

over the wall....

The newsletter for Horsley Villagers

Spring 2013

issue 69

HORSLEY HISTORY

The following continues from issue 68 & is taken from: 'Horsley: Introduction', A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 11: Bisley and Longtree Hundreds (1976), pp. 175-177.

Horsley village developed from the cross-roads east of the church where a group of buildings, including the former Boot inn, recorded between 1779 and 1939, retain features dating from the late 17th or early 18th century. Tradition maintains that the cross-roads was the site of the market.

North of the cross-roads stands Horsley Court, a house predominantly of the early 19th century but incorporating a staircase and part of the structure of an early-18th-century house. The large room occupying the north half of the main front was formerly of double height with an encircling gallery at first-floor level. A three-storey porch and a north-west service wing were added in the 19th century. During the later 19th century it was the chief house of an estate of c. 100 a. owned by Edward Wood Mason (d. 1883).

Cottages were built east of the village on Hay Lane and the lane leading to Washpool from the 18th century.

The site of the priory was used for a house of correction, opened in 1791 and built according to the principles of Sir George Onesiphorous Paul. The prison was closed and sold in 1878 when the site contained a petty sessional court and committee rooms, cell blocks, chapel, infirmary, two dwelling houses, and a lodge. Most of the buildings were demolished but a three-storeyed block was converted for use as a residence, and in 1972, called the Priory, was used as a local office by the highways department of Gloucestershire county council. A small council estate was built nearby in the mid 20th century.

(cont'd on p 10)

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email addresses: nick.hackett@btinternet.com
lornaadamson@msn.com & heyweather@msn.com

GARDENER'S WORLD

I'm writing this making the assumption that by the time our acclaimed editor has put the newsletter to bed, the marvellous printers have printed it and sent it back post haste by the lovely couriers who always do their utmost to deliver the boxes undamaged, and our superb delivery team have delivered it to your door post haste to avoid disappointment, Spring will finally have sprung and signs of life will be showing in our gardens.

It seems that the plant world is at least a month behind, so don't worry if you have been a little sluggish at getting out there, you haven't missed a thing!

My old mum used to say that if the soil isn't warm enough to put your bare bottom on without shouting OOOOOH then it isn't warm enough to be sowing seeds.

Now I have to say that I have never tried doing this, opting for the sow seeds under glass method, but don't let me stop you if you want to give it a go. Do let me know how you get on.

And remember, if you are going to start seeds off in your greenhouse or windowsill, that plants like sweet peas and root vegetables don't like having their roots disturbed, so sow them

in bio-degradable pots or the tubes from the centre of toilet rolls and plant the whole thing out in the garden when they are big enough.

Now you may have noticed that I was able to use the word sluggish earlier in this piece without going into to a rant. Well, whilst talking to my therapist about my mother and her gardening techniques, the subject of slugs came up and the advice was 'it's time to let go.....'

GH

*Madame Matisse
testing the soil
temperature the old
fashioned way.....*

Henri Matisse 1949



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THE TERROR TO COME!

PLOT TO ENSLAVE HORSLEYITES EXPOSED!

AN AWFUL WARNING!

THE DAY OF THE GRIT BINS IS AT HAND!

Those of you who are lucky enough to receive the almost daily jolly e-mails from Horsley's webmeister may think that they are a kind of modern village-green – chatting beside the parish pump - a happy way of cementing the village spirit, spreading useful information and finding the odd pussy-cat or missing family dog.

Only very recently have its more sinister implications become obvious to the members of the Downend Neurotics' Conspiracy Theorists' Society. Surely it is clear that these messages are part of a dastardly plot to numb the minds of the Horsley populace before they are shipped as slaves to work at the intercontinental incinerator now under construction in the vale behind an invisibility shield – don't believe this nonsense about public enquiries!

Hiding behind those warnings about fake steamed-pudding salesmen or offers to adjust your council-tax band are coded messages to the *webmeister's* evil henchmen. Wardrobes advertised have 'extra hanging space': pictures of people dancing in circles carry the code-word 'transforming'; huge rolls of carpet are suddenly 'left over'; whole theatre stages disappear from behind the village hall.

Strange things are afoot all over the Parish! Exhibitions at Stratford Park have titles so outlandish that they can only make sense if seen as part of a fiendish plot to enslave the simple folk of Horsley and the even simpler folk of Washpool. How many of your neighbours have gone to a concert at Ruskin Mill to listen to instruments that no-one has ever heard of, and have never returned (or have returned with their minds strangely altered?)

Good people of Horsley – awake! But it may be too late!

As April began, a dreadful - and to all but the initiated, incomprehensible - message about Horsley's Grit Bins was issued from the bat-encircled turrets of Tickmorend. Attached was a map of 'the KNOWN grit bins', implying, of course, that there are legions of these evil, slaving monsters lurking in the undergrowth of the lanes, waiting to be activated. How many of those poor missing pussy-cats and innocent doggies have disappeared into their jaws?

And it will be us next! Our fate will be, zombie-like, to spend our wretched lives stealing rubbish-sacks from all over the country to feed the insatiable maw of the intercontinental incinerator now under construction in the vale behind an invisibility shield (or did I mention that already?)

THE GRIT BINS ARE AWAKENING! RUN, YOU FOOLS, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

Peter Hunt

(PS: the Editor of OTW proposed that we write on the theme of 'Letting Go' this month – but some of us were not fooled by such an obvious ploy to distract from the Grit Bin Plot.)

HORSLEY VILLAGE FETE 2013 SATURDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER

Calling all Owners of Gazebos, Marquees, etc!!**IF** you are the proud owner of a gazebo (the larger the better!) OR (even better) a Marquee of some description, then we would be very grateful if we could borrow them for the Fete. There may be a minor miracle, and we MAY have a decent summer but I for one, ain't holding my breath.....(They could also be used to shield everyone from the searing rays of the sun.....)

We also need volunteers to help on the day with the famous tea and cakes in the Village hall, as well as helping out on the stalls. This years' Fete promises to be a real Cracker so if you can help in ANY capacity, we would LOVE to hear from you.

Please contact Ria Guest 01453 832157 or email ria@theguests.net

RUSKIN MILL COPPICING WALK AND TALK

On a bitter cold March morning eleven of us braved the weather, arriving at Horsley Mill for a stroll through the woods.

On the way we kept stopping to listen to Richard Turley, the Ruskin Mill Woodland Manager. He gave us a very interesting talk about the 10 year cycle of coppicing at Ruskin Mill.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the morning's "walk and talk" finishing with a very welcome cup of tea and biscuits.

Many thanks go to Rich for giving up his Saturday to enlighten villagers about RM's woodland management.

We are hoping to organise a similar event next spring.

Min Hogg



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HORSLEY CHURCH

In the last six weeks I have been involved with two very special and totally different events both held in Horsley Church. I am amazed by how flexible the space is and what a welcoming atmosphere it has whatever the event.

The most recent was the funeral of Pip's mother Denise who died on March 16th aged 93. As a family we chose to have the service side-on in the church with the chairs arranged in a circle around her and a picture projected on the screen of her aged 90 standing on a beach with her arms out as if ready to take off.

Although unconventional the arrangement made the atmosphere very warm and friendly and a young 12 year old neighbour afterwards said 'what a lovely funeral'.....

At the end of the service Denise left the church with the undertakers and without anyone having to move far, there was tea and cakes and family and friends were able to stay and talk and look at photographs and sketchbooks of her drawings.

Pip and I and all the family felt so lucky to have such a special place to hold her funeral and it made a huge difference to the whole process.

The second event could not have been more different.

A sumptuous dinner and cabaret to raise money for Guide Dogs for the Blind and Sense, a charity which supports deaf/blind people. The event was organised by Ellen Watson and her family as she is facing the future as a blind young person who also has severe deafness, this is caused by Usher Syndrome and at present as well as studying for her A2 exams she is learning to read Braille and use a long cane.

The evening was very upbeat and fun with fantastic entertainment but for me the best thing was hearing Ellen talk very frankly and articulately about the challenges which she faces, far from bringing us down she lifted us up and showed us a different way of seeing. The event raised a fantastic £5000.

Thank you to all the people who worked so hard to make the conversion of the church possible.

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SO THAT WAS SPRING

... but it's amazing what a great Spring-clean can do.

While the rest of us were cowering in tents on windswept hillsides, baking on alien beaches, or just huddling on a Horsley hillside, brave souls from the Community Shop committee were in there over the Easter week-end giving the shop the deep spring-clean and refurbishment of its life.

The big change you notice as soon as you go in now is that the shelves have been swung round to make everything easier to spot or, still better, to discover for the first time. Not only is it now easier to see what used to be hidden away in the refrigerators along the back wall, but everything is easier to find on even the lowest shelves under the new arrangement.

And somehow you can feel the fresh sparkle from the deep-cleaned floors and shelves, and feel the de-cluttered walls and notice-boards breathe again. The next plan is to use some of this fresh space to draw attention every week to what's new or special in the shop. Watch out for announcements to catch what is fresh in.

Due in soon will be smoked trout from the new Ruskin Mill smokery. And fresh organic vegetables from the Duchy Farm are just beginning to arrive as the frozen fields of winter start to produce again.

So come on in to the shop to catch all these elusive signs of Spring, and have a word with Jo the manager if you realise that now is the time to volunteer for a few shifts behind the counter.

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Patricia Rowan

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THE BIG WALK BY THE SEA GOES ROUND THE BEND

Some say I went round the bend some time ago. In 2013 it becomes official.

In May this year, I am taking on a barmy challenge – to hike 211 miles of the Cornish Coast in ten days. During the walk, I will climb (and descend) 37,000 feet. I am also carrying all my kit. I am calling this hike “going round the bend”, partly because I will be rounding Land’s End at about 90 miles. But mainly because you have to be a bit of a loony to do this sort of walk.

There is, however, method in my madness as I have set this challenge to raise funds for a two good causes – research into the particularly nasty “Triple Negative” Breast Cancer (at Guy’s Hospital) and Combat Stress (the Military Veterans’ Mental Health charity). These charities are closely associated with two good friends who died recently. I am covering all my costs, so 98% of donations go to the charities.

I will be picking up the trail at Padstow on 15 May. I reach Fowey on 25 May. It is all Atlantic Coast. This is beautiful, but it can also be a beast.

In a recent page on my blog, I wrote about the glorious absurdity of walking 211 miles of coast, when the direct route is a mere 27 miles. Of course, this misses the point and I am looking forward to discovering more about this part of the country and, in particular, the contrasts between the north and south coast.

On a simple level, at about halfway, I will be walking into the sunset rather than having the sun in my face at dawn. Then there are more subtle contrasts: the north coast is craggy and involves precipitous climbs and descents. It skirts high moors, features mighty headlands and offers flat beaches to Atlantic rollers.

The south coast is gentler. It is more densely populated and is a riviera. In this trip we will be crossing four rivers on the south coast, each with a name that might be at home in the Southern United States. In a forty-mile stretch, we will cross: Gillan Creek, The Helford River, Carrick Roads and The Percuil River.

The contrasts produce a variety of beautiful scenery. Perhaps because of this, the coast fires the imagination and it has attracted generations of writers and artists.

Writers have included: D.H. Lawrence, who wrote *Women in Love* while living at Zennor; Winston Graham, who based his *Poldark* novels around Perranporth; and Daphne du Maurier, who was stimulated by the landscape at Fowey.

The area also has a long reputation for inspiring artists. Notable examples include the St Ives community and the Newlyn School at Lamorna.

I will be learning more about this part of the coast as I prepare for, and undertake, this fundraising challenge. If you would like to join me on this journey, my blog is at:

<http://thebigwalkbythesea2013.blogspot.co.uk/2013>

If you would like to donate to Breast Cancer Research and Combat Stress and/or want to find out why I am fundraising, then please go to: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Jolyon>

Jolyon Neely



THE FRIENDS OF HORSLEY SCHOOL

In the first quarter of the year, FHS have been very busy working on how we can update the school library to make it an exciting and modern part of the school building.

We want to promote reading for leisure by not only adding to our existing range of fiction and non-fiction books, but by also introducing a wider range of reading media that might appeal to the more reluctant readers. We also want to create a great research hub for the children to explore school topics and outside interests alike. We hope to start making the changes at the end of May and continuing as our finances allow.

Anyone who has attended any function in the church will know it can be hard to hear the spoken word, even if amplification is used.

Following an independent professional assessment of the acoustics we now know that it's because there is a significant level of reverberation in the nave in particular. The advice we received was to improve the acoustics using non obtrusive panelling on the ceiling before reassessing the situation to see if amplification would then help further. If we just install amplification all you get is worse reverberation, making it especially hard for anyone with any hearing loss. FHS will be using our newly acquired charity status to apply for funding to improve the acoustics in the church for the benefit of all users.

We recently held the annual Washpool duck race. The weather wasn't as warm and sunny as it has been previously, but thankfully we had a break in the rain for the race itself. Despite the weather and the high level of illness which has swept the school recently, we still managed to raise over £200 for the school library improvements. Thanks to all those who braved the weather to help make this a fun afternoon none the less.

We haven't fixed a calendar of events for the summer term yet, but details of all events will be promoted in the Horse's Mouth, via posters around the parish and through the village email list.

Please do come along - everyone is welcome to FHS events, it's a great way to meet new people and old friends and to have a bit of a giggle whilst raising much needed funds for the local school.

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.....(*cont'd from Front Cover*)

In the late 18th and 19th centuries the village grew westwards along the main street to Nupend where a church house was recorded in 1671. Two farm-houses, one of which was used as cottages in 1972, and a cottage at the west end of Nupend date from the 17th century but most of the buildings are of the 18th or 19th century.

A habitation was recorded in 1327 at Barton End, named from a barton on the manor estate. Tenants were recorded there in the mid-16th century and two houses dating from the 17th century survive, Barton End House and the Grange, a gabled house which was reoriented with a new north-west front during the 19th century. Some small houses at Upper Barton End date from the late 17th or early 18th century as does a gabled house, used as a small hotel in 1972, situated at Tiltups End ½ mile south of Barton End. An inn, called Tiltups inn or the Black Horse, was recorded there from 1769 and was housed in a mid-19th-century building in 1972.

Downend, a small settlement north of Horsley village, includes a pair of 17th-century gabled houses. The earlier, western house was formerly the White Hart inn, recorded from 1798. The situation of the houses, with a small 19th-century residence to the north, suggests that there may have once been a mill there on a tributary of the Horsley stream. The hamlet grew eastwards during the late 18th & 19th centuries and some private housing and a small council estate were built in the mid-20th century. North of Downend are Sugley Farm, a 17th century farm-house greatly enlarged in the 19th century, and Tickmorend, where a house was recorded in 1660. Further north are small groups of 19th century cottages at Wallow Green and near Fooks Farm, a small 19th-century farm-house recalling the name of a copyhold property mentioned in the 16th century.

In 1755 four licensed premises were recorded in Horsley parish, including that part later transferred to Nailsworth. The same area had ten ale-houses in 1785 but the magistrates reduced their number to three the following year. In 1838, however, Horsley had ten public houses and 31 beer-houses, most of which were presumably in the area later transferred to Nailsworth. Apart from the public houses already mentioned the Yew Tree was recorded at Nupend from 1870 until 1935, and the Bell and Castle was recorded from 1870 and remained in premises east of the parish church in 1972. A friendly society was recorded at the Boot inn in the 1820s and another met at the school between 1857 and 1859.

The population figures for Horsley before 1891 include that part of the parish later transferred to Nailsworth. In 1327 49 inhabitants were assessed for tax. The parish was apparently severely depopulated at the time of the Black Death but in 1381 62 persons were assessed for tax. In 1551 there were 217 communicants in the parish and 56 households were recorded in 1563. The number of communicants had increased to 400 by 1603 and there were said to be 200 families in 1650. In the early 18th century there were said to be c. 1,200 people living in 300 houses in the parish. The population increased from 2,971 in 1801 to a peak of 3,690 in 1831 but the decline of the cloth industry resulted in emigration, some of it officially sponsored, and in 1861 2,558 people were enumerated. The population remained steady until 1881. In 1891 1,136 people were recorded in the residual parish and the figure remained steady until 1931 when the population was 1,038. A further change in the boundary contributed to the drop in numbers to 918 in 1951 and in 1961 the population of Horsley was 857.

A parliamentary garrison was stationed at Horsley in 1643. Henry Sheppard, a prominent lawyer on the parliamentary side, was born in the parish. In the first decade of the 19th century a troop of volunteer infantry was raised at Horsley and presumably included men from the surrounding parishes.



Downend Now & Then.....top approximately 1900.....bottom 2013

LETTING GO

I tugged the rooted nettle clumps.
They held. I held.
No thoughts, no reasoning beyond the act.
With each bound truss I wrestled from its fastness
came great followings of matted trails,
nerves yanked from their tenacious grip
backlashing weals across my skin.

The knots had blindly grown, a chaos
gramping down and deep and through.
The nettles' arteries had darkly meshed themselves
as had my multiplying mind, ensnared
in one hard task these recent, striving months.

Yet now, that work complete and needing rest,
I battled on ferociously intent,
compelled unknowing by a deeper need.

Four full days on, it came upon me then:
a dawning sense on shaking out the soil,
that both the earth and I fell free
with every loosened braid.
We opened to the summer sky,
an unbound space to breathe, inhale at last.

Through this enactment of release I found
a quiet, sifted warmth, a simpler place
from which a transformation could emerge,
a truer, newlife seed unfurl.

Maxine Relton



*Willis Tower, Chicago
glass box window*

LADIES WHO SLEDGE!

Remember when Horsley had all that snow
And life ground to a halt, but did you know
That Downend was right at the cutting edge,
'Cos out and about were Ladies who Sledge!

Yes, bright with jumpers, and scarves a-tangle,
And hats put on at a jaunty angle,
They dragged their sleighs, one red and one blue,
But how to use them? Not got a clue!

They clambered the fence to the field with sheep,
You'll know the one, it's pretty damn steep,
No primary slopes to help these two fledge,
It's straight to la piste for Ladies who Sledge.

But the climb to the top proved too much of a task
And they hadn't remembered their oxygen mask,
So they stopped halfway up to admire the view
And decided that place would just have to do.

They said, 'Right we just have to sit on and scream',
Although it seemed like some nightmarish dream,
There was no turning back 'cos they'd taken a pledge
Nothing would daunt those two Ladies who Sledge.

Well the first time they managed a couple of feet,
It was terribly hard to keep on that seat,
And if you had seen them collapsed in the ditches
All covered in snow, it would have you in stitches.

The key witness was named as Daisy the dog,
Yes the one you all know if you've followed the blog,
She leapt, she barked, she jumped on their heads,
I'll bet you've not heard about Puppies who Sledge.

In no time at all they were sleighing just fine,
Though the track marks suggested a wiggly line,
But after a while they were starting to shiver
They'd not brought their whiskey to top up their liver.

One last time, they'd start nearer the top
Quite forgetting it might be much harder to stop;
You'd think they may well be still stuck in the hedge
But there's photos to prove there were Ladies who Sledge!



POLLY HOWELL

Jo Payne & Daisy

CELEBRATING THE SENSES

On the 2nd of march we hosted a wonderful event in the church 'celebrating our senses' in aid of two incredible charities: Guide dogs for the Blind and Sense.

It was such an enjoyable night, with lovely food and class entertainment.

The support we received was heart-warming, and that ranges from all of those who bought tickets, the wonderful performers and artists who gave up their night to provide entertainment, my friends who waitressed and supervised the bar, those who volunteered their help before and after who were absolutely priceless.

I'd like to specifically highlight my Mum (Amanda Lowery) who put so much effort into the running of this event and it means sooo much, and Ali Heywood who was my mum's right hand women in the running of this event and none of us could have done is without her!

I'm sure there is more, thank you all, I'm really grateful! Its brilliant to know it was all worth something, I'm so pleased to say that when all the payments are finalised we will have raised around £5000, all in the space of one night! Although we are still awaiting some of the payments, particularly those from the auction.

On behalf of myself, my family and all of the others I know living with Usher Syndrome we are thrilled! As I'm sure many of you will know, both of the charities are very close to my heart and have done inspirational work supporting myself and people in a similar position to me.

To everybody involved thank you so much!

Ellen Lowery

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LETTER TO NEIL CARMICHAEL MP

Dear Mr Carmichael,

BT OPENREACH BROADBAND

For some time now, Cllr Hackett as Chairman of Council has been in contact with BT Openreach concerning the extension of faster broadband to the village. As this has been a particular interest of yours for some time, Council resolved at its latest meeting to draw your attention to the prevarication encountered by Council and to request you to employ your best efforts to obtain some meaningful response from BT Openreach.

BT Openreach is responsible for the telephonic infrastructure of which Fibre is the latest technology. This requires the whole of the nation's telephone lines to be upgraded where possible in order to achieve much faster and more reliable broadband connections. This is urgently needed for our school, which runs off a remote 'education approved' server, and also by the many home workers, small businesses and farmers within our community.

Nailsworth exchange is already upgraded and taking orders for BT Infinity which is BT's fibre broadband. Horsley is designated to receive 'fibre to the cabinet' (FTTC) which means that a fibre optic link will be made from Nailsworth exchange to a point in the village, called Cabinet P8. The Openreach website currently locates this in a field just off the top of Narrowcut Lane (Nailsworth side), although this may be inaccurate.

Apparently the cabinet location needs to meet various deployment criteria and so far the engineers have failed to identify a suitable location. It has therefore been '

Council believes that Horsley is being side-lined for no good reason other than scheduling convenience. Furthermore the information that Cllr Hackett has received is tantamount to fending off a genuine enquiry. After 4 weeks we actually know nothing more than when Cllr Hackett posted his first enquiry to Openreach.

Council would like to engage with Openreach so that we can assist in the location of the cabinet and get the work back into the programme. So far this request has not been met.

Yours sincerely,

J R Nicholson, Horsley Parish Clerk

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HORSLEY PLAYGROUP

The spring term has been very busy packed with exploring the prevailing weather like the snow earlier in the term and lots of celebrations like Valentines, Chinese New year and Mothering Sunday. The children have embraced a wide variety of activities with great enthusiasm. We have also welcomed Hetty to playgroup and her family, all new to playgroup.

During Chinese New year we made brightly coloured snakes, and added detail to the dragon some of our older children helped to make last year. We listened to oriental music and practised our drumming skills, and then we took turns to dance inside the dragon and make our own music. We also tried eating noodles with chopsticks – quite a tricky thing to do!



As part of our Mother's Day celebration, the children made a fantastic lunch for their mums. They also made flower displays and set out the tables for the lunch. The look on the children's faces was sheer delight as they welcomed their mum and sat down with them to eat together - a very proud and happy occasion for us all.

At our Tuesday pre-school session we had a design and making project to develop our painting, sewing and thinking skills to produce a Mother's Day gift – the children have made it very individual and have made something very much for their mums to treasure.

You may already be aware of our lovely deputy Immy's absence to support her child Harry through his fight against cancer. He is currently recovering from an amputation above the knee on the affected leg and is half way through his chemotherapy treatment. All our love and positive thoughts are with them, and we are currently collecting money for the **CLIC charity** – a charity that Immy and her family have had huge support from already during their many visits to the Bristol BRI hospital. If you would like to help us with this collection and make a donation, please drop into playgroup on a Monday or Wednesday – every little bit helps. Thank you.

You may also notice that we are collecting **Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers**. The collecting period goes on until towards the end of May. Please consider giving us some of the vouchers you may be getting if you shop at Sainsbury's – it may mean we can get something from it, however small, it is worth it, so do drop them in please. Thank you.

Our sessions currently run on Monday and Wednesday 9.30am -12.30pm in the village hall. For our pre-school year children our Monday sessions run to 3.00pm and we also have a session in the school reception classroom on Tuesdays 12.30-3.00pm. We also run a parent, baby and toddler session on Tuesdays 9.30-11.30am in the village hall.

Looking forward to a warm and sunny summer term - hopefully!

Mags Ratford, on behalf of Horsley Playgroup 833876

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HOBBYISM

I have this problem: ***I get infected with other people's hobbies.***

The other day for example, Mrs Wormwood went to visit one of her former work colleagues at her house by the seaside. She took me along to keep the husband busy while she and her friend caught up on the latest news, in that special way that only women ... Anyway.

No sooner had we exchanged greetings and so on, when the friend said to her husband, in a stage whisper: "Keith, why don't you show Wormwood your train set."

"Oh, he won't want to see that!" said Keith.

But I found myself saying: "Actually I'd love to." And what's more - I meant it, even as I felt a ripple of mild panic pass through my body.

So Keith and I adjourned to the spare room and it wasn't long before we were hunched over his extensive collection of locomotives. I was admiring the piston-work on a Robinson D11 when Keith said "You realise that's the Stephenson valve gear you're looking at there. Lovely, isn't it?"

And suddenly I knew I had to get out – unless, that is, I was willing to risk developing an expensive and time-consuming interest in model railways. I mean, for goodness sake, these things cost a fortune! The Wren model of the Coronation Class 4-6-2 Duchess of Athol, for example, will set you back around £800.

The mere fact that I knew this, was proof enough that it was almost too late. There was nothing else for it but to make our excuses and leave.

Hard on Mrs W though. She and her friend had barely got started. But she's very understanding, Mrs W. She knows I can't help it.

I haven't always got off quite so lightly as I did with the train set. Many's the time I've found myself listening to someone explaining their particular hobby only to find my interest slowly uncoiling like a hungry snake. And then suddenly it's too late and I'm studying star charts and deciding which astronomical telescope to order.

I'd feel fine about it if I could only settle down with a real hobby and get good at it; but no, by the time I've immersed myself in the details I'm primed and ready for the next infection. And I've had them all:

Wine-making (still in bell-jar after 7 years); stone-carving (lovely set of tools, barely used); Bird-watching (always good to have a pair of binoculars handy); Bonsai (they said it was impossible to kill a Chinese Elm); fishing (only cruel if you actually catch fish); card modelling, as well as ships, castles and aeroplanes, you can make a real clock (half-built in cardboard box).

All the same, I'll occasionally find myself left with some odd fragments of skill: an ability to play The Moonlight Sonata, for example, or mastery of a single, jaw-dropping magic trick.

Stamp-collecting is an interesting case. Here, rather than acquainting myself with philately in general, I chose to spend the limited time available on developing a detailed knowledge of one tiny corner of the subject, namely the shade variations of the George V First World War definitives. I'll spare you the details but suffice it to say that when visiting London, there's nothing I enjoy more than popping into Stanley Gibbons on The Strand and politely disputing their classification of some of the more difficult penny shades.

The truth is. I'm learning to come to terms with my affliction, to accept it as part of who I am. These days I see hobbyism as a natural and healthy lifestyle choice.

Next week I've arranged to visit a man who makes harpsichords. That should keep me busy for a while.

Wormwood

THE WASHPOOL WORKOUT

We humans were not made to sit at desks - rather move; walk, run, reach, bend, lift, twist.

Instead, many of us hunch, stoop, arch over desks, leading to postural deviations that prevent us functioning less than optimally. Evolution has got us into all sorts of problems with our posture. Scoliosis (lateral deviation of the spine); Kyphosis (hunch back); Sway back (over lumbar spine arch - very common posture in the west)

Since moving to Horsley two and a half years ago I've met loads of people who embrace their environment and walk, run, horse-ride, bike, climb, chop, saw, garden - this is what we're meant to do!

Whilst a lot of this movement is great for your heart health, muscles will become tighter and gradually shorten. In order to get more out of these and other activities we need to compliment them with lengthening and stabilising exercises. Pilates and Yoga will lengthen and strengthen the muscles surrounding the spine (erector spinae) whilst developing flexibility and improving posture. Here's a couple that will help to mobilise your spine and develop core strength.

The Roll Down:

Stand tall - shoulders relaxed and down, chest lifted, tuck your chin in slightly to lengthen through your neck, take a short inhalation (to initiate the movement) then imagine you are rolling over a barrel as you exhale and slowly roll down (1 vertebrae at a time) towards the floor. When you feel a deep stretch in your hamstrings (back of thighs) bend your knees slightly (depending on your flexibility), Let your arms and head hang heavy until your fingers reach the floor (if possible) Then inhale (to initiate your return to standing) and reverse the movement exhaling - again 1 vertebrae at a time until you are standing tall.....Repeat 3-5 times

Leg Pull Prone:

This follows on nicely from The Roll Down - so get onto all fours, distributing your weight evenly. Keep your core strong throughout by sucking your belly in towards your spine and imagine you have a bowl of water resting on your lower back - movement should be slow and controlled. Rest on your elbows (directly under your shoulders) and take your knees back slightly from under your hips. Remember to suck your belly in and keep your trunk still - hold this 'plank' position for up to a minute whilst reading or singing!

If this is easy, take your legs back further or even straight, tucking your toes under. Focus on lengthening - imagine your head being gently pulled and your tailbone stretching away.

So those of you who get your movement fix regularly - keep it up. And for those who are less inclined to put on your running/biking gear - then make sure you work up a sweat in whatever rocks your boat!

Next time I'll focus on sports specific stretching. See you out there!

Got any queries, contact me: stuart@pulse4life.co.uk



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MUSIC

Fri 3 May 8pm

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST £10 / £8

Breathtaking and wickedly inventive: traditional folk mixed up with classical, jazz, music hall and a large dose of wry humour.

Tues 21 May 7.30pm

SAM CARTER Nailsworth Festival Richard Valentine Memorial Concert £12 / £10

Winner of Best Newcomer at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2010 *Please note earlier start time*

Fri 2 Aug 8pm

ENGLISH ACOUSTIC COLLECTIVE SUMMER SCHOOL CONCERT Free

Please note this event takes place at Harsley Mill Canteen

EXHIBITIONS

5 May–2 June

site festival 2013: RAW photography and sculpture

6–20 June

INDIGO Dyed, over dyed, stitched and embellished cloth from the makers of the Ruskin Mill Textiles Workshop

13 July–25 Aug

RUSKIN MILL COLLEGE STUDENT END OF YEAR EXHIBITION

CRAFT FOR ALL

Sun 19 May

10.30am–2.30pm

Nailsworth Festival: RUSKIN MILL COLLEGE CRAFT OPEN DAY Free

An invitation to visit the beautiful craft workshops in the grounds of Ruskin Mill College, watch demonstrations, have a go with tools and materials, and try your hand at some simple, pleasing craft projects

Sat 8, Sat 29 &

Sun 30 June

Please see our website or call the Events Office for details of the **CRAFT WORKSHOPS**

& WALKS running on these dates. Free but limited places available so advance booking essential

WORKSHOPS & TALKS

CLASSES IN THE TEXTILES WORKSHOP

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Wed 8 May 7.30pm

MINDFULNESS with Dario Travaini Free

Sat 25 May

10am–4pm

SEEING WITH NEW EYES A photography workshop with Ruth Davey & Nikki Simpson £55

Call Ruth on 07789 958895 or email ruth@look-again.org for details and bookings

STORYTELLING

Sat 25 May, 15 June

10.30am

STORYTELLING WITH FIONA EADIE £4 adults / £3 children / £10 families

Sun 30 June 2.30pm

STORYWALK WITH FIONA EADIE Free but limited places available so advance booking essential

For events booking and information please visit our website at www.rmt.org/ruskin-mill-events

HORSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Notes of the meeting held on 26th March 2013.

Highways - Cllr Mrs Kay raised the question of pothole repairs on the A46 between Nailsworth and Stroud where it seems some have been repaired but others left, which are now a danger as motorists are taking evasive action to avoid them. County Cllr Waddington responded that the cuts to GCC budget had left funding to repair only the worst potholes but that an extra £3m had now been allocated to the road repair budget.

District Cllr Mrs Sims reported on the initial discussions with residents of Nailsworth on the introduction of forms of traffic speed control for the A46.

Javelin Park Incinerator - County Cllr Waddington reported that GCC Development Control committee had rejected the planning application but that the applicants were the contractor UBB and they were considering an appeal. In response to a question, he replied that the refusal did have implications for GCC Budget as it would continue paying larger amounts of Landfill Tax whilst ever the incinerator or an alternative were not in place.

Part Night Lighting Scheme - Council is conducting an informal survey of the area around Wallow Green to test resident's response to the introduction of the scheme whereby street lights are switched off, usually between midnight and 05:00am. To date there is a mixed response; it is hoped to have completed the exercise by next meeting.

Pavilion - Cllr Hackett reported that he had submitted an 'expression of interest' for a Community Building Improvement Grant to install solar panels on the roof of the pavilion. Cllr Caudwell inquired if it might apply to providing cavity wall insulation for the village hall. He offered to make preliminary investigations before liaising with the village hall management committee, which would ultimately make any decision relating to the hall.

Playing Field - The clerk reported that the new litter bin had arrived which he had placed in the pavilion veranda close to the playing field. He invited councillors to review the siting as the bin could easily be moved if a more suitable position could be found.

Grit Bins - The clerk had obtained an additional grit bin from Nailsworth Town Council at no cost. This had been placed on Hollingham Lane but other 'freebies' were no longer available. Cllr Caudwell felt he might be able to source some before Council proceeded to purchasing the three extra ones that residents had requested.

Burial Ground - The Churchwarden is investigating the cost of improving the path through to the churchyard towards the village hall by edging and resurfacing. Council agreed to consider a possible contribution when details of costs were known.

BT Broadband - Cllr Hackett reported on his dialogue to date with BT over the progress of fibre optic broadband installation for the village. He has requested to be kept informed regarding the proposed BT survey so that Council can provide assistance and local knowledge. The clerk reported he had written as requested to the local MP and Glos. Local Enterprise Partnership seeking their assistance in pressurising BT into action (*see p14*).

'Bell & Castle' Site - It was noted that the pub site would appear on the Community Asset Register within the next few weeks.

County Councillor Stan Waddington - This would be Cllr Waddington's last attendance at a Horsley Parish Council meeting as, due to County Council Ward boundary changes, he would no longer be representing Horsley after the forthcoming elections in May. Cllr Waddington was thanked for his continued attendance at Council meetings in the past years and for all his efforts in assisting with Horsley matters at County Council level.

John Nicholson, clerk to the council

HORSLEY PARISH COUNCILLORS

The following list of Parish Councillors was given to **otw** on 25th September 2012; they are shown with their contact numbers & letter codes indicating their committee & working party involvement where known (see KEY):

John Nicholson	(Clerk)	832734
Kate Kay	B&C, T	833458
Bryn Howells	F, P,	836601
Dawn Clarke	PF, P	836131
Nick Hackett	(Chair) F, S, B&C	834568
Min Hogg	FP, RM	832455
Christina McDonagh	P, VH, B&C	834465
Allan Caudwell	(V Chair) F, P	834548

KEY

P	- Planning Committee
F	- Finance Committee
FP	- Footpath Working Party
S	- School Liaison
VH	- Village Hall Rep
RM	- Ruskin Mill Liaison
PV	- Pavilion Working Party
T	- Traffic & Road Working Party
HC	- Horsley Charities Rep
PF	- Playing Field

* Denotes chair of Committee/ Working Party indicated

Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month

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Address to an old Ash

After two weeks of sun -
the world's green
the swallows are back,
the air's so warm
we're dripping with sweat.

But you – old skinflint,
are still in winter garb,
eyes squeezed shut -
your tight black buds
and bony twigs funereal

beside beech, cherry
and incandescent may.
What will it take to coax you out,
you old turtle !
I know, I know -

the weather's so uncertain –
one day heaters, the next fans,
but even your old
sparring partner - the oak,
is in full sail.

Cautious. Yes, I hear you,
winter will be back –
we'll be the ones to suffer.
Take a chance, this year
looks like one-way traffic

you old vulture.
Show us some leaf -
don't tell me it's some stunt
about not wanting
to follow the crowd.

Only the elms look less alive,
Isn't your sap running
like the rest of us.
Go on, give in to the improbable
gravity of spring.

David Hale

Note: This was written a year ago, before the advent of ash dieback (and this year's bitter weather).

OVER THE WALL PRODUCTION TEAM

Lorna Adamson (836351)	Copy
Ali Heywood (834382)	Copy
Lynn Stride (833026)	Advertising
Nick Hackett (834568)	DTP & Distribution

Next Copy Date is 3rd July 2013; please contact Lorna or Ali to submit copy:

heyweather@msn.com **for Ali** or
lornaadamson@msn.com **for Lorna**

Over The Wall is distributed free four times a year to every house in Horsley. Extra copies are usually available from the Village Shop.