



Project Purley

PURLEY'S LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

MAY 1991 NEWSLETTER

NO.26

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

R612

In February, Michael Bayley came to speak to us on the origins of place names. Michael's work started with the placenames of his homeground on the Berkshire/Buckinghamshire border, but over the years has spread throughout the counties. Michael found many connections with medieval Welsh so set about learning the language along with early English. He also managed to relate many place names to local myths and legends. It was an interesting and thought provoking evening, though some of the audience would have liked a little more evidence for some of the conclusions.

March brought the AGM. The new committee is on the last page. We shall miss John Titterton after all these years service - for which Cliff voiced his thanks. After the great success of our Open Day last year, it was decided to spend the rest of the evening browsing through some of the maps, documents and photographs held by members of the society. Newspaper clippings and photographs sparked off memories for many members but the star of the evening was the 1786 map. We must make this a regular event as there is never enough time to look at everything.

In April Catherine Davis gave a talk, entitled "Rabbits Friends and Relations". Rabbit in the A A Milne stories was renowned for his numerous relations. Catherine, while studying Wills and Letters of Administration for Sutton Courtney, began to notice names cropping up as witnesses, beneficiaries or relatives in what had previously appeared to be unconnected families. She started to build "Network Diagrams" showing how they inter-related. It was amazing how the jigsaw began to fit together. Since that evening, many of us have been inspired to have a go at making connections or 'networks' in our own areas of research.

ORAL INTERVIEW GROUP

On the 22nd of March, at a meeting with Tom Robinson and Margaret Hughes at Tom's home, I assumed the chairmanship of the Oral Interview Group from Tom.

I would like to pay tribute to Tom for his sterling qualities of leadership and also the unstinted effort he has dedicated to the Group over many years. I am confident I represent Project Purley as a whole in recording our appreciation of Tom's achievements, and I am personally delighted that he has indicated his willingness to remain a member of our Oral Interview Team.

We now, additionally, have to prepare for the sorrowful departure of Margaret Hughes, Tom's second in command, who so ably assisted in ensuring the success of the group, with her dedicated interest and hard work. Margaret, we salute you and wish you well and happiness in your new home in Kirkcudbright. Their gain is our loss, particularly so for this fledgling chairman~ I like to think you will have plenty of scope for your historical talent, being domiciled so close to Rabbin Burns heritage, even though you will need to turn a blind eye to his amorous intrigues.

In looking to the future, I have applied for membership of the Oral History Society but have not yet received any reply. It must also be observed that the group's signal success with elderly residents over the years will make the task of finding and persuading additional interviewees somewhat more difficult as the years pass. I have to date approached two who have flatly refused to be interviewed, but there are others in the pipeline and coupled with the approved technique which recommends two or three visits prior to a taped interview, I entertain every hope of success.

THE HYDE CONNECTIONS

We all know of the memorial to Ann Hyde in Purley Church. She died in 1629 of smallpox and was buried at Purley. Her husband, Edward Hyde, went on to be Lord Clarendon, Chancellor of England 1657-1667 and the father of Anne Hyde who married the Duke of York, later James II whose daughters were Queen Anne and Queen Mary **II**.

The second Anne Hyde had a sister Frances who married Thomas Keightley of Hertfordshire. Their daughter married Lucias O'Brian of county Clare, Ireland and from them was descended Edith Annie Selfe who married John Henry Dudley Matthews in 1871.

John became Rector of Purley in 1902 and we have vivid recollections of Purley at the time written by two of their children, Rose and Frederick.

Edward Hyde's father was Henry Hyde of Wiltshire and one of Henry's brothers was Sir Nicholas Hyde of Marlborough. There appears to be a connection between Sir Nicholas and the Hydes who lived at Purley Hall from the late 16th century until 1720. From this branch of the family we can trace the origins of the Manor of Purley La Hyde back to the early 13th century. (This was the manor around what is now Purley Hall).

Another interesting connection is between Edith Selfe and Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford who contributed towards the rebuilding of Purley Church in 1870. Edith's Grandfather, William Spooner, had a sister Barbara who married William Wilberforce the well known opponent of the slave trade. Their son Samuel became bishop of Oxford in 1849 and when the appeal for funds was made he promised to contribute £10 towards the new church. He became Bishop of Winchester in 1869 just before the **re-**opening so we hope he made good his promise.

John Chapman

Tile QUEEN OPENS HRFLCKNELL IIF.RITf1GF. CF.NTRF.

Last summer, we received an expensive 100kinR brochure about the proposed Heritage Centre on Crown Land at Bracknell to he called "The Look Out". Al though aimed at loca 1 companies for financial contributions, we decided to keep it.

Earlier this year, Cliff, as Chairman of the Berkshire Local History Association, received a gilt-edged card inviting us hoth to attend the official opening of the Look Out by Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by IIRH the Duke of Edinburgh, on Wednesday 10 April 1991. Naturally, we accepted. What to wear presented no problem as our youngest son was to be married four days before and our "wedding" outfits would be quite suitable; Cl iff arranged to have the day off work.

In due course a large envelope arrived containing detailed instructions, name badges "to be worn while on the site", a map of the area, a large yellow car pass and an official programme. This latter item listed down to the minute the Queen's itinerary while on site: who was to be presented to her and where, etc. such detailed planning.

On THE day, after an early lunch, we set off for Bracknell via our son's so that he could take our photo. The large yellow car pass looked a bit conspicuous as we drove through Reading so, prepared with blobs of bluetac, we waited until Bracknell before Jean stuck it back on the windscreen.

It was most impressive being directed into the car park off Nine Mile Ride by be vies of policemen and women who quickly spotted the yellow card. On the site, crowds were already beginning to gather in the designated areas waving Union Jacks and green balloons supplied by the authorities. We were directed to a conspicuous blue & white striped marquee where the ceremony was to take place. The interior was lined with orange and white and lit by three chandeliers. Early arrivals stood around chatting nervously or sat at one of the circular tables for eight. We were served with a choice of drinks and some even managed to get a second glass. Eventually about 300 people were assembled, the local MP, council officials, representatives of firms who had made a contribution and of local societies, all with their partners. Luckily Jean found, someone she knew and we sat at their table.

As the time drew near to 3 o'clock we found a corner with a clear view of the dais with its curtained plaque and microphone all surrounded by banks of colourful plants. Suddenly in dashed a tense faced official clutching a clip board who announced into the microphone that the Queen was "on site" and would shortly be in the marquee. Seconds later a gang of heavyfooted press pounded along the wooden floor of the entry and were herded by their "organiser" in front of the dais and told to crouch down and not impede anyones view. They were followed by the much more dignified entrance of the Queen in a royal blue suit and hat, and shoes with very sensible heels - after all she was going to tour the site afterwards and this included a walk in the woodlands. She was escorted by the Mayor of Bracknell Forest wea- ing his chain of office and a nervous expression, followed by Prince Philip, the High Sheriff of Berkshire in uniform coping with his sword with practised ease and the First Crown Commissioner with

the mayor's wife.

The welcoming speech by the mayor was read from his notes, his wife in red standing beside him. With practised ease, the Queen stood at the centre front of the dais and smiled pleasantly at the audience who she seemed to examine quite closely. Then she turned and opened the blue velvet curtains covering the plaque with the inscription: "The Look Out was opened by Her Majesty the Queen on 10 April 1991".

The Queen, who has done it all before, paused, admired the plaque and then turned to smile again at the audience and press before leaving the dais. According to the programme it was all over in 6 minutes.

For the next hour we enjoyed afternoon tea of sandwiches of fresh salmon, egg, cucumber and corned beef, scones with cream and strawberry jam and a cream cake, plus several cups of tea. It was all produced and served by the on-site caterers.

Soon after 4 o'clock the same tense official with his clip board announced that the Queen was about to depart; We streamed out across the soft sandy soil under the trees to a position on the ropes near the lych gate. Here we had an even closer view of the Queen and took lots more photographs, although Jean found it hard to balance with her heels sinking into the ground. The party left in a fleet of gleaming Range Rovers and we were amazed to see how many were crammed into the cars following the Queen's.

We returned briefly to the marquee to photograph the plaque and there met the tense official now looking more relaxed but exhausted and who, with the rest of the organisers, was about to enjoy his afternoon tea.

It was then our turn to make a tour of The Look Out. After adding our names to a space at the foot of the second page of the visitors book - the Queen and Prince Philip occupied the first page - we saw the foyer where she met the school children who had drawn the animal designs for the floor, the Audio Visual Theatre where senior citizens had been watching a programme, the Schoolroom with a group of children working with two Rangers and all the other sections of the exhibition where so many people involved with the project were all waiting to be presented. We decided not to go up the Look Out Tower with its spectacular view of the tree tops.

The event was shown as part of the 6 o'clock news on South Today, BBC TV, but we missed it because we can only receive London, being on the wrong side of Tilehurst hill. However, we have lots of photos of the Queen that we took to commemorate the occasion. We enjoyed our visit, proud to have represented the BLHA but it was also nice to relax and be ourselves after it was all over.

INFORMATION:

THE LOOK OUT, Nine Mile Road, Bracknell, Brk RG12 4QW; tel. 0344 868222. Open 7 days a week (with exceptions), admission free to Centre including gift shop, coffee shop and woodlands for walking, picnics etc; free parking. Exhibition Centre admission [1 50, children/OAPs [I, special family rates.- Many information leaflets available.

Cliff and Jean DEBNEY

BOOK NE\~S

BERKSJLIRE OLD u.NEH NO 8 (1991) pub by Berks L.II.A. £3 00.
A miscellany of articles about Berkshire including One Hundred
Years of Social Service, Comings & Goings in Tudor Berkshire~ the
Parliamentary Enclosure of Bray, Historical School Records,
Newbury Postal Markings, Homen's Employment in Hest Ilsley 1851-
81 and a bibliography of recently published Berkshire items.

The Parish Church of St James the Less, PANG BOURNE by Joan
WILCOX, £1 00. Includes-a brief history-or-the village as well
as the church - a must for anyone interested in local history.

Copies of above can be obtained at meetings or direct from Jean
DEBNEY; if by UK post please add 30p or 20p respectively.

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CORRESPONDENCE & INFORMATION received by Jean DEBNEY

NEWBERY of purlef

Robert NEWBERY o Bedford has been in contact again with further
details of the NEWBERY family of Pur ley. It now seems likely
that a senior branch moved from Purley in the early 1700s to
Waltham St Lawrence and Easthampstead, Berks, and then into
London where they became booksellers. Although not yet proved,
it is thought that the John NEWBERY who was editor and publisher
of the Reading Mercury in the 18th century belonged to this
family.

Robert has also sent copies of some Purley records that he found
in the Society of Genealogists Library.

WILDER of Nunhide, Sulham & Purley Hall-

Mrs G WILDER of Aldershot and a member of Berkshire FHS has been
researching her husband's family and, although not yet thought to
be related, has researched the WILDERS of Sulham. A copy of the
resulting family tree with some additional notes has been
received and is now stored with other items in the WILDER File.

ROGERS & HEAD of Purley

Two meetings with Mrs Lottie HEAD of Binfield Heath and one with
her sister has resulted in a great deal more information about
the 20th century descendants of the ROGERS and some about the
HEAD families of Purley. James and Susannah ROGERS came to
Purley in the late 1800s and died in the parish in the 1920s.
The family has been traced back to Whitchurch Oxf in the late
1700s. Cliff copied several photographs loaned to Project Purley
but this has now ended for the time being because his camera has
broken. The family tree, copy photographs, etc. are now in the
ROGERS file.

Map of Purley Magna 1786 bf Robert MOSS

Regular readers of the Pur ey News will know that the original
map, drawn up for the new lord of the manor of Purley Magna,
Robert MACKRETH in 1786, was recently discovered in Pangbourne.
Badly damaged by flood water, a large ink stain and general
deterioration due to age and poor storage, the Berkshire Record
Office estimates that it will cost over £200 to restore.
Although not yet in a fit state for copying, it has revealed
several interesting details omitted from one or both of the 20th
century tracings which were all that was available until now.

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FUTURE PROGRAMME

All meetings start at 8 pm unless otherwise stated.

17 May 1991: Dr Gillian CLARK: talk "Nurse Children
in Berkshire" at The Gatehouse, Purley

21 Jun 1991: Whitchurch Walkabout: meet 7.30 pm.
Details of where etc. to be announced.

19 Jul 1991: An informal evening at John Chapman's
5 Cecil Aldin Drive, Purley on Thames.

Aug - no meeting

(Provisional autumn programme)

20 Sep 1991: Peter Woodage: An illustrated talk
with slides.

18 Oct 1991: Mr Moss: "Houses in and around Reading"
illustrated talk with slides.

Nov 1991: (date to be announced) John Chapman:
"The Development of Public Services
in Purley"

6/13 Dec 1991: Christmas Social Evening.

COMMITTEE

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DOCUMENTS

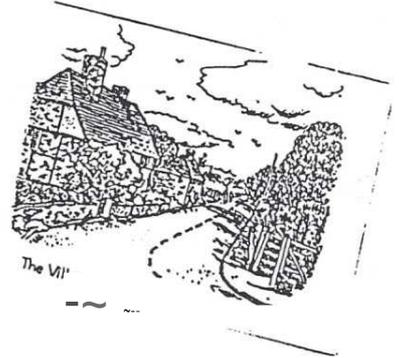
PHOTOGRAPHS

OLD FIELD NAMES

BOOKS

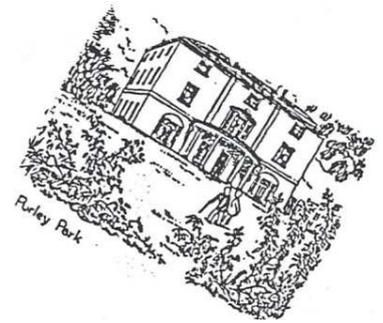
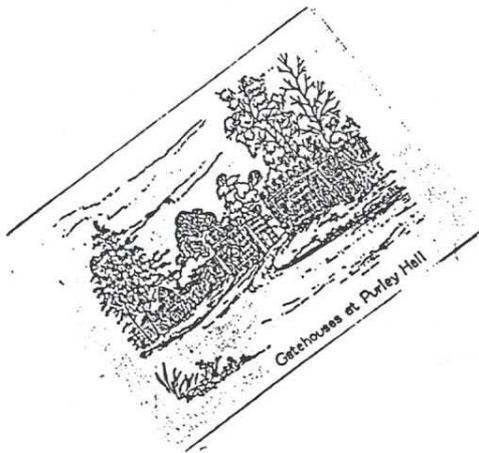
MAPS

MEMORABILIA



RESEARCH

PURLEY PUBLICATION



TRANSCRIPTS

PAMPHLETS

Jean Debney