

Autumn 2015



Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society

Local History Group Publications

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The Local History Group catalogue now comprises sixteen titles: thirteen monographs and three ‘occasional papers’.

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Coming Soon

“Éminence Grise: The Unknown Political Agent, The Tory Bloodhound, The Peer Maker”

John Cunningham describes the life and times of William Nevill, KG. 1st Marquess of Abergavenny.

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Personally Speaking

by Chris Jones

What you can learn in church ... Does anyone know how much a guinea was worth? Or indeed how much a guinea is worth. I wouldn't be asking the question if I didn't already know the answer, but then I used to work for Tattersalls. Its value, though, was not always the same. In the 17th century it varied depending upon the price of gold. And how do we learn this from church? If you look at the subscription lists in King Charles the Martyr, you will see a number of payments of 10 shillings and 9 pence. They must represent half-guineas when a guinea was £1.1.6.

The Crouching Venus in the last issue was on the lawn of Saxonbury Lodge, a fascinating house in Frant (now sadly demolished). It was built about 1830 by Daniel Rowland, the Abergavenny agent (his grandfather was the Welsh Methodist). Later on it was the home of Maria Jackson. Her sister was Julia Margaret Cameron, the photographer, and her (Maria's) daughter was Julia



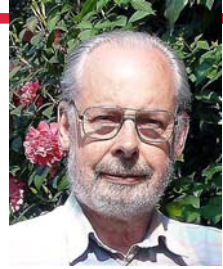
Stephen - the mother of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell. Given that bunch of characters it is not surprising that it was Caroline Auckland who came up with the correct answer. It's a useful reminder that there is lots of interesting stuff down there over the county boundary - we must not be too focussed on Tunbridge Wells.

'Maps: their untold stories' ... You probably know of the 'Tudor Map' of the Mount Pleasant area a century before Lord North came riding by - it's on p.17 of the Historical Atlas. It's nice to see that it has been included in a recent book by Rose Mitchell and Andrew Janes. They describe it as 'a metamorphosis in the recording of land', and Bromelerge (the predecessor to Tunbridge Wells) 'may well be the first deserted hamlet to be depicted and described as such'. Eat your heart out, Auburn.

Quiz question - v) ... Given the importance of the Salomons and Goldsmid families in the area it is surprising that anyone would want to hide a Jewish background. Yet so it is claimed. Which noted historian of Tunbridge Wells concealed their real identity by using a nom-de-plume?

From the Planning Scrutineers

by Alastair Tod



We recognise the situation of **Trinity Arts Centre**, with the reduction of their Council grant leading them to make changes to the graveyard to support their activities. The Society was instrumental in preserving the building and setting up the Arts Centre. But the graveyard is a vital town centre green space, with historic graves, and a role in the chain of green spaces defined by the Council. We objected to the TAC's proposed additional paving and parking, and the application was withdrawn. TAC have now agreed to bring all their plans together in a proposal for public discussion.

The Society's 'area of interest' is formally that of the old Royal Borough but we sometimes look beyond this. We have seen proposals for **Mabledon**, between Southborough and Tonbridge, a neo-Jacobean mansion built for James Burton, father of Decimus, and extended by his son. It was the setting for our garden party a few years ago. After many years as a single-family home there are now plans for it to become flats. Such conversions are not always welcome but in this case the need for expensive restoration makes creating flats, subject to safeguards, probably the best way to secure the future of the building.

We were alerted to this case but in another beyond our boundary, **Owlsnest Wood** at Pembury, developers approached us. The site of 7.5 acres with a single house between Tonbridge Road and the A21 opposite the new hospital comprises woodland, now sadly overgrown, and a lake. The developer proposes a substantial care home and about 20 lodges for sheltered living, with the woodland and lake restored for public access. The site is in the Green Belt which would normally be decisive, but in this case it's possible other factors may prevail.

We took part in public consultation on the **Dairy Crest** site in St John's Road, opposite Skinners. A developer wants to demolish the former chapel with its prominent gable and build about sixty small flats in two large blocks nearer to the road than the present. Besides being a popular landmark on St John's Road, the fine baroque gable is a relic of a mission hall built in the 1890s for the preacher John McAuliffe at a time when 'the Lew' was notorious, and the bold architecture of his mission was no doubt calculated to inspire the locals. We have applied to have the gable defined as a Local Heritage Asset (the equivalent of Local Listing), and are supporting the present residents of the Lew in their opposition to the development.

Chairmen's Letter*



Tunbridge Wells
September 2015

This is the fourth and last Joint-Chairmen's Letter. By the next edition we should have a new Chair for the Society and I am very happy to tell you that the candidate for the post will be female. I can hear you all say that it is about time too, since the Society hasn't had a female Chair since 1999.

Janet Sturgis was born and educated in Ontario, Canada, but has lived in England since 1968, and Tunbridge Wells since 1971. She has a daughter and two sons who went to school in the town. After teaching French at the Beacon Comprehensive (now Academy) in Crowborough for 25 years, she retired in 1998. She then spent several years doing post-graduate studies and at the same time began a more active involvement in Tunbridge Wells' life, first as a volunteer at the Trinity Arts Centre, of which she subsequently became a Director; and then as the Vice-Chair of the Hawkenbury Allotments and Horticultural Association - and inherited the responsibility of chairing this large and complex organisation. In about 2006, she began to research the Association's history and her contact with Dr Ian Beavis of the Museum led her to join the "Friends of the Museum". What had been a vague appreciation of the Museum, Library and Art Gallery became an active interest, not to say a major concern when the Civic Centre buildings were threatened with being swept away. It was at that point that she realised that the voice of reason in the whole matter was coming from the Civic Society. So she joined, in order to support the stand the Society was taking. She was quickly 'snapped up' to join the Society's Executive Committee and this year became a Vice-Chairman. Now she stands as the next Chairman with the full endorsement of the Executive Committee.

She takes on a Society which is active with about 400 members, has a programme of a dozen member meetings a year, is financially stable, has generally good relations with the Borough Council and Town Forum, even though it insists that its role is not to be the friend, but rather the critical friend of the Council. Nonetheless the Society is generally well-regarded by the Council, and also the media and the public, although it is seen by some as 'fuddy-duddy' and reactionary, a view with which the Society understandably disagrees.

This view is due probably to the fact that it has a disproportionate number of members over 60, which is understandable since younger potential members

have very busy lives, pursuing a career and bringing up their families and inevitably living for the present; while the retired do not have the same pressures and consequently may have more time and perspective for the future.

The Society accepts that it needs to recruit not only more members (after all, we live in a town of nearly 50,000 people [including children]), but also younger members, to reflect and represent the profile and interests of our future population. We should also seek to increase the number of our corporate members, since they also should have an interest in conserving and preserving what we have, while developing and adapting our town to meet the challenges of the future economy.

Most decisions about the issues facing our town have long-term implications. Whatever is decided in the next 5-10 years, will almost certainly affect the character, style and nature of our town for at least 60 years, since it is rare for even unsuccessful developments to be redeveloped in under that time. Many of these issues are fundamental and long-standing to the 'character and ethos' of what is Tunbridge Wells, so we have a great responsibility to provide the best for future generations as yet unborn.

Among these issues are:

- the Ritz cinema site – an unresolved dilemma for over 14 years*
- the pedestrianisation of Mount Pleasant and Fiveways*
- the development of a new Cultural Centre and the redevelopment of the Civic Centre*
- the future of the Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons*
- the development of Union House in the Pantiles*
- the development of the St. John's area and particularly the bus garage, the telephone exchange, the Dairy Crest depot and the Ford showroom complex on Mt. Ephraim*
- the Government requirement to provide up to 4,000 new homes by 2026*
- traffic and parking problems, particularly to do with the A26*
- and without doubt there will be other 'new' issues.*

All these need serious and considered discussion and the Society has a definite role to play in this. So we wish Janet and her successors 'bon courage' in the knowledge that they will rise to the challenge, as all their predecessors have done for the past 56 years.

John Cunningham

** There are three co-Chairmen this year: John Cunningham, Chris Jones and Brian Lippard.*



A big thank you to Christo Skelton

Will there ever be anyone like Christo to welcome members to our meetings? Or to manage our membership database and fix our computers? Christo came to Tunbridge Wells in 1999 and joined the committee ten years later. Did you know that he lived in Canada for over thirty years? I can only assume that wandering around with cardboard tubes and white balloons is something he picked up over there.

By the time you read this he should be settled into Exeter. It does seem an awfully long way away (but then perhaps that's the point). We wish him all the very best.

And another big thank you, to Fiona Woodfield

After seven years Fiona is stepping down from the responsibility of organising Heritage Open Days. Before moving to Tunbridge Wells, Fiona was Chairman of the Southborough Society, so she knows the town very well, and is probably our greatest expert on the St John's area. Under her, HODs have gone from strength to strength. She brought in Cranbrook and Paddock Wood, as well as interesting new places in and around Tunbridge Wells. This year the brochure boasted 40 venues and events. Many many thanks, Fiona.



Big shoes to fill ...

It will be obvious from the reports opposite that we are looking for volunteers to take over the responsibilities of Membership Secretary and HODs Organiser.

They can both be very fulfilling tasks, and excellent opportunities to get to know the town and our members. They can also seem quite daunting at first sight. So if you would like to try out part of either role, or come together with others to work as a team - particularly on HODs, we would be very happy to hear from you.

Now that Christo has gone, I guess you should contact me (Chris Jones) - details on p.3.



Susan, Ed, and Christine Harrison (Ed's cousin) on a visit to Hever.

Visit by Ed Gilbert

Last year we gave our Community Contribution Award to Ed Gilbert for his amazingly detailed local history web-site: www.allabouttunbridgewells.com.

What was especially amazing about the web-site was that Ed lives in Canada and had never been to Tunbridge Wells. In June of this year he was finally able to see the place, on a visit organised by his friend and neighbour from Thunder Bay, Susan Prince. During their visit Ed and Susan were invited to a reception hosted by John and Sheila Cunningham to meet members of the Society and others interested in the history of the town.



Christine and Susan, with Ian Richardson, Ann Bates and Trish Wright in the background.



Ed Gilbert, John Cunningham

The Night the Zeppelin Came

The night of 13-14th October 1915 saw the only air raid on Tunbridge Wells in the First World War. by John Cunningham and Ian Castle

Over the past 100 years, little has been known in Tunbridge Wells about the town's only air raid in the First World War which occurred at 10.45 pm on Wednesday 13th October 1915, and was the only occasion in which there was enemy action against Tunbridge Wells during the whole of the War.

This lack of information was probably due to the newspaper censorship which was imposed at the time. Joan Burslem did give her memories of the raid when she spoke to the Society many years ago, but until June this year the most detailed account of what had happened was that given in the Society's recent monograph, 'The Shock of War. Tunbridge Wells: Life on the Home Front 1914-1919' (pages 63-64) concerning Lady Annette Amelia Matthews. Lady Matthews wrote in her Diary "War has come to our doors at length. Last night at 10.45 pm a violent explosion occurred close by, followed

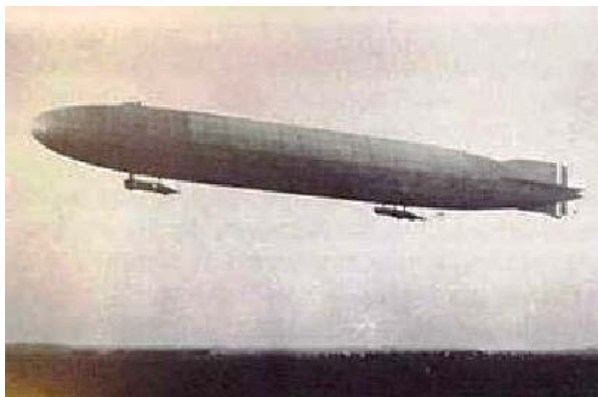
immediately by two more. There was a faint burring, purring sound [obviously this was the sound of the engines], but nothing further. I was still up & dressed, & so was J.[her husband, Sir John]. The children slept peacefully on; the rest of the house, very trim and neat in dressing gowns, came down from their rooms & we waited & did not go to the cellars because all noise had ceased.

"J. went out & discovered that it was indeed a Zeppelin & that bombs had been seen to drop somewhere not far off. The household was all in bed again soon after 11, & spent a quiet night, though one of the maids preferred sleeping on the floor with the others, to remaining in a room by herself."

The following day it was established that three bombs had been dropped by a Zeppelin airship on Calverley Park; that they landed on open ground; one house had been slightly damaged, and many windows had been broken as far away as Crescent Road, but that no one had been killed or even slightly injured. There is only one extant photograph of the event - of a relatively small crater in Calverley Park - and this is reproduced here by kind permission of its owner, Peter Blackwell, the Deputy Lieutenant for Kent. The small boy standing on the right of the photo was Peter's great uncle, Charles Wesley Blackwell, then aged 11 (see picture on p.12).



Lady Matthews,
who lived in
Hurstwood Lane.



Zeppelin L-14

HOWEVER, now we have a lot more information about the raid, due to an enquiry I made of Dr. Giles Camplin, the Editor of 'Dirigible' - The Airship Heritage Trust Journal. He put my enquiry into the Journal and several months later, Ian Castle, the author of several books on Airships and Zeppelins in particular, kindly wrote, supplying us with the following details:

“Both the German Army and Navy had Zeppelins which were operated as entirely separate units. The Navy had more Zeppelins than the Army and were based in North Germany, being used mainly for patrol and reconnaissance of the North and Baltic Seas. It took the best part of a day to cross the North Sea.

Five Navy Zeppelins – numbered L.11, L.13, L.14, L.15 and L.16 – were to set out on the morning of 13th October 1915 to raid London in the evening. It was one of these Zeppelins, L.14, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Alois Böcker, which would bomb Tunbridge Wells.

L.14 came inland at Bacton on the

Norfolk coast at about 6.30pm and five minutes later passed over North Walsham, receiving machine gun fire from both places. Reports of engine noise allowed the authorities to plot her* progress via Felthorpe (north-west of Norwich), Thetford (7.25pm), Beyton (east of Bury St. Edmonds – 7.40pm), Mark's Tey (8.10pm), then she crossed the Blackwater near Tollesbury (8.20pm), Foulness (8.30pm) and Shoeburyness (8.35pm) where she crossed the Thames estuary.

Now over Kent she passed Sheppey (8.40pm) and Faversham (8.50pm), then went over Willesborough (east of Ashford) to Lympne where, at 9.15pm, L.14 found herself over the army camp at Otterpool.

Böcker released four high-explosive (HE) bombs on the camp of the 8th Howitzer Brigade (killing two, injuring four) and 5th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery (13 killed, seven injured: in addition the bombs killed seven horses). From there L.14 approached the camp

at Westenhanger but, released early, the bombs landed on the racecourse and only broke a few windows.

At this point Böcker seems unaware of just how far off-course he was, as he reported his bombs falling on Woolwich, attacking 'the dock facilities there as well as the Arsenal.' L.14 then approached Hythe at which point Böcker realised he was over the English Channel. So he came back inland at Littlestone (9.35pm) and passed Winchelsea at about 9.55pm. Having followed the coast almost to Hastings, Böcker seems to have reassured himself as to his position and turned inland at Pett, just east of Hastings, possibly following the railway line towards London.

Due to mist, L.14 was not observed until it reached Frant where it dropped seven incendiary bombs (one failed to ignite) at 10.30pm, although they caused no damage. According to the official report, L.14 then approached Tunbridge Wells, no doubt attracted by a light, and

dropped three HE bombs at 10.40pm, which caused only broken windows. It seems the mist was very thick here and no one saw the raider.

L.14 then approached Oxted and drew close to Zeppelin L.13 at about 11.05pm before passing over Limpsfield, Warlingham and Purley, where she was recorded at 11.15pm. Five minutes later she appeared over East Croydon, dropping 17 HE bombs, killing 9 people (including three brothers) and injuring 15.

Passing east of Crystal Palace, L.14 then encountered L.13 again near Bromley, only narrowly avoiding a collision. Having already exhausted all her bombs, L.14 then set course for home, initially to the north-east. Reports show her crossing the Thames between Purfleet and Erith at about 11.50pm, passing Pitsea, Wickford and Burnham, which she reached at around 12.25am. She seemed unsure of her position and appeared at various points near the coast of Essex and Suffolk before finally going out to sea near Aldeburgh at



Examining the bomb crater in Calverley Park

1.45am.

This confirms what has always been suspected in Tunbridge Wells which is that Tunbridge Wells was not a deliberate target, but the victim of a 'lost' airship that had strayed wildly off-course, 'dumping' its bomb-load. Tunbridge Wells, despite the number of troops in the town (a fact which it is unlikely that the Germans would ever have known), would not have been a strategic bombing target for the Germans."

POSTSCRIPT

Bocker was subsequently the captain of L.33, which on its first raid on London on 24th September 1916 was damaged by anti-aircraft fire and a squadron of night-fighters. The Zeppelin managed to elude her attackers but, despite jettisoning guns and equipment, crash-landed at Little Wigborough in Essex, where Bocker set the airship on fire to prevent it falling into 'enemy hands', before marching his crew



Kptlt Alois Böcker

of 21 men into captivity.

*Airships, like ships, are always referred to as female.

Notes: Zeppelins were named after Graf (ie Count) Ferdinand von Zeppelin, who formed a company to build hydrogen-filled airships in the early years of the 20th century. They differ from simple balloons in having a rigid internal metal framework. They were originally intended for civilian use - carrying passengers and freight.

A Zeppelin like L-14 was over 500 feet long, with four engines and a crew of about twenty. Engines and crew were housed in 'gondolas' attached beneath. They had a maximum speed of about 60 mph. Zeppelins were made at Friedrichshafen, on Lake Constance (Bodensee), in southern Germany, but during the war L-14 was based at Nordholz on the North Sea, near Bremerhaven.

Within the outer skin, the gas is held in large pockets made of 'goldbeater's skin', a material made from cows' intestines. There is a story that, given the number required to make each zeppelin, sausage manufacture was forbidden in Germany as part of the war effort.

— Replacing the Vale Road Railway Bridge —

In the Winter 2014 Newsletter John Arkell told the story of the Central Railway Station. In this update he explains how the original bridge over the railway was replaced in 1906/7.

By the early 1900s congestion in the streets around the station was becoming acute and the condition of the 1846 bridge was giving cause for concern. In 1903 the speed of traffic over the old bridge had to be restricted to walking pace. The Borough Council produced plans and estimates for a replacement bridge. The railway company was not prepared to pay the whole of the £15,000 cost so two-thirds was funded by the Council.

Work started on the replacement in early 1906 with the erection of a temporary bridge. Work on the brick abutments to the new bridge was supposed to start in April, but didn't actually begin until June.

The contract for the steelwork was let

to the Widnes Foundry Co., and work on this started on September 23rd. Prior to this a temporary platform had been built to the north of the old bridge. This facilitated the fabrication of the girders forming the new bridge.

The materials to form the new bridge were delivered by rail, and lifted into place by a rail-mounted crane, as in the picture opposite (though that actually shows sections of the old bridge being removed).

We know that riveting the structure was well under way by January 1907 as the *Courier* reported an accident on the site when one of the rivet heads snapped off and struck one of the workmen on the temple. He was taken to the General Hospital but not detained.



The old bridge - note the policeman on point duty, and the decorative lamp standard.

Part of the old bridge being removed by a rail-mounted crane.



In March the *Courier* reported that asphalt and asbestos were being laid over the bridge ready to make the roadway. Wooden blocks were also used.

On Thursday May 16th 1907 there was a ceremonial opening of the new bridge by the Mayor, Councillor Woollan J. P., accompanied by Mr. Sheath, secretary to the South Eastern & Chatham Railway (SE&CR). The opening was followed by

luncheon and many speeches.

The pillars at the ends of the bridge are of Cornish granite, each with a bronze panel cast by the Coalbrookdale Co. Two of the panels depict the arms of Tunbridge Wells, and a third the arms of the SE&CR - presumably reflecting their respective contributions to the cost. The fourth panel names prominent persons from the Council and SE&CR who were instrumental in the project. **JA**

And today? After the Society asked Greg Clark to take up the condition of the bridge with the owners Network Rail, the Council and NR agreed to share the cost of restoration. Work was due to start a year ago but since then nothing has happened...



The arms of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway - a working union, rather than a merger, of the South Eastern and the London, Chatham and Dover Railways.

Olive Walton 1887-1937

This description of the ‘daring local suffragette’ is taken from a new book by the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery (see p.19).

The *Courier* in March 1913 described Olive Walton as “*the daring local Suffragette*” after her irruption into a Liberal Federation meeting at the Opera House, shouting ‘*When are you going to deal with women’s suffrage?*’ Together with Emily Wilding Davidson—who died 3 months later under the hooves of the Kings horse at the Derby- she had hidden overnight in the orchestra pit. The *Courier* reported that she was carried out ‘*after a violent struggle*’.

She was one of four children of Charles Walton, a retired wine merchant, by his second wife, living at Ardenhurst in Culverden Park Road. He was in his seventies when she was born, and died when she was seven. The children were then brought up in a somewhat puritanical household by their mother, a former missionary in Africa. Olive was seen as something of a misfit in the family as she was not ‘scholarly’.

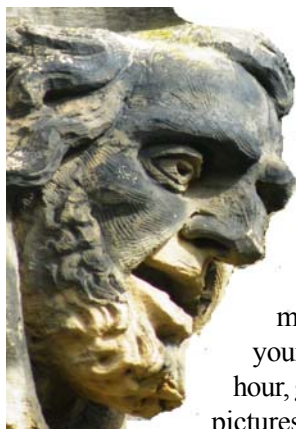
After cookery and art classes she was sent by her mother to do social work in London. Her niece recalled many years later that she was discontented, so the suffrage movement was a godsend for her. She joined the National Union of Womens Suffrage Societies in Tunbridge Wells in 1908. This sought change through peaceful and constitutional means. In 1911 in London, however, she joined the militant Women’s Social and Political Union and threw herself wholeheartedly into their protest activities. That

November, after she took part in a deputation to the House of Commons she spent a week in Holloway Prison. The following March a window-smashing campaign led to a four-month sentence in Aylesbury Prison. To the horror of her family, she went on hunger strike and was forcibly fed, but refused their attempts to bail her out. The local WSPU organiser appealed in the *Courier* to the women of Tunbridge Wells to write to the Home Secretary and local MPs to demand the ‘*immediate suspension of the dangerous and barbarous treatment of Miss Olive Walton in Aylesbury Prison.*’

In April 1913 after the Nevill Cricket Pavilion was burnt down, a photo of Emmeline Pankhurst was found pinned to the grass in front of the charred wreck, along with suffragette literature. A public protest meeting about the arson was called by the Mayor (“*Tunbridge Wells is declared to be a hotbed of militants*”). Olive and two fellow local WSPU members were violently ejected when they tried to speak. In July 1914 she was arrested after throwing a ball of pamphlets into the King’s carriage in Dundee protesting against the force feeding of suffragettes in prison. At Queen Mary’s request she was not charged, but then promptly repeated the offence a few days later as the Queen was leaving St Giles Church in Edinburgh.

During the First World War Olive and some fellow suffragettes joined the

Women Police Volunteers Their duties included “*preventing acts of immorality*”, carrying out searches of women and caring for refugees. She remained in this force after the War ended, though its request to become a permanent part of the regular police force was turned down by the Commissioner, on the grounds that the women were “*too educated*” and would “*irritate male members of the force*”. However in 1920 ‘Inspector Walton’ was sent to Ireland during the so-called Troubles there, taking part in raids on suspect farms, and searches of local inhabitants. Her police career ended after a motorbike accident in Canterbury from which she never fully recovered.



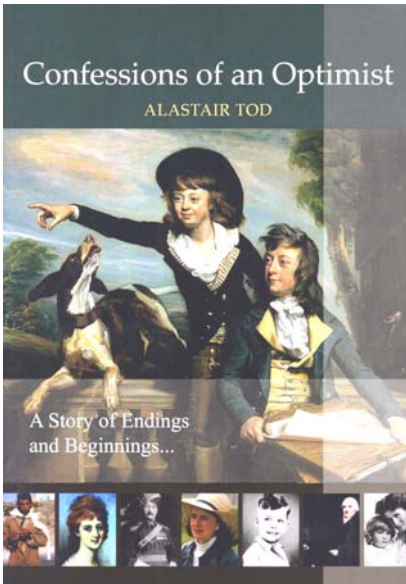
Be a Friend

The Olive Walton story and the others in the book on p.19, were put together by the Memorial Inscriptions Group of the Friends of Tunbridge Wells Cemetery. They would like other people to join them and are quite persuasive in their enthusiasm for the work. Having identified a likely subject from a memorial, “you get hit by the detective bug, and find yourself still at the computer at the witching hour, gloating over Victorian memoirs and pictures”. You end up making special trips to study the houses and places associated

with your target.

A new group of Friends was recently formed at Trinity. One of their first projects is to consider the carved faces on the outside walls. What do they signify? Might some of them represent actual people? If you are interested, please contact jbman@btinternet.com.





Confessions of an Optimist by Alastair Tod

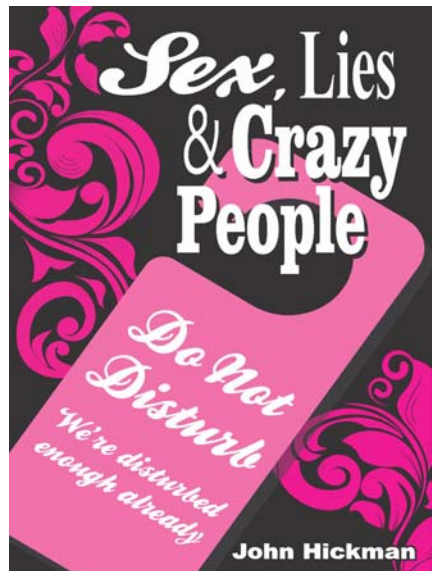
Alastair Tod has served twice as Chairman of the Society and currently leads the Planning Scrutineers. His memoirs are rich in stories from his family past: Jamaica planters, Yorkshire sea-captains, Puritans and smugglers. His own experiences, less colourful perhaps, are no less interesting, culminating in his tussles as Society Chairman with the mysteriously-named 'R'.

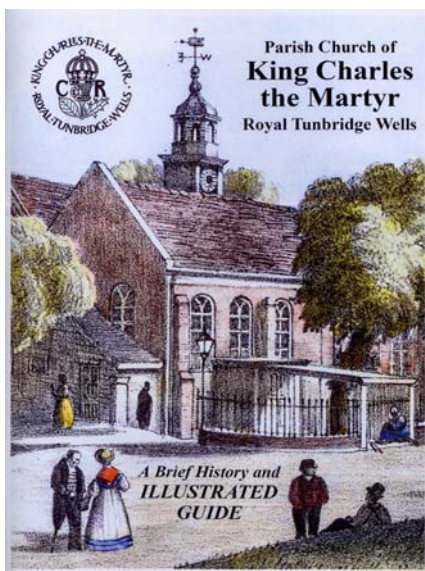
Available from Waterstones £12.

Sex, Lies and Crazy People by John Hickman

Perhaps an unexpected title for these pages, but John Hickman's book is about his family's experience of running the Harewood Hotel (now Grantly Court) in the 1960s. To a background of hits by the *Animals* and *Seekers*, he tells of their attempts to upgrade the rooms: white paint and colour televisions, and to create a high-class restaurant. Their efforts were not always appreciated. John left for Australia in 1971.

The book is available in printed form, but it might be easier to access as an e-book, eg on www.smashwords.com. There is a certain amount of 'adult' content.





King Charles the Martyr - a brief history and illustrated guide

by Philip Whitbourn

This 32-page, richly-illustrated booklet fully meets the need for an accessible but authoritative guide to one of the jewels of the town. Philip explains the history, and describes the architecture, but there is so much more. We all know of the ceiling, but what of the carving, the altar rail, font and stained glass? And the importance of Jonas Hanway, member of the Vestry in 1775, who introduced the umbrella to this country.

Available from the church. £2.50.

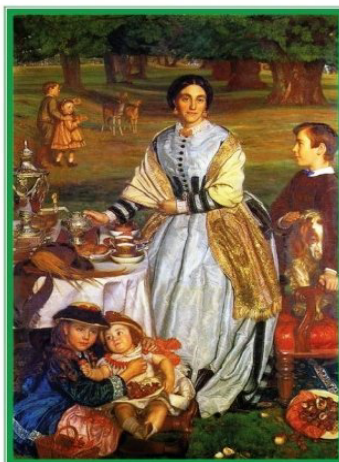
A walk round some interesting memorials

by the Friends of TW Cemetery

This walk around a small part of Tunbridge Wells (ie 'Hawkenbury') Cemetery is a wonderful introduction to the polite society of the Victorian and Edwardian town. Soldiers, engineers and administrators; merchants and entrepreneurs - or at least their fortunate heirs; clergymen, lawyers and physicians. Twenty stories in all - please see p.16 for an example.

Available from jbman@btinternet.com, price £3 plus 60p P&P. All proceeds go to conservation work.

A walk round some interesting memorials



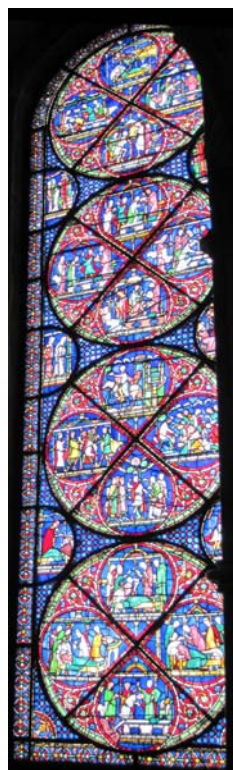
Tunbridge Wells Borough Cemetery

Canterbury July 8th



Our thanks to John de Lucy, who not only made all the arrangements for the outing to Canterbury, but acted as our guide. And chose an excellent restaurant for our lunch (the Old Weavers, next to the river).

We were fortunate in our timing to see the ‘Ancestors’ exhibition of medieval stained glass from the Great South Window, but it’s always a delight to experience the windows at Canterbury. Even on a slightly grey day (as left) the intensity of colour from the north-facing windows of the Trinity Chapel was a wonder (see below).



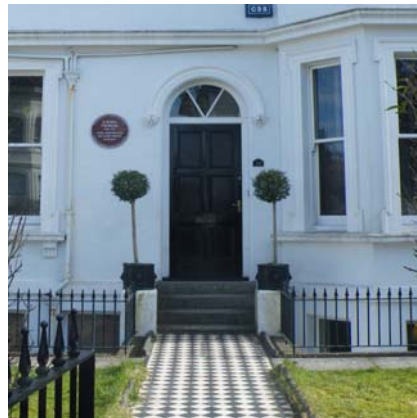
Pics: Charmian Clissold-Jones and Caroline Lippard



Unveiling Plaques 2015

Most of the plaques identified in the current scheme have been fitted. Some issues remain over access to buildings for fitting the remainder. It may be that we will be looking for an additional two or three candidates. In the meantime ceremonial unveilings have taken place for the plaques to Lionel Queripel (above) and Victor von Ephrussi (below left). The ceremonies were arranged by the owners of the respective buildings. In addition, in St James Road, Lucy and Duncan Stone organised a ceremonial tea-drinking (and a super picnic) to celebrate their plaque which honours the Poor-Law reformer, Louisa Twining (below right). Unfortunately we have no photograph of the event.

Once all the names have been identified, Alastair Tod is to produce an ‘occasional paper’ providing brief biographies of all those commemorated. In the meantime Jane Bakowski is writing a series of reports in the Courier.



The scheme is administered by the Society and funded by a TWBC Heritage Partnership Grant.

Local History Group - From the Archives

A lot of the stuff we look at in the archives can be, how shall I put it, a little dry. But sometimes there are items where age has added a certain charm, like a Dictograph brochure that Charmian* came across recently. It was sent to the Council in the 1920s, and says so much to us now about that period: its innovative technology, the practice of advertising, and its concept of social identities and relationships.

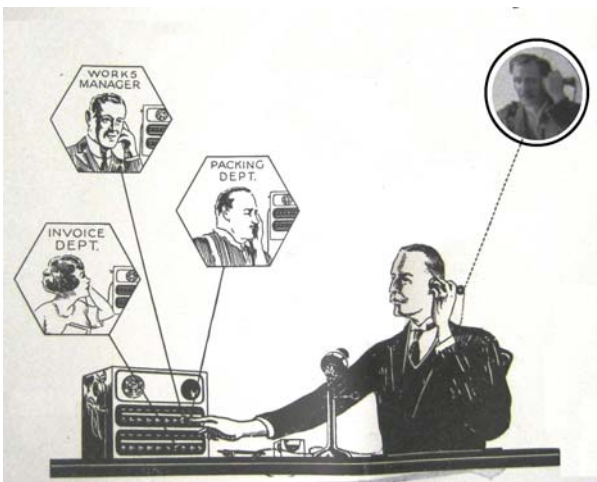
The Dictograph was an intercom, but to the salesman it was much more than that. "You, to whom this booklet is particularly addressed, are in control of an Organisation. The instrument provided for you, is called the Master Station ... it is really an electrical assistant for the *Man in Control*."

No mouthpiece was needed and none of that tedious dialling "Never again will anything be put off owing to that subconscious distaste of 'telephoning'". At the flick of a switch the Master's voice could be heard wherever he chose across the Organisation. If the receiving Sub-Station was already in use, the user was notified. "Thus there are no engaged lines to a Master Station call".

"This can scarcely be called telephoning."

It is not known whether the Town Hall was persuaded.

*Charmian Clissold-Jones, who works on the archive catalogue once a fortnight.



In this example the Man in Control is fielding a trunk-call from Edinburgh. With no need to lift another receiver he gets the information immediately from those who know. "The delay is so slight that the customer at the other end ... thinks 'Blank has his business at his finger tips'. Blank has - literally."



The Dictograph could also help the Woman in Control - in her separate sphere of course. In Country Residence or Town House it was an "aid to solving the ever-present servant problem".

Local History Group Publications

Monographs:

- ‘Decimus Burton Esquire, Architect and Gentleman, (1800-1881).’
by Philip Whitbourn (2006) Std price: £5:95 Members: £4.45
- ‘Researching Royal Tunbridge Wells, a bibliography of historical sources.’
by Sue Brown (2003) Std price: £4:95 Members: £3.70
- ‘The Skinners’ School. Its controversial birth and its landmark buildings’.
by Cecil Beeby & Philip Whitbourn (2004) Std price: £4:95 Members: £3.70
- ‘The Residential Parks of Tunbridge Wells.’
ed John Cunningham (2004) Std price: £5:95 Members: £4.45
- ‘400 Years of the Wells. A history of Royal Tunbridge Wells.’
ed John Cunningham (2004) Std price: £7:95 Members: £5.95
- ‘The Origins of Warwick Park and the Nevill Ground’.
by John Cunningham (2007) Std price: £7:95 Members: £5.95
- ‘An Historical Atlas of Tunbridge Wells.’
ed John Cunningham (2007) Std price: £16:95 Members: £12.70
- ‘Tunbridge Wells in Literature. An Anthology.’
by Sue Brown (2008) Std price: £6:95 Members: £5.20
- ‘Tunbridge Wells in 1909: The Year we became Royal.’
by Chris Jones (2008) Std price: £8:95 Members: £6.70
- ‘By Royal Appointment, or Why Do They Call It Royal Tunbridge Wells’.
by Chris Jones (2009) Std price: £5:95 Members: £4.45
- ‘Tunbridge Wells in the Second World War and the Years of Austerity’
by Ann Bates (2009) Std price: £9:95 Members: £7.45
- ‘Historic Panoramas of Royal Tunbridge Wells’
ed Roger Joye & John Cunningham (2009) Std price: £15:95 Members: £11.95
- ‘The Shock of War - Tunbridge Wells in the First World War.’
ed John Cunningham (2014) Std price: £9:95 Members: £7.45

Occasional Papers:

- ‘The Pantiles’ by Philip Whitbourn (2014) Std price: £4:95 Members: £3.70
- ‘The Non-Conformist Chapels and Churches of Tunbridge Wells’
ed John Cunningham (2013) Std price: £3:95 Members: £2.95
- ‘Tunbridge Wells in the mid-19th Century’
ed John Cunningham (2013) Std price: £4:95 Members: £3.70

See page 2 for special Christmas offers



CIVIC SOCIETY

Forthcoming Events

Meetings start at 7.30pm on the second Thursday in the month (unless otherwise stated) in the Town Hall or the Royal Wells Hotel. Remember to bring your membership card. Suggested £2 donation from non-members.

Entrance to the Town Hall is via the main door. If you are late and find that it is locked, please ring the bell and wait to be admitted.

Oct 8th	RTWCS Awards Evening Town Hall
Nov 12th	Annual General Meeting (see agenda below) Town Hall
Dec 10th	'The Oldest Trade in Town?' Michael Payne looks back at the history of Payne & Son which has been trading in Tunbridge Wells since 1870. Town Hall

Agenda of the Annual General Meeting

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the previous AGM held on 13th Nov 2014
3. Matters arising from the minutes, not covered elsewhere on the agenda
4. Chairmen's report and address
5. Elections - Vice-Presidents, Committee members, Officers*
6. Annual accounts and report - Nigel Price, Treasurer
7. Report on the Local History Group - John Cunningham, LHG Chairman
8. Date of next Annual General Meeting

*Nominations, signed and seconded, must be received by the Secretary (address on page 3) by Thursday 29th October.

The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of the named author or of the editor and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Society.

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