



## NEWSLETTER-No 117-AUTUMN 2008

### THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTARY

I have wondered from time to time the meaning of the word 'Hundred' as applied to counties and districts and I had a particular reason recently to investigate further and I will explain what may already have been very clear to many of you. I found in Bourne Hall Library 'A Topographical Description of Surrey 1837', reprinted and illustrated in 1972. At that time apparently Surrey was divided into Blackheath, Brixton, Copthorne, Effingham, Elmbridge, Farnham, Godalming, Godley, Kingston, Reigate, Tandridge, Wallington, Woking and Wotton Hundreds. Banstead with 940 inhabitants, Epsom with 2890, Ewell with 1550 and Walton with 314 were in the First Division of the Copthorne Hundred and Ashted with 579 inhabitants was, with Chessington, Cuddington, Fetcham, Headley, Leatherhead, Mickleham and Newdigate, in the Second Division.

In Epsom the important inhabitants in 1837 were Lord Arden at Nork House, Sir Gilbert Heathcote at The Durdans, James Tessier at Woodcote Park, E Knight at Hookfield Grove and Captain Bolton at Headley Hill. There is of course much more detail but this set me to find out more about the meaning of 'Hundred' and in The Local Historian's Encyclopaedia second edition 1986 by John Richardson, I read that a Hundred was an administrative division of a shire probably established in the 10<sup>th</sup> Century and its derivation remains obscure. The unit existed formally until the Local Government Act of 1894 which set up District Councils.

English Heritage has, to our disappointment, decided to support the planning application for Lavandou Stables, formerly part of The Durdans. Presumably they see the buildings being restored and maintained as a good thing but do not take into account the traffic problems and loss to the area of the equestrian facilities. We also understand that Lord Halifax has asked for further time before the application goes to Planning Committee. The issues are apparently very complex involving consultant's advice on both sides but for us the issue of preserving the listed buildings and equestrian use is clear and we await the outcome.

We have met with the County Highways representative David Curl and he has told us of some of the improvements which will be made to assist traffic flow in the Borough during the next few months. We do hope that these will be successful and that the road resurfacing planned for the autumn will not create too many problems

We are pleased to read that the Borough Council is taking a strong line with the 'odd' residents who seem determined to spoil the appearance of our front gardens and streets.

**Harry Corben, Chairman**

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**Magistrates and County Courts:** This major application is for the redevelopment of both the Courts which form a single site surrounding the old Chelsea Building Society, now under development. They have been purchased by Gladedale Ltd who have their offices in Ashley House, opposite the Magistrates Court, and are the people who built Capitol House in Church Street. Their proposal for the Courts is for 54 apartments: affordable in Ashley Road, with their own offices on the ground floor, and market flats in The Parade with a communal garden between. Whilst not so high as some recent buildings, we think that – at three storeys plus a mansard floor – they are too high and bulky compared with adjoining buildings. The density is far too great and the design disappointing, although more traditional than Capitol House. The parking is well sited in the basement but with only 41 spaces is inadequate. We are also concerned about overlooking in The Parade. We have written accordingly, to say that we believe planning permission should not be given to the scheme in its present form and expect a decision at the September Planning Committee.

**Passageway from High Street to Town Hall Car Park:** This is a very welcome proposal to improve this tatty but well used footpath. The only planning permission needed – and now approved – is for the change of use of parts of the adjoining gardens to highway use, but the scheme as a whole will make the best improvement practicable. The arch to the High Street cannot be changed, apart from decoration, as it is private property.

**Land at Hylands Mews:** We objected to yet another proposal to build on the small green area behind the listed cottages on the corner of Hylands Mews and Dorking Road. It is a very small site and provides an essential open area at the entrance to the Mews. Permission has been refused.

**Balti House, South Street:** We had drawn attention to the large advertisement on the flank wall adjoining the Balti House, which we considered totally out of place within the Town Centre Conservation Area. As a result of action by the Planning Enforcement Officer the advertisement has been removed and an application is expected.

**Land rear of 39-41, Manor Green Road:** This proposal was for a terrace of three houses on garden land fronting Hamilton Close. We objected on the grounds that this would be overdevelopment and out of character with this well established road. It was an example of cramming in an unsuitable infill and permission was refused.

**The Paddock, Langley Vale Road:** After two visits to the Planning Committee, and much negotiation, permission has been granted for suitably modified signs on the new hotel. These are as discreet as can reasonably be expected and can be regarded as a satisfactory outcome.

**Hudson House (the building opposite the station):** The latest news is that detailed discussions about the corrections to the facade are nearing conclusion. Fairview will put the work in hand when everything is finally settled. Understandably they want to do everything at once as the building will need re-scaffolding and the expense will be very substantial. This of course reflects the seriousness of their mistakes in departing from the agreed scheme. We must again thank the Planning Department – Mark Berry and Anthony Evans in particular - for getting the best practicable solution to

the problem. So far as Station Way is concerned, particulars of the materials, railings, false ceiling, lighting, CCTV and other details of the passage from Station Way to the High Street are also nearly complete and the items are in course of manufacture. The proposed canopy at the entrance has unfortunately been abandoned, but suitable signage to draw attention to the passage is under negotiation.

**Alan Baker**

## **CONSERVATION**

Our tally of applications reviewed this year is now 30 with a further 3 awaiting inspection. We have written a further four letters. The summer is a relatively quiet period, and things may hot up somewhat in the autumn, although the current financial climate may continue to put a damper on things.

As I mentioned last time, we try to limit our letters to those applications which seem to have some severe deficiencies or which have design issues which, in our opinion, have a serious impact on their setting or which are otherwise unsuitable. Sometimes, these are purely matters of opinion and taste, and these are more difficult matters to argue.

Some applications are accompanied by very poor plans, which do not show the proposals adequately for some reason and we recently had occasion to object to a proposal on this basis. This concerned an extension which seemed to be oversized and therefore out of keeping with the host property, whose design was a fundamental element in the reasons for the establishment of the Conservation Area in which it was sited. Such cases are considered very carefully, as we would not wish to stand in the way of the very legitimate desire of home owners to improve their property.

In the last newsletter we mentioned an application by the Chalk Lane Hotel for a new 14 bed wing. We had written to voice our concerns regarding the impact on the hotel's existing parking and the potentially adverse impact on the area, particularly in traffic terms. This application was subsequently refused by the council on these and related grounds.

Atkins has submitted an application in relation to a new entrance to the main office block. This is a 1960's building and, being typical of the period, is very undistinguished. The proposals include refurbishment and improvements to the existing building, which are very welcome. However, the new entrance building, which is very contemporary in appearance with a metal clad curved roof, does not, in our view, sit comfortably with the building and pays scant heed to the architecture of the listed manor house. This is a difficult case, but we have written to express our strong reservations, suggesting that the new building might be resited in a less sensitive location.

**Robert Austen**

## **DOWNNS**

The following notes are from the Downs Consultative Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Discussion took place on the re-routing of bridleway 65, overgrown hack rides, the difficulties faced when riding facilities - as specified under the 1986 Act - clash with Nature Conservation needs. The Derby meeting went off well, though attendance for the Oaks (or Ladies Day) was not as high as Nick Blofeld, the Managing Director, would have liked. Comments were made about possible encroachment of caravans associated with the fair over a wider than usual area and this will be checked on aerial photographs taken for the Management. Parking problems at Tattenham Corner and possibly Harding Road,

Langley Vale caused cancellation of some buses. Nick Blofeld will follow this up. Litter picking is carried out twice a year, as well as after meetings. The proposed 'Posh fest' with one day pop and one day classical will be run by an experienced company, so Nick Blofeld has no fears of a 'mini Glastonbury'. Chairman (Councillor Jean Smith) said concerns about the hotel application concerning illuminated signs had been discussed and, she felt, suitably addressed.

The Habitat Management Plan was discussed and generally approved. Nick Owen of Lower Mole Countryside Management Group explained the proposal for coppicing the woodland at The Warren and at the eastern side of Langley Vale together with Langley Bottom Copse. Coppicing is a very ancient method of managing woodland and providing a renewable source of wood for charcoal. This proposal was welcomed as it is highly likely to increase the variety of plants and animals. Nick will endeavour to explain and inform so there is not a huge outcry when what appears to be cutting and burning starts. It was suggested that he visits The Vale School as a starting point and leaflets could be given to the Playgroup leaders.

A Downs Tour has been arranged for 21<sup>st</sup> August at 6pm.

**Angela Clifford**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

We have a healthy membership of over 1670 and 59 people involved in Newsletter distribution. We are very grateful to them all. However, at the moment there is one area not covered. It is in Ashted with 19 households and spread out so would be suitable for someone energetic who enjoys walking, cycling or even running. Alternatively it could be broken up into smaller areas if you think you could manage part of it. I have contacted the members in this area and none of them are able to do this so I am looking for offers from someone, perhaps living nearby, who would be prepared to take on this task for the Society of delivering 4 Newsletters a year and collecting subscriptions. If you think that you might be able to help in this way please give me a ring on 01372 728570 for more information.

**Ishbel Kenward, Membership Secretary**

### **DISPLAY IN THE MALL ASHLEY**

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October your committee will be mounting a one day display of the Society's activities in the Mall Ashley. Please come and support the Society in this venture which is the most important way in which we can increase our membership. This year we will have, among other things, some excellent new aerial photographs of various aspects of Epsom on view. *(Since our shopping centre has recently been sold to the Carlyle Group it remains to be seen whether its name will revert back to the preferred Ashley Centre. Ed)*

### **EVENTS, OUTINGS and TALKS**

#### **Mapledurham & Henley Outing on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008.**

Unlike last year when the outing had to be postponed because of flooding the weather was perfect. Alan, our usual driver, took the scenic route to Henley, along the Thames at Runnymede and through Windsor with a good view of the castle. The coach parked at the River and Rowing Museum and most people toured the exhibition and the Wind in the Willows attraction. There was plenty of time as well to walk along the river bank in the sunshine and have lunch before joining the coach to travel

to Caversham Bridge where we boarded the boat for the 40 minute trip up river to Mapledurham. Edward from Mapledurham made the journey very interesting giving a commentary about the properties we passed, pointing out the site of the Reading Festival and the extent of the Mapledurham estate. The miller met us at the landing stage and she showed us over the mill and gave a very interesting talk about its history and operation. There has been a watermill on the site since Saxon times, the present one dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and is constructed of wood with no nails and is the last working corn mill left on the Thames. Different types of wholemeal flour ground by the mill were on sale. We walked the short distance to the house. Mapledurham is an Elizabethan manor house which has been owned by the same family for 400 years. We were taken round in 2 groups and saw the rooms, furniture, portraits and the chapel (the family are Roman Catholic). The impressive oak staircase had an odd feature, the architect had made a miscalculation and the top banister rail was false to preserve the symmetry and the real one was hidden behind at a lower level. Next to the house is the large parish church with a separate RC Chapel attached but time did not permit a viewing. The visit finished with a splendid cream tea, before the return journey.

### **Nonsuch Mansion visit on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

Ian West was unable to conduct this tour (he had promised to do a 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party for a friend and the date was changed at the last moment) but had arranged for Gerald Smith, Chairman of the Friends of Nonsuch Mansion, to take his place. This was good for us because Gerald is THE expert on the history of Nonsuch Mansion, and has written a book on the subject.

The main house is still closed because of a council dispute. After an introductory talk about the history of the house and its ownership by Gerald Smith, he and another Friend took us in 2 groups for a tour of the domestic quarters, visiting the kitchen, laundry and store rooms. We saw how this area was screened from the main house and the back courtyard with the dairy and its interesting tiles. Then we toured the outside of the main house where various features were pointed out including a description of rooms behind the windows. A big 'Thankyou' to Gerald Smith for stepping in at the last moment and giving us such an interesting afternoon.

### **Christmas Outing on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

The Christmas outing this year will be to Chichester Theatre to see the Carl Rosa Opera Company performance of THE MIKADO, the most popular of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas. Following a sell-out season in the West End the opera company returns to Chichester for the third year running. Featuring Oscar-winning sets and costumes the Mikado transports you to the magnificent Japanese court of Titipu in an hilarious tale of love, executions and heroics.

I have been able to book the best seats in the house for the matinee.

The coach will pick up outside the Methodist Church at 9.15am and the car park at Tattenham Corner at 9.30am. We should arrive in Chichester by 11.00am and the coach will stop near the Cathedral and will pick again at 1.30pm to take us to the theatre for the matinee which starts at 2pm. This will allow plenty of free time for people to visit the Cathedral, go Christmas shopping, have lunch or whatever they please to do in the morning. The coach will bring us back after the show, arriving in Epsom about 6pm.

The cost will be £37.00 each which includes theatre seat, coach and tips (unfortunately the cost of coach hire has gone up considerably due to fuel price rises).

This outing will be popular so apply early.

Please apply on the application form printed in this newsletter and return together with your cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society and a stamped addressed envelope to:- Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS

### **Annual Buffet Supper Party, Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008 7.45 to 10.15pm**

Details of this event were given in the last news letter, in case you have mislaid it they are repeated below. The party will be held as usual in the large hall at St Joseph's Church Epsom (behind the Haywain in the Dorking Road).

Please note the doors will not open before 7.30pm

The Food Studio Caterers will provide the food and their menu looks very appetising.

By popular request Headley Kay who entertained us in 2006 has agreed to return this year with his special mixture of songs stories and music. He is an excellent guitarist who lives in Leatherhead and does a lot of voluntary work entertaining patients in hospitals.

Tickets are £17each (wine or soft drinks are included).

You are welcome to bring friends and guests as the numbers are not limited.

Please apply on the application form printed on page 7 of this newsletter with a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society and enclose a stamped addressed envelope and return to:- Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS

### **Talk**

#### **Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008 8pm in Myers Studio**

To begin this season we have asked a Director of CABE (The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) to talk about their purpose and role with particular reference to towns like Epsom. CABE was set up in 1999 to advise central, regional and local government on architecture and urban design. It helps to formulate planning policy to deliver the best design for public buildings, town centre developments and public areas. Working directly with planners, designers, clients and architects they offer guidance on projects that will shape all our lives, seeking to improve the quality of life through good design. In the light of our recent experience of developments in the town centre this should be an interesting evening.

Tickets are £3 each and an application form is on page 7.

### **NOTE**

Please send a separate cheque and SAE for each event.

**Joy Furness**

### **Professor John Ashurst**

Professor Ashurst who had to cancel his talk in February 2008 because he was in hospital but had hoped to come later in the year was more seriously ill than we realised and died in May. He was an eminent architect, an authority on building conservation and an expert on the history of Epsom. His death was a great loss and a full page obituary appeared in The Times newspaper.

**Our Chairman Harry Corben writes:**

'The Epsom Club (Church Street) is inviting members of the Epsom Protection Society only to a special Open Evening on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008 at 6.00pm. A free buffet will be provided and drinks will be available at Club bar prices.

For catering purposes, please let Harry Corben know if you wish to come by Friday, 3rd October at the latest. Harry's phone number is 01372 721061.

(Car parking is available in the Council car park opposite the Club).The Epsom Club looks forward to welcoming you.'

**Application form for Christmas Outing to Chichester and THE MIKADO on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

Please tick as appropriate:-

I will join the coach at the Methodist Church at 9.15am sharp

I will join the coach at Tattenham Corner car park 9.30am sharp

Cost £37.00 each (inclusive of matinee, coach and tips)

I would like....tickets and enclose a cheque for £.....made payable to Epsom Protection Society and a stamped addressed envelope. Please return the completed form with cheque and stamped addressed envelope to Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst, Epsom KT18 7DS (01372 722186)

**Application form for Talk, Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2008 at 8pm in Myers Studio Epsom Playhouse.**

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

I would like....tickets for the talk (£3 each) and enclose a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society for £...and a stamped addressed envelope. Please return to Joy Furness, 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS (Tel 01372 722186).

**Application Form for Buffet Supper Party,**

FRIDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2008 at 7.45 pm in St Joseph's Church Hall Epsom

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

I would like.....tickets for this event (£17 each) and enclose a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society for £.....and a stamped addressed envelope.

Please return to Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS.

(Tel 01372 7221860

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