



£1, free to Members

Barkham Newsletter

Issue 109 Autumn 2014

from the Barkham Village Residents Association

<http://www.barkham.org.uk>



Barkham in 1907 - see page 12

**We still need a new Secretary!
Please help - see page 2 for details**

Quiz Night



Saturday 22 November 7.00 for 7.30pm

Fish & Chip Supper Licensed Bar

Tickets £8.50 per person

More details on page 10



27th BVRA AGM – 13th November 2014

In accordance with the constitution, the BVRA Annual General Meeting will take place at 8pm on Thursday 13th November 2014. The meeting will take place at Barkham Village Hall and all residents of Barkham are welcome to attend. Nominations for any post should reach the Chairman by 23rd October.

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BVRA Secretary – could you help please?

We have a vacancy on the BVRA Committee for the role of Secretary. The main responsibilities are:

- Attend and participate in the quarterly committee meetings & Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Take, agree & distribute minutes arising
- Co-ordinate committee members' reports in advance of the AGM

This is a key role to oil the wheels of the BVRA machine and to contribute your ideas in the development of the residents' association!

Please contact Stewart Richardson (details on page 3) or any committee member for further details.

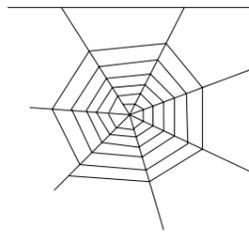


The Quiz

The theme this time is (loosely as ever) "Connections".....

1. Mike A, Mike B, Mike D, Mike G. Who are they and what is the link?
2. Hydrogen, helium, lithium, beryllium, boron –what is the connection (and for a bonus point, what is next in the sequence)?
3. Who presented the 70s TV series "Connections" and the follow up series in the 90s?
4. What connects "Whole Lotta Love", "Sweet Child O'Mine", "Back in Black", "Smoke on the Water" and "Layla" in a recent poll?
5. What was the name of Gene Hackman's character in The French Connection?
6. Sea, London, Pastoral, Antarctica. Who composed these symphonies?
7. Who presents the BBC quiz "Only Connect"?
8. What is the connection between the Île aux Cygnes in Paris and a great American landmark?.
9. What connects Leigh Woods to Clifton?
10. Highbury, The Dell, Maine Road, Roker Park – what is the connection?

Answers on page 19



Barkham web site

I hope you like our revamped website www.barkham.org.uk

We are constantly looking for ways to improve it and would welcome your suggestions.

More photos please!

We are always in need of attractive images of the Barkham area for both the web site and newsletter, so if you have some interesting photos and would like to share them please get in touch.

Dave Clements

BVRA 2014/15 GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: Stewart Richardson (acting)
chairman@barkham.org.uk

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Editorial

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Barkham Newsletter!

Could I start by making a plea for a Barkham resident to take on the role of BVRA secretary?

Our previous secretary had to step down and we advertised in the previous newsletter and on the website for a replacement but we haven't found anyone. Please don't wait for someone else to come forward! It really isn't a big commitment - we meet 4 times a year for about an hour and one of the meetings coincides with the AGM. Please contact me or any of the other committee members (details opposite) to volunteer or discuss the role further. The BVRA is run by volunteers and you will see in the centre spread photos from the annual Distributor's Party which we hold to thank the newsletter distributors and other BVRA helpers. Without residents stepping forward to help where needed we couldn't operate.

This issue is "members only". You may be aware that the Spring and Summer newsletters are distributed to every household in Barkham but the Autumn and Winter ones are just for paid up members. The large majority

of residents are members – 679 households this year. Thank you for your support!

In this issue Janet Firth (co-author of "Barkham – a History") writes the first of what I hope will be a series of articles about Barkham in WW1 and this include a number of pictures of Barkham at that time. Laurence Heath provides a detailed update on the development plans for Arborfield Garrison (a large part of which is of course in Barkham)

We have the regular contributions from our WBC councillor and other local societies such as music, gardening and rambling. David Horrocks reports on the Holiday Bible Club which has been running successfully for many years and must be one of the biggest logistical challenges in the area (almost all achieved by volunteers)!

The Quiz this time is "Connections" and the subjects range from sport, science, rock & classical music, TV & films and general knowledge - an eclectic mix! If anyone fancies being a guest quiz setter for one (or more) editions please let me know.

Stewart Richardson

Editor

Advertising and Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter articles / contributions for the Winter edition should be in by 7 November 2014. It helps if these can be submitted in electronic form by email to newsletter@barkham.org.uk. They may also be hand written, and should be sent to the Editor, Stewart Richardson, at 342 Barkham Road, Wokingham, RG41 4DE.

For trade adverts, contact Ian Overton by email to treasurer@barkham.org.uk, or call 973 4806. We offer three sizes, 64mm x 54mm at £22, 124mm x 105mm at £52 and 190x130mm at £100, for 4 quarterly insertions.

Distribution of the next issue will take place in early December.



News from Your Parish Council

The summer is now at a close and the Parish Council has had a well earned rest from meetings during August. September is upon us and things start to become very busy again.

the war and lost their lives. Their stories are truly fascinating and we would like to encourage you to take a few minutes to reflect on the sacrifice they made. The banners will be on display at the Royal British Legion, Eversley Road, Arborfield, Monday to Saturday 7.00 – 11.00 p.m. and Sunday 1.00 – 10.30 p.m. until Christmas. Barkham Parish Council has worked with Arborfield & Newland Parish Council to produce the information from both Parishes and would like to thank Barry Salter and Janet Firth for their time and expertise collating the information.



World War 1 Centenary

Town and Parish Councils across Wokingham Borough have joined together to provide a Heritage Memorial Trail to commemorate the centenary of World War 1. There are 23 war memorials within the Borough. Exhibition stands for the town, parishes and churches involved have been created offering a permanent display of some of the stories of the fallen. These "pop up banner" mobile exhibition stands are also designed to be displayed collectively as a larger scale exhibition available to schools and local community groups.

With the help of Janet Firth, our local knowledgeable historian, Barkham Parish Council has researched two young men from Barkham, Frederick Lailey and Edward Sturges who served in

The information about Frederick Lailey and Edward Sturges can also be found in even more detail on the new Barkham Remembers page of the Barkham Parish Council web site, this is linked from our home page. Additionally, details of the Heritage Memorial Trail and how to download the leaflet that accompanies this can be found at Wokingham Town Council's web site.

The Sam Hosgood Sporting Endeavour Fund

On 9th September Sam Hosgood the former Chairman of Barkham Parish Council proudly presented 4 worthy winners of this award. This year we were delighted to receive applications from two new applicants, Amy and Lucy Rothwell who are both members of the Reading Royals Synchronised Swimming Club. Jacob Payne an already accomplished

ice dancer and Katie Abrahams who has had much success in trampolining. The Parish Council wish these worthy winners every success for the future. We would love to hear from any new young people who excel in sport, you must be under the age of 18, be a Barkham resident and participate in a sport at national level.

Neighbourhood Plan

The area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan (ie, the boundaries of both Barkham and Arborfield Parishes) has now been formally agreed by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) Executive.

The existing Steering and Topic Groups are being given a formal structure and the Parishes are now looking for more residents who would like to be involved in helping to create the Neighbourhood Plan. The topic groups will also be looking at the effect of the planning applications for the SDL and anyone wanting to take part should contact either of the Parish clerks.

Arborfield Garrison SDL Update

The MOD are still here but their departure is imminent with development on the Garrison likely to start sooner rather than later. Exhibitions have been held at various venues; I do hope you took the time to view what is planned. The developers have promised a development based on garden village principles which will create a better environment and should lead to the protection of the majority of trees and woodland, more open space and low density building with improved infrastructure. Traffic still remains the biggest

concern. The planning applications for both parts of the SDL are expected to be received by WBC late September/October, so please check the Parish Council web site to keep up to date with developments.

The Community Forums

The Community forums are held at Henry Street Garden Centre and are an excellent opportunity for residents to have their say on the development and its impact on residents and have been very well attended.

Forthcoming dates for 2014 are as follows:-
Wednesday 12th November
Thursday 12th March 2015
All dates may be subject to change

Parish Councillors had an informal tour of the Junipers during the summer to check the state of the playing field and equipment and to consider whether facilities could be improved for residents. Any ideas or suggestions from residents will be most welcome.

History Book

We are delighted to inform you that the Parish Council now have a new stock of "Barkham A History". The history book has now been reprinted with a new Foreword which details the forthcoming move of the Garrison to RAF Lyneham. If you are new to the area and do not own a copy of the history book they can now be purchased from the Clerk for £8.50 each, or they are on sale at Henry Street Garden Centre and Barkham Post Office.

Judith Neuhofer
Clerk to
Barkham Parish Council

Arborfield Local History Society (AHLS)

Well, it seems to have been a busy time! This year we held our annual Garden Party at Ridgefield Farm in the lovely garden of Margaret and David Edwards. We were blessed with really good weather and the heat and the sun helped the Pimms to slip down, plus of course the tea, sandwiches, sausages, cakes etc., quite a feast before we tackled the quiz based on World War I and waited for the raffle draw. I think all left the gathering quite content and probably a little heavier! Grateful thanks must go to everyone who played a part in organizing the event, we just couldn't do it without you.

Our August meeting included a talk about the history of English Royal Parks. Peter Halman, the speaker, also opened our eyes to local parks such as the Forbury and Caversham Court, which has undergone huge improvements in recent years and is well worth a visit.

In September we visited Silchester. The weather was not kind but still a good number of our members, suitably attired, braved the Hampshire countryside. We parked (with permission) at St. Mary's and walked from there to the remains of the amphitheatre where we were met by Mrs. Rand, an absolute treasure, who was happy to share her local knowledge with us. We then returned to the church and were welcomed inside for refreshments and an insight into some of the interesting features to be found there. From here we set off to follow the remains of part of the Roman walls. Mrs Rand led the way and was happy to answer any questions relating to Roman Silchester. Our walk led us back to our cars

and although a little damp and tired I believe we all had a good evening chatting to each other and learning more about nearby Silchester.

In October we welcome back an old friend Paul Lacey who will talk to us about Thames Valley Buses in the 1960s – some of us just might remember them? In November the subject of the meeting will be "Family History and Genealogy", of particular interest for those tracing their family trees (which I find quite addictive). December brings the ALHS Christmas Dinner for members and guests at Bearwood Lakes Golf Club. We are happy to accept deposits to secure places as soon as possible as this helps us to know how many we may expect at the event.

Now for the return of "A snippet of local history".

This may contain a hint as to how to treat your local tradespeople..... I leave it to you.....

"Sir John Conroy entertained the whole of the tradesmen and workmen last week who had been employed during the summer in enlarging Arborfield House, now nearly completed; and yesterday (Christmas Day) Sir John gave the unmarried labourers a dinner at the Bull Inn, and bread, meat, and beer were distributed to the married men, and their wives and families."

London Standard 26.12.1843

Diana Thorne – Chairman
www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk



The AGLC exhibition, led by Crest Nicholson has provided some new information:

- The location of the school is settled. It will be near the centre of the development, adjacent to the Reading FC training ground. (Some previous plans had suggested a site off Langley Common Road.) This location has been agreed in principle with Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), so hopefully the planning process can step up a gear in order to achieve the proposed opening in September 2016
- It is good to see that they are sticking with their Garden Village concept, with a high emphasis on landscaping and green routes within the development.

Some unanswered questions:

- Transport is the main concern for Barkham residents as yet more traffic on our already overstretched road network will make life more difficult. The transport proposals have not yet been completed, along with the traffic assessment. Proposals will have to be tabled along with the planning application, so some news may be imminent. The Parish Council is keeping a close eye on this topic and we have a further meeting scheduled with the transport consultant later this month
- We do now know that the main entry point will be on west side of SDL, adjacent to A327 and south of the Poppyfield roundabout.. This is good news as far as Barkham is concerned, encouraging traffic to use the proposed Arborfield relief road as the main access route. However there will also be an entrance

at the north end of the site at Biggs lane, and the layout of this area remains a concern and we have yet to see a final proposal for how the linkage to the proposed Arborfield bypass will be designed.

- What happens to various older buildings is unclear. Listed buildings, such as the stables will remain. The Sergeants Mess is likely to be demolished, though the cricket field will remain. Langley House in Langley Common Road will probably be lost. The future of the water tower is unclear – there seem to be mixed feelings amongst the community as to whether or not this should be retained.
- The immediate future of land left derelict once the MOD vacates is unclear. Some areas, such as the lands adjacent to Langley Common Road will remain vacant for some years which presents security and landscape issues.

Once the planning applications have been submitted, they will be published by WBC in the usual way. There will be a consultation period, probably lasting six weeks. I also anticipate that a Community Forum will be held to explain the application to local residents. This is likely to be in October. It is essential that residents write to WBC during the consultation period on any of the issues that concern them. In particular the transport proposals should be inspected carefully as this is something that will affect all of us: hopefully we will not have a repeat of the fiasco of the previous planning application that proposed traffic lights at virtually every main road junction!

The Infirmary Stables

Especially in view of the WWI commemorations, it is timely to say a few words about the Infirmary stables, which are situated within the development site. They can be seen adjacent to Tope Crescent and are listed buildings and will have to remain, even though they are currently in a derelict state.

Crest have made some interesting suggestions for renovating the stables, including possible use as a museum, cafe and small work units. A suggestion has also been put forward to have a village common in front of the stables and a walled garden, maybe containing allotments, behind.

The stables were probably built circa 1912 for the army Remount Service, which housed thousands of horses to support the war effort.. They were used as infirmary stables for sick horses. Horse slings remain in some of the boxes to suspend horses that could not bear their own weight or if they had injuries which could be exacerbated by the horse lying down. Other fittings remain including corner mangers while the west block displays an innovative ventilation system.

In the pre-mechanised era, horses were a vital means of transport. The army did not have its own stud farms as it was preferred to buy animals in the open market. These often came from overseas, from as far as Australia, Argentina and North America. Ireland seems to have been the major source of horses.

One colourful story concerns horses arriving at Wokingham by train. They were off-loaded

in the sidings and herded along Barkham Road. To avoid disruption to traffic (Barkham Road was congested even 100 years ago, it seems!), they were mainly moved at night. Apparently it was not uncommon that the next few days there would be searches throughout the area for horses that had escaped en route.

Surprisingly the Remount Depot continued in operation after the First World War, though the use of horses in the army had greatly declined. During the 1920s it became a venue for point to point races which attracted many spectators. The royal family competed and another colourful story concerns how the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII was thrown from his horse while crossing the brook.

The Remount Depot was disbanded in 1937 and the site taken over by REME. Military horses remained at the Garrison until the 1960s, mainly as draught animals.

The infirmary stables are a Scheduled Ancient Monument but have limited architectural significance. Scheduled status is more a reflection of their history and rarity, being the only remaining stables of this type. Locally the buildings are also of interest as they are a surviving link with the Remount Depot and with the military origins of Arborfield Garrison.

More information about the stables can be found in the Barkham history book. It is an interesting read and recounts our village history from the Domesday Book and earlier. See page 5.

Laurence Heath
Vice Chairman
Barkham Parish Council



The Wokingham Volunteer Centre is holding a Volunteer Recruitment Fair on Saturday 11th October from 10am-1pm. Around 25 charities and organisations from across the Borough are attending on the day, all of which are looking for volunteers to help in the local area. The organisations attending include; the Link visiting scheme (which provides befrienders for elderly people who have become isolated) the Me2 Club (which supports children and young people with extra needs to access mainstream activities) and Deaf Positives (which support those who are deaf and DeafBlind) Other organisations attending include those that support the environment, young people, children, people looking for work, the elderly and people with health needs and people disabilities. There is something for everyone!

It will be held at the Bradbury Centre, at the Rose Street Methodist Church. The event is free, so just turn up and find out more about volunteering. Being a volunteer is a great way to help the local community, enhance your CV, meet new friends, gain new skills and have fun!! Please do come along on the day and help support your local community!

If you cannot attend the Recruitment Fair, but you would still like to find out more about volunteering, please contact us at the Volunteer Centre on 0118 977 0749 or email us on wok-vol@btconnect.com.

www.volunteercentrewokingham.org.uk



Borough Councillors report

Wokingham much like other areas in the south east suffers from traffic congestion and this is not helped by the amount of utilities work which requires road works, In 2013/14 over 9,000 notifiable pieces of work were carried out on Wokingham's roads by utility companies and the Council. In order to try to co-ordinate these works a system exists whereby works promoters have to inform the Council what they are going to do and when. This is done within a relatively strict set of rules and there are penalties for not adhering to these rules.

To strengthen the powers which the council has to control such works the council are planning to implement a new permit system will not just tell us that works are going ahead but will mean utilities companies have to ask the council for permission to carry out those works. In addition if they wish to vary the time that they are on site they will incur a cost – thus encouraging them to plan properly in the first place.

Other authorities that have introduced a permit scheme have reported reduced delays to traffic from works. Rather than reinvent the wheel we are taking advantage of a permit system which is already up and running across a number of councils in the south east. This reduces the cost of im-

plementing the system as there is less preparatory work to do and also a tested method for running the system.

A consultation on the council's proposals was sent to 120 stakeholders. 9 responses were received 5 in favour and 4 against. The 4 against were all utility companies that will be subject to more rigorous control under the new scheme. There is no financial implementation to the council in the new system as this is allowed for fees charged for permits which will cover the cost. This scheme is planned to come into force next January once we have the approval of the department of transport

The Council owns and operates more than 16,000 street lights. The cost of operating these lights is split between energy costs and maintenance costs. This year we will spend more than £600,000 on electricity for street lights and more than £300,000 maintaining them. Many of the lighting columns are so old that they are at risk of falling over – in the last 2 years we have had 2 columns fall over with no warning, fortunately no damage or injury has occurred and we have made sure we have stepped up the maintenance and inspection of street lights to ensure they are safe pending their replacement.

Energy costs are predicted to rise by 8.5% a year for the foreseeable future. In 10 years' time our street lighting energy bill would be more than £1.3m and rising. Lighting technology has improved significantly over the last few years and modern LED lights require significantly less energy. A modern LED street light produces the same amount of light as a traditional unit but uses around half the electricity

and lasts 5 to 6 times as long. Costs of LED lights have fallen as mass production has ramped up. Detailed financial modelling has demonstrated that it is now cost effective for Wokingham to borrow the money required to replace the majority of its lights with LED units.

This will reduce the on-going and future costs of the street lighting service delivering some £14m of savings over 20 years even after taking into account the cost of borrowing the money. The upgrading of the lights will start in 2015 and will take up to 5 years. To reduce costs streetlights will generally be replaced on a like for like basis although we may use the

opportunity of installing new columns to move them to more convenient locations (such as the back of the footpath). Lights will, where appropriate, operate on a part night basis, turning off between midnight and 5:30am and will be remotely monitored making fault reporting and unit management more efficient.

Lights that have been recently replaced will not be included in the programme but will be upgraded at the end of their life. All in all a win for the borough lower costs, less emissions and the replacement of valuable assets.

You will probably be aware of problems the Council has with unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller pitches, in addition to the applications and appeals for pitches in unsuitable locations. In the same way as the borough council is required by Government to have a Local Plan setting out how we will address the housing needs of the borough, i.e. the Core Strategy, we have to have a similar document setting

out how we will meet the need for Gypsies and Travellers (and Travelling Show people). Having this plan in place, supported by strong evidence (through a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment of need) will help us to fight those inappropriate applications and appeals, and take action successfully against unauthorised encampments and ensure that pitches are located in suitable locations.

The Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan (GTLP) will set out how we will meet any needs within the Borough until 2027. It will set out how we will minimise the number of unauthorised sites by identifying a supply of suitable sites up to 2027. In addition this will provide us with control over the location, use and occupation of Gypsy and Traveller sites.

There are a number of stages that a Local Plan has to go through. This stage is called the Draft Options stage, and focuses on what the principles should be about where sites should be located (e.g. within or close to settlements, or in rural locations, close to facilities etc.) and how large these sites should be. It does not identify specific sites or allocate any sites for development.

On a personal note the new council has been installed after last year's elections and although Barkham does not go to the vote until next May I would like to thank the residents of other wards in the borough who gave a vote of confidence to the those members who were elected.

We have a new leader of the council, David Lee having stood down after nearly 7 years as leader has been replaced by Keith Baker a ward member for Woodley. I have been asked by Keith to serve on

the Executive with responsibility for Planning and Highways; a challenge I welcome and look forward to serving residents of the borough, I have noticed since taking the role it is an area, not surprisingly, where nearly everybody holds a view.

I consider it to be very important role as the impact the subject has on the life of us all living in Wokingham is far reaching. This thought will feature in any decision in which I am involved, to ensure Barkham and Wokingham borough remains a place where we all want to live, work and bring up our families

If I can be of any help on issues related to the borough council please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you

John Kaiser
Councillor Barkham ward
Executive Member Planning
and Highways
Wokingham Borough Council
john.kaiser@wokingham.gov.uk
07714192352

British Red Cross

Thank you to the people of Barkham for giving so generously to the Red Cross house-to-house collection in May. We raised over £813 and I am very grateful to our team who bravely knocked on your doors!

This year especially, as we look back to 1914, we remember what the Red Cross did to deliver desperately needed parcels and letters to British prisoners of war and give help to the wounded and displaced. Always neutral and non-combative they had the trust of all sides as they do today.

Richard Firth.



If you look at the 'official' statistics you will wonder why we need a CAB in Wokingham Borough. The stats paint a very rosy picture of good housing, good employment in the higher paid jobs, a well above average wage and a very low crime rate. It is also the second least deprived district in the country. So, why do we need a CAB?

That over 4,500 new people that came to us in the last year will tell you why. They tell a different story – one of increasing debt and employment problems leading to problems accessing benefits and in some cases accessing food for the family. Problems with housing, particularly the affordability of housing is very real. Problems with relationships, health and consumer issues also affect many hundreds of people.

It just goes to show that there are statistics and then there is the real world. It would seem that, in the words of Rudyard Kipling 'never the twain shall meet'.

We help, on average, 75 people from Barkham every year. If you have been helped by the CAB please lobby your local Borough and Parish councillors and ask them to make sure that we are still here for the foreseeable future.

Many thanks.

WOKINGHAM
2nd floor, Waterford House,
Erftstadt Court RG40 1AP
public@wokingham-cab.org.uk
www.wokingham-cab.org.uk

Hours:
Mon - Thu: 9.00am - 3.00pm
Fri: 9.00am - 1.00pm

Telephone assessments: 0844 499 4126



seemed to last for July and then August was mixed with the end being rather chilly. We were very fortunate with the evening of the distributors' party again this year when over 30 people attended and enjoyed the BBQ cooked by Jim Butler and Bernie Hicks see pictures on these pages). If you would like to become a distributor please contact Jim and even if he has not got a space at the moment then I am sure that he would keep your name for future reference.

Social Matters

What a year this has been! After all the rain in the spring we hoped for a long hot summer which



The shrubs this year seem to have grown quickly and, not been a very good gardener, I gave mine a trim and they have now grown even higher. The fruits have come earlier and even the trees are dropping their leaves so I presume that autumn has come earlier and I hope that this does not mean a very long winter.

Now that the children have returned to school and the nights

are drawing in I am sure that would like to know what your social committee have been doing. We tried to arrange a different evening for you as we had had to cancel a barn dance last year as it would not have been cost effective to run. We decided to run a family beetle drive but due to lack of support this had to be cancelled as well. It seems a shame that out of a population of over two thousand we had so few people interested. If you have

ideas for future events please let me know.

On November 22nd we will be holding our annual quiz evening which is a popular event. If you want a table of six then please can you contact me so that I can reserve one for you. As usual there will be a fish and chips supper but if there are participants with special dietary requirements will you please let me know well before the evening. Tickets will be

£8.50 per person. A licence for the bar has been obtained so please support it, as any profit made goes to keeping the ticket price as low as possible as well as funding future events such as Carols in the Park and the children's Easter Egg Hunt. At the moment we do not have a date for the Carols but when we do it will be advertised on the BVRA website and in the next newsletter.

Judith Collins
977 1579



Barkham in The First World War

Setting the scene

'In a quiet corner of the Old Forest of Windsor lies the little village of Barkham, a peaceful rural spot girt with woods and old forest land, an ideal English hamlet' wrote the Rev. Peter Ditchfield, Rector of Barkham, in 1911¹.

This was an apt description, for, at the time of the First World War, the parish of Barkham was just under a third woodland, a far larger area than today. Kedgham (or Kitchem) Coppice, a substantial old wood of about 84 acres (34ha) stretched from Barkham Street almost to the houses in Langley Common Road. All the woodland was a source of kindling (going 'sticking' as my godmother used to say). This could be gathered legally 'by hook or by crook'. Kitchem Coppice was gradually reduced until it was totally felled by about 1950.

Coombes Hill was firstly a source of gravel. There were already a few fine old English oaks, some beeches, holly and ash, but, probably during the ownership of the Walter family, the area had been drained by ditches and banks, planted and managed, probably mainly for game. Charcoal burners worked there too. The sweet chestnuts and hazel bushes, were good for fencing, but the yews on the ditch banks, downy birches, the rhododendrons and the stands of planted larches were possibly there for their beauty. The whole area was up for sale after 1910 as part of the Bearwood estate, was not being managed and fast becoming choked with introduced rhododendron.

The roadsides were lined by many elms, now killed by Dutch Elm Disease and more oaks than today (see postcard of 'Barkham' in 1907³ on the front cover). The Barkham Brook, which runs North-West into the River Loddon was crossed by fords on Barkham Street, and Barkham Road, then known as the Arborfield Road⁴; the bottom of the latter ford was of brick which can still be seen⁵. The drainage ponds beside the roads at Sparkes' Farm, Manor

Farm (The Bailiff's Cottage), the Square and Langley Pond Farm were a particular concern 'for sanitary reasons' as discussed frequently at Barkham Parish Annual Meetings before and at the start of the War⁴. This probably meant that people were throwing rubbish into them. The Parish Surveyor was consulted; until his death in 1913 this was a local farmer, Mr Edwin George Blake of Hand Post Farm. The view of the Wokingham Rural District Council was then sought. In the end the parish had to pay for cleaning the ponds in 1914⁶ anyway.

The roads themselves were surfaced with flint gravel, sometimes steam-rolled⁶; the pebbles were taken from the parish gravel pits, whose remains are in the Coombes. A roadman used to sweep away horse-droppings and then spray the surfaces in dry weather to settle the dust using a water carrier (see photo⁷). 'Greenways' were very important too; the one from Barkham Road (then Wokingham Road) to Coombes Lane, known as 'The Old Road' in the early nineteenth century⁸ and now Barkham Bridleway 2, was a short cut which avoided the steeper slope of Coppid Hill on Barkham Road and supposedly saved the effort of horses pulling wagons of hay, straw, timber or coal etc to Coombes Lane and thence to the top of the hill on Bearwood Road. Coppid Hill is frequently mis-named Barkham Hill, which is in fact the hill on Bearwood Road!

The 1911 census showed that there were 59 households in the parish and a population of 234, of which 89 were children under the age of 16 years. The big houses were, as now: Barkham Manor, Barkham Square, the Rectory and Moat House in the Remount Depot, which was built in 1906 and named after the adjacent demolished moated medieval Biggs Farm. Live-in servants were employed in all of these and the grooms and some of the gardeners lived above the stables at Barkham Square and the Manor (and for the latter at Manor Farm), and in an adjacent cottage at The Rectory.

Although Barkham might be described as a poly-focal settlement, the main village was along the west

side of Barkham Street, simply known as Barkham Village. On the opposite side there was only Brook Farm (now Brook House). I imagine that by 1914 there was little change from the record of the 1911 census, which described eleven households along the west side of the lane: White Cottage, nearest Barkham Square, had one family, Brook Cottage was divided into two, their front doors are visible in the photo and two households are named in the 1911 census. Between this and Manor Cottage there were three households in unnamed cottages and between Manor Cottage and the Bull Inn (or 'Hotel'⁹) there were four more; the last two before the Bull were Shaw and Beadnell Cottages, built in the 1890s by the tenant of the Manor House, which were subsequently converted into one, named The Well House¹⁰, itself recently replaced.

There were however more households, fourteen, on Langley Common and one at Langley Common Farm. Five families lived on Coppid Hill, on the Wokingham Road, and three on Rut Lane or Hill (now Hayes Lane). Other households lived on the remaining five farms: Church Farm (or Cottages), Ellis's Farm, which like Church Farm was divided into two households, Manor Farm, Hand Post Farm and Langley Pond Farm. There were other more isolated households, one each on Coombs Lane, Barkham Hill, Nash Grove Lane, Longmoor and Edney's Hill. Most of the dwellings were built of brick, a few of wood and were tiled or slated. They were heated by kitchen ranges used for cooking, fired with coal, coke or wood depending on what was available. The Parish Annual Meeting Minutes complained of difficulties in obtaining coal in consequence of the War, as early as 1915⁴.

Wells were the main source of water for each household, some shared, via a hand pump (Sparks' Farm had five wells) and washing for the household may have been done in large coppers (tanks) for the more fortunate, heated by wood or coal. Only the Manor and Barkham Square enjoyed electricity. At the Square, large batteries were charged daily by hand; a son, Eric

Sturges was an electric mechanic. At the Manor a motor was used all day to run a generator to charge the batteries¹¹. The future supply of electricity to all the villages in Wokingham Borough was discussed as early as November 1914⁴ but not achieved until after the Second World War¹². Presumably candles and oil lamps were important for lighting. Gas was not available until well after the Great War. There was no rubbish collection, but little food was wasted; compost heaps were used and inanimate objects such as glass bottles and ceramic vessels were thrown into pits or holes in the ground or simply piled up in a heap, as finds at Manor Farm have demonstrated. There was no telephone service until later in the 20th century.

In this 'peaceful, rural spot' before and during The First World War, ordinary life could be very hard work for the majority of its population, one hundred years ago.

To be continued.....

References:

1. Rev. Ditchfield, P.H. 1911 *Out of the Ivory Palaces, Mills and Boon*, London p 35.
2. The actual figures show that in 1923 the parish of Barkham was 388 acres (562ha); 333 acres (135ha) woodland, 417 acres (169ha) arable and 559 acres (226ha) permanent grass; *Statistics of Board of Agriculture*.
3. Postcard of Barkham Street from the south; kindly copied by Percy Austen.
4. Barkham Parish Annual Meeting Minutes for 28th March 1910 ff and April 1914 ff (BRO CPC 13/2).
5. Pointed out to me by Phillip King.
6. Wokingham Rural District Council Minutes 28th April 1914 and 2nd October 1915 *Berkshire Record Office* (BRO) RD/WO/CA/1/7-9.
7. Photo held by Museum of English Rural Life B184.
8. Marriage Settlement between John Leweson Gower Esq and Miss C.G.E. Mitchell 18th April 1825. BRO D/EW1 T10 (Document 4)
9. Postcards from 1916 to 1927, sometimes addressed to the 'Bull Hotel' are in the possession of the present proprietor of the Bull, Mike Cobb.
10. Personal communication from Mrs Jenny Buttle.
11. Thomas, C, Robins, D. and B. Woolford *nd Recollections of Barkham Village c. 1915 - 1940* unpublished typescript.
12. A constant subject in Barkham Parish Council Annual Meeting Minutes for the 1940s.

Janet Firth



Arborfield Garden Association

Hello again Everyone!

So much has happened since my last report and we have been blessed with some beautiful weather this year

In June we enjoyed a visit to Farley Hill Place Gardens, a 4-acre cottage garden, with walled garden, herbaceous plants, vegetable garden & flowers for cutting. It is owned by Margaret Finch, a wonderful flower-arranger & friend of AGA, who opens her garden to the public for the Air Ambulance charity. We just missed Alan Titchmarsh who had visited to arrange "the garden shed" for a future TV programme – so keep your eyes open for that!

In July we were privileged to have an evening visit to the amazing Japanese Garden of Heather Bradley. Helped by her friend John, she has created a waiting arbour, where guests would wash & wait to be invited into the garden, a Torii gate to enter through, a moss lawn & deer-scarer, the dry stream bed with its little romantic bridge & misty pond, even a charming tea house displaying Japanese nick-knacks, with a little well outside, so there was always fresh water for the tea

John had carefully laboured over the raked gravel garden, only to have us walk all over it to avoid the wonderful hydrangeas, which were spilling all over the path! Haven't they been glorious this year?

The greenhouse supplied plants for sale & the soft fruit area, jams, which were all snapped up. There was even space for a vegetable garden (although only peasants grow vegetables in Ja-

pan!!) Amazing what you learn by coming along to AGA events!

In October last year Mark Saunders from Fittleworth private estate in West Sussex gave a talk



on 'A Head Gardener's Year', and invited us to visit the garden in early July, so we could see for ourselves the results of all his efforts.



The trip to Fittleworth was very enjoyable and informative & the journey through some beautiful countryside was much enjoyed too & made for some hungry travellers, who managed to find some naughty food on the way home!! Many thanks to Jan Heard for organising the event as a joint venture for the Shinfield, Swallowfield & Arborfield Gardening & Horticultural Groups.

More than 30 people joined us in Sheila Bunce's amazing garden for our annual Garden Party. The Committee & their co-opted fantastic helpers had worked so hard, putting up pagodas, etc. preparing the delicious food & of course the Pimms

making a most enjoyable afternoon.

AGA's special day-long trip to Wisley was held in August, in order that we could see the fields of poppies sown for the Centennial. Unfortunately, there were not many left to see, following the amazing hot start to the summer this year. However, it was a delightful day with something for everyone - sights included the stunning Glasshouse (housing over 5,000 different varieties of tropical plant), Battleston Hill, the Fruit Orchard and dramatic Rock Garden & many members enjoyed a conducted tour & long walks in the arboretum.

Some of our members were also able to join various trips organised by the Wokingham Horticultural Association (WHA): Woburn Abbey, with its wide variety of elegant horticultural designs, woodland glades, wild biodiversity areas, an Aviary, Camellia House and romantic Folly: the RHS Garden at Hyde Hall, finding an eclectic mix of horticulture from traditional rose gardens and herbaceous borders to large beds of grasses and meadowland. We were fortunate to be there at the time of the Garden Show too: and by the time you read this, some AGA members will also have joined the WHA outing to Gilbert White House, gardens & the Oates Museum. On 5th October we look forward to a trip to Stourhead House & Gardens.

On Oct 9th we will be holding our very popular Gardeners' Question Time at Henry Street Garden Centre. Your question time panel includes: Colin Evans (BBC Radio Berkshire's Gardening Presenter), Ray Norton (Landscape from Pudding Lane Nursery) & Alan Goold (Champion Rose Grower from Henry Street) - Bring along your problem plants for advice from the experts Challenge them to name that plant from your garden that you cannot name Seek guidance on the damp, dark corner of your garden where nothing seems to flourish except weeds There will be a £5 charge for this event.

All our events are advertised at various popular locations throughout the local area. So keep your eyes open & do come along if any appeal. We will be very happy to welcome you

July's quiz was won by Sue Vaesen.

Catherine Breen (Chair)

CROWTHORNE Symphony ORCHESTRA

The orchestra's Summer Concert was held on one of the hottest evenings in July and proved to be a marvellous event in spite of the heat. The Old Gym at Wellington College was packed to capacity to hear Dvorak's 'New World Symphony' and a programme that included not one, but two piano works. Our soloist, Daniel King Smith, enthralled the audience with his sparkling performance of the Prokofiev 1st Piano Concerto and finished the evening with the popular 'Warsaw Concerto' by Addinsell. The orchestra has come a long way over the past few years thanks to our Musical Director Robert Roscoe, and it is rewarding to have such enthusiastic audiences and a privilege to play with such a talented soloist as Daniel.

Our next season promises to be another exciting one and we are looking forward to our Autumn Concert on Saturday 22nd November, at The Old Gym, Wellington College when the programme will include Mozart's 3rd Horn Concerto, (with soloist Simon De Souza), Grieg's 'Peer Gynt' Suite and a selection of music from Prokofiev's 'Romeo and Juliet' Ballet Suite. If you are not familiar with the latter you may recognise one of the movements, as it is used in the TV series 'The Apprentice'.

Our afternoon Family Christmas Concert at St John's Church on Saturday 13th December will include the beautiful Rodrigo Concerto de Aranjuez (with guitarist Manus Noble), as well as the usual selection of seasonal music and carols. So put the dates in your diary! Tickets for both concerts will be available from

Traveltime in the High Street, and Bookends Bookshop in Peach Street Wokingham (Autumn Concert only) or from members of the orchestra (£10 in advance or £12 on the door). Tickets can also be purchased on-line via the orchestra's website.

We welcome anyone who would like to join the orchestra, subject to vacancies. If you are interested and are a competent player, even if you have taken a break from playing, please get in touch or come along to a rehearsal, if only to listen. Rehearsals are on Monday evenings 7.45-10pm in term time and are now held at Oaklands Junior School in Butler Road, Crowthorne. Please check our website for up to date information on concerts, rehearsals and workshops as well as contact details: www.crowthorneorchestra.com

Chris Gadsby

Wokingham Choral Society

Commemorating the start of WW1, Wokingham Choral Society will be performing Goodall's Eternal Light and Rutter's Mass of the Children on Saturday 8 November, 7.30pm at the Great Hall, University of Reading. WCS is also proud to be singing the 2 winning entries of the composition competition which was open to all schools in the Borough of Wokingham. Tickets are £15.00 (under 18s and students £5.00). Do join us for what promises to be a wonderful evening. Further details can be found on www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk.

Alison Sears



The Greatest Story Ever Told?

Charles Dickens knew a thing or two about stories (so I'm told – I can't say I've actually read many of his). So which story do you think he described as 'the greatest story ever told'? Believe it or not, it was the one we spent a week thinking about at Holiday Bible Club (HBC) this year – the one that's come to be known as 'The Parable of the Prodigal Son.'

Actually, it turns out that's a rubbish name! Have another look at it (grab a Bible or go on-line and look up Luke 15) and the very first thing we're told is that the father in the story doesn't just have one son; he has two. And it's not just one of the sons who ends up being cut off from his father; they both do. Sure, only the younger son looks like he's lost, as he grabs his share of the money, storms out of the house, and heads off to waste it on wild living and prostitutes (don't worry - we missed out the prostitutes bit at HBC...), only to end up starving when the famine came. But read on to the end of the story. See the total breakdown in relationship between the older son and his father too, as that older son angrily refuses to come in and join the party the father is throwing to celebrate the younger son's return home. If being 'lost' isn't just about looking like your life is a mess, but about the state of your relationship with the



father, then surely that older son is lost too?

There are so many good things about Holiday Bible Club. It's full of fun and games. It's a great place to meet and make new friends. The sun always shines (well – almost always...). And



it's a great way to fill a week of a long summer holiday. But one of the best things of all is the way it gives us a chance to look into some of the biggest questions of all: Who is God? What's he like? Why did Jesus come? How does he want us to respond? And, as we do so, every year we see some

very surprising and absolutely wonderful things.

Why did Jesus tell what Charles Dickens (and many others) have described as the greatest story ever told? First, to make the point that, left to ourselves, all of us are naturally lost. Jesus says

it doesn't make any difference whether our lives look a total mess or very polished indeed, whether we look like rule-breakers or rule-keepers. He says the fact is that none of us have loved God like we're meant to. That's such a humbling thing for Jesus to say that it's no wonder it makes so many people so angry.

But there is another reason Jesus tells this story too. He wants us to know that, whether we're rule-breakers or rule-keepers, God still loves us and longs for us to come home to him. Have another look at the father in the story. See him spotting his younger son coming home, running to him, throwing his arms around him, kissing him, and then throwing the biggest party they'd ever had to celebrate his return. Just think, wouldn't it be wonderful to know you'd been loved like that? And Jesus says, for that to happen, all we each need to do is turn back to him.

That's what Barkham Church is all about: a bunch of people (some natural rule-breakers; some natural rule-keepers), who've turned back to Jesus. Please feel free to come and join us. Whichever you are, you'll fit right in!

David Horrocks



Sally Wilson came to talk about the organisation "Help for Heroes" in June. In July David Hills explained about Local Crime/Community Sentences. Our barbecue was held outside the hall in August. It was a nice dry evening and the food was very tasty.

The meetings take place on the first Wednesday of the month at approx. 7.30pm at Barkham Village Hall. New members will be made most welcome. For further details, contact Pauline Vestey on 979 1714.

Angela Hands

Loddon Valley Ramblers' Walks

Everyone is welcome to join **Loddon Valley Ramblers** on any of these walks. Just turn up at the start or phone the leader for more details. Please wear appropriate clothing & footwear. For more walks, including some longer ones, visit Loddon Valley Ramblers

Sunday 5th October: Circular walk from Wargrave, returning via Crazies Hill and High Knowl Wood. Autumn views of the Berkshire countryside to the east of Wargrave 5½ miles 10.00 from CP Victoria Road Recreation Ground, Wargrave (RG10 8BG). Leaders Pat & Daphne P 07785 331375.

Thursday 9th October: Woodland walk around Warren Heath and Heath Warren 5 miles 10.30 after parking around green at Eversley church (RG27 0PX). Leader John A 0118 9774183.

Sunday 19th October: Through the Coombes to Barkham Church 4 miles 10.30 after careful verge parking at east end of Coombe Lane, Barkham, at junction with Bearwood Road. (RG41 4SL) Leaders Graham S & Karen D 07966 002016.

Thursday 23rd October: Circular walk from Ashenbury Park through Lands End then Charvil Country Park between Woodley and Twyford 5½ miles 10.30 from Ashenbury Park off Tippings Lane, Woodley. (Free Parking) (RG5 4RX). Leader Ralph L 0118 9691228.

Thursday 30th October: Figure of Eight Walk around Sonning 5½ miles (you may leave walk after 3 miles, near to start) 10.30 from Berkshire County Sports CP Sonning Lane, Sonning (RG4 6ST). Leader Alan B 0118 9616595.

Sunday 9th November: Circular walk through Chapman's farm & Chalkhouse Green 5½ miles 10.30 from Playing field CP, top of Caversham Park Road (RG4 6AA). Leader Ellen H 0118 9341084 or 07715 553979

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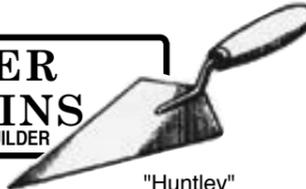
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1. Atherton, Brearley, Dennes and Gating - England Cricket Captains (although Dennes is Scottish)
2. The first 5 elements in the Periodic Table - Carbon is the 6th.
3. James Burke
4. They were the top 5 in a BBC poll of the best guitar riffs of all time.
5. "Popeye" Doyle
6. Ralph Vaughan Williams
7. Victoria Coren Mitchell
8. The Statue of Liberty - the Parisian American community gave a one quarter scale replica to the city in 1889 and it is on an island in the Seine.
9. The Clifton Suspension Bridge over the Avon Gorge.
10. They were the previous grounds of Arsenal, Southampton, Manchester City and Sunderland respectively. All the clubs moved into new stadiums (St Mary's, Emirates, Etihad, Stadium of Light).

The Quiz - Answers

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Wokingham Library 978 1368
Job Support Centre 977 0517

Barkham Diary

1-Oct-14	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
7-Oct-14	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
8-Oct-14	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
14-Oct-14	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
25-Oct-14	Refuse Lorry	Junipers	8-11am
27-Oct-14	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	7.30pm
28-Oct-14	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
5-Nov-14	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
7-Nov-14	Copy deadline for Winter Newsletter		
11-Nov-14	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
11-Nov-14	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
12-Nov-14	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
13-Nov-14	BVRA AGM	BVH	8pm
22-Nov-14	Refuse Lorry	Junipers	8-11am
22-Nov-14	BVRA Quiz Night	BVH	7.30pm
24-Nov-14	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	7.30pm
25-Nov-14	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
9-Dec-14	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
Weekly Events			
Mondays	Pilates Class	BVH	11.30am
Mondays	Dog Training	BVH	6.30pm
Tues-Fri	Barkham Pre-School	BVH	9.00am
Thursdays	Pilates Class	BVH	6.15pm

AVH is Arborfield Village Hall
CRH is California Ratepayers Hall

BVH is Barkham Village Hall
FMH is Finchampstead Memorial Hall

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