

SPRING 2021
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Datchet Village Society

NEWSLETTER

Jubilee Green, Adrian Giddins

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We hope this newsletter finds you and your family and friends in good health, looking forward to the summer and, hopefully, a return to more normal activities at long last.

Usually at this time of year we start planning the DVS AGM. It is very unlikely that we'll be able to have a large public meeting in spring but we may be able to hold an event in June or July, towards the end of the government's 'road map' and, by then, we hope to be able to share some exciting news about a new DVS acquisition.

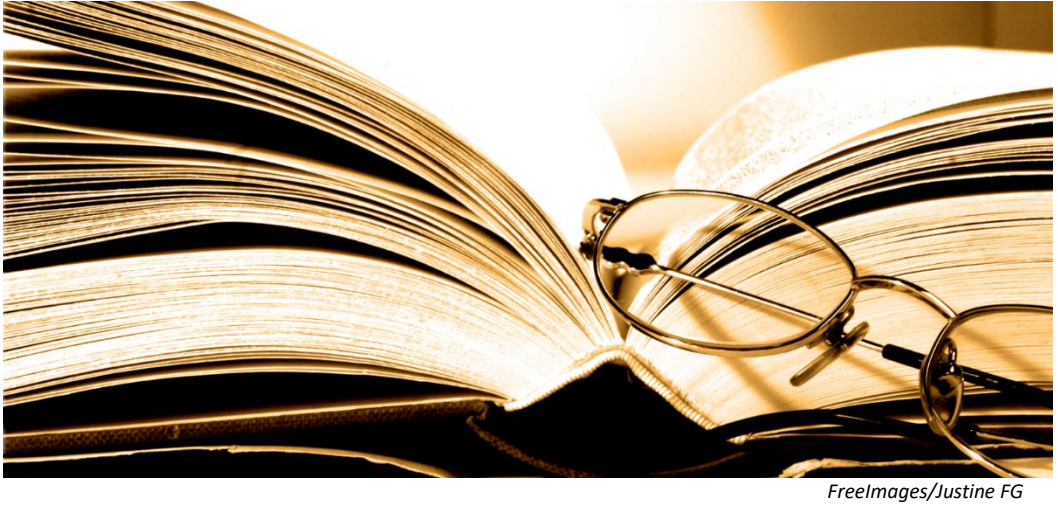
In the meantime, it seems that lots of people are still using lockdown to research their family histories and mysteries. The DVS has been busy answering questions on a variety of topics and we are sharing some of our most recent discoveries in this newsletter.

We hope these longer newsletters are of interest, helping to fill the gap left by the absence of DVS events, talks and visits. If there's anything you'd like to read about, please do let us know.

We would like to thank you for your continued support throughout this difficult past year. We really appreciate it and look forward to the time when we can all get together again in person.

Your DVS Committee

Email: info@datchetvillagesociety.org.uk
www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk



FreeImages/Justine FG

DATCHET LIBRARY TO CLOSE?

There is a public consultation asking for residents' views on RBWM's proposals to save money on library services. These proposals include the closure of libraries and associated services in Datchet and Old Windsor, and Wraysbury's container library provision. This would mean that Windsor would be the nearest library for residents in the east of the Borough.

The consultation documents lay out the reasons for the proposed cuts; Datchet's library is expensive to run and there is low community involvement compared to other areas.

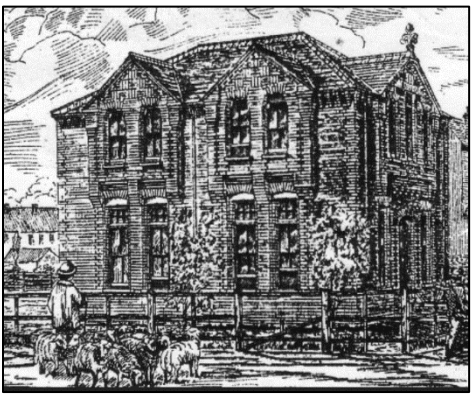
Datchet Parish Council, which refurbished the building, pays a 'peppercorn rent' to Lord Montagu of Beaulieu to use it for community purposes. RBWM pays a commercial rent to DPC to use it as a library, plus there are staffing, cleaning and associated costs. The Police also rent space in the building from DPC to house the police post. This suggests there may be some room for negotiation on the rent but it will also take community engagement to persuade RBWM not to close the library. If we wish to keep it open, we will need to show how much it is needed and propose ways to increase community involvement, encourage volunteers and offset costs.

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

- Make your views known by responding to the library consultation and encourage friends and neighbours to do so too. It is open until 30 April: www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/consultations/library-consultations
- Additional concerns can be emailed directly to the Borough Librarian, Angela.Huisman@rbwm.gov.uk, copying in the lead member for libraries, CllrS.Rayner@rbwm.gov.uk
  If you prefer to write, the address is Maidenhead Library, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1QU.
- If you support retaining the library, you could perhaps propose ways to reduce or offset operating costs and encourage community involvement enabling RBWM to keep the library open.
- You might also like to copy in our parish councillors so they are aware of the strength of feeling locally, c/o the parish clerk, clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk, or Datchet Parish Council Office, 1 Allen Way, Datchet SL3 9HR.



The library building, formerly the Working Men's Club, was built by public subscription on land provided by the Duke of Buccleuch. (See the Datchet History website for details.)



In 2019, the DVS was given a metal document box containing records from Datchet's Working Men's Club dating back to the 1880s. Details are on the Datchet Village Society website

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

Community libraries have been set up in some areas of the country to protect local services. Information about these is on the government website



Above right, Windsor, *c1904, by Arthur Streeton (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest, 1907). The artist appears to be viewing the Castle from Romney Island. A footpath sloping down to the tow-path can be seen, centre left.*
Above, *View of the castle and railway station, 2021, from the Riverside Station car park where the old railway sidings stood*



AN AUSTRALIAN ARTIST'S VIEW OF WINDSOR

This rather unusual, attractively-lit depiction of Windsor Castle and the Riverside Station is a 1904 oil painting by Australian impressionist artist Arthur Streeton (1867-1943). It was on display at a recent exhibition of Streeton's work in Sydney, New South Wales, and a photo was sent to us by an Australian friend of the DVS and regular Datchet visitor (in normal times) who thought we might not have seen it before.
Streeton spent much of the early 20th century (1897-1919) in Europe and painted several views of Windsor Castle. During WWI, age 48, he joined the British Royal Army Medical Corps and worked at the 3rd London General Hospital in Wandsworth. In 1918, he travelled to France as an Australian Official War Artist where he concentrated on the landscape of the scenes of war, capturing everyday moments rather than attempting to convey the human suffering and definitive moments of battle. After the war he returned to Australia where he also worked as an art critic.
A digital record of Streeton's work, including this painting of Windsor, is available at the National Gallery of Victoria's NGV Collection Online, and a Google search for 'Streeton Windsor' will find others.



Above*, Ditton Manor, Datchet, photographed on a DVS visit*

DITTON MANOR IN MUSIC VIDEO

Just before Christmas, we received a cheery note from former DVS committee member, Paul Bonnici-Waddingham, to tell us that one of our local heritage buildings appears in a music video being seen right around the world. He was watching the video of Celeste's 'A Little Love' on YouTube (not the John Lewis Christmas advert but her own original version) and spotted that it was filmed at Ditton Manor. In the video, you'll be able to recognise the hallway from our DVS visits and, towards the end, the exterior is instantly recognisable. Paul studied Ditton Manor for his degree in heritage interior design and confirms that the scenes in the bedrooms - which we didn't get to see on our DVS visit - were also filmed there. Paul still lives in Datchet and now runs his own consultancy, Ghost Design Studio, specialising in heritage buildings and spaces.







***From top**: Holmcroft in Montagu Road; adverts for the nursing home; and Durrans, Reading*

A FAMILY MYSTERY

DVS receives emails from around the world with Datchet-related enquiries. Some are straightforward to answer, others require a bit more work, and very occasionally we hit a brick wall.

Recently, we received an email from 'B' asking simply for information about Holmcroft Nursing Home. We replied that Marion Blarney had set up a nursing home at Holmcroft, 59 Montagu Road, in 1914. She attended private patients in their homes while her daughter, Doris, took care of the day-to-day running of the home. From 1919 until at least 1939, it was run by Misses Lovell and Dawson for surgical, medical and maternity patients. They also cared for the elderly and infirm.

B then asked if DVS knew about any children born at Holmcroft, in particular Denis Nelson, born July 1936, whose parents were recorded as Helen Durhan (not Durham) and John Nelson.

DVS doesn't hold that information but we did some research. We were unable to find a record of Denis's parents' marriage or any Durhans or Nelsons in or around Datchet. Nor could we find a birth record for a Helen Durhan while there were dozens of John Nelsons nationwide. Could the information provided for Denis's birth certificate have been misheard or been incorrect, possibly deliberately?

In the 1930s, most births took place at home. A family would have to be quite well off to afford maternity care. Might Denis have been born at Holmcroft because his family could afford that level of care or - a rather delicate question - to keep his birth quiet if his parents were not married, given the shame surrounding illegitimacy at the time?

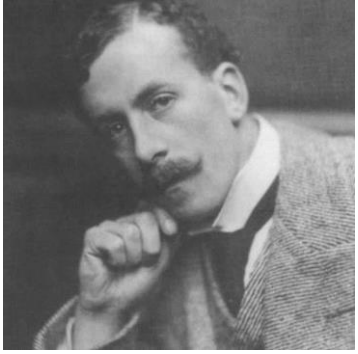
Over the course of a few emails, B explained that Denis was 'fostered'. (Informal adoption continued well into the 1930s.) She thought he stayed for a while with two ladies named Spond and another boy, John Stayte.

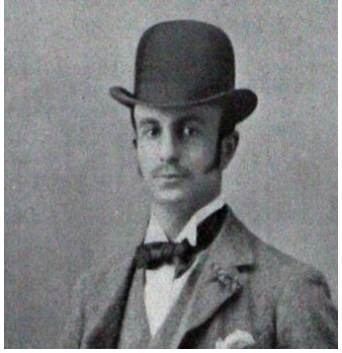
We couldn't track down any Sponds but we found, in the 1939 Register, two sisters in their 60s, Francis and Alice Spong, in Slough High Street. Alice was a dressmaker. Also in the same house were a gardener in his 60s; 15-year-old John Stayte, a factory office boy; a two-year-old boy; and a redacted name which may be three-year-old Denis. (Some names are redacted in the Register to protect the privacy of people who may still be alive.) Could the sisters have been 'fostering' children?

B thought that John was possibly a travelling wine merchant and she had an address, 761 Oxford Road. We found a 761 Oxford Road in Tilehurst, Reading but the text was redacted in the 1939 Register. Unable to visit a library, due to COVID, we searched online for a local directory to find out who lived there in 1936. Unfortunately the closest date available was a 1914 edition. There were no Nelsons in Tilehurst but, coincidentally, we noticed a Durran's jewellers in Oxford Street (later Oxford Road), Reading. Edith Durran, born 1900, was the shop manageress in the 1930s. Her parents were John and Beatrice Ellen. Edith never married; she died in 1963 leaving more than £80,000. Durran/Durhan is such an unusual name and there are some interesting coincidences so, in the absence of any other leads, we suggested the family might be worth researching if only to eliminate them.

B is going to contact the county Records Offices when they reopen to ask if Holmcroft's records were deposited there, and will look at later local directories and keep us posted.

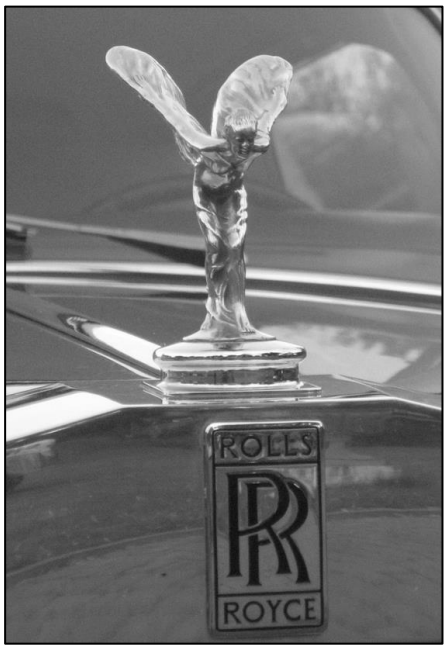
LOCAL CHARACTERS



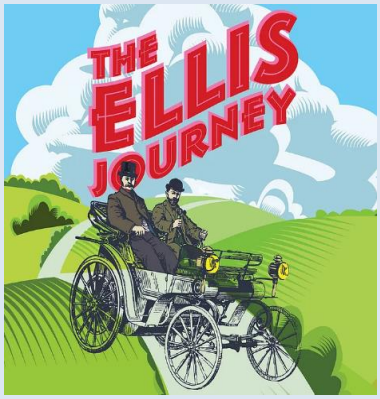




From left to right:
Claude Goodman Johnson,
Frederick Simms,
Eleanor Velasco Thornton



The model for Rolls-Royce's Spirit of Ecstasy lived in Datchet



The Ellis Journey is scheduled for 4 July 2021 (COVID-permitting). This will be the 125th +1 anniversary of the first recorded journey by a motor vehicle in the UK, made by the Hon. Evelyn Ellis from Micheldever to his home in Datchet. For details, see **www.ellisjourney.co.uk**

CLAUDE GOODMAN-JOHNSON

A member of the Datchet Eye Facebook group recently came across Claude Goodman Johnson (1864-1926) on Wikipedia. They had read that he was born in Datchet and wondered if anyone knew where. Claude is known to the DVS as we came across him in our research into motoring in Datchet for The Ellis Journey event.

Claude's father, William Goodman Johnson, came from Bishops Stortford and his mother from Windsor. Before Claude's birth, the family was living in Windsor. Claude, their sixth child, was born in Datchet in October 1864. His sister Mildred was born here in 1867, but their eighth child, Evelyn, was born in Ealing in 1870. This location would have been more convenient for Claude's father who was working at the South Kensington Museum (now the V&A).

The family is not listed in the 1864 Post Office Directory for Datchet which suggests they moved here around the time of Claude's birth and stayed for three to six years. If we discover exactly where the family lived, we'll add it to our display at the next Ellis Journey event.

Claude started studying at the Royal College of Art but dropped out and became a clerk at the Imperial Institute in South Kensington. It was there, in 1896, that the first ever motoring exhibition was held, organised by Frederick Simms who had documented Evelyn Ellis's historic journey to Datchet the previous year. Simms was so impressed with Claude's organisational skills, he appointed him club secretary of the newly-formed Automobile Club, later the RAC.

At that time, Eleanor Velasco Thornton was working at the RAC as a secretary. She also has a Datchet connection. She became the personal assistant and lover of another motoring enthusiast, John Douglas-Scott Montagu, 2nd Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. She lived here for a while, at Garden Cottage in the grounds of Ditton House, one of Lord Montagu's family's estates.

Claude left the RAC in 1903 to join Charles Rolls' motor agency. In 1904 Charles Rolls met Henry Royce and, as they say, the rest is history. From 1906-1926, Claude was the managing director, nicknaming himself the hyphen in Rolls-Royce. He excelled at promoting vehicles and coined names for them such as the *Silver Ghost*. When Claude was looking for a suitable bonnet mascot which embodied the spirit of the Rolls-Royce brand, Lord Montagu put him in touch with sculptor Charles Sykes whom he had asked to create the mascot for his own *Silver Ghost.* Sykes had used Eleanor Velasco Thornton as his model, creating a figurine in fluttering robes with her finger to her lips, known as *The Whisper.* In 1911, Sykes created a modified version of *The Whisper* for Rolls-Royce, which became known as the *Spirit of Ecstasy*.

PLANNING

HISTORIC TREE AT RISK



Another application has been submitted to fell a magnificent Wellingtonia at the entrance to the Conservation Area on Southlea Road. It is one of a pair believed to be more than 150 years old at an unusual Italianate house built c1850 and is registered on the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Inventory. In 2019, it was one of a number of trees possibly implicated in the subsidence of a nearby structure. At that time, a temporary tree preservation order was issued. RBWM said the evidence lacked detail and appropriate remedies should be explored to allow its retention. Datchet Parish Council says the tree has outstanding amenity value owing to its size and prominence in the Conservation Area, and has objected to the recent application on the basis that alternative solutions have not been fully explored. If you would like to add your support or comment, by 23 March, visit the RBWM website, or email planning@rbwm.gov.uk, quoting application 21/00492



DATCHET DESIGN GUIDE

On 25 February, RBWM cabinet approved the adoption of the Datchet Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. Datchet's Neighbourhood Plan team was involved in the creation of this document alongside a team of professional planning consultants and RBWM planning officers. It was funded by a government Design Quality grant secured by the Borough.

The DNP team, which includes DVS committee members, was delighted that it was so positively received by the cabinet. Cllr David Coppinger said it shows what can be achieved by enthusiastic volunteers who care about their village; and Cllr David Cannon commended the volunteers and parish councillors involved, and RBWM's officers, calling it 'a fantastic document and a template for others'.

We hope the Datchet Design Guide will help to ensure that new development in Datchet, large or small, is visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, and maintains a strong sense of place.

How will the DDG affect planning for Datchet

In recent years planning guidelines have relaxed as permitted development has increased and individual householders have more opportunity to build extensions. In addition, land has been allocated near London Road to build 80 new houses. However, in Datchet Neighbourhood Plan surveys, many people have said that they like Datchet as it is and do not want to see wholesale changes to the character of the village. How can these opposing forces be reconciled? The DDG has been produced to help planners ensure that new developments do not spoil the characters of the neighbourhoods that we know and love, but blend and harmonise with them. Tastes differ and while individuals own individual properties we all own our neighbourhoods and need to protect them from poorly designed and incongruous builds.

[continued overleaf]

PLANNING







Right: Sample pages from the Datchet Design Guide

How will the DDG affect planning for Datchet *[from page 5]*

The planning consultants and DNP Steering Group examined several Datchet neighbourhoods for the features which create their particular characters, such as the age, size and design of the houses and gardens, the colours and textures of the building materials, the type of windows, paths, porches, garden boundaries, etc. They looked at the settings and layouts, the street scene, the storage of bins, and the presence of trees and grass verges. When put together, sometimes the features produced a pleasing and attractive neighbourhood. Sometimes the reverse was true. The DDG helps to define the qualities which create pleasant places to live in.

Some examples of positive features:

- A clear sense of arrival in the village centre and a distinct character.
- Distinctive architectural forms and decorative brickwork.
- Heritage buildings with features of significant design value.
- Decorative metalwork, primarily in gates and railings.
- Strong building lines and layouts creating density without cramming.
- Front-facing gables, often with decorative barge boards and finials.
- Good mix of large and small, detached, semi-detached and terraced homes creating visual variety.
- Large mature specimen trees and well-considered planting in private gardens in combination with street trees and verges.

Some examples of negative features:

- Poorly-designed contemporary commercial frontages.
- Significant visual clutter, particularly excessive signage.
- Narrow pavements and poorly-located parking areas.
- Loss of frontage enclosures (walls, railings, hedges, etc) or inclusion of high walls/fences which do not follow the prevailing pattern.
- Complete coverage of front gardens with hardscaping for parking.
- Verges and pavements used for and damaged by parking.
- Extensions which are unsympathetic to the original property.
- Bins left loose on frontages.

The DDG gives many more details on how we can keep the attractive neighbourhoods in Datchet and improve the negative features in others. For gardeners there is also advice on hedging plants, trees and garden boundaries, and how you can both enhance your property and neighbourhood and help to encourage local flora and wildlife.

The DDG will be used by RBWM's planners to guide planning decisions. If you are a householder, developer or shop owner applying for planning permission, it gives guidance on how to improve your design so that it blends with and enriches the built environment of your neighbourhood. For further details and a link to the DDG see: www.datchetneighbourhoodplan.org/datchet-design-guide.html

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A Datchet Neighbourhood Plan survey asked about Datchet's most important green spaces, and most treasured buildings and monuments. You can find the results of the survey here: And read the feedback on downsizing here.

THE MANOR HOTEL

We recently alerted members to a planning application submitted by the Manor Hotel for a change of use to a household of multiple occupancy or HMO. The application has since been withdrawn and the owners, MG Hotels, say that after the Covid crisis they will refurbish the hotel and return it to its original purpose.

DATCHET MATTERS

A new Facebook Group has been set up, originally to coordinate a response to this planning application. Datchet Matters is a page for residents to 'communicate, share ideas and provide helpful information to support solutions for issues that affect all our residents'.



BRONZE-AGE SETTLEMENT AT THE MYRKE







Top left: *General shot of excavation area, view to south.* ***Top right:*** *Water hole, post holes of an unusual rectangular building and southern ditch sequence, view to north*
Above: *Well with remains of a butchered cow*
PHOTOGRAPHS: ©OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

ORIGIN OF THE MYRKE

Until the early 20th-century, the settlement was called 'Mirk'. The name may derive from the Old English 'mearc', meaning boundary, as the settlement lies on the boundary between Upton, Eton and Datchet. A section of The Myrke, up to and including number 115, falls inside our parish boundary.

In Spring 2020, DVS contacted Berkshire Archaeology, the county archaeological advice service, to ask if anything of interest had been found in the field between the allotments and The Myrke during the preparatory work for the M4 Smart Motorway.

We were told that evidence of a late Bronze Age/Roman settlement had been found but at the time the details and images were embargoed so we were unable to share them officially. We can now tell you that Oxford Archaeology's investigations, on behalf of Highways England and Balfour Beatty Vinci JV, have demonstrated a long history of settlement in the area.

They found a series of repeatedly re-dug ditches, possibly marking a natural spring and stream running across the site from adjacent fields and settlement. The earliest ditches may date from the late second millennium BC (c1100 BC) and they may have been maintained and re-dug into the later Iron Age (c200 BC). Close to these were a number of other remains including an abandoned well with the remains of a butchered cow near the base.

The archaeologists also recorded evidence of a building, an irregular, long, narrow rectangular structure with only the holes and trenches for timber foundations surviving. It is an unusual building plan and its date remains uncertain. It could be as early as the Neolithic period or as late as the Saxon or medieval period. It is hoped that charcoal recovered from the post holes of the building will provide radiocarbon evidence to date this enigmatic structure. Oxford Archaeology will now be analysing and reporting on the results.

This latest discovery supplements the evidence of considerable activity in the later Bronze Age in this part of the Thames Valley, with farms, field systems and burial monuments recorded in many locations between Staines and Maidenhead.

It is an exciting find which, combined with the discovery of the Neolithic causewayed enclosure at Riding Court and the multi-period settlement from the Neolithic to Romano-British periods at Southlea, adds to our understanding of settlement in our area.







From top: *Monica's cousin Flight Officer Frances (Frank) Martin Connolly; Arthur Bellingham Jameson, father of Flight Sergeant Derek Bellingham Jameson, remembered in Datchet; Byeways on Castle Avenue where the Jamesons lived*

FLT/SGT DEREK BELLINGHAM JAMESON

The WWI and WWII information on the DVS website continues to attract attention. We recently had an email from Jim in Chadderton, Lancashire, asking if Flight Sergeant Derek Bellingham Jameson RAFVR, who is commemorated on Datchet's WWII memorial and at Runnymede, still had any family in the village. We put out a request for information but, sadly, didn't get any responses.

Jim's quest had started some years ago with a photograph his wife, Monica, inherited, of her cousin, Flight Officer Frances (Frank) Martin Connolly. Frank was a navigator who was killed in action before she was born. No-one in the family knew any more about the fate of the young man in the picture so Jim, who had been in the forces himself, decided to investigate. He discovered that one of Frank's fellow crew members, the pilot, was Derek Bellingham Jameson of Datchet. Jim contacted Datchet British Legion but they were unable to help further. It was only this year, during lockdown, that Jim found the DVS website and got in touch with us.

Jim was new to tracing family history so we were able to help him find census records, copies of the 1939 Register, Kelly's Local Directories, birth, marriage, death and probate records, even a photo of Derek's father, Arthur, who had died in 1916, not long after Derek's birth.

We were able to tell Jim that during WWII Derek's mother, Charlotte, was at Byeways, 3 Castle Avenue, and she lived there until her death in 1980. Derek had a sister, a nurse, Sheila Kathleen, who lived in this area until the late 1990s. Another sister, Joan, married Guy Cattell and they had three children, with two born in this area.

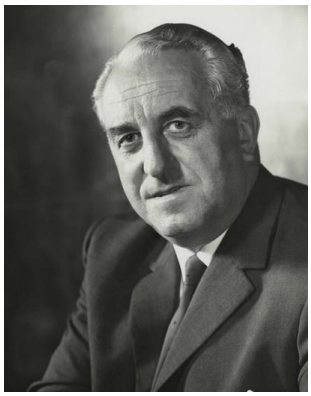
In return, Jim shared what he knew about the airmen's final flight with 'The Ton', 100 Squadron RAF. They were flying a Lancaster Bomber, serial number JB594 (one of 550 ordered from A V Roe of Chadderton, Jim's hometown). It was delivered to 100 Squadron in November 1943 and had flown a number of sorties to Berlin. On the night of the 23/24 December 1943, the crew were taking part in another operation over Berlin. Derek, at 29, was the oldest crew member; the six others, including Frank, were all aged 20-23.

We discovered that JB594 took off from RAF Grimsby and was airborne at 00.14 on Christmas Eve. It was shot down over the North Sea, 50km west of Noord-Holland province, between 6.10 and 6.40am by a night fighter pilot, Oberfeldwebel Karl-Heinz Scherfling, flying a Bf 110 G-4, Messerschmitt from Leeuwarden airfield.

Scherfling shot down 33 planes between 1941 and 1944 but was eventually shot down and killed by a British night fighter in July 1944.

Jim is investigating further, looking through documentation he has obtained from RAF Cranwell, and has promised to be in touch if he finds anything relevant to our research in Datchet. We're delighted that our emails have inspired Jim and Monica to visit Datchet when they are able, to drop by and say hello and see where Derek lived.

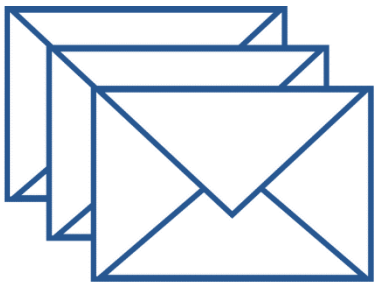
A TOP SECRET ASSIGNATION?





Datchet airmen. ***From top:*** *Group Captain (later Air Vice Marshall) Benjamin Ball of Castle View, Eton Road; Group Captain Gwilym Laugharne Sloane Griffith-Jones of Queen Anne House, Windsor Road*

An intriguing puzzle dropped into our inbox over Christmas, from Chris in Devon who is researching his late father's service with 138 Squadron.
'My father's war service is proving very confusing and mysterious,' he wrote. 'You won't find anything on the internet about him. We find ourselves trying to put a giant jigsaw together.'
Chris had come across an interview his father gave in 2005 about his wartime service: 'I had to locate a place "D on T" with some connection to King Arthur,' his father said. 'I had very little time but I got onto it very quickly and it turned out to be Datchet on the River Thames. The association with King Arthur was Guinevere, the name of a house I had to locate, and it turned out to be the old man's house. I got there about 4pm and met his wife and stayed the night. Their little boy had been making a model of a Spitfire which I helped with so I was the cat's whiskers.'
The DVS likes a good mystery and rarely shies away from a challenge. We were puzzled by the association with King Arthur as we could find no record of a house called Guinevere but we had a few pieces for the jigsaw. We were able to give Chris some potential candidates for his 'old man' from Kelly's Local Directories: Group Captain (later Air Vice Marshall) Benjamin Ball at Castle View, Eton Road; Group Captain Gwilym Laugharne Sloane Griffith-Jones at Queen Anne House, Windsor Road; Group Captain Ian Balmford Newbigging at Red House, Slough Road; Wing Commander (later Air Vice Marshall) Peter Hamilton Holmes at Sumptermead, Windsor Road; and Squadron Leader Wallis Halford DFC at Greenways, Slough Road.
Chris replied by return. 'When a pilot refers to the "old man", it is usually a reference to a Squadron Leader or Wing Commander,' he wrote, so he was going to start his research there. 'The presence of a son is another clue which may narrow it down. Although,' he added mysteriously, 'if my father was linked to 138 Squadron finding information may prove difficult.'
Curious to find out why, we consulted Google which revealed that 138 Squadron was a Special Duties Squadron, undertaking operations which fell outside normal RAF duties. In early 1940, during the Nazi occupation of much of Western Europe, the British Secret Services faced many challenges. The Special Duties Squadrons provided an effective means of infiltrating and extracting agents and supplying the growing resistance movements with arms and ammunition. Flying mainly by the light of the moon, No 138 and No 161 Special Duties Squadrons, based at RAF Tempsford, operated throughout Western Europe, delivering agents and supplies. Without the agents, the secret services would have been hamstrung and without the supplies the resistance movements would have been unable to participate in the armed struggle. By the end of the war the two Squadrons had lost in excess of 600 men.
So which, if any, of Datchet's residents was Chris's father visiting and why? If you have any suggestions, please let us know. We've asked Chris to get back in touch if he has any news and in the meantime, we're conducting our own research into these airmen as part of DVS's WWII project.



A SELECTION FROM OUR INBOX

The DVS is often the first port of call for anyone wanting to find or share information about the history of the village. During the past few months, we've received more emails than ever. Here's a couple we received recently.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL

Chris Darby, a former pupil of St Mary's, emailed to say how much he had been enjoying Janet Kennish's *Datchet History* website and asked for copies of Janet's books about St Mary's School and The Royal Stag. As often happens, we struck up a correspondence about life in Datchet and Chris sent us a couple of photos taken in the school playground, c1960, for our DVS photo archive. The three children standing together are Chris's friends, Philippa Simons (now in Canada), Duncan Bell (now living in Windsor) and Stephanie Patterson but he can't remember who the children in the other photo are or why they were moving chairs in the playground.





THE HOME FRONT

We also heard from a teacher who is home-schooling a young person during lockdown. They were working on a project about WWII, in particular the Home Front, and had details of a London firefighter, James Tindall, who was sent to Datchet during the war. They asked if DVS had any information about the village in WWII to help them build a picture of what life might have been like here. We were able to direct them to information on the DVS website about WWII: http://www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk/datchet-in-wwi/datchet-in-wwii/ and, for a first-hand account, we put them in touch with Roger Hardy who was evacuated here during WWII. Roger has written about his recollections on the DVS website and kindly gave the DVS a painting of Slough Road by Fred Avis which we hope to be able to put on display as soon as we're able to hold events again.

BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

We've also been helping with a birthday surprise. We were contacted by someone who was looking for an old photograph of a house in Datchet which her brother has moved to and is renovating. She is intending to frame it as a gift.

Datchet Village Society

ABOUT THE DVS

In 1995, the Datchet Village Society was formed to help preserve the special character of Datchet and to encourage interest in its history and environment. Our focus is primarily on Datchet but also includes its locality and historical connections. The DVS organises talks, exhibitions, guided walks and visits to places of interest for members and publishes Datchet-related books, leaflets and cards. We're the first port of call for anyone wanting to know more about their family history in Datchet, or about the history of the village generally. The Society also monitors local planning policy, conservation and development issues and is contributing to Datchet's Neighbourhood Plan. Regular updates about our work and events are posted on the DVS website. New members are always welcome.

DATCHET BOOKS & CARDS

While the shops and cafes have been closed, we've been posting out books on request or, if the address is local, we can arrange for copies to be hand-delivered. Please contact Alison for details, email alison_crampin@yahoo.co.uk

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Membership runs from April each year to March the following year. The annual membership fee is £10 per adult, and life membership is £125 per person. Junior membership remains £1.
Membership fees can be paid by bank transfer, the Sort Code is 09-01-29, Account 04339438, reference MEMBER and your surname; or by cheque payable to 'Datchet Village Society' and sent to Sandra Needham at 114 Slough Road, Datchet, SL3 9AF.
Many thanks.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Just before Christmas, we heard the sad news that Gordon Murray had died. He was a DVS member for many years and loved coming to meetings although increasing frailty in later years prevented him attending.

DVS MAIN CONTACTS

President: Janet Kennish
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Websites: www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk
www.datchethistory.org.uk

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ ABOUT?

Please tell us what you'd like to see in your DVS newsletters, especially while we're not able to organise events and visits. We're always happy to receive feedback and ideas.