward to our main meal. During the night, we had cocoa, hearty bread and cheese, occasionally some corned beef sandwiches. Most welcome.

Throughout the day, in two hour periods, we took turns at air sentry duty in a sandbag enclosure with the Lewis gun, and another radio sentry in contact with troop headquarters near Storrington.

During the afternoon of the 16th August, air activity was constant. Although the day was sunny and bright, the cloud base was low, although clearer to the east of our location. I was radio sentry and the bombardier was air sentry with the Lewis gun loaded with 50 rounds of 303 ammunition. I remember that the road (A283) alongside our site was clear of traffic except for the grandmother, the wife, and two small children returning to the Welldiggers with shopping from Petworth.

Suddenly, to the west of the town, a Heinkel III appeared, flying directly above the church steeple. It was flying very slowly, somewhat erratically and low. It followed the road, heading east, and passing directly overhead. So, we opened-fire, using all the ammunition we had and, scored a hit, aft of the right hand side of the trailing edge of the wing. By the time we had placed the second pas of ammunition on the Lewis gun, the plane was out of range. However, it was well within the range of the RAF. A Hurricane appeared and blasted the Heinkel, which, I understand, eventually crashed near Kirdford. I was somewhat excited, and gave a running commentary over the radio, thereby breaking all the rules by jamming Troop HQ and the other detachments, but they all listened and enjoyed the break in the day's routine. I was suitably ticked off by the Troop Commander on his next visit.

As soon as we opened fire, the Welldiggers family scattered along the road, and into the

hedges, spilling the groceries, and skirts flying. Later, this small action gave them a good opportunity of regaling the regulars and others with their experience. It also gave us a pint or two when the time permitted. No doubt, the story was somewhat enhanced in the telling.

Thus, Petworth played its part in the early days of the Battle of Britain, but, no mention was ever made of our efforts. As far as I know, this is the first time it has been recorded.

John Dobson

John is the elder brother of Joyce and Jim Dobson (of Petworth Scout fame). He remained in the army, retiring as a full colonel with the OBE. He and his wife Jean live at Haslemere.

All new, nothing new

Jonathan Newdick's next exhibition at Petworth House will be a display of two very different aspects of his work. On the one hand he will be showing a series of pencil drawings of local barns and farm buildings, considered and accurately observed. The main thrust, however, will be quite different from these: a set of pictures produced by the solvent transfer process which are based chiefly around pin-ups and the conflict of war. The editor visited Jonathan in his studio to discover more about these apparently contradictory approaches.

"An exhibition has an economic aspect; it has to. But this is only part of the story. It is a chance for me to see my work outside the confines of the studio, to strip away the subjective element. It's a moment of truth, possibly uncomfortable and never predictable. Also for this exhibition it's a sort of dummy run – there are plans to move the pin-ups/conflicts part of the show to Berlin later in the year.

"An exhibition must also have the power to jolt the imagination. And I do mean 'jolt' – I don't mean 'shock'. Shock in contemporary art has become all too familiar so that people have become inured to it, anaesthetised almost. I want to arouse the viewers' emotions, to subliminally encourage them to generate their own narratives from the starting point of my ideas. It does happen: a couple of years ago a lady came into one of my Petworth House shows, spent some time looking around and finally came over to Fulvia and me at the desk. She had tears in her eyes. 'Thank you,' she said. 'Thank you.' There was another occasion in Venice when I was showing some large charcoal drawings of that city which Venetians call 'La Serenissima' (meaning 'the most serene'). A Venetian noblewoman came in – La Contessa something – I can't remember her name. After looking at every drawing with some care she said to me rather severely in Venetian 'You have undressed La Serenissima. But you have found her soul.' And she left. Better than selling and certainly more memorable.

"Anyway, that's all in the past. Let me try and explain what I am attempting to say in this next exhibition: for some time I have been uneasy about the apparent perfection of contemporary imagery. The image, cinematic, televisual or printed has never been more 'perfect' but to my mind it is increasingly losing touch with reality. Life is not perfect, and neither is what we see. In our daily lives what we see is centrally well-defined but is always less clear at the edges. Peripherally we see only sets of suggestions, often blurred, always indistinct. I want to question this assumed perfection: to find reality in the imperfect. Also for some time I have been thinking about re-considering pop art, the art of my childhood and youth, I suppose. I still remember the thrill of discovering Robert Rauschenberg in a library book while still at school, (I think you could legitimately call Rauschenberg the father of solvent transfer) and after fifty years it would seem reasonable for me, on a personal level, to re-assess pop art and its aims.

"So my starting point was twofold: this dualism between dull perfection and rather more rewarding imperfection alongside the dualism between pop art-like images of pin-ups and photographs of war and conflict. Certainly a contrast here. And yet the pin-up of course has always been an essential part of the foot-soldier's armoury. The fighting soldier in the dust of Afghanistan, the swamps of Vietnam, or the trenches in the Great War was, even though history mythologises, in severe reality. A reality which at times (probably frequently) must have seemed distinctly (or hazily) unreal. The pin-up on the other hand really is unreal and for the young soldier she becomes a benevolent and enduring comforter and a foil to the blood on the clay and the apparent stupidity of orders.

"Having arrived at my contrasting themes the next question was how to present them, and, before that, where to find images of conflicts and pin-ups. Clearly they would have to be from existing printed sources – on the one hand I am too old to be fooling around in a studio with glamour models (and anyway I wanted historical as well as contemporary images) and on the other hand I don't suppose Air Chief Marshall Sir Jock Stirrup would appreciate my getting in his way in Afghanistan, even if I had the stomach for it. Besides, one of the points of pop art is that its visual references are pre-set. Ever since I was at college, and before that, I have been keeping press-cuttings – everything from religion and philosophy to gardening, from art to zoology (yes, really – that's not just a convenient A to Z!). No end of pictures there, and as well as trawling through that lot I have been through magazines, books, post cards and also part of the Paul Arden archive (thanks to Toni Arden's interest in the project). Also the internet of course, but the problem with the internet is that there is so much dross to wade through before you find anything with potential. It's a source you can't ignore though and in a way I sort of like Google: you can enter your name and discover all sorts of stuff about yourself that you never knew or had forgotten!

"This picture research was a tedious process indeed (and, in view of the nature of the imagery I sought, a sometimes harrowing one) but I eventually found what I needed and I then edited my selection to 178 war pictures and the same number of pin-ups. Why 178? Because as well as the pictures on the gallery walls I will be producing three books and I need a total of 356 pictures for all of these. One book will be devoted to pin-ups, one to



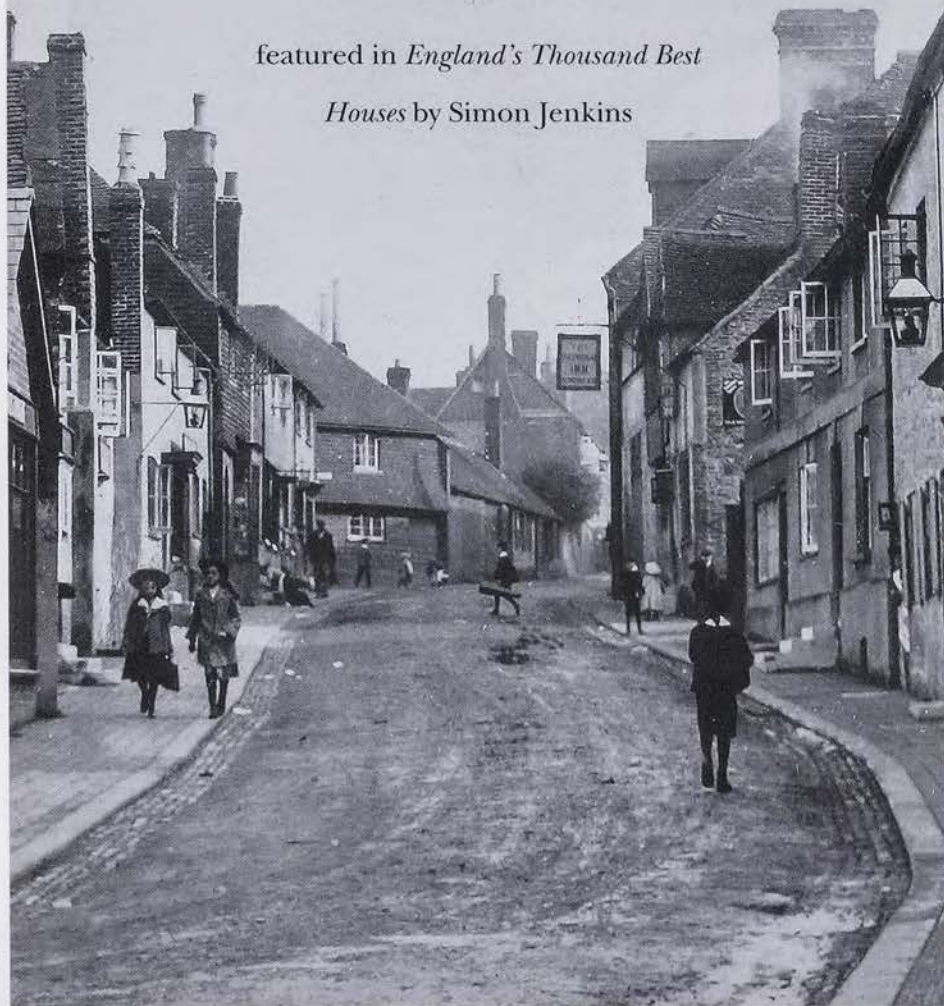
Original postcard showing High Street about 1905.
See "I've got a cat you can have ..." page 9.

The Petworth Cottage Museum

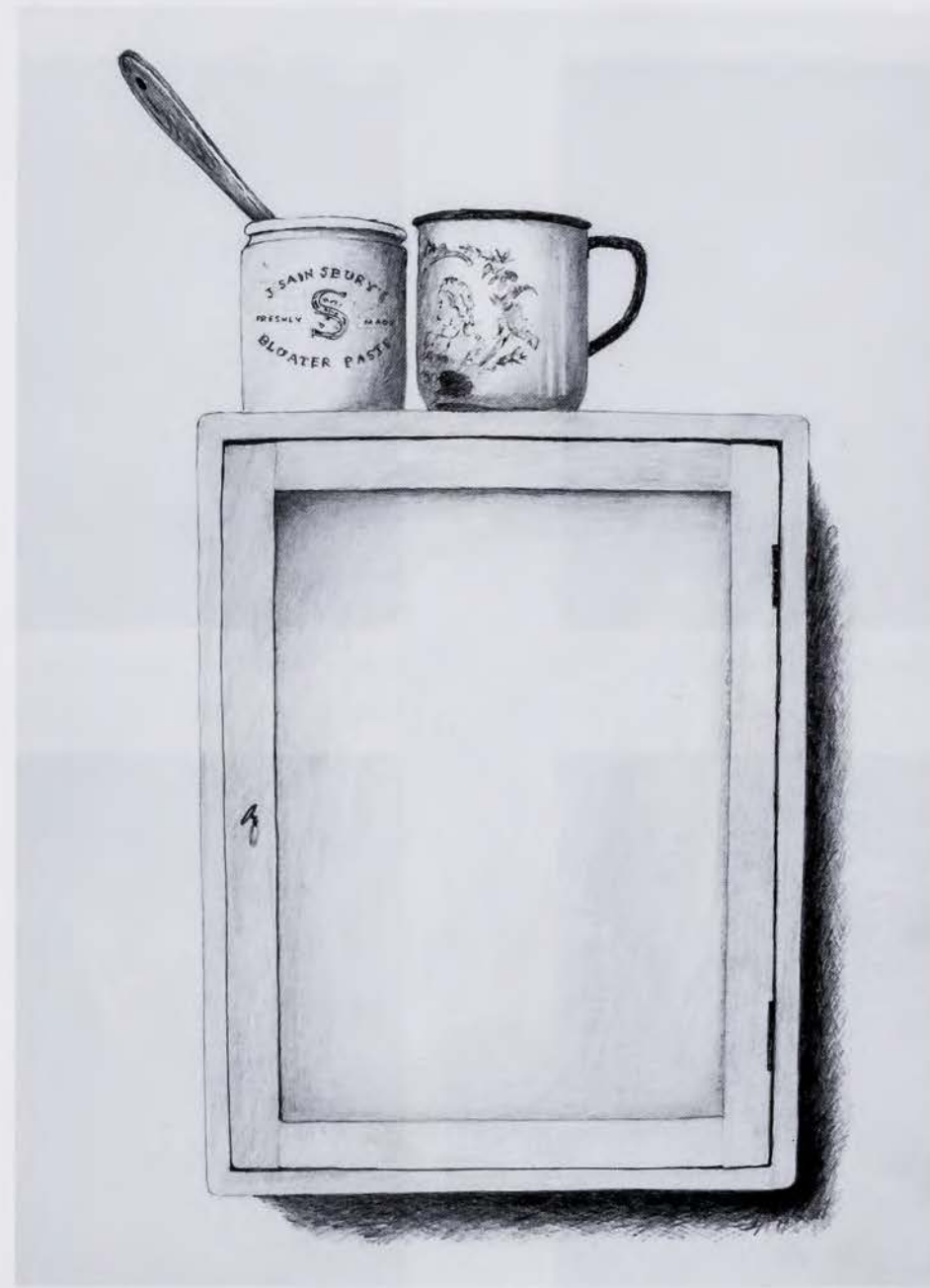
at 346 High Street

featured in *England's Thousand Best*

Houses by Simon Jenkins

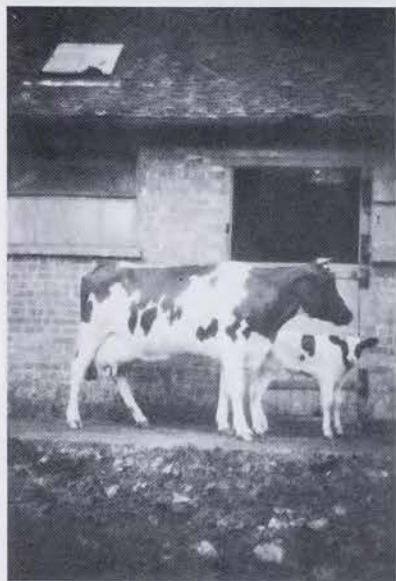


New Cottage Museum Guide cover:
See "I've got a cat you can have ..." page 9.



A wall cupboard at the Petworth Cottage Museum. Pencil drawing by Jonathan Newdick.
See "I've got a cat you can have ..." page 9.

See "Elms straddling the road" page 24.



Calves at Barnsgate.



A churn trolley.

See "Elms straddling the road" page 24.



Hay-tubs in yard.



Calving in the high hedge.



Mr and Mrs Harnett.



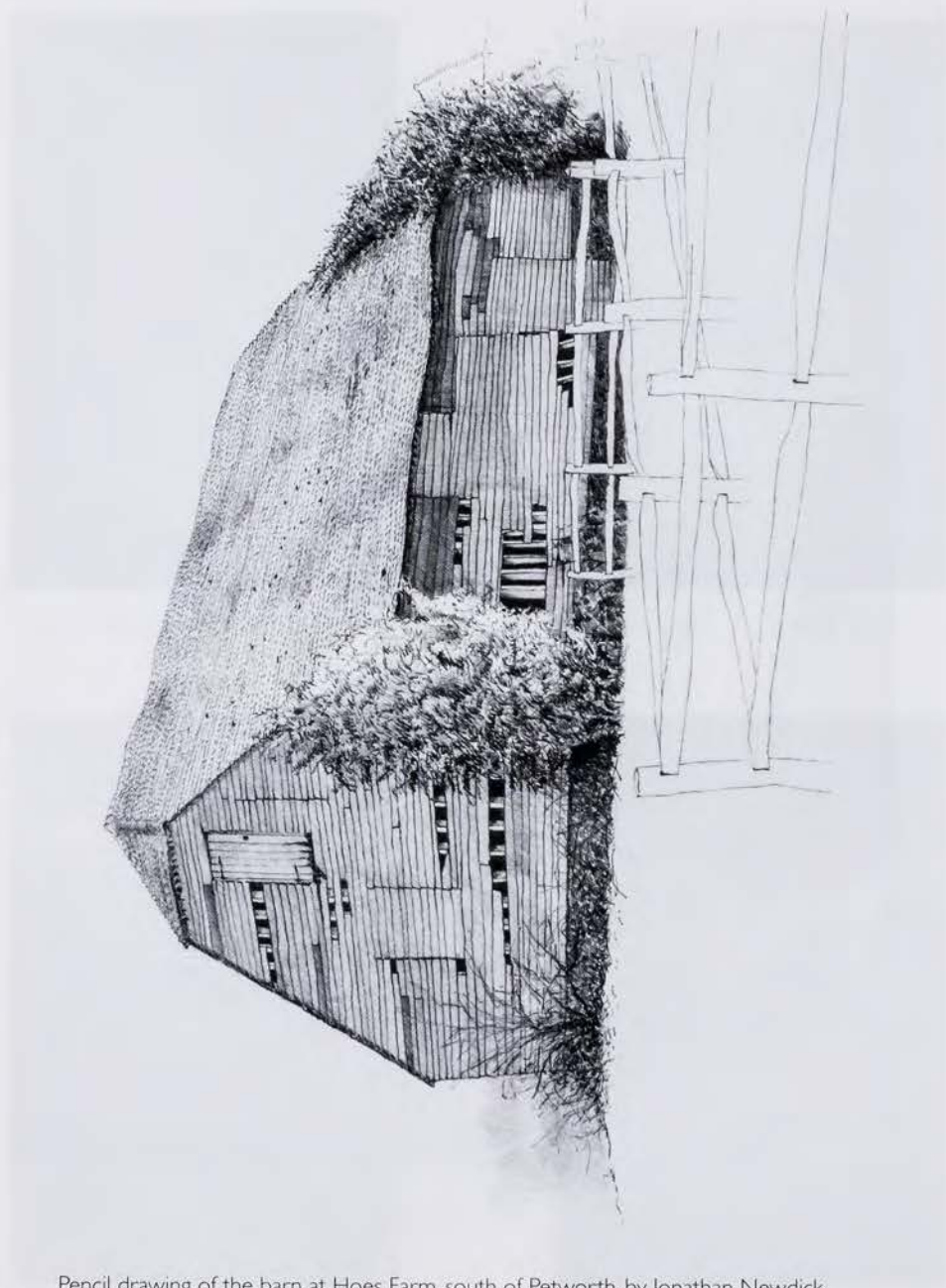
Hilda Harnett with calf.



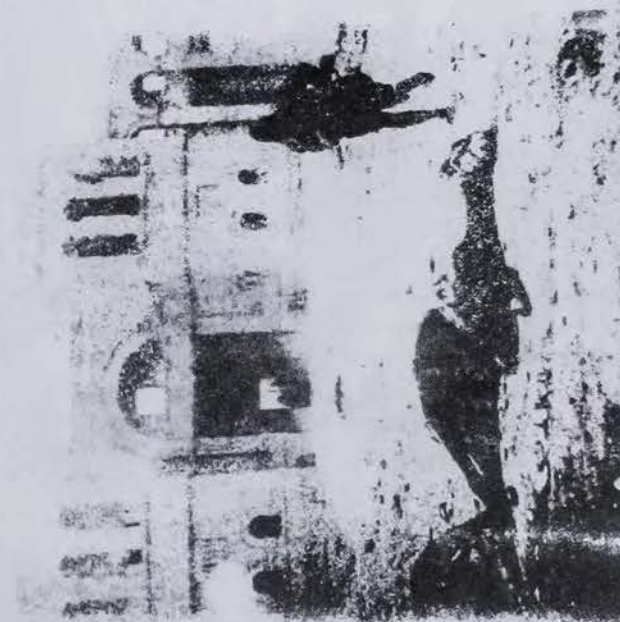
Cow, calf and Byworth elms.



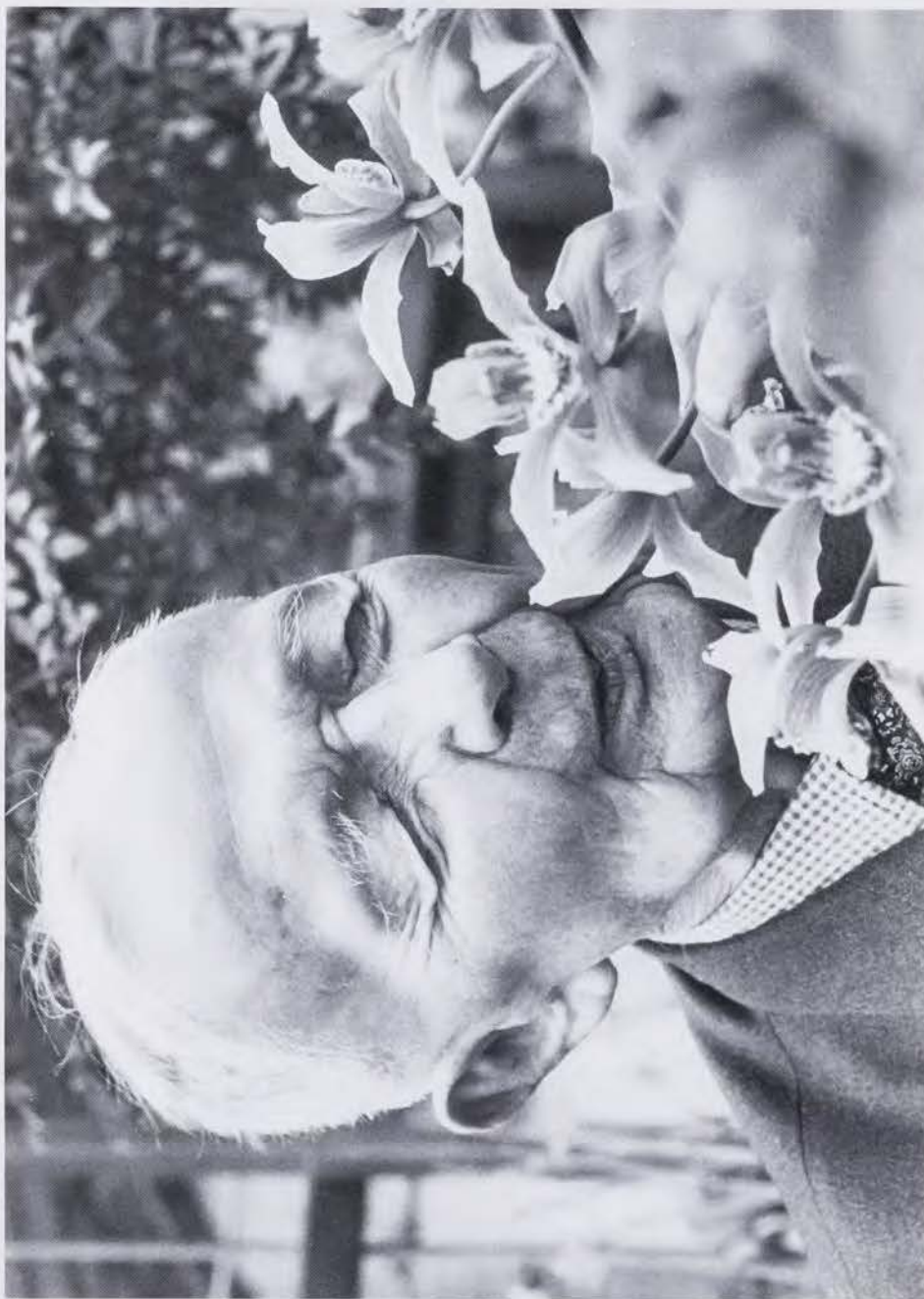
General view of cowyard complex, now largely gone.



Pencil drawing of the barn at Hoes Farm, south of Petworth, by Jonathan Newdick.
See "All new, nothing new" page 21.



One of Jonathan Newdick's solvent transfer pictures from his conflicts/pin-ups series.
See "All new, nothing new" page 21.



Fred Streeter in old age. An unattributed agency picture from the 1970s.

conflicts and the other to a combination of both. I then photographed all these pictures, put them into the computer, cropped them to the correct proportions for the finished works and retouched them where necessary. This was confined mainly to reducing colour and adjusting (mostly increasing) the contrast. Then I printed them all to about post-card size and lastly photocopied them to their final, larger, sizes. At each of these stages, and particularly at the photocopying stage I am losing image quality. I am happy to see it go, because as perfection lessens, so power and authority seem to increase. Within reason of course; you can't take this too far. Remember too that I am often dealing with fairly poor originals anyway. Don McCullin's photographs from Vietnam are understandably grainy – that is often their strength, and photographs of Brigitte Bardot from a 1962 *Paris Match* or of Billy Fury from *Rave* magazine of the same period aren't all that good either, so I'm often dealing with imperfections from the outset.

"My reason for using photocopies is fundamental. They become the bases of the final pictures and the important point is that photocopy toner can be dissolved with acetone. This is what I do: I lay the photocopy face down on my paper, anchor it with weights to prevent it moving and then brush acetone on to the back of it. The acetone seeps through the photocopy, dissolves the toner and I exert pressure on it with a wooden roller, in so doing transferring the photocopy image on to my paper. I have to work very quickly as acetone evaporates almost immediately. I then peel off the photocopy and it is only now that I know the result. Before this juncture I really have no idea – all too often it's a disappointment: an image that I thought might be ideal simply doesn't perform for some reason. The rejection ratio is high and my paper expensive but there is no other way. Proofing would be pointless as each transfer from an identical photocopy will be quite unlike the previous one. No two are ever the same. But this is important, this element of serendipity and chance. Anyone today with a digital camera, an Apple Mac, the right software and the belief that sitting before a computer screen for hours on end is somehow creative (it isn't, it's manipulative) can produce a perfect image. But perfection is at best dull and is often dead. The only real perfection is imperfection. The handsome face is a bland face and of use only for a Gillette advertisement. But a scar on that face raises its natural beauty to a higher level by creating intrigue, questions and narratives. Whatever the cliché says, beauty is not only skin deep.

"But, and this also is important, you must not confuse imperfection with carelessness. The solvent transfer process is unpredictable, often, as I have said, disappointing, but I do take as much care as the process allows, especially with the editing and frequent discarding of final pictures. It's all a bit like darts. These pictures appear at first to be prints but, as the results are so different with each transfer, each one is unique, original. Throw one dart and you've got a double top but the next throw, which appears identical to the first, produces a five perhaps, or a thirteen. The same process with the same equipment giving quite different results.

"I've not said much about the other side of the exhibition, the farm buildings. In a way, a rather unexpected way perhaps, they do have a parallel with the pin-up/conflict pictures. They are, after all, about contrasts and imperfections. A 200-year-old barn will, of its nature, be imperfect, redundant perhaps, possibly irrelevant to contemporary agriculture,

anachronistic. There will be tiles missing from the roof, weatherboarding hanging loose from a rusting nail. And above all there will be the encroaching ivy, brambles and elder. These are the scars on the handsome face and a perfectly restored barn would not begin to hold the same interest.

"The title of the exhibition? 'All new, nothing new'. It's a reference to the fact that while all the work is new – produced within the last year, its roots are age old, looking back to the pop art of the 1960s and beyond. To Spain in the 1930s and to 1914-18, to conflicts old and more recent and to the transient and timeless allure of the pin-up, all forged together by the dissolving art of the transfer process and the continuing search for 'imperfection'.

'All new, nothing new' is at Petworth House from July 31 until August 11 during normal House opening hours.

Elms straddling the road

I did not know Hilda Harnett at all well, although, in fact, my memory of her goes back to the early 1950s. She would bring eggs into the Pound Street shop for us to sell. At the time it wasn't really my concern: Hilda was always referred to as "Miss Harnett" and I had the impression of a certain reserve. A rather smart lady for someone bringing in farm eggs, I thought, or perhaps I theorise, memory isn't always reliable. How she came in from Byworth I've no idea. Eventually she stopped coming, perhaps when the Harnett family left Byworth. I was away a lot and that was that.

Clearly those early days were not completely forgotten, for, years later, late 1970s perhaps, Hilda stopped me in the street. "I have left you some photographs in my will." She did not elaborate. I remember the occasion but it seemed of no great significance.

Earlier this year, I received a telephone call from Hilda's solicitors. Miss Harnett had died and there was a box of photographs waiting for me at the office. When I collected it, it was initially something of a disappointment: modern colour prints, holiday snaps, unidentified family pictures, very few of any age, and one or two newspaper cuttings of family interest. And all jumbled together as if tumbled out of a drawer – possibly this is what had happened. The Harnetts had left Byworth in the mid-1950s and moved to Selham. There were a few black and white pictures of the Halfway Bridge area in the 1960s and a number of family colour snaps.

One seam of material, however, stood apart, a mere fraction of the whole, almost a hundred brownie-type snaps. Perhaps 10% had "Barnsgate" written in capitals in biro on the back, while some twenty carried a pencil date. Only one had location and date. The earliest dated photograph came from September 1939 and there seemed to be no obvious reason to suppose that any photographs were earlier. There were odd prints, marked 1947, 1948 and 1949, eight from 1950 (May, June, August) and one from May 31st 1955. None were dated from the war years. It seemed a reasonable assumption that prints in the same format might also be of Barnsgate, and with two or three exceptions this turned out to be

the case.

The Barnsgate farm buildings provided the basic subject matter, while the farm fields over the main road by the Cottage Hospital, crucial to the farm, were represented but offered less scope for the camera. It would of course be the twice daily Odyssey of the Barnsgate cows, down the track from the Cottage Hospital and across the main road into Byworth that George Garland had found so attractive in the 1930s. Here was an undying symbol of that older rural England to which newspaper readers (and editors) were already looking back.

How Hilda Harnett evaluated the photographs I did not know, but I can only imagine that she realised that in the Barnsgate snaps she had something that transcended mere family. Here, unassuming, unselfconscious, tacit, was a working farm in operation. Why were the pictures taken originally? A number showed a boy, ten or eleven years old perhaps, in shorts and snake-belt, a nephew perhaps enjoying a few days on the farm? Conceivably an evacuee, but more probably a relative. Were the 1939 pictures taken with a view to the time – September 1939? Equally were some of the later pictures taken as a memento when the family were about to leave?



Barnsgate Farm, Byworth about 1950.

Clearly Joan Dallyn who, with her husband Bob, had farmed Barnsgate after the Harnetts might be able to help. Stuart Dallyn had grown up there. They had no difficulty in identifying the great bulk of the snaps as being of Barnsgate – just one or two seemed to reflect the Downs country. As I had suspected, we did indeed have an unpretentious,

intimate picture of farm life in the 1940s and the early 1950s. Although the Harnett family seem to have been very private people, Mr Harnett had been churchwarden for years before Byworth church finally closed in the 1930s.

The Dallyns had quickly had to adjust. By the mid-1950s the Garland idyll was running on empty. The old passage from the Cottage Hospital lane was impossibly dangerous and newer Byworth residents were all too aware that cows coming through the village street were inclined to leave evidence of their passing – something George Garland had contrived to ignore. Initially access to the Byworth cowsheds was altered to come out further up the Lowheath Road but it was still difficult and the authorities were not prepared to give permission for a sign on the road. Stalls would be built in the fields and the crossing avoided.



Snow on the mounting block at Barnsgate.

It was clear from the photographs that the Harnetts were excellent farmers of their time; the animals – pigs, sheep, chickens, hens and horses were sturdy and well looked-after. There were suggestions that the move from Byworth was a wrench – it would have been surprising were it not. Perhaps the photographs themselves indicate a certain lingering affection. Changing over was a gradual process: the Harnetts left three ricks of rye to be threshed after they had left, Wellers of Graffham came to do the job. Similarly, according to the old custom, that year's apples in the orchard belonged to the Harnetts¹. The habits of a lifetime died hard – for a while Mr Harnett would come over from Selham in his car and sit there as if guarding his old haunts. A little disconcerting for the new tenants and not viewed with favour by Mr Shelley the Leconfield agent.

There isn't space to reproduce the photographs in any number but those we do reproduce give at least a flavour of the whole. During the Harnetts' time Barnsgate was a farm of high hedges, a paradise of wild life. One difficulty was that cows would get right into the hedges to calve. If the dated pictures tend to reflect high summer, there are also a few snow pictures. One suspects that Barnsgate with its flagstoned kitchen could be cold. There are small pointers to a different, more frugal, way of life, the geraniums growing in a tea-chest, the corrugated iron background to the cow stalls, the obsolete stable building, the early-type combine harvester, the ivy covering the back door, removed by the new tenants, the cow with twins in the high hedge. And Byworth itself, the small stand of elms just a little further down toward Hallgate. Some pictures show them effectively overhanging the road. They were long gone when the Dallyns came, Stuart could remember standing on the rotting stumps. Probably when the elms were half straddling the road no bus could pass through the village.

Now the entire cow stall complex has gone. Mr Harnett, originally a Wiltshire man, had come from Hampshire as part of the great eastward movement of farmers to be nearer the London markets during the depression. The Barnsgate photographs are a fortunate survival, a witness to an era and we have to be grateful for Hilda Harnett's foresight.

P.

1. See PSM 139 for the situation at Bognor Mills a half century before.

Fred Streeter

My first contact with Mr Streeter would have been in 1943 when a P.O. telegram boy. There were few telephones and I would be cycling 8 hours a day. Fred Streeter would sometimes receive 2 or 3 telegrams a week from the B.B.C. or the London Evening Standard asking if he could write an article or appear on a programme. These telegrams were usually reply paid (12 words for 1/6d, 1d per extra word). If he was not in the house Mrs Streeter could usually tell me where I might find him, we would then go to his office, part of a sunken greenhouse long since demolished. Having written his reply he would offer me whatever was in season by way of fruit – a fresh peach, a couple of pears or plums. On one occasion a basket of apples was in evidence and I was invited to help myself. Having put one in each trouser pocket he said, "Is that all you're going to take boy? Stuff some in your tunic over the belt." The result was a Billy Bunter appearance on return to the office.

He was a Vice President of the Village Produce Association, now the Horticultural Society, for about 4 years from 1952. Reading the Minutes of those days, he did give one talk but took no other part in Association activities.

This seems to have been very much his approach to Petworth in general, I am sure very few people would have known him.

Don Simpson

Beyond the Lombardy Poplars

For the year 2000 I offered pen-portraits of five significant Petworth personalities of the last century. The choice was arbitrary, even, perhaps, contentious. If it was, I heard no more. John Penrose had been rector before and during the 1914-1918 war and seems now to bestride the period, Violet, Lady Leconfield, is through her personality and her position, an enduring influence between the wars, George Garland died in 1978, but his legacy remains, while Gwenda Morgan, reticent enough in a local context, enjoys a national reputation as a wood engraver. I was fortunate to know the two last personally. Fred Streeter would have been another choice but I had already given a biographical sketch, and printed an interview with Florie Hallett his long-term housekeeper¹. For the former article I had used two books reflecting his life:

Geoffrey Eley: *And here is Mr Streeter* (1950)

Frank Hennig: *Cheerio Frank, Cheerio Everybody* (1976)

Both books were opportunist in the sense that they came into being to satisfy a demand, in Eley's case to give a background to "the nation's favourite gardener." Streeter was a

national phenomenon. If I mentioned Petworth when living away I would be met with, "High Wall and Fred Streeter," at one time he was almost synonymous with Petworth. The construction of Eley's book was a little curious; it was effectively an "autobiographical biography." Long passages were written in longhand by Streeter himself and posted to Eley as the book progressed. Not perhaps a recipe for objectivity, but then objectivity was not what the book's potential readers were looking for.

Frank Hennig's book reflects the long twilight of Streeter's media career. After a spell in television in the 1950s he would retreat again into radio, broadcasting more or less until he died on All Saint's day 1975 at the age of ninety-eight. Hennig's book also reflects great changes in the gardens at Petworth House, the breakdown of an older order and to an extent the myth replacing the man. While there is the occasional veiled reference to the discordant, the book reflects a kind of quietus. It appeared soon after Streeter's death. Brief mention is made of his experience in France during the 1914-1918 war, his role as a Special Constable during the tragedy of Petworth's bombed Boys' School, or his decision (not perhaps unreasonable) to stop produce leaving the gardens for selected members of the Estate hierarchy. His decisive action on this when he arrived at Petworth would be a bone of contention for years. Genial as he might seem on radio or television, Streeter was a hard taskmaster and a man who knew how to keep his distance. I wrote in 1987, "Streeter's broadcasting persona was an amiable one but his hard early years had called for more than an affable smile."

Streeter's first steps on a broadcasting career were very much a matter of chance. It was 1935 and Mr Middleton the radio gardener thought he might be useful as an occasional contributor. Florie Hallett gives the standard account:²

"He'd begun his radio career by working once or twice with Mr Middleton, the BBC gardener. The first time he was on the air with Mr Middleton he walked up and down outside the BBC for an hour without plucking up the courage to enter the building. Mr Middleton and the producer were wondering where he'd got to. 'Have you seen a man called Fred Streeter outside?' they asked the commissionaire. 'Well, there's been a man walking about outside for an hour or so,' he said. The producer went outside to bring in the reluctant broadcaster." If the story has gained a little over the years, there is no reason to suppose that it is essentially inaccurate; Streeter's initial credentials as a media personality were fragile indeed. Diffident as he might have been in 1935, his unselfconscious manner and encyclopaedic knowledge of horticulture clearly marked him out as unusual. After a while Mr Middleton may have wondered whether his guest was a little more successful than he had anticipated, who was Elijah and who was Elisha? When Middleton died a few years later, Streeter took over his mantle.

My own personal acquaintance with Streeter and his wife Hilda, goes back to the early war years. Always a fit man, although he had over the years survived some life-threatening illnesses, he would be at this time a sprightly figure coming towards his mid-sixties. His broadcasting career had given him a certain aura, but from a Petworth point of view he remained very much on the other side of the wall. If he had been little seen in the town before the war, his senior wartime position in the Special Constabulary³ would bring him into contact with a wider Petworth.

Mr and Mrs Streeter were regular visitors to my grandparents at York Cottage¹ in Pound Street, coming through the Armoury gate and across the road. In turn my grandparents, my grandfather particularly, had the Armoury key and would go over to the Streeters. There was nothing unusual in this: both men were Leconfield heads of department and, leaving Streeter's radio celebrity to one side, both were of similar standing, having a team of workers under them, as did Augustin Wilcox the head forester just up the road at Magnolia. My grandfather had run the private Leconfield water supply since at least the turn of the century. Both men, as was Wilcox, were strict, peremptory and utterly incorruptible. On estate business Wilcox famously refused to handle money in any shape or form. To a child, such figures seemed impervious to time. In fact by Leconfield standards Streeter, who had come to Petworth in the mid-1920s would be something of a parvenu.⁵

From the first floor window at York Cottage it was possible to look out over the high wall of Pound Street up and down which the wartime tanks rumbled over the broken tarmac, and into Mr Streeter's mysterious domain, while the Lombardy poplars in the background seemed the very boundary of the known world. The Streeters had two evacuees from Peckham, one, Thelma Hewitt, I remember particularly, but both were a few years older than I. The great thing about a visit to the Streeters was the chance to see Mrs Streeter's tortoise and parrot. Even then I sensed that Hilda Streeter, while no media personality, was as much of a "character" as her husband, perhaps more so. Something of a loose cannon perhaps outside her own preserve. Society was more rigid then. I remember a curious incident at York Cottage, at some kind of informal get-together. For reasons I can now only conjecture, a senior member of the Estate staff was known as "Old Itchy-bottom." Whether this soubriquet was general or a coinage of Hilda's I cannot say. A rather ponderous member of the local business community was warming himself in front of the open fire. He turned as Hilda entered the room and she observed, "Oh, I thought you were Old Itchy-bottom." Mild as this might seem in 2010, the gentleman concerned took umbrage and the matter was discussed when all had left. If nothing else a comment on 1940s manners.

Fred Streeter was clearly not aloof from Estate politics as a glance at his letters to "Mrs" Leversuch the housekeeper after she had left Petworth shows clearly enough⁶, while the repercussions of his 1920s embargo on free produce from the house gardens would rumble on into the 1950s. Streeter was known also for his violent aversion to smoking.⁷

Young housemaids at Petworth might find him distant. Ivy Richardson in the late 1920s incurred his displeasure by picking some daffodils. "He said they were spreading pollen to other flowers." To Dorothy Lording⁸ he seemed a little moody, "people never quite knew how to take him." Occasionally she'd be sent down to collect something from the Gardens, more usually one of the gardeners would come up with it. "Vegetables for the kitchen or flowers for decoration." Streeter had a somewhat sardonic sense of humour. My grandfather had always wanted to have an espalier Cox. Eventually it was all set up, wires tautened across from metal pipes and the seedling obtained from Mr Streeter. The young plant grew well and in time it was ready to fruit. Unfortunately it was no Cox and the labour expended had been in vain. A mistake? My grandfather had his doubts.

By the early 1950s my grandfather had died and Fred Streeter was moving into the new medium of television. The adjustment appears to have been seamless. It may be because of this that the Streeters had installed a television set (black and white of course) in their sitting room.

Wednesday half-day was sacrosanct in those days and Midhurst Grammar School worked half-day Wednesday and Saturday. If England were playing football at home the arrangement was that I would go to the Streeters to watch, up the long drive where the espalier pears flourished on the high wall. Mrs Streeter would usher me into the sitting room and carry on with what she was doing. Fred Streeter would be working outside. An indelible memory is of watching awestruck as Hungary destroyed England's record of being unbeaten at home against foreign opposition. Puskas, Kocsis, Hidegkuti, Grosics, Boszik . . . the names are still imprinted on the mind.

With my grandfather gone and my grandmother not well, the Streeters became more remote. These were changing times in the gardens, I was away, and Fred Streeter's media star shone ever more brightly.

* * * * *

Years later I alighted at Pulborough from the London train to wait for the Petworth bus outside the station café. To my left, alone, thin, pinched and apparently in a world of his own, stood Fred Streeter. Just the two of us. Should I breach that solitude? But Fred Streeter wasn't the Fred Streeter I had once known, he was now, to an extent at least, a creation of the media. To accost him now would be perhaps to trespass on that new persona. I said nothing. We boarded the bus separately. He, like me, had found a world beyond the Lombardy poplars. I would never be as close to him again.

1. PSM 50 December 1987.

2. PSM 50 page 26.

3. See the curious incident described by Jumbo Taylor – PSM 26 page 25-26 (December 1981).

4. Now Moon Cottage.

5. According to Eley, Streeter started at Petworth in March 1929. This is clearly wrong. Streeter was writing for St Mary's parish magazine in 1927. He had left Petworth to work for Fogwills the seedsmen soon after arriving but this did not work out and, a little surprisingly, Lord Leconfield took him back. Neither Eley nor Hennig make any reference to this.

6. See PSM 92 pages 28 and 29 (June 1998).

7. See Bill Westlake in PSM 86 (December 1996).

8. PSM 85 page 30 (September 1996).

P.

An Elevated Staff

I often wonder how many people recall the bell that hung on the garden wall by the Grand Entrance Lodge in Park Road. Such was its familiarity that it was hardly noticed by local people and yet each morning Monday to Saturday at 7 o'clock the lodge keeper would ring the bell as a reminder to the estate employees that the working day would shortly begin. I believe the bell ringing ceased during the war and like many such practices was not reinstated after the end of hostilities.

Father worked in the hunt stables and looked after Lord Leconfield's horses. He was very close to Charles Leconfield and would ride with him as a sort of factotum, opening gates and such like for his lordship as well as generally ensuring that he came to no harm. Many years later I was told that Father was known rather mischievously as 'John the Baptist' by some of the other huntsmen, for like the Baptist he would 'go ahead to prepare the way of the Lord'. I can remember my grandfather being lodge keeper at the Grand Entrance in the days when he would have to wear full livery when attending the gates. The uniform was a long blue coat with a rosette and a top hat.

I was born at 300 North Street, not a stone's throw from where we are sitting now. The old cottage was at one time part of The Running Horse beerhouse though that was long before my time. My memories of the cottage are dim though I can remember Dora Hill or Ivy Franklin taking me for walks in the brick courtyard. Sadly both Dora and Ivy have now gone. I was only a toddler when we moved down to Station Road to Littlecote Lodge. The Lodge was much more modern than the cottage in North Street and had a good garden which suited Father. Mr Griffith the Leconfield agent lived at Littlecote and later it would be Captain Briggs followed by Mr. Shelley. Of course there are two lodges at Littlecote and we lived in the north one which was much newer than the other and a Mr Stratton who was gardener at Littlecote lived in the other with his wife and daughter. I believe that they moved away sometime after the war.

For one reason or another we seemed to move about quite a bit. I suppose that lots of Leconfield families did. After all, you would need a house that suited your needs. We spent a good few years in the cottage opposite the entrance to the Estate Yard in Park Road. This property had a long front garden and went with Castle's Garage, the present Market Square Garage. The cottage was not needed by the garage and as, like most properties in Petworth, it belonged to Lord Leconfield there was no reason why we couldn't live there. Besides it had hot running water and an upstairs bathroom both of which would have been great luxuries to Mother. We also lived in what is now called Chantry Cottage just a few yards up the road towards the Grand Entrance. Chantry Cottage had no garden to speak of though there were two allotments in Station Road that went with it. In those days it was important that a house had either a decent garden or an allotment.

The Iron Room was home to many of the activities that went on in Petworth when I was growing up. I suppose it was like a village hall rather than the much grander town hall. The town hall always seemed cold and draughty and was very rarely used except for rather posh events like balls and meetings of the Freemasons. Beneath the south-west

corner of the building was the then disused holding cell for prisoners awaiting trial at the county sessions. The cell was accessed by a long flight of steps then a short alleyway led into two stone lined cells each about six feet long by five feet wide. A raised stone slab ran along the side of each cell and into the wall at the end was set a heavy stone ring for securing the prisoners' shackles. No light could have entered the rooms and it must have been a miserable place to wait for one's fate to be decided. Thinking about the Iron Room brings back memories of trestle tables, tea parties and elderly ladies, of fairy cakes, sticky buns and conjuring tricks. The Boys' School concerts were also held in the Iron Room.

I went to the boys' school in North Street from the age of seven. There were three teachers, Mr. Howie Crawley taught standards one and two, Mr Court taught standards three and four and the headmaster Mr Charles Stevenson did standards five, six, seven and eight. The rooms had very high ceilings and large windows set high in the walls. The school was cool in the summer and bitterly cold during the winter, the only heating being a large cast iron wood and coal burner in each room. While standards one and two enjoyed a separate classroom the remaining standards shared a very large room which after assembly and prayers was divided by way of a folding screen which was drawn out from the east and west walls to join at the centre of the room. I mention this divider as adjusting it was very much a part of the daily routine carried out by certain privileged pupils.

The desks were all two-seaters made of a cast iron frame with a wooden top, seat and back support. Each desk had an inkwell and every student had a wooden dip pen with a replaceable nib. The desks also had a foot rest, a piece of wood fitted into cast hinges which allowed the rest to be set in two positions to accommodate the length of leg. As the desks were shared it was sensible to be sitting with a boy of the same height which allowed both pupils to use the foot rest in the same position. However a mismatch was common and this would result in a great deal of clanking of the rest as each boy tried to get comfortable. This competition invariably resulted in a rap over the knuckles with a wooden pointer for the offending boys.

The walk to school for some of the boys could be considerable and in the winter we would all arrive cold before even entering the building. There was no such thing as a nice warm cloakroom or warmed up classes, and for a lot of the children clothing was minimal and of a poor quality, often handed down from older brothers or even their father. We did however enjoy the luxury of a third of a pint of free milk each morning and on really cold days we would add a malted milk tablet which had been provided free by the 'Cow and Gate' company. Another one of these promotional freebies was Horlicks which was added to a jug of water which had been heated on the iron top of the room stove.

For a time we had a relief teacher for standards three and four though I cannot recall his name. The poor man had suffered terribly with shell shock during the Great War and occasionally he would freeze halfway through a sentence. Usually he would recover very quickly but now and again he would go into a complete trance. One of the boys would rush to get Mr Stevenson who would lead him off to rest and recover in his own time. Mr Stevenson was a very understanding headmaster even though situations like that must have put a great deal of strain on him.

For some reason or other which was never made clear we were not allowed to wear exposed braces during the summertime but were required to wear the school belt. Like most pupils we couldn't afford the belt and so my mother skilfully overcame this problem by sewing small slots in our shirts to let the braces attach to the buttons on our trousers while concealing them beneath our shirts.

The school toilets were dark and gloomy, full of dust and spiders and using them meant a walk out of the main building and almost out of the school grounds. The school gardens were down by the Horsham Road cemetery. We learnt to dig, rake and sow vegetables. I seem to remember Brussell sprouts and artichokes being grown. There was an old cast iron water pump in the middle of the plot and I often wonder what became of it.

I was still at school when I went to work part-time for Major Syer in his gents' outfitters in the Square. I was there for a couple of years just as the general boy but didn't like it much as I had to work evenings as well as all day Saturday. Eventually I left the shop and took a job looking after Mr Brown's chickens. He was Lady Leconfield's chauffeur and lived in the Garage Flat in the Cowyard at Petworth House. The chickens were kept in the Pleasure Gardens hard up against the wall just beside the flat and were probably quite a good little business. You see eggs were of course strictly rationed and my job was to get scraps from the Petworth House kitchens, grind them up, and feed them to the chickens. The Cowyard was until quite recently a very different place to how it is today. It was a working yard with workshops down the right-hand side and mechanics in the estate garage. The tunnel into the Park was strictly out of bounds to the public and the gates at the far end were always kept locked. I began my first proper job at the age of fourteen. I was to be employed in the Leconfield Estate building department in the carpenter's and joiner's workshop. Mr Godsalve was Clerk of Works with Arch Newman as carpenter and my immediate superior. Bill Moss had been carpenter at Petworth House but because of the war he was taken out of the house and sent down to the workshop to do necessary war work such as maintaining the farms and repairing bomb damage. The estate yard was a busy place then even though many men were away fighting. There were all different trades working there. There were blacksmiths, farriers, bricklayers, sawyers and painters to name just a few. Timber for building or carpentry was cut in the yard. Logs would come in from the estate and be sawn and prepared. Harry and Bert Peacock and Bill Gane were sawyers and rough carpenters. They would cut the logs to a certain length and a flat face would be hewn on one side only with an axe, this would stop the log from rolling about when being sawn. Much of this wood was used for rough carpentry such as field gates, picket fencing and paling.

Past the sawyer's shop was the smithy. Mr Ted Chaffer was blacksmith when I was there. He was perfectly capable of producing beautifully ornamental gates but much of his work was making gutter brackets, hooks and general ironwork. He also spent a good deal of his time refurbishing the cottage ranges which periodically required new oven boxes as well as grates for the fires. Ted would also make tools for a multitude of jobs, anything from tongs and pincers to crow bars. He would also sharpen chisels and such like. The forge fires were blown by hand operated bellows but shortly after I started these were replaced by an electric blower.

In the same shop as the blacksmith were the whitesmiths. In my day Mr. Daniel Crawley and George Simpson worked here. They were skilled at repairing such things as door locks and window catches along with most metal work that was needed at Petworth House. I believe that Mr Crawley built the steam powered water pump for the Petworth House fire engine. The pump had a vertical copper cylinder with gauges and safety valves which screamed when the pressure got dangerously high. This latter was a regular and uncontrollable occurrence not helped by Mr Crawley dying in 1942 without passing on detailed operating instructions to his colleagues. George Simpson worked alone during much of the war years until Mr Crawley's son Bill Crawley joined him in 1945.

Across the yard from the Smithy was the bricklayer's department. In 1942 Ernest Card was foreman and he had a staff that included Edwin Saunders, Claude Lucas, George Penfold and William (Chubby) Parker. The first three were bricklayers and the last two labourers. I would occasionally help Claude, George and Billy move bricks and tiles about. They were a light-hearted group and taught me how to throw and catch piles of bricks without pinching my fingers. My relationship with the bricklayers and their labourers was frowned upon by my superiors in the carpentry department as they felt that it was not socially acceptable. It seems that there was a loose social hierarchy on the estate which broadly speaking went carpenter, blacksmith, plumber, painter and lastly bricklayer.

Mr Frank Best was farrier in the yard and like the smiths he could work magic with an iron bar and a hammer. He wasn't a big man and yet he could handle the large mules still in use on the farms. When there was no shoeing to be done Frank would help in the painting department. He was also quite deaf but somehow managed to pick up the noise of an approaching aircraft before any of the rest of us could. In the Leconfield Estate pecking order farrier came below the blacksmith.

To the left of Frank's shop was the Estate Office presided over by Mr Hubert Whitcomb. He dealt with all of the estate paperwork as well as ensuring that the fortnightly wage packets were issued on time. Mr Godsalve the Clerk of Works also had an office here and lived with his wife and family in the adjacent house.

Immediately west of the Estate Office was the carpenter's shop. This was an elevated workshop for an elevated staff. At least that was our opinion! The workshop was home to Archibald Newman, Bill Moss plus the lowest ranked member of staff, me. Later on in the year that I started work a school friend of mine, Gordon Simpson, joined the carpentry shop and at least I would have some competition. The shop was large with all of the light coming from the east wall. There were five long benches each with a vice, and a vast selection of screws, knobs, handles and hand-made nails of every size kept in the stock room. There was also a large open fireplace which was always lit when we were in the shop if only to boil a kettle for our tea or occasionally to heat the glue used for fixing joints or such like.

Immediately beneath us was the sawing shop where the rough logs were cut to timbers. It was possible to identify the type of wood being sawn by the noise from the saw, and the smell of the wood. Occasionally there would be a loud grinding noise followed by a succession of curses as the saw blade hit a piece of metal shrapnel which had lodged in the wood.

At the south end of the yard was the paint shop with the painter foreman Mr Fred Hill and his assistant Harry Sheil.

As an apprentice I had no rights whatsoever and was expected to do the most menial of jobs for whoever wanted me. One day we were working at Fawley Cottage in Angel Street doing it up for the new parson and I was told to clean up an awful mess made by the plasterers and bricklayers. I refused and was hauled up in front of Mr. Godsalve who despite being quite sympathetic to my cause was clearly not prepared to defend such an outrageous act by a mere apprentice.

My 'reward' for challenging the system was to be put on some of the less pleasant jobs such as fitting large farm gates. The work was heavy and the posts had to be at least four feet in the ground. Naturally my job was to dig the holes for the posts. If I was lucky the holes would be bored, but either way it would be me carrying the heavy posts into position, drilling the holes for the hooks, filling and ramming the backfill around the posts and all of this under the watchful supervision of Billy Pullen. Even though I was only a slip of a lad at 14 I was still bigger than Billy.

I recall one summer working with Charlie Baxter. Charlie I think had come out of retirement due to the war and he and I spent a most enjoyable couple of months 'cottage dodging' or renovating and painting farm cottages from Egdean to Douglas Lake Farm and ending the job at Little Bognor. Charlie was about seventy and I was not even sixteen, yet we got on like a house on fire. Charlie was wonderful company and he would regale me with tales of his time at Gallipoli, especially the various methods of locating and killing Turkish snipers!

Charlie and I seemed to rub along well together. I repaired doors and frames, casements, floorboards and draining boards, copper lids, latches and cockspurs. If a piece of timber was beyond repair on site then I would lash it to my bicycle and walk back to the yard to carry out the necessary repair. I would also paint the cottage numbers as my hand was steadier. I would paint the gutters and downpipes while Charlie held the bottom of the ladder, his rheumatic shoulders preventing him from climbing the ladder.

Charlie had a unique method of mounting his bicycle. He would run with the bike until he felt that it had gathered sufficient speed to remain upright and then he would place a foot onto a pin fixed to the rear axle and fling himself onto the saddle. This exercise was relatively easy when starting off on a downhill slope but another matter entirely if uphill. I recall one instance when we were coming home along the track that runs parallel with the main road between Egdean and the Welldiggers pub. I had gone ahead and would usually wait for Charlie to catch up. After a while he hadn't appeared so I cycled back the way I had come only to find him and his machine lying tangled up in a holly bush. Charlie was unable to move and after a great deal of effort I managed to extricate both him and his bike from the bush. Charlie explained that he had tried to mount at too slow a speed and had simply run off the track and into the bush. The bike was very old and probably dated back to the Victorian age, a very heavy machine with a high frame. We had a good laugh about the incident but if I had not been with him I don't suppose that anybody would have found him until Christmas when perhaps someone collecting holly may have stumbled across his remains. The track you see was little used in those days.

Moving around from home to job or from job to job was nearly always done by bicycle. We would bike out to Sutton, Duncton, Stopham, and Kirdford or anywhere we were needed. We were allowed twenty minutes travelling time but of course that hardly covered the bike ride out to the other side of Pulborough or perhaps over Duncton Hill. A lot of the work was bomb damage and if the required material was too heavy for the bike then it would be delivered by Bert Penfold in his blue Commer van. Very, very occasionally I would get the opportunity to ride with Bert in the van. Conversations were rare with Bert and the journey would be very quiet and sedate.

I was a member of the Petworth House fire brigade and several times a year we would have a drill day which was worthy of any theatrical farce. On the chosen day the building department staff would muster in the estate yard and then follow Mr Godsalve the Clerk of Works up to the Grand Entrance and along the east side of the house to the Fire Brigade house where we assembled. Old Ernie Card was fire chief and as a mark of his rank he wore a brass helmet while the lower order had leather ones. Inside the fire brigade house were rows of hooks where the uniforms hung, these consisted of a sleeved jerkin, creaseless trousers and leather boots. Each fireman wore a large leather belt with a huge brass buckle. From the belt would hang a leather pouch which held a combined axe and hammer, a safety line and a police type whistle. New members of the brigade were expected to dress in the odd pieces of unclaimed uniforms that were hung unused from the hooks.

Usually drill days involved little more than maintaining the hydrants and fire-fighting equipment. Occasionally, though, we would check that the upper floors escape equipment was in a satisfactory working order. This involved me being lowered by a safety rope known as a Davy Brake. On one occasion everything was going smoothly until we were testing the escapes from the upper floor servants' rooms. As I descended I caught my overalls on some carved lintels and before I knew it I was hanging upside down some thirty feet above the ground. Fortunately I managed to correct my position and was lowered to the ground amid a chorus of laughter from the assembled audience. A little while later I was helping to fix one of the attic windows and discovered to my horror that the escape apparatus was secured to the window linings by just three screws and the linings themselves were secured by six short oval nails of some antiquity. I decided that being the guinea pig on the fire drill days was not such a good idea and I put forward the notion that it might be prudent to use bags of sand in place of a person; needless to say my somewhat revolutionary suggestion was greeted with the usual reaction to any change.

Another of my roles on drill day was to provide and split the firewood necessary to fire up the boiler on the brigade's water pump. This was the very pump that Mr Crawley had built sometime ago. Once lit the boiler would take what seemed like a lifetime to reach the pressure necessary. Then without warning the needle would shoot from zero to the red section of the dial and the release valve would blow furiously. While we were all aware of the vagaries of the pump we were never prepared for the precise moment when the valve would blow and the assembled group would dive for cover in a state of panic, only to reappear with fake acts of bravado in an attempt to restore their dignity.

Having got the pump under some sort of control the next part of the exercise would

begin. The extending ladder with its two very large iron tyred wheels would be manouvered to beneath the highest part of Petworth House which stood some 80 feet from the ground. Once in position the farce of raising the ladders would begin. Fully extended the ladders would reach just three feet above the stone parapet so it was important that the machine was placed in just the right position otherwise the ladders would fall short of the necessary height. The apparatus looked something like a cannon on huge wheels. It would be placed about 16 feet from the house wall with the wheels chocked and the task of raising the ladders from the horizontal to the vertical would begin. The whole operation was a miracle to behold and depended upon brute force, teamwork and an incredible amount of good fortune to raise the ladders to the required position without breaking a window or losing control of the whole apparatus. It is also important to remember that apart from me and Gordon Simpson all of the men hoisting the ladders were over forty years old and had gone through the trenches in France. Many of them had poor joints and poor eyesight and with only two of these practices a year were not exactly over-trained at the job.

While we were raising the ladders Mr Godsolve and an assistant would go up onto the roof to lash the top of the ladder in place. Having secured the whole thing to a parapet next would come the question of who was going to try it. Guess who! Once was enough.

Having successfully accomplished the drill it was just time to check the hoses. Water was pumped through them with the usual result that a hose or nozzle would fail and somebody would get drenched. The faulty part would be repaired and the lot would be packed up and returned the sheds for another six months. The reward for these extra duties would be an additional shilling in the next pay packet and with it a chance to spend it at a visit to the Regal perhaps.

I don't remember the engine being used on any major incident though I do believe that on one occasion a spark from the boiler set fire to some grass and caused a great deal of excitement. Heaven help us if we had been required to tackle a blaze in earnest.

Looking back now from some distance in time I suppose that those youthful years that I spent on the Leconfield Estate were not so bad really. I believe that both my brother Jumbo and I were treated somewhat differently to the other youngsters and can only put that down to our father's connection with Lord Leconfield. After all it really was a matter of who you knew as much as what you knew that dictated your life in Petworth and to some degree it remains the same today.

Jim Taylor was talking to Miles Costello

The Leconfield Hall, Petworth

My story by Raymond Harris

1 HISTORY

As a Market Town, Petworth would always have had a Market Square of some sort. In the Square since Tudor times – perhaps earlier – there would have stood a Market Hall. Documentary evidence, such as it is, leads to the assumption that the Leconfield Hall we now see was built in 1793 on the same site as the timber framed building which preceded it. Nothing is known of its form, but it may well have had an open ground floor market area for stalls with a first floor enclosed chamber above on the lines of the Horsham market hall now re-erected at the Weald and Downland Museum. It would have been narrower than the present site since houses on the west side were standing until the 1860's when the present building was enlarged. There has been controversy over the site since the late 19th century when an article by Roger Turner and a drawing appeared in the journal of the Sussex Archaeological Society showing the building at the north end of the Square, Teelings, (now a ladies fashion shop called the Courtyard), as the old town hall complete with bell tower. This structure may have been a market building, possibly the corn market, as the layout of the present ancient timber structure shows. Some details of the same drawing are proven by what we can still see on the ground. At the rear of Teelings there is still evidence of an open courtyard in which the present post office and newsagent's building was constructed much later. In the drawing accompanying Turner's article, a post is shown in the centre of the yard indicating that it may have been used for bull baiting in the 16th century when such cruel sports were permitted – both to improve the quality of the meat and to provide entertainment for the ladies of those times!

To move on to firmer ground, in 1793 the 3rd Earl Egremont gave instruction for the construction of a new Market Hall in the Market Square. Some houses on the west side of the present site remained until the 1860's, so the demolition of the old hall provided about two-thirds of the present site. The east side was built level with the street at the north end, the present entrance. As it had an open ground floor, public access could only be gained by a wedge-shaped set of steps such as we can see on the west side today. At some stage, the ground floor was fully enclosed and the wedge-shaped steps removed. Evidence of this can be seen by examining the structure around the present windows inserted into the once open arches. Below the cills the infilling piece of wall is not integral with the stone piers between the windows. Then in the 1860's the remaining houses on the west side were demolished and the stone building was extended westwards but in rendered brickwork. Time and pollution have almost completely smudged out what would have been starkly different at the time, but the junction between the two phases of construction can still be seen. A thick wall divides the two phases internally, creating nasty structural problems for any attempt to create open internal spaces. The support of the roof over the enlarged open space at first floor gave our engineers difficult problems in the 1990's. Similar problems had occurred when the extra site was added in the 1860's and an

enormous timber beam was inserted.

2 THE WORKS - External

I was elected as a trustee representing "the people of Petworth" in 1993 at a noisy public meeting. I had been proposed by two Petworth ancients not, shall I say, of the ruling party. Rumour had therefore been spread that I was a terrorist who wanted to demolish the old place to expand car parking in the Square. I felt the radiation of their animosity as if I were Guy Fawkes himself. I was elected after supporting Peter Jerrome whole heartedly (of course) and got myself a job for my remaining years!

The building was in a sorry state, from the roof to the foundations. At the south-east corner the main east wall was parting company with the weather-beaten south wall overhanging the twitten; large flakes of stone were about to be shed on to the waiting bus queues; the roof and the lead gutters were in a poor state; the interior had the atmosphere of a wartime recruitment hall. The facilities were sad and did not reach minimum standards for a public building. The reasons for this apparent neglect were simple. The cost of renovation was prohibitively high and the income from hirings was too low to undertake any capital works of this magnitude. The hiring rates could have been raised, but never enough. In any case, the committee members themselves represented the principal hirers, whose own vested interest would be best served by keeping rates as low as possible. There were no endowment funds.

In the season before I came on to the scene, a welcome legacy had just been received from the estate of the late Miss Gwenda Morgan, a Petworth resident, a fine and successful artist in wood engraving. The handsome sum of £50,000, could not do the whole job, but it could and did prime several pumps which enabled us to start raising funds. In my position as a retired architect I could not rest until the building had been made safe at least. I immediately ordered a scaffold around the building, we stitched up the falling corner, removed all loose stonework and surveyed the condition of every surface and with the help of an architect specialising in the restoration of stone buildings, Gary Seymour of Winchester, drew up a specification and contract for the work. English Heritage joined us in these inspections and said we were likely to get their assistance. The Leconfield Estate submitted the best tender and were appointed to do the work as soon as the grant had been approved. As other organisations and individuals could see that the work would definitely proceed, they were far more willing to help. All their names are commemorated on the board in the Hall.

A programme of limited stone restoration was undertaken. The quarry above Little Bognor, whence the original stone probably came, is now reduced to rubble. A quarry still producing Greensand stone was used near Midhurst. All sound stones were left or trimmed and repointed to reduce further damage. The overall appearance remains of a venerable weathered building, not a new replica. This is in accordance with the policy of English Heritage who were supporting us generously.

When I originally examined the building from the first scaffolding I noticed a tell-tale circular stone in the centre of the pediment east side – evidence that there had once been a clock there. Looked at from the inside, there was a structure behind the circle for the

clock's mechanism. In Arnold's "History of Petworth" of 1864, there we found mention of the Market Square clock which I had suspected, though Arnold adds that it was no longer working and caused great confusion to the locals who set their own timepieces by it. I made a hardboard replica of face and hands, painted it blue and gold and hung it on the stonework. It found favour all round and English Heritage offered a grant – but restricted the grant to the cost of the face and hands! No better than the clock abandoned in the 1860's. Fortunately, West Sussex County Council found a special fund and bought the works for us!

Among other curiosities we found were the old fire bells under the stairs. Old prints revealed their rightful home on the ridge of the pediment over the clock where we fixed them. They can be rung by opening the oak cupboard which I made and installed on the ground floor wall immediately below the bells, then pulling on the handle. They are all on the same arm – no change ringing here!

We restored next the badly worn and treacherous steps on the west side using a good Purbeck stone – as used in the old streets of Chichester – but surrounded here by original cobbles up to the edge of the public footpath. The work to the west side would all have been carried out after the demolition of the houses in the 1860's. I replaced the stone steps in the 1990's as an extension of the building restoration project. West Sussex County Council took a very responsible attitude particularly as it had become quite difficult not to trip on the uneven nosings. Having found an active quarry in the Isle of Purbeck, Peter Jerrome and I went to visit the proprietor, Mr Bonfield. We found him on a very blasted hill beside his works, a corrugated iron shack with a crooked crane perched alongside. Concerned lest we had picked a rough jack for a fine job, I asked him if he felt up to the quality of the work we needed. I was almost blown away by the ferocity of his reply: "A Bonfield built Corfe Castle!" He did an excellent job at an acceptable price.

There had stood on the top step where the seats are, a listed red telephone kiosk a vintage edition of Giles Gilbert Scott's 20th century icon. I thought it a stupid position, inaccessible to the lame, halt and mums with push-chairs. To re-locate it at street level required the installation of a fresh kiosk of identical design installed in the new position and checked by a planning officer that it really was the same design as the existing one – which we were then permitted to break up as it was cast iron and could not be dismantled and re-used!

The final item of external work was the most interesting – the bust of William of Orange on the north side. The marble original which had been put there on the 3rd Earl's instructions, was in danger of decaying in the polluted atmosphere of Market Square where vehicles from several A roads pass and re-pass daily. It was taken into Petworth House much to the concern of the then committee. Marble is not the best material for an external sculpture of such high merit. The finest public sculpture to adorn a public building, and it is in Petworth! In "The Buildings of England", Pevsner/Nairn, it is referred to as "one of the finest baroque sculptures in England". "The King's proud patrician face turns right with a breath-catching yearning expression; a swaggering asymmetrical wig hangs down over one shoulder, his torso rises out of the froth of draperies dancing diagonally around the bust..." It is ascribed to Honore Pelle, or perhaps

to Proust of Dijon who did the trophies now at the Main Gate in Park Road. I proposed that if we could not have it back we should have an accurate replica in a durable material and I proposed a highly skilled modeller to do the work. He made a soft mould and then cast the new piece in a resin concrete to resemble marble. Lord Egremont insisted on paying for it and it was unveiled by him. Which more or less completed the exterior in grand style

3 THE WORKS Internal

After nearly four years of fund-raising, brow-beating, design and construction, there were still no improvements to the amenities of the Hall which remained just as out of date and institutional. I drew up the outline of a scheme for disabled access, an acceptable fire escape, a new stage, a lighting scheme which could be adapted to all the uses it might be put to, a new kitchen and toilets and a disabled toilet, and a general internal face-lift to appeal to 21st century users. I was joined in the development of the design and the contract drawings and specification by Terry Adsett, FRICS who then administered the contract. The Leconfield Estate again won the contract in competition and appointed the same team as for the external works: Mr Roger Wootton, the Estate's Clerk of Works ran the contract with Stemps as main contractor for building works controlled by Mr Richard Stemp. At last an excellent grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund was awarded and many other donors enabled us to proceed in 1998 with the intention of re-opening on Millennium night 1999/2000.

The principal aims of the internal works were to bring up the standards of accommodation to current legislation, especially fire escape and access for the disabled; equipment to enable a wider range of uses by hirers; improved standards of comfort; improved facilities for concerts, meetings etc; but still retaining priorities which had always been central for the regular users of the hall: sales, parties, Masonic activities, a Polling station and activities of the Petworth Society and the Petworth Festival. A passenger lift close to the entrance made it necessary to reverse the use of the first floor by locating a lower stage at the south end and providing retractable raked seating, also a secondary staircase for escape in case of fire, better kitchen and toilet arrangements

The exterior had been plain-sailing. But opening up the old structure revealed a can of serpents – three stages of previous constructions hooked together and made up to look like one building. That was above ground. Below ground level there were really interesting secrets. The first task was to investigate the foundations for the passenger lift. After a foot of digging we came to the top of a fine brick vault. A small hole and a plumb line through it and we found about twelve feet of water before the lead reached the floor of the vault! It was one of several underground cisterns in Petworth. Nearby in the pavement was a manhole which revealed some of the truth. We had to pump out all the water before all else – all 55,000 gallons, and discharge it, not into the drains but on to Leconfield land somewhere. It was indeed a noble sight, beautifully finished in cement render and in perfect condition. Our consultant engineer calculated the considerable loads which would be imposed on this structure, but by the time we were ready to carry out the work to strengthen the vault, the vault had re-filled. So another 55,000 gallons had to be

carted away to another piece of Leconfield land. Most probably this cistern was a part of the system of water distribution in the town and connected to works in the Park undertaken by Capability Brown in the 18th century. Before any proposals for the Hall were settled, there was a faction in the town that a new swimming pool should be built here! There was one already.

Then there were the vestiges of prison cells to note: one at the south end of the ground floor, one below ground alongside the water cistern, and one in the roof space over the entrance. It would have been a case of "send the prisoner up!" instead of down. This one can still be seen. All kinds of nasty problems arose from past alterations. A temporary steel structure had to be constructed before the escape stair could be built.

The first floor auditorium was given a new semi-sprung floor for dancing; the new lower stage meant that the whole volume of the first floor could be used as one space for exhibitions and sales; the new lighting suspended below the old acoustic ceiling enabled uplighting as well as downlighting, dispelling Victorian gloom; blinds matching the wall colour improved the appearance when blacked out; theatre lighting and controls were added, but re-using the old serviceable stage light fittings. Access to the gallery was now by an elegant staircase matching the Georgian balustrade from the old court house. Both Gallery access and secondary escape had been via an unprotected spiral staircase, unacceptable for both purposes. Later, a theatre lighting control box was created out of the lobby to the lift motor room and a dimmer rack was supplied. The lower stage led to the most popular improvement of all: the comfortable retractable raked seating.

Throughout these works, the help and encouragement given by Lord Egremont both personally and through his offering the resources of the Leconfield Estate cannot be over-emphasised, especially through the advice and administrative help of Roger Wootton. Petworth is deeply indebted to the unstinting services of the Hall's honorary treasurer, Tim Wardle, who has been so helpful in managing the finances of all the projects I have initiated. His help was particularly valuable in the preparation of many appeals to authorities for grants and for satisfying their voracious appetites for statistics and accounts. Many many times I have interrupted his onerous day job. He now runs, with Kate, the Friends Scheme. And all the time, Peter Jerrome as chairman has backed every proposal, as I promised to back him when I was elected. His successor as chairman, Andy Henderson, has been just as dedicated to the improvements made more recently.

4 LATER WORKS

The building you now see was practically completed for the great Millennium night and it opened "amid general rejoicing". Subsequently many improvements to the equipment and usefulness of the Hall have been added, mainly by generous benefactors whose names are inscribed in the entrance. A hearing aid "loop" system at both levels with extra microphone sockets, additional built-in kitchen equipment, double windows to sound proof the upper Hall; a DVD and Video projector and automatic screen to enable films to be shown regularly; a Green room for artists; improved and simply controlled heating, and a fine new grand piano belonging to the Festival. The very latest addition has been a much needed bus shelter which has been fitted most satisfactorily into the recess in the

building at the north-west corner. The transparent panels and slim metalwork do not obstruct the view of the old Hall. I took no part in this last addition.

Hirings have stood up well since the year 2000, but there is never enough surplus to build up an adequate endowment fund. All these later additions have been made possible through the incredible generosity of many donors – as indeed all the 15 years of work has been made possible by donations, some by the same trusts and individuals who supported the very beginnings of the works.. It is a valuable asset for this small town and in the future it will always need funds to keep up maintenance and new demands. Do look after it well please, Petworth People! One way would be to become a Friend of the Leconfield Hall. Just get in touch with Tim Wardle at the Leconfield Estate Office, Petworth, GU28 0DU.

Raymond Harris (Vice chairman 1993 – 2008)

I. The drawing accompanying the article by Roger Turner has caused confusion over the years. It seems to owe more to the writer's imagination than to informed reconstruction. Ed

