

REMENHAM NEWSLETTER

REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

PO Box 4748, Henley on Thames RG9 3ET

☎ 01491 412908

✉ remenhampc@btinternet.com



REMENHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Parish Hall
Tuesday 14th May 2019
8.00pm**

**(following the May Remenham Parish Council
meeting at 6pm)**

All residents are welcome to attend, to speak on any matter and
join us in refreshments.

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman's Report
5. Neighbourhood Plan
6. Financial Report – presentation of unaudited accounts
7. Matters raised from the floor

No 268 – May-June 2019



QUEEN ANNE'S SCHOOL
PRESENTS

Chamber and Consort Choir Concert

ST NICHOLAS, REMENHAM, RG9 3DD

THURSDAY 13 JUNE, 7.30PM

OPEN TO ALL, RETIRING COLLECTION FOR CHURCH FUNDS

THE CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS

Rector

St Mary's, Henley }
St Nicholas, Remenham }

Revd Jeremy Tayler

The Rectory, Hart Street
Henley-on-Thames, Oxon

Churchwardens

Charlotte Every

Tel: 07973 798071

churchwarden@remenhamparish.org.uk

John Laing

Tel: 07778 464162

Churchwarden emeritus

Mike Dowsett

Tel: 01491 575711

Treasurer

Nigel Gray

Tel: 01491 572024

Secretary

Mandy Sermon

Tel: 01491 412908

Sidesmen

1st Sunday

Antony Duckett

Rosemary Duckett

2nd Sunday

Anthony West

Sarah West

3rd Sunday

Charlotte Every

4th Sunday

John Laing

Sue Laing

5th Sunday

Glen Palethorpe

Ruth Palethorpe

NORMAL SERVICES

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

First Sunday

11.15am

Holy Communion (BCP)

Second Sunday

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

Third Sunday

11.15am

Holy Communion (BCP)

Fourth Sunday

11.15am

Matins (BCP)

Fifth Sunday

Parish Office: Monday & Tuesday 9.30am-12.30pm, Wednesday & Friday 9.30am-4.30pm

Tel: 01491 577340, email: *office.hwr@lineone.net*

ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER AND EDITORIAL POLICY

Do please keep sending any interesting/topical items for possible inclusion to the Editor, Felicity Rutland, preferably by email to *newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk*. The editorial team reserves the right to edit, amend, précis or reject articles. The opinions expressed are those of the authors of the articles and not necessarily those of the editorial team.

REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Paul Sermon (Parish Clerk): clerk@remenhamparish.org.uk 07425 131 861

All mail to Remenham Parish Council, PO Box 4748, Henley on Thames RG9 9DH

The Parish Council meetings are held on the second Tuesday in the month at 8.00pm in the Parish Hall, except on the evening of the Annual Parish Meeting (usually in May) when it is beforehand. There is normally no meeting in August.

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

REMENHAM, WARGRAVE AND RUSCOMBE

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Graham Howe: grahamahowe@gmail.com 07540 193 239

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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email: newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk

REMENHAM PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

The Rector	Revd Jeremy Tayler
Charlotte Every	Churchwarden
John Laing	Churchwarden
Mandy Sermon	Secretary
Nigel Gray	Treasurer
Sue Laing, Paul Sermon, Anthony West, Sarah West, Hugh Whitfield	

CHURCH CLEANING

May	Rosemary Duckett	Minnie Wilson	Sally-Anne Plunket
June	Mike Dowsett		

ALTAR FLOWERS

May	Mandy Cook	Maureen Holborn
June	Marilyn Dudley	Judy Bate

PARISH REGISTER

Baptism

3 March	Eve Olivia Duckworth
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NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Months	Deadlines for Contributors	Approx. Dates for Distributors
Jan-Feb	Friday 28 December 2018	Friday 4 January 2019
Mar-Apr	Friday 22 February 2019	Friday 1 March 2019
May-June	Friday 26 April	Friday 3 May
July-Aug	Friday 21 June	Friday 23 June
Sept-Oct	Friday 16 August	Friday 23 August
Nov-Dec	Friday 25 October	Friday 1 November
Jan-Feb 2020	Friday 27 December 2018	Friday 3 January 2019

NB PLEASE NOTE THE DATES FOR THE JULY-AUGUST ISSUE - THEY ARE A WEEK EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED IN ORDER TO AVOID THE DISTRIBUTION TAKING PLACE DURING HENLEY REGATTA

CALLING ALL REMENHAM ARTISTS - AGAIN!

Thank you to the *Remenham Artists* who have contributed some absolutely wonderful pictures and photographs for use in the newsletter, principally for the front cover. My request last time produced a small number but I need more, so please keep them coming!

Felicity, Editor
newsletter@remenham.parish.org.uk

PARISH DIARY *(See articles for more information)*

May

- 4th-6th Henley Arts Trail, 33 various venues including Remenham
- 13th 2.30pm W.I. Meeting in the Parish Hall
- 9th 8.45am Cricket Club Golf Day, Henley Golf Club
- 14th 6.00pm Parish Council meeting, Parish Hall, *followed by*
- 8.00pm Annual Parish Meeting
- 20th W.I. 'Ladies who lunch'

June

- 10th 2.30pm W.I. Meeting in the Parish Hall
- 11th 8.00pm Parish Council meeting, Parish Hall
- 13th 7.30pm Queen Anne's School, Concert, St Nicholas' Church
- 21st-23rd Henley Women's Regatta
- 14th W.I. coffee and cake at Toad Hall Garden Centre
- 28th evening Henley Royal Regatta Qualifying Races
- 30th 4.00am Selkie Henley Classic Swim, HRR Course, start Temple Island
- 30th 2-5pm W.I. Picnic afternoon at Littlewick Green W.I.

Further ahead

- 3rd-7th July Henley Royal Regatta
- 10th-14th July Henley Festival
- 12/13th July Henley Masters' Regatta, Temple Island Meadows
- 14th July 9.30am Henley Mile Swim, start Temple Island Meadows
- 20th July 6.45pm Club to Pub Henley Swim, start Henley Rowing Club
- 4 August 7.00am Thames Marathon Swim, start Henley Bridge
- 16/18th August Rewind Festival
- 1st Sept. (tbc) Remenham Summer Fete
- 4th October (tbc) Harvest Supper
- 26th October Quiz Night, Parish Hall
- 7/8/9 November Remenham Thespians performances, Parish Hall

FROM THE EDITOR

The length of the Parish Diary in this issue shows what a busy summer is in store for Remenham.

It sounds as if a lot of people missed a wonderful-sounding talk on ‘Creating a Garden for Chelsea’ (see page 9), but with the warmer weather perhaps we are all nevertheless creating our own perfect gardens!

Those who read this newsletter carefully (which is all of us of course) will have noticed that the Remenham Thespians are springing into action in November. This is just after the Quiz Night on 26 October, so keep your diaries clear for these village ‘old favourites’.

In the meantime we have the Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday 14 May - the chance for everyone in the village to make their views known and to enjoy (judging by last year) some excellent refreshments. See you there!

Felicity
newsletter@remenhamparish.org.uk



HENLEY SWIM

Henley Swim has a range of open water swimming events, covering distances from 200m to 14km, at different times of day, upstream and downstream, wetsuit and non-wetsuit, from age 8 to 88. We cater for the requirements of everyone from the novice to the experienced swimmer.

HENLEY SWIM EVENTS

SELKIE HENLEY CLASSIC	30 June 2019	4.00am
OUTDOOR SWIMMER HENLEY SWIM FESTIVAL - MILE, HALF MILE & SPLASH	14 July 2019	9.30am - 4.00pm
CLUB TO PUB	20 July 2019	6.45pm
THAMES MARATHON SWIM	4 August 2019	7.00am

www.henleyswim.com

NEWS FROM ST NICHOLAS



Not a great deal to report from St Nicholas.

We held a very successful churchyard and church clean up on Saturday 16 March and a good turnout meant that we achieved a great deal in a few hours and everything now looks very neat and tidy. Many thanks to all those that came and helped. *See photo on page 17.*

Our Easter services went well and the flowers in church looked spectacular. Many thanks to all those who had a hand in the decoration of church.

The next event in aid of St Nicholas will be a concert by Queen Anne's School on Thursday 13 June at 7.30pm - see inside front cover. Do try to come along.

Charlotte Every

John Laing

Churchwardens, St Nicholas Remenham

THANK YOU

I would like to thank all those people who sent cards, delivered flowers and meals, cakes, brought magazines, ice creams, took me out or just popped in for a chat following my recent spell in hospital. Remenham is such a special place to live. Thank you all so much.

Pat Sly

CREATING A GARDEN FOR CHELSEA - see opposite page

It was a pity that we didn't have a bigger audience (only 25 people attended), but those who did said they had thoroughly enjoyed the whole evening. Pat Sly

CREATING A GARDEN FOR CHELSEA - An illustrated talk on 12 April 2019

The Parish Hall, laid out to invoke a garden party atmosphere, provided the perfect location for an engaging talk about the joys, trials and tribulations of designing a Chelsea show garden.

Patricia Thirion and Janet Honour met at Capel Manor College, where they were both studying garden design. Patricia was living in south London and recalled how the journey to the College took her over one and a half hours due to her terror of the M25.

Patricia and Janet designed their first Chelsea garden while they were still studying. Amazingly, it was the first garden they had fully planned together, and they were astonished and delighted when it was accepted by the RHS in the courtyard garden category. Their 2009 entry, 'Entente Cordiale', was awarded a silver gilt medal. The design included typical English cottage garden plants combined with more formal French planting, a cricket bat, boules and a table laid with Bonne Maman jam and scones. Janet recounted a wonderful story of how she persuaded her mother to make the scones, which then had to be varnished so that they survived the Chelsea week. An interesting moment occurred when one of the judges asked to taste a scone!

In 2014, Patricia and Janet decided to use Christain Dior's perfumed garden as inspiration for their Chelsea entry 'Christain before Dior.' Their design was based on the garden a fifteen-year Dior might have created, and included a formal rectangular pool, an exquisite bench and a rose-covered pergola. Dior's favourite flowers and plants were incorporated into the planting, including Lily of the Valley, 'Christain Dior' roses and jasmine. Two vases on either side of the garden celebrated Dior's 'New Look' and were planted with pink hydrangeas. Janet recalled that the hydrangeas were the one plant they had not worried about obtaining, as the garden centre where she worked was well-stocked with pink hydrangeas. However, a late frost decimated the entire supply, leaving her extremely worried until a shopping trip to Waitrose solved the problem.

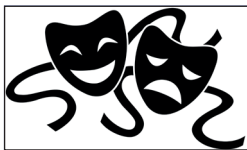
There were many other fascinating accounts. Patricia and Janet planned to have a Dior jacket, with a sprig of Lily of the Valley in the button hole, draped over the bench. Janet was amazed when she found exactly the right jacket on e-Bay, and started bidding. Soon there was only one other person bidding against her, and it was not until she phoned Patricia that she discovered her competitor.

When the Queen visits Chelsea, designers are only allowed to have one member of the team present. Patricia watched, aghast, as the Queen walked past their garden, stepped forward and proceeded to tell the Queen about the planning and planting. She remembered how the Queen listened intently and commented very knowledgeably in perfect French.

Patricia and Janet will not be displaying at Chelsea this year as they are working on designs for private clients.

It was an inspiring and entertaining evening, perfectly arranged by Liz and Roger Cope, Nigel and Jayne Gray, Charlotte Every, Sue Laing, Helen and Barry Rosier, and Pru and Oscar Sly.

Alison Barraclough



REMENHAM THESPIANS!!

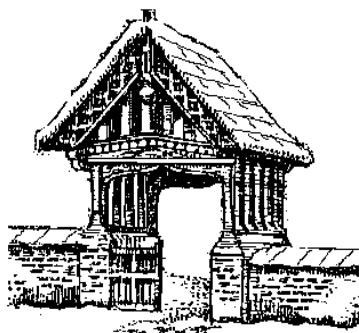


Discussions have taken place and a commitment in principle reached! We have dates for the performances although - at present - no script. Put 7/8/9 November in your diaries and wait for details - and have faith that we will find a script 'good enough' for our intrepid band of players - and of course that they learn their lines!!

In the meantime see the photograph below - a 1929 production by a fairly local amateur dramatic group and featuring two members of the family of one of our own stalwart members. As a group of performers they don't seem to me to look very different from the current Remenham Thespians despite the lapse of time! See if you can spot any family likenesses - answers in the next issue.

Felicity Rutland
felicitymrutland@gmail.com.





REMENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish council has honoured me with the appointment of Chairman for another year and John Merkel as the Deputy Chairman. We are fortunate to have an excellent Parish Council including Bill Ronald, Chris Leeming, Franky Cookson, Darrel Poulos and Nigel Williams ably supported by Paul Sermon. Please come to the Annual Parish Meeting on the 14th May; the food and wine will be good.

FOOD WASTE

Wokingham Borough residents have now experienced the first four weeks' collection of their food waste as part of the council's initiative to increase our recycling rates. In week three, we hit our target of 1.49 Kg per property per week on which the business case was based.

In Wokingham Borough, some 30% of our blue bag rubbish is food waste. We hope to reduce this to 15% with the food waste scheme. This will help us recycle more of your waste, diverting it from the most expensive disposal costs and bringing our total recycling rates closer to 50%. From 2020, it is likely that councils not reaching a 50% recycling rate will be fined up to £500,000 per annum.

By reducing our food waste we also cut the levels of methane in the atmosphere. Methane is a dangerous greenhouse gas and by collecting food waste we can turn that methane into energy to use as fuel. The caddy liners are also recycled and used to generate electricity using Energy from Waste (EfW) technology.

FOOD WASTE CADDIES

We apologise that some addresses were missed. Every household in Remenham should have received caddies unless you live in a flat in which case we are resolving food waste collection household by household.

IF YOU HAVE NOT HAD A FOOD WASTE CADDY DELIVERED. PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF US AND WE WILL ARRANGE FOR THIS TO BE CORRECTED.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The extraordinary passion and commitment of young people for whom climate change is a clear and present threat is an example to us all. The UK was the first developed economy to pass a Climate Change Act, since which the UK has reduced its emissions by over 40 per cent – more than any other developed G7 economy.

There has also been a huge leap in renewable energy, and the UK is now a world leader in new technologies like offshore wind. Internationally, we have shown leadership in tackling climate change, the protection of our oceans, and reducing pollution.

However, we are failing to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change at the rate that science tells us is necessary and desirable. The UN's climate science authority spoke about the absolute imperative of all countries to aim for a 'net zero' emissions target of around mid-century – that is, reducing our emissions of greenhouse gases as far as possible, and using negative emissions techniques such as tree planting or the restoration of degraded habitats to absorb the rest.

Central Government has asked the Committee on Climate Change to conduct a feasibility study on how to reach a net zero target which gives rise to an economic opportunity for Britain to continue to be a centre for green growth. The British public likes renewable energy – just two per cent strongly oppose onshore wind, supposedly the most controversial. They overwhelmingly back spending money on measures which cut energy waste, lowering bills as well as greenhouse gas emissions. They back, by significant proportions, the Climate Change Act and the Paris Accord.

Young people on the school strikes have the public's backing. Survey results show a clear majority of the public endorsing their actions and demanding more of the Government on climate change. We must listen to the young people calling for more action on climate change, not just complain about their having the nerve to bunk off school. We need to agree with them that there is a problem and that much more needs to be done, and we need to explain what we are doing.

The climate crisis will whatever else is happening still present a much more intractable challenge and be the first priority of legislators.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Wokingham Borough Council recognises the climate emergency. It also recognises that it could do more to help achieve the "net zero" emissions target. If the elections do not change the brief that we currently undertake, we will be leading in the Borough's ambitions and I look forward to reporting to you in the future as to what we are doing.

REWIND

A license application was been received from Rewind to increase the event from 20,000 per day to 30,000 and from two days to three coupled with closing at 3.00am as opposed to 11.00pm. This was obviously a major departure and was resisted.

The Licensing Committee granted the license but with major changes to that which was requested:

- That the activities, namely Recorded Music, Late Night Refreshment and the campsite Bar that were applied for to cease 03.00, will cease at 01.00
- To start activities, namely Plays, films, live music, performance of dance and anything similar (indoors and outdoors) and Recorded music (indoors and outdoors) on Friday, Saturday, and Monday at 11.00, but on Sunday at 12.00
- The maximum capacity be limited to 23,000

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

RPC is offering the framed print of an aerial photo of the parish (below, with apologies for the reflections and remaining wrapping - but only just collected) to the Parish Hall to illustrate the pleasant area in which we all live/work. At the APM it would be interested to have views on whether A2, A3 or A4 copies should be available to residents free or with a donation to the Newsletter, Parish Hall, etc.



STAR WORKS

A Draft Joint Minerals and Waste Plan was subject to consultation during the Summer 2018. The Draft Plan set the Vision and outlined the Future level of minerals and waste provision required to deliver the Vision and meet national policy targets and objectives. Proposed site allocations were also included in the Draft plan. A summary of the consultation responses has been published and is available on the Hampshire County Council Website.

HARE HATCH SHEEPLANDS

As promised by the Leader at the last Council meeting the Borough is conducting an internal review of the matters connected with the Court of Appeal decision.

LITTER PICK

Sadly, the Litter pick was attended only by Franky and me. Perhaps it is not an initiative which appeals to the Village.

TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAYS CONSULTANT

We have been very successful in making our views have weight with the planning authority by employing Pegasus. We have been less successful with our requests for Highways. We are in discussion with Pegasus to employ a consultant.

AIR QUALITY MONITORING

I was extremely surprised to read that Remenham Parish Council is to contribute to the Air Quality Monitoring in Henley. I think the report is a little premature. We are part of the Henley Traffic Strategy Group and therefore we have agreed in principle that we would consider sharing costs. However, no specific proposal has been put to the Parish Council to agree, which must happen before a commitment is made.

VILLAGE SKIP

We are investigating how we can resurrect the periodic skip amenity. This would probably be a manned caged vehicle stopping at a number of locations in the village.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Parish council has decided to restart the preparation of the Parish Plan.

*John Halsall
Chairman Remenham Parish Council
Councillor Wokingham Borough Council*

Please use clerk@remenhamparish.org.uk for both Paul Sermon and me, or johnashalsall@gmail.com for me or clerk4rempc@gmail.com for Paul.
Tel 07939 041227 for me, 07425 131861 for Paul.



HENLEY 2019 ARTSTRAIL

4-6 MAY BANK HOLIDAY
WEEKEND

Free entry to 33 open studio venues in and around Henley and Twyford showing work of a very high standard.

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www.henleyartstrail.com

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Churchyard Clean-up!



2019 GOLF DAY

Thursday May 9th

HENLEY GOLF CLUB

8.45 am Shotgun Start

18 Holes Team & Individual Stableford

Competitions

Teams of Four [mixed teams very welcome]

Maximum Handicaps: Men 24 Ladies 28

Longest Drive

Two Nearest the Pin Holes

Gambling Hole

•

Bacon Buttie & Coffee Welcome

Refreshment Buggy

Hot Carvery Lunch

•

Welcome Pack

Driver Raffle + Mini Auction

Imaginative Competition Prizes



Team of Four £288 [concessions for HGC members]

This is a Fundraising event, with the emphasis on 'Fun'
Contact David Winter on 01491 573607 davidewinter@btinternet.com

REMENHAM W.I.

March

Our March meeting had Judy Palmer our Vice President in the chair. After news of members, the business was gone through: a reminder to bring "pennies for Friendship" to cover the 100 year plaques made as part of our Berkshire 100 years celebrations; Littlewick Green W.I. have invited members of Berkshire to a Picnic afternoon on Sunday 30th June from 2-5pm, again to celebrate Berkshire's 100 years. All are asked to bring a picnic and their own chairs.



As Judy is our "green" rep, she reminded us to fill in the form on the notice board with all the ways in which we had helped the environment during the month - things like car sharing, not using cling film or plastic bags, LED light bulbs etc. Several outings were put forward for the Summer, i.e. a visit and tour of the Globe Theatre, a day at Woburn Abbey, a drive through the Safari Park or a visit to Kelmscott Manor. Members were asked to vote for their preference.

Then our speakers were welcomed - Angela O'Connell and her husband Graham - to give their talk entitled "Beyond the Garden Gate". They are volunteers of the Berkshire Branch of the National Gardens Scheme.



Angela started by telling us of the History of the scheme. It was all started by William Rathbone of Liverpool in the 1800s. His wife was ill and he hired a nurse, Mary Robinson. After his wife died he asked Mary to stay on to set up help for the local poor, and to teach them the basic rules of health and comfort. She found this really daunting at first, but he divided Liverpool into 18 districts, though he was short of nurses - and he wrote to Florence Nightingale for help to find them. She proposed that he set up a Nursing Facility to train women as nurses - this was in 1861. Of course this needed finance. Queen Victoria became the President and the idea was formed that the great and the good should open their gardens to the public at 1 shilling a time. Later Queen Mary opened Sandringham, and Blenheim also. So District Nurses were formed and supported and the National Gardens scheme was born. Before

the Second World War it raised £8,000 p.a. It continued throughout the war, and when the NHS was formed it decided to keep the fund raising on to support Nurses. The AA were great supporters and so the Yellow book came about.

Over to Graham now and he told us that within 25 miles of Remenham there are some 129 gardens one can visit. Some are very well known - Welford House for the snowdrops, which the Monks brought to help those suffering from Mal a tête . Now Galazine, another product from snowdrops, is used to help Alzheimer sufferers. Frogmore House is nearby, Luxmore Gardens at Eton and Danesfield to name but a few. The O'Connell's garden at Frimley Green in Surrey has won a gold award for an organic garden.

Angela then told us of the amount of money the National Scheme raises each year. In 2018 it amounted to £3,000,000, which is distributed to various charities, for example £500,000 to Macmillan, Marie Curie and Hospice UK, and many others. The National Gardens Patron is now Prince Charles, and Mary Berry is the President.

This was such a lively , fascinating talk, so well presented. We were all asked to keep visiting and to spread the word, to enjoy the gardens and buy many of the plants they have on sale. Sheila Constantinidi gave a very heartfelt vote of thanks - all felt it was an inspirational talk.

On a completely different subject, Sheila then told of a letter she had received through the Charity Action Aid from a Keynan Woman who had previously been an FGM cutter in her village. Thanks to Action Aid she had been shown the dangers, and had completely given up, and with a group of local women supporters they had saved 90 girls from being cut, and they continue to monitor them through school and on.

After a delicious tea provided by Carol Wissett and June Shelton , and a lot of happy chat, the members were reminded that the next meeting is on April 8th, at the Remenham Parish Hall at 2.30pm when all are invited to join in the fun for a Games afternoon

April

Our April meeting was a very jolly games afternoon. Our President Daphne Austen in the chair, with 20 present, welcomed a new member, and received apologies from Ann Francis, Pat Sly and Blanche Williams. There was news of a past much loved member, Judy Hamilton Fraser, who has moved to Wales to live with her daughter and family. Daphne told of a busy Summer ahead, with an invitation from Littlewick Green W.I. to a picnic to celebrate the W.I.'s centenary, our "Ladies who Lunch" on May 20th, coffee and cake at Toad Hall garden centre on June 14th and a summer tea party at our President's home - so plenty to keep us all on our toes.

We then divided into groups of 4, and played various games - beetle drives, perfect squares, shut the box and others - moving around so that all played with all, causing a lot of chat and competitive hilarity.

Carol Wissett, June Shelton, Sheila Constantinidi, served by Jen Terry gave a superb tea to revive us all. Our May meeting is as usual at the Remenham Village Hall 2.30pm on May 13th. All are very welcome.

Sheila Constantinidi

PARK PLACE IN THE 18TH CENTURY - (Part 2) - General Conway, Anne (née Conway) Damer, The Rev Humphrey Gainsborough.

The first part of 'Park Place in the 18th Century' was published in the Remenham Newsletter Issue 266 January-February 2019 under the title 'Two Lady Hamiltons, Frederick the Prince of Wales and an Admiral'. This article picks up the history in the second half of the 18th century.

GENERAL HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY

Prince Frederick (father of the future mad King George the 3rd) died from a suspected pulmonary embolism aged 44 and his ownership of Park Place passed to General Henry Seymour Conway (1721-1795) in 1751. Conway energetically set about transforming the 900



acre estate into an aristocrat's elegant parkland with underground tunnels, a Chinese Garden, a Grecian Folly, a lavender farm and distillery.

At the same time he pursued a turbulent military, political and administrative career. As a young officer leading Hanoverian mercenaries, he joined Duke (butcher) Cumberland to put down the 1745 Jacobite anti-Hanoverian rising of Bonnie Prince Charlie at the Battle of Culloden. Conway fought in the Seven Years War during summer campaigns in Europe. He was appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland and then Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. He fell out with prime minister Lord North and King George the 3rd over the rising in the American colony which became the American War of Independence led to victory by George Washington.

Conway was finally 'promoted upstairs' to be Governor of Jersey in the Channel Islands for 23 years where he faced invasion from Republicans following the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789. It was a close-run thing; making efficient use of Martello towers, he thwarted the Republican plan to capture and return the Channel Islands to French ownership after several hundred years of English occupation. Consequently the islands provided a safe haven for the French 'Aristos' fleeing from the guillotine. Also, at heart, Conway was a collector exemplified by his acquisition and removal of a Neolithic stone circle from Jersey to Park Place where it was reinstalled as a ridiculously named 'Druids' Temple'. With hindsight this was an act of archaeological vandalism. It is an example of the arrogance of English aristocratic collectors when they travelled overseas, usually on Grand Tours.

Although Conway's career resembled a game of snakes and ladders, he retained friends in high places; his life-long friends from Eton school days included his cousin Horace Walpole (1717-1797) (son of Prime Minister Walpole).

Also by a remarkable coincidence Conway, Horace Walpole were Eton school friends of George Augustus Selwyn (1719-1791) of Matson Park in Gloucestershire who led a privileged life of sophisticated indolence with a notorious reputation for gambling, attending public executions, necrophilia and belonging to the Hell and Fire Club of Medmenham Abbey. (Remenham Newsletter Issue No 209 Sept-Oct 2012 contains details of a visit of Remenham WI to Strawberry Hill House on 9th July 2012 and the unexpected inheritance of the proceeds of Matson Park by our late Teddy Selwyn's father Rev Stephen John Selwyn which he used to buy Wilminster House, Remenham Hill in the 1920's).

ANNE DAMER

Conway's daughter Anne Seymour (nee Conway) Damer (1748-1828) being niece of Horace Walpole became his ward while her father was involved in the wars in continental Europe. When Horace Walpole died in 1797 he left his pseudo-gothic mansion Strawberry Hill to her where she lived for several years before setting up her own grand house and theatrical salon nearby. She resumed her career as a sculptress and carved heads of the river gods Thamesis (downstream) and Isis (upstream) still visible, built into the bridge connecting Henley and Remenham.

REVEREND HUMPHREY GAINSBOROUGH

The Reverend Humphrey Gainsborough (1718-1776) was a non-conformist congregational Minister at Christ Church, Henley-on-Thames from 1748 for 28 years; he studied theology at the congregational academy at Moorfields with John Eames, friend of Sir Isaac Newton. Humphrey was a civil and mechanical engineer and a prolific inventor competing with James Watt and Newcomen in the development of steam power. His brother Thomas Gainsborough was also gifted becoming the famous 18th century portrait painter; together they were part of the 'Age of Enlightenment' notable for the wave of discoveries and understandings of modern science.

General Conway encouraged, supported and employed Humphrey to engineer Conway's Ragged Bridge carrying the Wargrave Road over Happy Valley in 1763; it still stands over 250 years later being constructed of colossal 'sarsen' stones (30 million year old geological relics of silicified sandstone) said to have been removed from the ruins of Reading Abbey.

Humphrey also improved access to Park Place taking chalk from the top of White Hill to build an embankment lower down near Henley Bridge using an ingenious rope and pulley system in which descending loaded trucks pulled up empty trucks to be refilled at the hill top. In another imaginative project he made a significant impact on the River Thames barge traffic by replacing eight medieval flash locks with pound locks along the challenging upstream route from Boulton's lock at Maidenhead through Marlow, Hurley, Hambleden, Marsh Lock, Shiplake up to Sonning.

The memorial to the Reverend Humphrey Gainsborough is to be found as a blue plaque* on the gates of the manse next to Christ Church in Reading Road. His wife Mary must have been a strong support for such a driven, wide ranging man - they died within a year of each other.



Sources:

Title: *Genius & Gentility - Henley in the Age of Enlightenment - Exhibition at the River & Rowing Museum Henley on Thames, 26 January - 15 September, 2002.*

Title: *Out of the SHADOW of a GIANT (Sir Isaac Newton) - Hooke, Halley & the Birth of British Science - By John Gribbin & Mary Gribbin. Publishers: William Collins.*

Title: *Handel in London - The Making of a Genius by Jane Glover. Publisher Pan Macmillan (the preface contains a succinct account of how the Hanoverian Georges came to rule England in the 18th Century).*

Jim Bland, Matson Drive, Remenham. February 2019



Landscape Painting of Park Place, White Hill and the River Thames in the 18th Century [before Rev Humphrey Gainsborough engineered the cutting and embankment?]

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On this page, you'll find a facility to create an online account, which will allow you to report any problem, such as potholes, flooding or rubbish collection – and then track the WBC response to your complaint.

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