

# The Amberley Society

The aim of the Society, is the conservation and improvement of the amenities, character and interests of Amberley and its surroundings

## Newsletter May 2014

### BLACK HORSE PLANS

Next Monday, May 19, 2014, at 7.30pm St Michael's Church Hall, Amberley

Come and hear first-hand the plans for The Black Horse. The new owners kindly invite you to meet the development team behind The Black Horse and to discuss the recently submitted plans. The team includes:

Paul Smith, Partner, Cregagh Properties (Developer)  
Mike Wilson, Founder, Mike Wilson Restorations (Supervising Architect)  
John Bater, Partner, Prime Meridian (Architects & Structural Engineers)  
Angus Davies, The Black Horse (General Manager)  
Dan Howes, The Black Horse (Executive Chef)

The discussion will be chaired by Mike Toynbee, and it would be helpful if you could advise him ([miketoyntee@btconnect.com](mailto:miketoyntee@btconnect.com)) if you would like to attend.

A planning application has been submitted and should appear on the SDNPA website any day soon. <http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning> then > (click) View Planning Applications (LHS) > [public access system](#) (blue), Enter a **keyword** such as Amberley in the box, > Search. When available it will be in the list of Amberley applications. The plans will also be available to view at Storrington Library Help Point.

We really appreciate the opportunity the evening presents and anticipate there will be a good turn out.

### DREWITT'S FARM PLANNING APPLICATIONS SDNP/14/01178/FUL & SDNP/14/01150/FUL

The Amberley Society, together with Amberley Parish Council, has objected to the latest plans and lobbied the South Downs National Park Authority to 'Call-in' the applications. We have been advised this will now be the case, although Horsham District Council will continue to carry out the administration of the applications for and on behalf of the SDNPA. We are grateful to everyone who wrote letters over the Easter period in connection with these applications – it was a great effort. We also managed to enlist support from the South Downs Network, South Downs Society and the Wiggonholt Association.

### GREATHAM MANOR FARM DEVELOPMENT

At our Annual General Meeting there was a unanimous vote to oppose the development at Greatham Manor Farm. However, on May 8 the SDNPA Planning Committee at Midhurst approved the plans by the narrowest of margins. Although the outcome was somewhat disappointing there was good debate. I spoke on behalf of the Society against the proposals together with several residents, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), South Downs Society and Wiggonholt Association.

### GUIDED WILDFLOWER WALK FROM AMBERLEY TO MEDLEY BOTTOM ON THE SOUTH DOWNS

Sunday, July 6, 2014. 10am, from Amberley Square

After the persistent winter rainfall it promises to be a good year for wild orchids and one of the best places to see them is at the spectacular and rare chalk grassland site of Medley Bottom. Peter Daughtrey has kindly offered to lead the 30-minute walk across the Downs to see them. For those not able to manage the terrain, the site can be reached by a short, flatter walk after a car drive via North Stoke. Please ask for details. There will be a host of other wildflowers to see, plus butterflies like the Chalk Hill Blue, and birds of prey. Many will remember at our AGM a couple of years ago, SDNPA Ranger Simon Mockford enthusiastically talking about the site, the grazing of which is carefully managed by the Strudwick farming family. Families and children are particularly welcome. It would be helpful if you could please let me know if you would like to join us.

## **AMBERLEY SOCIETY WEBSITE** [www.amberleysociety.org.uk](http://www.amberleysociety.org.uk)

Our new website, created by Dee Alsey, has been a great success and is currently averaging around 20 visits a day. One such website visitor was Ted Cook (see item below), who lives in Leicester and worked at Amberley Railway Station from 1967 to 1970 as a signalman.

### **SIGNAL BOX AT AMBERLEY STATION CLOSES**

Built in 1934 the signal box closed on March 14. Signalman Ted Cook made a nostalgic trip to Amberley a couple of days earlier and contacted us via the website to say:

*'This was my first signal box after starting as a junior porter at Arundel after leaving school in July 1965, (West Tarring School for Boys) as it was then, in Worthing. From Arundel I went as "box boy" in Haywards Heath signal box before becoming what will always be now the youngest signalman on BR. At Amberley, at the time, we still had the 'camping coaches' and the Post Office as well as the booking office and signal box to deal with.'*

Tim Simpson and I had the privilege to meet Ted and be shown around the signal box and the old station buildings. Gary Pannell, the signalman who worked the very last shift at Amberley, spoke about his surprisingly busy if somewhat lonely job. Right to the very end the interior of the signal box was immaculate, with everything polished including large dials and the bells with their familiar ring to warn of oncoming trains. As was tradition, a rag always came between the handle of the big levers and human hand to avoid tarnishing them. It is such a shame to hear that the building has now been gutted.

Since retirement Ted has written a number of stories/novels based on his railway life, including one entitled *Goings on at Amberley*. Copies are available direct from Ted ([edward8fw@btinternet.com](mailto:edward8fw@btinternet.com)). Having joined the Society, he has kindly offered to come and entertain us with some of his humorous anecdotes.

### **AMBERLEY SOCIETY ARCHIVE**

Jim Hepburn created, and Dorothy Olney managed for a number of years the Archive that lives in the Old Forge Surgery in The Square. It is both a valuable resource and used regularly. An important and fascinating recent addition is the donation of four large files about Amberley artists, carefully researched and compiled over many years by the late Sheila Hale from Chichester. Many will remember Sheila in her wheelchair at the Society's 'Amberley Artists' exhibition in 2011. One of the first to benefit from the material is art historian and author, Bernard Allan from Midhurst, who is writing a book about Sussex artists. Like former signalman Ted Cook, Bernard discovered the Amberley Society through our website and joined as a member.

### **JIM AND MARGARET HEPBURN**

We send our best wishes to our past Chairman and Life President, Jim Hepburn, and his wife, Margaret, who have moved from their home of more than 50 years in East Street, Amberley, to live closer to their son and his family in Kingston-upon-Thames. Jim was chairman of this Society for more than 10 years from the late 1980s. Having played such an active role within the community, they found it hard to leave, but at least they can still keep up to date through this newsletter and the website. We look forward to them returning for occasional visits.

Grahame Joseph

Chairman

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### **DIARY DATES:**

Monday, May 19, BLACK HORSE MEETING. 7.30pm, Amberley Church Hall

Sunday, July 6, WILDFLOWER WALK WITH PETER DAUGHTREY. 10am, The Square, Amberley

Friday, October 17, AMBERLEY SOCIETY MEETING. 7.30pm, Amberley Church Hall