

THE EAST GRINSTEAD SOCIETY



Charity No.257870

<http://www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org>

NEWSLETTER

No 135

April 2022

A message from our Chairman

Welcome to the Society's April Newsletter! As ever, an edition full of varied stories to keep you updated on local and Society news. Among those stories is an update of our major Platinum Jubilee project to renovate the High Street drinking fountain, itself an 1887 Golden Jubilee project! Progress is good on all fronts and we hope to have a ceremony to mark the renovation later in this Jubilee Year.

As usual we look back at previous editions of the Bulletin in the Newsletter and this time reflect the Jubilee theme with two fascinating stories from 1977 focused on the 1887 and 1977 Golden Jubilees.

The Newsletter also contains news about the updated Town Trails and accounts of our recent meetings highlighting the day-to-day activities of the Society. Meetings are currently held at the Jubilee Centre in Charlwoods Road. Members will recall we switched from our traditional East Court venue last year to get a bigger room with more ventilation as a response to Covid concerns. There were comments at our last meeting supporting a return to East Court or another venue. I agreed that your Committee would review this and we will be in touch in due course with Members for further discussion on future options.

I hope you enjoy this Newsletter and hope to see you at our meetings – the forward meeting programme is also included in this edition.

James Baldwin

May Fair - Monday 2nd May 2022

Please make a note in your diaries to support the Society's stall in the High Street where you and your friends can find out who we are, what we do, plus the opportunity to win mystery prizes in our tombola!

Membership

As at April 2022, the Society had around 110 members and 5 honorary members. We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined recently:

Sharon Crane, Rosalind Crowther, Ann Bishop, Peter Bishop, Caroline Barry, Philip Barry, Nic Castiglione, Thomas Hicks, Sara Hicks, Barry Starmer, Jill Ritchie, Bryan Williamson and Pamela Harris.

A number of members have not yet renewed their annual membership and our Treasurer Mike Lyons is keen that you don't forget!!

Attendance at our monthly meetings since the end of lock-down has been good with a bumper 50 people attending the February lecture on "Growing Up in Stone Quarry in the 1950s".

Dorothy Hatswell 1934 -2022

Dorothy Hatswell, a long-standing Society member, sadly passed away in February. Many will know her from her regular articles in East Grinstead Living and published books.

Dorothy was a classroom teacher at Crawley Down School, later becoming Deputy Head in 1973 and then Acting Head shortly before her retirement.

Dorothy was chair of the Crawley Down Community Centre Association, and instrumental in setting up the Haven Centre, which still plays a key part in village life. Dorothy's initiative is commemorated by naming the Centre's large hall the "Dorothy Hatswell Hall".

Alongside her work with the Association, Dorothy was elected as a Worth Parish Councillor in 1979, a role she held until 1993, and a County Councillor for the village from 1996.

Retiring from teaching in 1995, Dorothy started helping with the East Grinstead Museum (then at East Court), and she was soon made the Honorary Curator following Michael Leppard. Dorothy was instrumental in the creation of the Heritage Lottery funded new Museum, a purpose-designed building in Cantelupe Road, which opened in 2006. She ceased being the Honorary Curator when the new Museum opened, but continued to play an active role as a volunteer and later Trustee. One of her last pieces of work was to curate the exhibition on the history of education now on display.

Dorothy wrote several books, including "East Grinstead: A History and Celebration" and jointly with the former Town Tourism Officer Simon Kerr, "East Grinstead Then and Now" and "Secret East Grinstead". She also found time to contribute to a series of detailed town walks issued by the East Grinstead Society to capture all of the hidden history of the town.

A much fuller obituary for Dorothy was published in the March Issue of "East Grinstead Living" see: <https://www.eastgrinsteadliving.co.uk/previousissues>

Eddie Harper

We are sad to announce the death in December of Eddie (Edwin) Harper. Eddie together with his wife Olive, was a long standing Member of the Society and regularly attended our meetings.

The Celebration Service of Eddie's life took place at St John's Church, Felbridge. The church was packed which was a testament to his commitment to the East Grinstead community. He devoted much time helping others locally, particularly through his voluntary work with the Access Group. He will be missed by many.

Our condolences go to Olive and the family.

Margaret Collins

Chris McCrory

We were also sad to learn very recently that Chris McCrory, who was the auditor for the Society and always attended our AGM, passed away in January this year. A fuller tribute will follow in our November Newsletter.

Development Update

There is still no news on the large scale housing allocations that Mid Sussex have planned for Felbridge and Imberhorne, although we were expecting the Inspector to have published his decision by now!

In the meantime, there is yet another application for housing in Felbridge ... an application for 20 houses on Crawley Down Road. The developer responsible for the 63 homes already under construction has submitted a new application for a further 20 homes. The developer is relying on the allocation of 200 homes in Felbridge being approved although the Inspector has yet to approve the Site Allocations Plan, and there's still a chance that he won't ... based on his further review of the traffic situation.

The key reason to object is the unacceptable further impact on local roads. For the current application, the developer is relying on its 2017 transport model and claims that the extra traffic from the 20 homes will be imperceptible: but the A264/A22 junction already exceeds its theoretical design capacity and no improvements are planned.

It gets worse: the 200 home scheme currently under construction at Hill Place Farm was allowed on the basis that improvements to the Felbridge junction would be delivered. The Felbridge junction was expected to be reconfigured so that the two lanes approaching the junction along the A264 would allow both lanes to turn right towards East Grinstead. The road would be widened for a short distance along the A22 to accommodate the greater volume of traffic exiting the junction. However, Surrey Highways have no scheduled plans to undertake the committed improvements to the Felbridge junction, despite many of the homes that rely on them nearing completion.

We share the view that it's important to stop approving yet more new homes until the promised road improvements are delivered! This remains a core policy in all Society responses on development plans: infrastructure improvements need to be integral to any development plans.

James Baldwin

The Jubilee Fountain - an Update

The Society is continuing with its plans for renovating the Jubilee Drinking Water Fountain in the High Street. SE Water determined (by using a miniature camera) that the original supply pipe was visible within the hollow centre of the fountain. This has enabled SE Water to return and install a short length of new insulated pipe from the central plinth of the fountain to a termination just below the first step on the north side. The pipe has been capped at both ends, pending final connection once a new spout/tap arrangement has been determined.

We have investigated the possibility of cleaning and renovation in time for June's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. We have received quotes from contractors for partial cleaning and minor repair work, following a detailed recommendation from a specialist stonework conservator. The Conservation Officer at MSDC has confirmed that Listed Building consent would not be required for cleaning and repair work but we will need to apply for this once the design of the spout system has been agreed. Accordingly we have now instructed Tilley Stonemasons of Brighton to undertake this cleaning and minor repair work.

The Society is confident that the fountain will be at least partially cleaned and repair work completed by the June Platinum celebrations. Final installation of the spout arrangements may take a little longer.

We continue to have support from East Grinstead Rotary, the "By the Fountain" restaurant and Arthur Crawford who have all agreed to help with the costs. The East Grinstead Lions and Portland Vets have also expressed interest and we are hopeful that they too can contribute.

Although the East Grinstead Town Council does not wish to provide financial assistance to the project, it has offered its support to the Society's plans. It is currently in discussion with MSDC, the current owners of the fountain, with a view to taking back ownership and maintenance responsibilities in perpetuity. Hence the fountain would then return back to the town's ownership as intended by the original benefactor Rev Charles Payne Crawford.

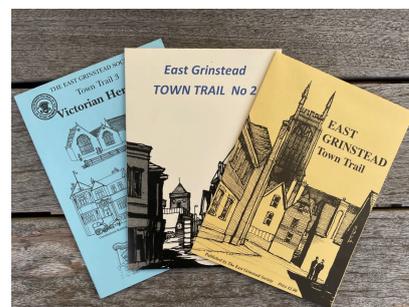
Robin Whalley

Updating Town Trails

The Society first started to produce "Town Trails" in 1978. These handy guides were designed to accompany walks both in the old parts of the town and further afield.



Town Trail No 2 covers London Road and the 19th and 20th century parts of the town to the north and west of the High Street. It was first prepared in 1983 and revised in 1994.



Society members have now updated this Trail to show the town as it is today. A new updated version has been printed and, along with the other trails, is available to purchase in the Museum, the Library and at the Bookshop in the High Street.

Robin Whalley

The Town Council's Platinum Jubilee Plans

East Grinstead Town Council has recently announced a number of planned activities to commemorate this year's Platinum Jubilee in June.




**PLATINUM JUBILEE WEEKEND
IN EAST GRINSTEAD**
THURSDAY 2ND JUNE 2022
TO
SUNDAY 5TH JUNE 2022

Thursday 2nd June: Picnic & Beacon Lighting
(in association with Town Twinning)
Arrive from 4pm: Bring a picnic to King George's Field
6pm: Displays from local community groups
9:45pm: Lighting the Beacon

Friday 3rd June: Afternoon Tea with the Mayor
If you remember the Queen's Coronation, the Town Mayor would like to invite you to afternoon tea at the Meridian Hall. To get your free ticket call 01342 335055 or email mayors.secretary@eastgrinstead.gov.uk

Friday 3rd June & Saturday 4th June
Do you fancy holding a street party? apply for £100 towards your street party, email mayors.secretary@eastgrinstead.gov.uk for an application form

Sunday 5th June: East Court Live
East Court Live ending with a "Last Night of the Proms" feel



Coronation Memories from Our President!

The Mayor has extended an invitation to tea with him at East Court Friday 3rd June for local residents who have memories of Her Majesty's Coronation 70 years ago.

I am looking forward to attending this special tea celebration. I well remember the excitement of the Coronation.

My Father was a Metropolitan police officer. He was given tickets for the Police stand which was located very near the entrance to Westminster Abbey so my Mother, younger brother and I had excellent views of the processions. We were entertained for hours with the military bands and all the carriage processions both before and after the service, which was relayed to the crowds on loud speakers.

My two very special memories of the day are the golden carriage carrying Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh and Queen Salote of Tonga who, despite the heavy rain, drove with her carriage open so that she could better see the crowds and they could see her!

It was certainly a day to remember!

Margaret Collins

Planning Past Jubilees in East Grinstead

(Principally from EGS Bulletin No 21 May 1977 – SPECIAL JUBILEE ISSUE)

We still have a memento of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee in 1887: the drinking fountain in the High Street, presented to the town by the Rev. C.W. Payne Crawford of East Court, a private resident. The restoration of the fountain is of course intended as the centre point of the Society's Platinum Jubilee commemoration in 2022.

Jubilee Day, 21 June 1887, passed off well, starting at 9.45 with a procession through the town including Sunday School children with flags and banners, public bodies, police, volunteers, the Volunteer and Town Bands and the fire brigade on its new engine. After a church service the fountain was handed over to the Local Board, a "feu de joie" was fired and the clubs had a public dinner at the Crown. In the Chequer Mead behind it there was a free tea for all children aged between 4 and 14 (1200 of them!) followed by a meat tea for the over 60s, both accompanied by the band. Finally at 10pm there was another procession, culminating in a bonfire on the Playfield. The Railway Company had its own dinner and bonfire on the platforms of the high level station.

Suggestions for a memorial included a hospital (to replace one closed in 1874), the refoundation of the Grammar School, a cricket ground and an institute. The latter was decided on and a building faced with local stone was erected in London Road (replaced in 1936 by the shop now M & Co) to the designs of P.B.Chambers, whose drawing of it hangs in our Museum. Unofficially, but to permanent effect, Cemetery Road was renamed Queens Road by those who lived in it. (Soon afterwards private efforts secured the hospital and cricket ground.)

Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897 seems to have raised less enthusiasm and correspondingly smaller funds, so all that was attempted was an extension to the Institute for the benefit of working men, who had wanted a club of their own. (Later the appropriately named Queens Hall was erected for the purpose.) Mr Payne Crawford suggested buying the land now occupied by Fairfield Road for a park, so preserving a splendid view of the Forest but nothing was done.

For King George V's silver jubilee in 1935 the proceeds of the local celebrations, about £300, were used to provide ornamental gates and brick piers for the field, named after the King,

recently compulsorily acquired by the Council to be laid out as a sports field with the aid of a grant from the National Playing Fields Association. Both the jubilee and George VI's coronation in 1937 were celebrated with the usual processions, eating and outdoor entertainments.

Sackville House Roof Repair

As part of a major renovation of the Grade II Listed Sackville House by the Landmark Trust, the roof has recently been completely rebuilt. The work has faithfully followed the traditional style with Horsham Slab roof "tiles" and tiled gables to the dormers. This style is very similar to its neighbour Cromwell House.

Horsham Slabs are extremely heavy and now in very short supply. The slabs and tiled gables look bright and new at the moment but in due course will weather to look more in keeping with the adjacent historic buildings.



Sackville House before restoration c 2020



After restoration 2022

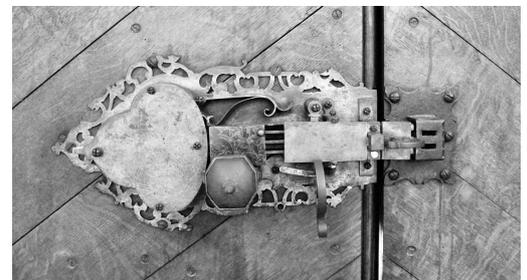
Robin Whalley

You Won't Lose this Key!

The lock on the Sackville College Chapel Door features as a header for our Programme Card and you might like to see the key, which is required to open it!



Recently, The Warden of the College has unearthed some interesting correspondence in 1996 between our Founder member Michael Leppard and the Clifford Society, an association interested in the history of the well-known Clifford family. Of course one famous member was Lady Anne Clifford, the wife of the third Earl of Dorset, Richard Sackville, during whose



life the College building was completed.

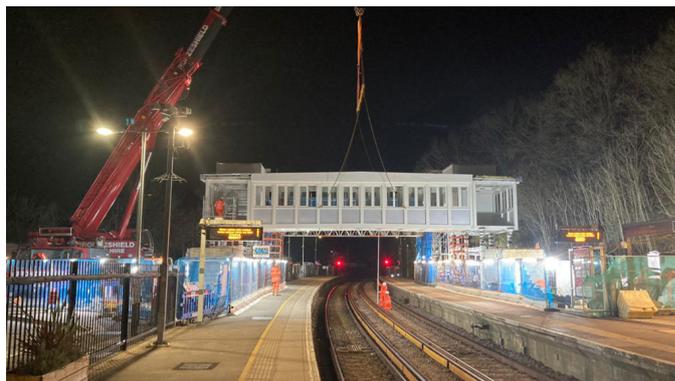
For many years College guides have been told this lock was late 16th century and of German manufacture. However, the Clifford Society believe it to be of English manufacture by the lock maker George Dent and very likely a gift to the College by Lady Anne some time after 1650.

Sackville College Summer opening *The Summer opening for the College is likely to be Friday, Saturday and Sunday from mid June with pre-booking by phoning the Office. Also Groups can be accommodated on Wednesday & Thursdays again by phoning the Office (01342 323414).*

Robin Whalley

Improved Accessibility at the Station

Members may remember that the East Grinstead and District Access Group (now "Disability Access"), together with our local MP, met with Network Rail and Southern Rail in 2019 with a view to seeking improvements for cross platform access at East Grinstead Station. Work is now underway at Crowborough and East Grinstead stations by Network Rail as part of the Department for Transport's 'Access for All' programme. £4.6m will be spent at East Grinstead to make the station easier to use by those with accessibility needs. The new high quality designed lifts, stair structures and footbridges will match the station designs and neighbouring landscape.



Partially sighted and blind travellers will also benefit from tactile paving, which will be installed near the edge of the platforms. Safety and security at the station will be also be improved with the installation of new CCTV cameras.

As at April 2022, the lifts have been installed and a new footbridge truss erected. The old footbridge is planned to be demolished over the weekend 8-10 July. Completion is anticipated by the Autumn.

Robin Whalley

Ashdown Forest Parking Charges

Ashdown Forest is to introduce car parking payments from summer 2022.

The Conservators – the organisation created to manage the Forest – approved a proposal that will bring in sustainable revenue and protect the area and its landscape.

A six-week public consultation attracted almost three thousand responses, with 70 per cent agreeing that more funding had to be found and 44 per cent of respondents supporting the introduction of parking payments.

The forest's chief executive, James Adler said: "We realise that a change such as this will not be universally popular, but we have to raise money to care for this precious place". The Forest will now carry out a tendering process to finalise how to install an appropriate system into the car parks. Payments for using the Forest's car parks are likely to begin in the summer of 2022.

James added: "As soon as possible we will use the funding that visitors provide to repair the car parks most in need. We will build a rolling programme of repairs both to the car parks but also the access tracks for walkers and horse riders.

We hope the changes will make the Forest more accessible. Regular visitors will be able to purchase an annual pass and know that their contribution is preserving the place they enjoy for future generations". Ashdown Forest is an absolutely stunning and unique area, loved by many people and of course it is also the home of Winnie-the-Pooh!

Robin Whalley

Summaries of Recent EGS Meetings

November 17th 2021 - Councillor Rex Whittaker – "The Ups and Downs of being a local representative"

Cllr Whittaker opened by explaining his many roles over the last 10 years including serving on East Grinstead Town Council, as Leader and as Town Mayor in 2018-19. During his term as Mayor he was Chair of the Planning Committee during the development of the local neighbourhood plan. He has been a Mid-Sussex District Councillor for the last 4 years including serving on the District Planning Committee, the Scrutiny Group and the Sustainability Working Group.

Cllr Whittaker touched on many local concerns in his presentation and the subsequent lively Q&A including: Planning Issues, including proposed new housing provisions and traffic concerns; the future of St Margaret's Loop; opening up of the Queens Road Cemetery; the upcoming food waste collection trial by Mid Sussex; Gatwick's second runway and the impact on the town and how decision-making works (or does not work) in local government.

December 8th 2021 – Dr Kathryn Ferry - The Sisters of St Margaret – Part 2

Dr Ferry continued with the history of the Sisterhood following on from her initial talk in May 2019 about its establishment. She explained how the Old Convent of Moat Road was designed, built and was used in its early years. She mentioned the architect G E Street who was a close friend of many of the Pre-Raphaelite artists and helped train such masters of late 19th-century English architecture and design as William Morris, Philip Webb and Richard Norman Shaw.

The talk was beautifully illustrated by some fascinating photos of the Convent.

It was suggested that Dr Ferry consider a guided tour of the Convent for Society members and this was welcomed!

February 16th 2022 – Michael Hodge – Growing up in Stone Quarry in the 1950s

Michael's talk generated much prior comment on social media, which led to a great turnout for his talk. He talked about the relaxed family atmosphere in what was one of East Grinstead's earliest planned estates. As a boy he said that he and other children were able to play in the woods without fear and how the estate was a really friendly and neighbourly place in which to grow up. A lively discussion followed with many previous residents exchanging memories and anecdotes. Subsequently, a former resident posted a photograph on Facebook and sought to identify nearly 50 residents of "The Quarry" at the time!



March 23rd 2022 – Paul Reader - Wakehurst, Kew and the National Trust

Paul gave a beautifully illustrated talk about Wakehurst and the history of the relationship with Kew. He showed us dramatic photos of the devastation caused by the great storm of 1987 as well as a description of the secret Second World War communication bunker, which still exists in the grounds.

EAST GRINSTEAD SOCIETY MEETINGS 7.30pm, Jubilee Community Centre – free to members, £5.00 for non-members (reimbursable if joining the Society at the meeting).

Wednesday 18 May 2022	Ian Gledhill: Art Deco
Wednesday 15 June 2022	Ros Black: Scandal, Salvation and Suffrage
Wednesday 13 July 2022	Summer Drinks and Open Forum
Wednesday 14 September 2022	Andy Thomas: Lewes and Bonfire Night
Wednesday 12 October 2022	Jeremy Clarke: East Grinstead in Manorial Records
Wednesday 16 November 2022	AGM
Wednesday 7 December 2022	John Pye: Reflections of a Bookseller and Christmas drinks

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EXTRA COPIES: Newsletter back issues may be ordered from Hon. Secretary, Alan Ward, 7 Heathcote Drive, East Grinstead, RH19 1LZ 01342 321725 or are available on the Society's website: www.eastgrinsteadsociety.org

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