

Horley Local History Society NEWS

DECEMBER 2009

Meetings Calendar

The Society meets at Strawson Hall, 156 Albert Road, Horley, Surrey, at 7:30pm for 8:00 unless stated below.

Thursday 17 December 2009 " Xmas Social Meeting" Archway Theatre (Arch next to the Station)

(Bring an old or interesting photo along)

Monday 25 January 2010 "The Crawley Museum" by Nick Sexton

Monday 22 February 2010 "HLHS AGM"

Monday 22 March 2010 TBA

The Apps Family

Andrew Apps is one of our out-of-town members but due to his background he still takes a strong interest in Horley and is currently researching his family history. His Great-Grandfather was George Apps born 1871 who lived in Ringley Oak Farm on the curve of the Brighton Road near the entrance to Church Road.

He had 6 children, George, Harry, Tom, Herbert (Percy), Florence & Nelson (Richard). Percy was a haulage contractor and was involved in road maintenance (see tarring photo), etc. Harry was a milkman & had a dairy shop in Tushmore Lane with a round in Crawley.

The farm had extensive fields to the rear that were not only farmed, but were also used for various activities in Horley including sports days and Sanger's circus. It was also used to winter some of its animals, hence today's Sangers Drive. When the circus was sold in 1941 some of the elephants were housed there. The land was always known as "Apps Field".





George Apps Tarring Gang C 1920s
(courtesy of Tony Apps)

Captain John Crewdson

Richard Cooper has recently acquired information about the extensive aerial film work undertaken by John Crewdson. Born in May 1926 he became a glider and light plane pilot in the Army and went on to fly his own helicopter before becoming an airline pilot while flying Meteor jets in the part-time Royal Auxiliary Air Force. However, quite by chance he was hired to fly the exciting car chase shots for the Hitchcock film "Catch a Thief" which led him to form his own company called "Film Aviation Services Ltd" based in Horley that participated in over 70 more films.

He lived in Stone Court in Smallfield Road where he often housed his helicopter in the garden. Children at Oakwood School would frequently watch him lift off to go to his next film location. He restored many vintage aircraft and flew them, besides enacting wheels-up landings on water as well as on land to create an authentic film shot, some that could have had dangerous consequences. "War Lover" with Steve McQueen was one such film. Unfortunately John Crewdson died when his helicopter crashed in June 1963 on Gat Sands in The Wash when reportedly taking a census of seals, a flight that was said not to be of any danger.

Donald Campbell CBE

Donald was born at Povey Cross Farm, Hookwood in 1921, the son of Sir Malcolm Campbell who held land and water speed records between 1924 and 1939. (hence why today's "Malcolm Gardens" close by was so named) Like his father, Donald also held such records and is said to have held both in the same year, 1964 that was of itself yet another record. Donald died attempting to increase his speed record on Coniston Water in 1967.



He has recently been featured on a new issue of Royal Mail stamps shown below, to mark the 50th anniversary of his water speed record when he reached 260mph.

Schools in Horley

Many who have visited the library recently, might have looked at our exhibition boards (yes they do belong to the HLHS) and noticed many photos of schools, past and present in and around Horley, compiled by Peter Cox and Richard Cooper. Peter has gone further by listing all the public and private schools from directories of Horley, from the first known called the National School that came about in 1834 in Horley row where St Wilfred's Church stands today. Surprisingly the total is almost 40 and no doubt there might be others he hasn't come across. Why not check the list on the boards in the library in case you know of others? The majority are of course private schools some with a defined purpose like dancing, or special needs. It is interesting to note that no new schools have appeared since the 1970s. Is this because of the tremendous growth of what can be gained from the computer? But not

everything can be gained from this source, especially if local history topics are sought. They cannot always be found, understood or appreciated from this method of learning and this is where the Local History Centre in the library can help as well illustrated in the next item.

The Doug Anderson Project

For the 4th year running some 60 pupils at Oakwood School have been given the same autumn project to research and write about this well known Horley resident that did so much for our town. Panic beyond belief arises when students cannot find a single word about him on any website. Having dealt with this situation so many times before and despite offering to help the teaching staff at the school, we as helpers at the library Centre desk decided to compile a file about Doug to help the students when eventually they come to ask if we know of him.

Unfortunately, the students only want to copy the file and exit pdq. This surely shows a present day weakness of computers and of the school to teach young people how to undertake local research, query and learn, rather than just copy to gain their marks.

Despite these present failings we will not give up trying to put our concerns to the school. We may be old fuddy-duddies but we like our local history and sometimes even know a little about it. We also feel very strongly that we would like to pass our heritage on to the younger generation, particularly as Doug Anderson played such a large part in it. Long may his memory last with or without the computer.

We still urgently want your help!

As stated so many times before, we still do not have a real chairman, not even a virtual one. Your committee would also like some real help in any of the following areas.

- Arranging speakers
- Helping to archive documents
- Presenting ideas/articles for inclusion in the Newsletter or other publications. Eg. the RH6 Uncovered
- Becoming a speaker to local organisations

IF YOU WISH YOUR SOCIETY TO CONTINUE THEN IT REALLY IS UP TO YOU
Brian Buss

This newsletter is published by the Horley Local History Society.
www.horleyhistory.org.uk Peter Gwynne Telephone: 01293 773026