



July 2017

Supported by



Chelsfield
Park
Hospital

Chelsfield Village Fair

Saturday 8th July 2017

Gates open
12 noon
Adults £3.50
Under 14s FREE
Music till 6:30pm



High performance aerobatics from an Extra 330SC and our traditional Spitfire display. Displays subject to weather, serviceability and CAA permissions

Flying Displays financed by WJ King and Chelsfield Flying Club



Flying Displays Birds of Prey Croydon Steel Orchestra Force 10 Big Band Green St Green May Queen Beer Tent Hog Roast and Barbecue Fun Fair Miniature Railway Pony Rides Over 70 stalls
ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR!

StChristopher's
Raising funds for St Christopher's and local good causes

Chelsfield Village Green, Bucks Cross Road, Chelsfield Village BR6 7RN
Website: chelsfieldfair.com Facebook: facebook.com/chelsfieldfair

The Newsletter and "What's On" Guide for Residents & Friends of Chelsfield Village

The Blackbird	2
Open Garden for Demelza	3
Mutterings from The Millers	4
The Spitfire is Back!	5
Neighbourhood Watch	6
Chelsfield WW1 Casualties	7
Philip Lane Photography (2)	8
Paula's Fund	10
Local Burglary	11
Local History Group	11
"My Hero" by Philip Boswell	12
Healthier Bromley Event	15
Archaeology Family Fun	15
Useful Contact Numbers	15
Dates for your Diary	16

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT YOUR EVENTS

We need your news, reports, stories, photos, diary events, cartoons, etc. to continue to make the Village Voice interesting and useful

Please send anything you feel suitable for the August 2017 issue to:
chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com

or post to:
Chelsfield Village Voice
2 Bucks Cross Cottages
Chelsfield Village
BR6 7RN
by Friday 28th July 2017

The Blackbird

This month I decided to choose a bird that is well known to us all: the common or garden blackbird (*Turdus merula*). The male sports the colour that gives the bird its name while the female looks identical but for deep brown plumage.

This bird is a member of the thrush family and one of the most common in Britain although historic records suggest that its relative the song thrush was once more common, the two species apparently reversing prevalence over recent centuries. Consequently, historically there are more poetic references to thrushes than there are to blackbirds. Its name is interesting in that it one of those names that is onomatopoeic (it sounds like the object it describes). But there are many British birds that are entirely (or almost) black; ravens, crows, rooks and choughs for example. Why is it that none of these acquired the moniker 'black'? It seems that in times past the word 'bird' only applied to small birds while larger birds of any

type were considered to be fowl. Consequently the blackbird became of the only bird that could honestly carry the name tag although I do recall hearing a presenter on the radio state that he thought all bird that were black were 'blackbirds' and was surprised to find that there were distinctions between them! Clearly a townie...

Blackbirds are quite prone to partial albinism which can appear spontaneously or can be inherited. A few white feathers does make them easy to identify as an individual (see photo below) although these birds are very territorial so one would only expect to find one male plus possible family members on any given patch.

This birds' song is one of the most under-appreciated aspects of the countryside and has been described as coming nearer to human music than any other bird song. It's both melodic and mellow and one of the first to herald each new dawn. But when startled, as is very easy

with this nervous bird, its call is both shrill and persistent. This occurs most frequently when a predator such as a cat prowls into the bird's territory and a persistent 'chink chink' call heralds danger to all species of birds. Blackbirds sing so readily that there is a now redundant idiom that states "To whistle like a blackbird", which means to do something very easily. Such is this bird's ease whilst singing.

Historically all thrushes, including blackbirds were regularly eaten and the price for a dozen was even regulated by statute. Killing for consumption continued until at least the 1940s and there is a record of the residents of the village Roydon in Norfolk trapping and eating blackbirds during the harsh winter of 1947 when villagers were trapped by heavy snowdrifts. Talking of eating blackbirds brings us to the well known nursery rhyme "Sing a song of sixpence". Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye; Four and twenty

blackbirds baked in a pie;
 When the pie was
 opened the birds began
 to sing;
 Was not that a dainty
 dish to put before a King?

One may ask how the
 birds survived the ordeal

accounts went down a
 treat with the guests. Just
 for good measure, on
 occasion, snakes or mice
 would be added. Clearly
 the standards of hygiene
 expected of one's host
 were a little different in
 Tudor times. Still, worth

pecking against ones
 window then there will be
 a death in the family or
 amongst close friends.
 But then robins,
 considered by most as
 being friendly birds also
 have connections with
 death involving visitations
 to households that would
 be considered unusual
 (see the Dec 2014 issue
 of The Village Voice).

My only personal
 experience up close with
 a blackbird was when I
 had a large ivy hedge in
 my garden and knew that
 a blackbird was going in
 and out on a regular
 basis. So I decided to
 have a quick look and
 shoved my head into the
 hedge to simply find out
 where the nest was only
 to find myself eyeball to
 eyeball with the female.
 As is usually the case, a
 nesting bird will simply
 freeze and so I backed
 off as fast as I could and
 the blackbirds raised a
 brood with no harm done.

*Steve Fuller
 July 2017*



of the oven? The answer
 is that this rhyme is not
 just a whimsical poem for
 kids but like many
 nursery rhymes is
 actually based in fact. It
 seems that in Tudor
 times the kitchen would
 on occasion create a
 'surprise pie' by doing the
 usual baking then lifting
 the pie's crust and adding
 the live birds just before
 serving which by all

considering the next time
 you invite the boss
 around for dinner....

Interestingly the
 blackbird's colour does
 not appear to be
 associated with evil or
 bad luck anywhere in
 Europe although saying
 that, I did find one
 reference from Cumbria
 that says that if a
 blackbird should be found

Open Garden for Demelza

Demelza Hospice Care
 for Children's Open
 Garden at 18 Grosvenor
 Rd, Orpington, BR5 1QU

on 16th July from
 2pm - 5pm There will be
 refreshments, plants and
 other stalls.

It is a beautiful garden
 and well worth a visit.

Rosemary Norris

Mutterings From The Millers

The crop growth has now caught up with itself and we are on target to start combining the barley by the end of July, all being well and although we need more rain, we don't want it too heavy otherwise it will knock the cereals down. Never satisfied are we. The cold and dry did affect the peas but that rain we had in May has done them the power of good and they have shot away. You probably have seen the pods if you walk across the field next to Hewitts. Unfortunately the pigeons like them too and had been attacking them. We apologise for the noise of the guns but it was the only way to keep them from eating the pea pods. The pigeons are leaving them alone now and feeding on the barley that has been knocked down by the weather. Hay making will start any day now.

Although the frost did some damage, the crops have recovered but Steve was talking to a fruit farmer recently and he has only 40% of his apples, 20% pears and

15% plums left after the frost hit his orchards. Once that blossom has been damaged that is it.

Our old farm cats have sadly died but we are pleased to rehome some cats from an industrial estate. The Celia Hammond Trust collect these semi feral cats and then help us establish them on the farm. We have introduced over the past few weeks two cats and hope to have their brothers and sisters by the time you read these notes. Although we feed them, they help keep the vermin under control and stop the mice eating the twine around the bales. Trying to pick up a bale with broken string isn't fun.

The first batch of swallows has fledged and it is lovely to see them sitting on the telephone wire being fed by their parents. We have had Great Tits, Dunnocks, and Robins with their young in the garden too. A great sight. On the bird side of life, I have order a few new hens but also a new energiser for the



Yellow Rattle (fading)

electric fence! Hopefully this will do the trick with the fox visitors.

Just maintenance work has taken place over the past month really, as Peter went to Indonesia and proposed to his girlfriend ahhh and then Steve and I went to



Pyramidal Orchid

Ireland. When it was very hot, Steve did do some spraying at about 4 in the morning and saw deer running through the crops. There seems to be a lot more around this year.

On the green opposite the farmhouse, the yellow

rattle has finished but there are some beautiful pyramidal orchids amongst the ox-eyed daisies. A lovely place to walk and of course you have that amazing view towards London too.

Not many country lore verses for July but of

course we all know about 15th July, St. Swithin's Day. I do like this one about summer though

Swallows high, staying dry
Swallows low, wet till blow.

Chris Miller

Chelsfield Village Fair (8th July) The Spitfire is Back!

If you have been following my endeavours with the Civil Aviation Authority in the Village Voice or on-line, you will be, I hope, pleased to learn that we have the permission for the CAA for both the Extra and the Spitfire. This is a huge relief to me personally and I would like to thank all the villagers who signed forms agreeing to vacate their properties during the flying display (complimentary tickets are on their way to you).

The committee are now in the final stages of preparation with marathon shopping trips planned plus the hundreds of other jobs which seem to get done before the day and the volunteers have undergone their first

emergency planning briefing.

You may, if you live on one of the affected roads, have received, or if not you soon will receive, a letter from our Chairman, Peter Lamond with regard to parking during the Fair. We're asking any of you who normally park in the road to move your car to the Exhibitor's car park (Jane Parkes' field - entrance at the top end of the Five Bells car park) by the Saturday morning of the Fair. Ordinarily we cone off the northern end of the village around the Five Bells but this year we will be coning off the right hand side of Buck's Cross Road all the way to Maypole Road in order to deter parking within the Flying Display Area.

Any traffic build up in this area will force us to cancel the flying displays.

We realise that this is an inconvenience and we really appreciate that you come through for us every year but the lanes are narrow and we are keen that the volume of traffic does not cause jams or indeed damage to neighbours' cars. A huge thank you in advance.

Anyway, the Fair promises to be another good one. We have Willow Birds of Prey Centre providing flying entertainment plus a static show of raptors, our friends from Reptile Events will be allowing the less squeamish to handle their amazing collection of rescued

snakes and lizards and to complete our animal line-up we have Pauline Gregory and her highly popular pony rides. The Fun Fair is back with ludicrously large and weirdly painted vehicles arriving in the village on Friday and we have the model steam railway rides which will be in their traditional place back at the bottom of the field again (it was a bit mountainous at the top!).

Lester and Henrietta Barnes' superb Force 10 Big Band will round off the afternoon and we start with the sublime sunny sounds of the Croydon Steel Orchestra once again. The Fair is being opened by the Deputy Mayor of

Bromley and he will introduce our traditional May Queen parade by the Green St Green May Queen and her entourage.

The prize draw will happen at the end of the afternoon and the aircraft displays will be subject to all the normal caveats such as weather, serviceability etc. We are not publishing the timing of these in advance as this is a condition of our CAA licence. It'll be in the programme!

Finally, if you catch wind of anyone planning to view the flying from outside the Fair, please urge them not to. If our pilots see gatherings of

spectators in the Flying Display Area, they will abort their displays and we will still pay for them. Entrance is a modest £3.50 so encourage everyone to come along and enjoy the whole day with us. We have 70+ stalls, a beer tent, tea rooms, a range of food and you can listen to my inane commentary all afternoon - what could possibly go wrong.

A big thanks to all of you for letting us wreck Chelsfield Village for one day each year - it's all for charity and you're supposed to forgive us on that basis!

*Dave Griffiths
Chelsfield Village Fair*

Public Neighbourhood Watch Meeting

There was a Public Neighbourhood Watch Meeting on 13 June 2017.

Police reported it was challenging times following the terrorist incidents. The Policeman killed at Parliament had worked in Bromley and was known to many colleagues.

We have had almost 4 years of continuous crime reduction year on year, however it now seem that crime is increasing throughout the Met area.

Motor bikes being riddled by youths are cause for concern as the riders believe they will not be followed for H&S reasons. This is not true

as certain are required to be followed.

Any suspicious activity needs to be reported and individuals can be checked – not only the bike but also down to TV licences. If they police get to know, action can be taken, but it does require information to be given to them so they can act.

Borough Amalgamation

Perhaps the ongoing debate is the amalgamation of Boroughs. The current thoughts our Borough will be amalgamated with Croydon and Sutton. Many people do not agree that as the area is far too large and Croydon would suck all our Bromley resources to try to solve their crimes, leaving us in Bromley with limited responses.

John Leach



Chelsfield's Casualties From World War 1

Two names from the war memorial in St Martin's porch this month, one is a casualty of war and one has a sad end much closer to home.

FREDERICK WICKHAM

G/4748 Corporal Frederick James Wickham of the 7th Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kent Regiment was killed in action on 21st July 1917 aged 33. His body was never found so he is remembered on the Ypres Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium. Frederick was the son of Mary Ann and Thomas Wickham of Oak Road, Green Street Green, and he was baptised at St Martin's on 17th February 1884. From the 1881

census Frederick's father was a blacksmith in Pratts Bottom but it appears he died soon after Frederick was born, as in the 1891 census Frederick's mother Mary is a widow, living with her parents in Oford without the children. It seems the children had been found homes elsewhere, as one is on the census as having been adopted by a family in St Mary Cray. However, I can't find Frederick, so perhaps he was also adopted and given the surname of the family he was living with. By 1901 Frederick is reunited with his mother, living with her in Banks Cottages next to All Souls church in Pratts Bottom, and working as an agricultural

labourer. In 1911 he is still living with his mother and her grandson Thomas but they have moved to Oak Road, just off World's End Lane. He married Alice Rosina Tomkins at Green Street Green on 3rd August 1912 and at the time he signed up they were living at 2 Nash Cottages, St Paul's Cray. His attestation papers say he had already served 6 1/2 years in the Territorial section of the Royal West Kent's, in 1/4th Volunteer Battalion. He signed up on 30th November 1914 and is recorded as being 5ft 3 1/2 inches tall – at that height the 1/2 was important! The 7th Battalion of the QORWK formed part of the British Expeditionary Force in Europe.

Frederick's army service record shows he was sent back to England in 1916 to recover from Bronchitis. It also shows he was reprimanded in the field on 12 July 1916 for 'playing cards at 10.45pm'!



In 1917 the 7th Battalion took part in the Operations on the Ancre including Miraumont and the capture of Irles, they fought during The German retreat to the Hindenburg Line and in The Third Battle of the Scarpe before moving to Flanders. I can't find a reference to a specific battle in the period in July that Frederick was killed, so perhaps he died earlier but was only confirmed as

missing on 21 July. His widow Rosina's address is initially given as 1 Chelsfield Terrace, Green Street Green, but later she has remarried and is living in Carlisle. She received the war widow's pension of 15/- a week. In 1918 Frederick's mother is living at Edith Villas, New Road, Green Street Green.

FREDERICK SMITH

48788 Private Frederick Smith of the 52nd Battalion Middlesex Regiment died on 27th July 1917 aged 40. Like Louis Martin, featured last year, Frederick Smith is not on our memorial but is buried with a Commonwealth War Grave headstone in the churchyard. As with Percy Thorpe, who died at home in May 1917, I would imagine this is because he gave loyal service before succumbing to illness and being invalided out. He lived at Rounds in the village with his parents James and Emma Smith and their large family, and in 1911 he is

registered on the census as being a carpenter for Bromley Board of Guardians, who ran the local workhouses; his army record says he had been employed by them for 13 years. His father James was also a carpenter. Frederick signed up in November 1915, but was discharged in December 1916 as being no longer physically fit for war service, and it appears he was never sent to the Front. Sadly his army record shows he developed cancer, and it seems he married his wife Lucy only two months before he died.



Philip Lane Photography Will Cease Trading in 2017 (Part 2)

Desperate needs mean desperate measures and there followed a couple of years of taking any work going, which included gardening, decorating, treework, general domestic repairs and gas log fire fitting. The latter was a direct result of having been kept on

as photographer by Paul Dunstall, a gas log fire importer from the USA, to take all his photographs for brochures, as well as for his motorcycle business of exhaust systems and fairings. For this work I had to quickly get some large format cameras and lenses

and some studio flash. I was then offered to quote for a section of the M25 at Westerham by MJ Gleeson who had somehow tracked me down. They needed a keen price which I could give, and by return their buyer gave me an ever larger contract for the A3 in

Hordean. I had kept my trusty Pentax SLR and 35mm enlarger and much of my home darkroom, so was able to rapidly establish my business again trading under my old registered name. I also had to find a pilot and plane for the aerial work, based easily out of nearby Biggin Hill. The loft at Warren Road became a bustling photographic darkroom producing hundreds of black and white prints weekly, which soon gave me more than I could cope with.

My very good friend Ann Blatcher of St Martins Church and Chelsfield Players, came to the rescue and became my sole paid darkroom assistant dealing with sorting, numbering, titling tens of thousands of prints, etc ...and dealing with me...! Not to mention sharing the learning of lines for many a play! For 30 years we worked as a team with Jayne the business partner who and was kept very busy with the telephone and posting work out, and keeping in touch via the new - fangled analogue mobile phone (this device saved many a wasted journey or allowed me to divert to another site or airfield whilst still miles from Chelsfield).

Ironically monochrome was fast giving way to colour and I had to invest in and then learn the skills of colour printing and processing. We had two special printing consoles as well as a colour

enlarger, and got through two Kreonite 16" processing machines. All this was housed in the custom built wooden outbuilding at Holly Cottage. It was embarking into making my own colour prints that was to make a significant increase in profits – one aerial job alone for the Dept of Transport involved 2,240 aerial photographs with a 6x8" print from every negative. This job nearly drove Ann mad as most of the photos of roads and motorways looked the same..... When digital photography came in I was reluctant to change as I was yet to be convinced it was as good as colour neg/print. I probably left it too late to change by which time my fine and costly collection of large format cameras were virtually unsaleable! I ran both systems for a few years making CD's by scanning the prints, but by the time I was looking towards retirement the need for hard copies had almost ceased and the "Darkroom" had no need to be "Dark". The relative ease of producing properly exposed digital images had another effect on my business, it was now noticeably less profitable, as many sites had their own cameras, seldom required prints, and had no need of a professional photographer - apart from the aerials (even this specialization is falling victim to drones).

As I write this resume, I have just completed my last two site visits as my costly public

indemnity insurance became due. I have kept a daily job book of all my assignments since 1977, and even have a smaller book of commissions carried out prior to 1970/71 when I moved to Tonbridge. I have serviced over 250 major civil contracts throughout the UK, of 12 months duration or more. Some went to 7 years such as High Speed Rail 1 (each contract for HS1 needed 70 photos monthly with 3 10x8 prints from each - you can do the sums! For most of the period from 1980 to 2008 I was incredibly busy and travelling 30,000 miles annually to construction sites and airfields from Cornwall to Wales. Long before we moved down to Seaford I had to dispose of several big boxes of negatives relating to sites, that had not been requested at the time of taking, but still have some 20,000 negatives, and digital images stored on the PC drives. I have kept many sample prints of the best jobs and brochures of opening ceremonies and other commercial work. I actually have two copies of the M25 opening ceremony brochure, one with a personal handwritten message from PM Margaret Thatcher, who opened the project - I had the front cover photograph!. If times get hard I shall sell that for a fortune.....

A decade or so ago there might have been enough equity in the business to sell it on, but due to the

forementioned reasons I doubt whether there would be any buyers. Obviously a shame that neither Nick nor Sal have any desire to take it on, but similar to my father's practice and dentistry, this would not have been viable.

Will I miss working?

I think to some extent one always does miss the challenges that self-motivated employment throws up, but there was stress of course and the new tighter regulations affecting both working on sites and aerial photography, were taking a lot of the pleasure out of the job. I met hundreds of people in the construction industry, and at aviation centres from Cornwall to Nottingham, and tried to keep the relationship I had with them personal, efficient and friendly. This paid off by way of recommendations and being looked on favourably with many contracts. Whilst

price was invariably the bottom line, the standard of workmanship was recognized and taken as read, and would sometimes lead to me winning work when not the cheapest.

Other industrial photographers I know who have also retired, and have not gone mad (or out of focus), agree with me that we have all seen the best years in our particular field of work.

I shall now be satisfying my creative needs with giving talks on aerial photography, and my other great love of music and entertaining, and possibly going back on the stage with one of the three Amdram groups locally. Although I shall have to test my powers of retention before letting myself in for any substantial parts!

Despite our radical move to East Sussex we have a deep affection for Chelsfield and all our friends there, and I

have enough images and stories in my head to provide written material for local magazines for many years to come. You have been warned!

I can therefore retire happy and fulfilled, and Jayne for one, will be pleased not to have me worrying about whether the weather will be OK for flying as I am glued to the BBC forecast each morning or the evening before!

And I shall certainly not miss the 3 hour inductions for new contracts, that I have had to endure for the last ten years!

Philip Lane - June 2017



Paula's Fund

Unfortunately the following event details arrived too late to be included in the June Village Voice, so the "Big Event" has passed.

However, in order that if any of you, our readers would like to contribute to this urgent cause you have here the information to make it possible - Editor

Paula Davis is a local lady, just 38 years old and suffering from a rare form of

cancer. She has had two rounds of chemotherapy and one round of radiotherapy - all unsuccessful. Her only hope now is to have Immunotherapy which is not available on the NHS. It costs £103K for 12 months. This treatment will give her the chance to spend more time with her four children (age 3-9).

We have a big event on Friday 16th June and you

can read Paula's story on p.23 of Orpington Connect and www.gofundme.com/paulas-immunotherapy-fund

Please contact me further further information.

Thank you in advance.

Vanessa Palmer

paulasimmunotherapyfund@gmail.com

Local Burglary

Sorry to report another burglary at a local Cottage while the lady was out on Friday 29th June. They ransacked the place, smashed the back door and

garage door down, tore down the CCTV etc etc. and stole a number of items.

A report was made to the police who responded

promptly.

Please be aware and report anything odd you see

*John. B. Leach
Safer Neighbourhood Watch*

Local History Group - Philip Hamblin

When, almost 18 months into the First World War, conscription was about to compel Britain's young men to take up arms and fight for their country, Philip Hamblin's Christian principles and beliefs left him with no choice but to disobey.

For the 21 year-old printer, a Methodist preacher in his spare time, war was abhorrent. The Sixth Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" was inviolable: how could he take life or help others to do so?

That stand brought him by fate to Chelsfield and Orpington, where he spent the rest of his life, first as a farmand then a businessman – owner of the Orpington Press printing firm and founder/editor of the Orpington Journal newspaper.

Hamblin's story was told at April's meeting of the local history group by Patrick Hellicar, while Tom Yeeles of the Orpington History Organisation brought along volumes of old copies of the

newspaper for people to examine.

Philip was born in 1894 at Frome, Somerset, into a family of devoted Methodists. When he was about nine, they moved to Tonbridge and in 1909 Philip was apprenticed as a compositor at the printing firm in the town where his father worked.

Like his father and grandfather, Philip took up preaching, giving his first sermon in September 1913 at the age of 19. He continued to be a preacher for another 70 years. When conscription loomed in early 1916, Philip sought exemption, along with his friend Ted, on the grounds of conscientious objection. Their claims were rejected. An appeal judge later granted both men non-combatant military service, But neither wanted to be part of a military unit so they quit their jobs and waited. In mid-April they were arrested. After a medical examination Hamblin was rejected as unfit for any military service due to a

hunched back and sunken chest and given a three-month reprieve. Ted was deemed fit for service but refused to co-operate and was imprisoned for the rest of the war.

Newspapers reported their case in detail and Robert Foreman, a well-known and respected fruit farmer at Westwood Farm on Well Hill, wrote Hamblin a letter of "sympathetic understanding". Like Philip, the Foremans were Methodists, so Philip asked if there was a possibility of work at Westwood. Robert took him on and Hamblin won a further three months' exemption from call-up. He quickly fell in love with Miriam, the second of Robert's three daughters, who was a year older than him. By the end of summer they were engaged and, realising he'd never save enough money to get married if he stayed on the farm, Hamblin went back to printing that winter. Again he was called up for military service, appealed, had another medical and was passed fit for home

service only on condition that he took the place of a fit man in industry to release him for war service—to which Hamblin strongly objected.

Eventually, he was granted exemption if he found “work of national importance”, which he did by taking a job at Cockerhurst Farm, not far from Westwood, where there was just the farmer and an aged, one-eyed cowman.

After the war, Philip took a printing job in London. But in 1920 he bought the plant of a small printing business in St Mary Cray for £100, found an empty shop in Chislehurst Road and the Orpington Press was born. Next he acquired a complete printing plant that had been lying unused in rat-infested stables in Orpington High Street and rented the premises too.

In August 1922, Philip married Miriam and they bought a terraced house in Worlds End Lane.

The Orpington Journal was

launched two years later. At first it appeared monthly, delivered free to all 2,000 houses in the village of Orpington, then twice a month with a cover price of a penny. In 1930, Hamblin bought the ancient cottage that housed the firm’s offices and built a new two-storey print works in the garden.



A couple of years later he and Miriam moved home to Lancing Road, Orpington, where they stayed until around 1953. They sold the house to their younger son Jim and his wife and bought “Long Range”, a substantial detached house at Well Hill, from Miriam’s brother Bob. The Orpington Journal

ceased publication in 1952 when Hamblin sold out to the Kentish Mercury. He retired in 1960 at the age of 66, with his two sons, Paul and Jim, now running the flourishing business. The old cottage was pulled down, a new building erected with two shops fronting the High Street and the original works building extended to the whole site.

It was a boom time for printing but labour problems left the Hamblins with no option but to sell up. The Orpington Press ceased to exist in 1973.

Sadly, Miriam was diagnosed with leukaemia and at the end of 1968 the couple moved back to Lancing Road. Miriam died in April 1971, a week short of her 78th birthday. Philip continued to live there on his own, looking after himself and still very active until his death on 23 February 1990 – in his 96th year.

There will be no Local History Group meetings in July or August.

“My Hero” by Philip Boswell

By chance I came across your magazine and read Philip Lane’s memory of its unmade condition and another article about the lack of street lights. I lived there from 1937 to 1964 and recall that we had gas lamp street

lights in the earlier period. The road was indeed atrocious and the dip in the road nearly always flooded. As kids playing in the street the puddles were an attraction. Cars were few. As a boy my main interest was

the traction engine yard almost opposite our bungalow owned by John Young, a threshing contractor who owned several traction engines, threshers, straw binder and associated farm equipment

and vehicles. My favourite engines were Sandy Macnab and Ben Lomond. There was a forge in his workshop where he made parts for repairs. When he raised steam and towed his wagon train along Craven Road and up Chelsfield Lane we boys followed on bikes or ran behind and hung on the back of the caravan. He also had a Foden steam car and a Deutz tractor which made a very distinctive POP POP sound which all the boys recognised as soon as it was started up. Occasionally when the road became almost impassable he would use this tractor to do a bit of road repair.

The interest has remained with me and only today I visited the steam rally at Hadlow Down in Sussex where numerous steam traction engines were on display and being paraded around the show ring. A lovely sooty smell pervaded the atmosphere and the sound of the steam whistles so familiar after all these years. I was given a picture of Sandy for my recent 80th Birthday and a picture of a refurbished Ben Lomond is shown on steam-up.co.uk web site at the Dorset Steam Fair in 2001. It had been rebuilt and looks very grand compared with its hard working days. It has even got soft tyres. The yard was built on in the nineteen fifties and we moved to a new house across the road which my Father built on land

which had been used for goat farming previously. The road was made up around that time.

I wrote a short story of my memories which I called 'My Hero' and attach it in case you have occasion to fill a page of your magazine some time.

If you are in touch with Philip Lane, remember me to him and let him know I sometimes see his articles and photos. He lived just up the road from me in Chelsfield Lane. My Wife's aunt Mrs Jean Burgess still lives in Craven Road and of course we visit from time to time as we only live a short distance away in Longfield.

Philip Boswell

MY HERO

My memory remains fresh and the pictures within it quite clear after 70 years have passed. Sandy McNab was my greatest hero and he lived in the yard opposite my house. He was a traction engine. I visited the yard frequently. In winter, he remained cocooned beneath draped tarpaulin sheets which hung rather sadly from his roof edges. He was usually missing some vital engine part or a wheel or two whilst being propped up on heavy oily blocks of wood. As he sat in the yard he always had an old bucket in the top of his chimney to keep out the rain. Sometimes he had

to have his boiler tubes cleaned or renewed. Then I could help. I could shout out when the brush came through each boiler tube pushing out a cloud of rust. My interest was mostly satisfied by just watching the men in the yard go about their maintenance work but my real treat was to be allowed into the forge workshop and help pass a tool or pump the bellows to blow up the fire which spat and roared up the chimney. The blacksmith always said, 'stand back sonny' as he smote the red-hot iron to shape a piece for Sandy before plunging it into the water bath with a terrific fizz and burst of steam. Heavy hob-nail boots, leather apron and a flat cap was the blacksmith's dress.

The shed had a heavy smell of oil, smoke, steam, hot metal and sometimes burnt bread as a sandwich had dropped off the long steel rod with a forked end and into the fire. He often toasted his sandwiches and boiled the water for tea over the coals. The shed was dark and had only the earth for the floor. The atmosphere was hot and smoky. Holes in the corrugated iron roof allowed narrow shafts of sunlight through. Very large wooden doors with pieces rotting or missing were propped open on their rusting hinges to provide some air and light. On the walls and the steel table hung or lay the heavy tools and pieces of metal to be wrought. The anvil, a huge

piece of steel tapered and pointed at one end was the central feature standing next to the forge fire. It also served as the blacksmith's seat whilst pieces of metal were heating in the red-hot embers. He waited, large tongs in hand studying the colour of the glowing metal ready to lift it out and begin the beating and bending to shape before returning it to the fire for the next process. A large pillar drill and a milling machine completed the major items in the workshop.

There were several lesser heroes in the yard almost opposite my home. There was the giant Benz tractor; the Foden steam car and Ben Lomond the huge old traction engine, forerunner to Sandy which rarely moved under its own steam and then only in the yard, but still steamed up at threshing time giving a shrill blast on its whistle before its giant flywheel turned and drove the long belt to the threshing machine dealing with the dried sheaves brought in from the farms on tractor drawn trailers. Ben Lomond had iron wheels without any softening road pads so no longer took to the highways lest damage occurred. Sandy had rubber road pads on his wheels which had to be renewed every year or two if he had been on much road travel. Each pad held in place with two large bolts which had to be drilled out and renewed for each worn pad. Bolts made in the

workshop of course.

Summertime saw more activity in the yard and the threshing machine, the straw binder and the caravan were checked and painted up. The diesel Benz would be started up with much popping and backfiring noises before settling into a regular engine rhythm shunting the various equipment around the yard to form up a train to set off behind Sandy to the local fields.

The sight of Sandy and his train going up the road was impressive and brought all the boys and some of the grown-ups out to see them off to the fields via the narrow lanes. Old John so proud at the wheel and Wally worked hard at shovelling coal into the boiler. A couple of the bigger boys would be hanging on the back of the caravan. Some of us got our bikes out and followed along. My own shoes had many metal studs in the soles and horseshoe shaped steel on the heels which made it difficult to keep feet from slipping on the pedals. The Engine's progress was slow and came to a halt frequently as the train met a horse and cart or the occasional car or van coming in the opposite direction. Turning into a field was often difficult and usually meant un-hitching the thresher, bailer and caravan and partially manhandling them to a position for Sandy to pull them in through the gap in

the hedge.

Harvest time was the very best time. It was hard work following the binder picking up sheaves and standing them in stooks to dry. Then a few weeks later pitchforking them up onto trailers carting them to build the ricks. The low levels were easy to build throwing the sheaves down from the trailer to be stacked neatly in a large rectangular (or sometimes round) shape. As it got higher the sheaves had to be tossed upwards to the people on top and finally arranged to form the sloping roof which kept the rain off. Ladders were lowered and all retired except the boys who returned to climb the ricks and slide off the sloping roofs onto a pile of straw arranged for a soft landing below.

Finally, it was my hero's turn to bring the threshing machine to the ricks. We dismantled them tossing the sheaves into the hopper where the separation of grain and straw took place amidst the vibrating noisy shakers causing clouds of dust and chaff to litter the ground around. Then the excitement as the very base of the rick was exposed and everyone gathered around with sticks at the ready, anticipating the rats running out in all directions. Most escaped. Job done and Sandy got up steam to pull the machinery back to the yard to await the return of the harvest next year.



Our Healthier Bromley Event

Hear about the future of health services in Bromley and SE London

Tuesday 18 July 2017, 1pm – 4pm

Bromley Central Library, High Street, Bromley, BR1 1EX

Read more about how we have been working to improve health and care services at
www.ourhealthiersel.nhs.uk

Come and hear about the Sustainability and Transformation Plans in detail.

1pm-3pm *Market place-Walk around, find out about our plans and share your views*

3pm-4pm *Question and answer - A panel of local clinicians and experts will answer some of the questions raised during the session.*

July Festival of Archaeology Family Fun

Date: 16 Jul 2017 **Location:** Crofton Roman Villa, Crofton Road, Orpington, BR6 8AF

Time: 10:30 - 16:30 **Cost:** Adults £1.50, Concessions £1.00, Family of four £4.00

Family event at Crofton Roman Villa...Sessions at 10.30am and 2.30pm

Parking available off York Rise, adjacent Orpington Railway Station.

For all the family, children to be accompanied. No booking needed.

Telephone: 01689 860939 Email: crofton.roman.villa@gmail.com

Web: <http://cka.moon-demon.co.uk/villa.htm>

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Bromley Council

Main switchboard:

020 8464 3333

E-mail: fixmystreet.com

Opening hours Monday to
Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm

Address: Civic Centre,
Stockwell Close,
Bromley, BR1 3UH

Reporting Problems to the Council

Can be reported via the
CVS website, or if urgent by
phone out of hours
Emergency Duty Team
020 8464 4848.

Neighbourhood Watch

John Leach 07711304965.

NHS Non-Emergency 111

Chelsfield Primary School
01689 825827

BMI Chelsfield Park Hospital

Main Reception

01689 877855

Physiotherapy

01689 885920

Outpatients

01689 885905

Councillors

Keith Onslow

keith.onslow@bromley.gov.uk

Samaris Huntington-Thresher

020 8464 3333

samaris.huntington-thresher@bromley.gov.uk

Lydia Buttinger

lydia.buttinger@bromley.gov.uk

Chelsfield Village Voice

chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com

EDF Electrical Power Failure
Call 105 or 0800 316 3105

BT Line Faults 0800 800151

Thames Water Emergencies
0800 714614

National Grid (Gas)

Emergency (leaks) 0800 111999

Bromley Police Station & Police non emergency 101

Samaritans

Freephone 116123

Safer Neighbourhood

Team 020 8721 2605

chelsfield.prattsbottom.snt@met.police.uk

Chelsfield Village Hall

(bookings) **01689 831826** or
email to:
cvhlettings@gmail.com

Chelsfield Players

info@chelsfieldplayers.org
www.chelsfieldplayers.org

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

WEEKLY EVENTS

EVERY MONDAY

Chelsfield Methodist Hall,
Windsor Drive

Iyengar Yoga Classes

9.30am-11.00am
Suitable for Beginners
Contact Denise
01689 853215

EVERY MONDAY

Chelsfield Village Hall and
Brass Crosby Room

Chelsfield Housemartins

Monday Afternoons, for local
people who are unable to go
out without help.

EVERY MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY

Christ Church Hall,
Charterhouse Rd

Pilates Classes

Monday 6.55pm Beginners
Tuesday 7.45pm Beginners
Wed 9.15am Mixed Ability
Wed. 1.30pm Over 60's
Saturday 8.45am Beginners
Saturday 10am Intermediate
Contact Sally 07786 035640
orpingtonpilates@gmail.com
see
www.orpingtonpilates.co.uk
for venues and more info

www.orpingtonpilates.co.uk
for venues and more info

EVERY TUESDAY

Brass Crosby Room

St Martin's Toddler Group

10.30am-12.00 midday
Contact Sarah Ford:
01689 853415
stmartinstoddlers@gmail.com

EVERY TUESDAY

The Chelsfield (Windsor Dr.)

Quiz Night

From 7.30pm Contact 01689
600656

EVERY TUESDAY

Five Bells

Charity Quiz Night

from 9.00pm

EVERY WED THURS & FRI

Chelsfield Methodist Church
Hall, Windsor Drive

Pilates Classes & Pre & Post Natal Pilates Classes

Wed 6.50-7.50pm

& 8.00-9.00pm

Thursday 8.20-9.20pm

Friday 9.35-10.35 & 10.45-
11.45am

Post Natal Pilates 12-1.00pm

(Babies Welcome)

Call Bethany Lucas

07415 638546

bethanylucaspilates@gmail.com

Further classes at:

www.bethanylucaspilates.co.uk

EVERY WEDNESDAY

Hatha Yoga Classes

10.30am-12.00am

Contact Pam Keeper 01732

458930

EVERY THURSDAY

Chelsfield Village Hall

Class Street Dance

4.30pm-6.00pm Boys & Girls

all Ages

Info: Clare 07960 865518

www.class-streetdance.co.uk

EVERY SUNDAY

The Chelsfield, Windsor Dr.

Live Singer

5.00pm-8.00pm

Contact 01689 600656

SPECIAL EVENTS

Saturday 1st July

St James Church Hall,

Elmers End

Plyford Ball

7 pm - 10.30pm Tickets £10

Wednesday 5th July

Five Bells

Open Mic Night

So all you budding musicians
out there, come along and
have a go!

Starts at 8.30pm

Saturday 8th July

Chelsfield Recreation

Ground

Chelsfield Village Fair

From 12.00 Midday

Wednesday 12th July

(2nd Wednesday of Month)

Chelsfield Village Hall

Afternoon W.I.

Newcomers Welcome

Contact Gwen on

01689 834879 or Sue

on 01689 827407

Sunday 16th July

Crofton Roman Villa

(adjacent Orpington Station)

Festival of Archeology

Sessions 10.30 and 14.30

(See page 15 for details)

Sunday 16th July

18 Grosvenor Rd BR5 1QU

Open Garden for Demelza

From 2pm - 5pm Well worth a

visit - Refreshments and
plants for sale (See page 3)

Tuesday 18th July

Bromley Central Library

Healthy Bromley Event

(See page 15 for details)

Tuesday 18th July

(3rd Tuesday of Month)

Chelsfield Village Hall

Evening W.I.

Newcomers Welcome

From 7.45pm

Contact Madeline 01689

891533

Wednesday 19th July

Five Bells

Open Mic Night

So all you budding musicians
out there, come along and
have a go!

Starts at 8.30pm

Saturday 12th August

Bishop Justus School

Maggie Hall Lane Bromley

Mother Daughter Day

9.30am-4.00pm

Workshops, Stalls, Pamper

Treatments

Thursday 28th September

(Last Thursday Each

Month)

Brass Crosby Room

Local History Group

Starts 10.30am

Thursday 30th November

Chelsfield Village Hall

Floral Workshop

Wreath Making From 7.30pm