

APRIL 2022

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Datchet Village Society

NEWSLETTER

Photograph: Adrian Giddins

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SAWBONES & QUACKS

Welcome to the DVS Spring Newsletter. Now that the pandemic restrictions have eased, we're putting together a programme of events for the coming year and are delighted to announce details of our 2022 AGM overleaf. The historic medical paraphernalia on display at Datchet Pharmacy set us wondering what health care was like for earlier generations in Datchet so we've booked a guest speaker from Live'n History to talk to us about it. We hope you will be able to join us and look forward to seeing you.

JUBILEE PROJECT

Were you living in Datchet at the time of the Queen's Coronation or did you participate in local celebrations for her Silver Jubilee in 1977? If so, we'd love to hear from you so we can record your memories and photos to share with present and future generations. Please email info@datchetvillagesociety.org.uk or call Alison on 01753 547090.

Please make sure your membership is up to date to continue to receive newsletters and updates about our work and invitations to DVS events

Email: info@datchetvillagesociety.org.uk

www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk



AGM & TALK: SAWBONES & QUACKS

After a short business meeting to appoint the DVS committee and review annual accounts, there will be a presentation by Steve Bacon from Live'n History entitled *'Sawbones and quacks: medical advance in the 19th century'* offering a glimpse into the world of health care experienced (or endured) by our ancestors. This will be followed by wine and nibbles.

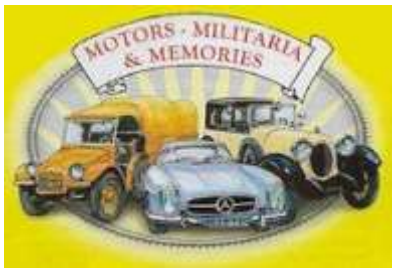
When: Wednesday 4 May 2022, 7.30pm
Where: WI Hall, The Green
Cost: Everyone welcome, no charge.
RSVP: marjorie.clasper@tiscali.co.uk, tel 01753 545110



VILLAGE WALK: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS

Members of the DVS Committee have been contributing to the Datchet Neighbourhood Plan which provides the opportunity to create a list of heritage assets of local importance, known in planning-speak as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs). Join us for a walk around The Green to find out more about these buildings and monuments, and discover why they're being proposed as NDHAs.

When: Tuesday 10 May, 10.30am
Where: Meet on Memorial Green
Cost: Free to members
To book: marjorie.clasper@tiscali.co.uk, tel 01753 545110



VISIT: HISTORY ON WHEELS

The History on Wheels Museum at Eton Wick describes itself as a unique collection of Motors, Militaria and Memories. It is a privately funded, non-profit-making, family museum, just 3.5 miles away. We are in the process of arranging a visit for DVS members. The museum has a NAAFI café for drinks and snacks afterwards.



VISIT: BATTLE OF BRITAIN BUNKER

We had to postpone our 2020 visit to the Battle of Britain Bunker in Uxbridge due to Covid but are aiming to schedule a date for later in the year.

WHERE NEXT?

If you have ideas for events, visits or guest speakers, or if there is a visit, walk, or talk that you missed and would like us to repeat, please let us know.



Right: *DVS visited Kingsmead Quarry in 2014 for a tour of the archaeological excavations with site director John Powell. The group saw at first hand the excavation of a human burial, another feature full of prehistoric worked flint, and the remains of field and enclosure ditches which were probably Bronze Age and later*

LOCAL FINDS DISPLAYED AT BRITISH MUSEUM

Many thanks to Helen Jenkins who drew our attention to the news that objects from Wessex Archaeology's dig at Kingsmead Quarry in Horton have recently been on display at the State Museum of Pre-history in Halle, Germany, and are now on loan to the British Museum for their 'World of Stonehenge' exhibition which runs until 17 July 2022. See www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/world-stonehenge.

Some of the finds recovered from the Kingsmead Quarry excavations are of national importance including the remains of four Early Neolithic (3750 BC) houses and a rare Bronze Age Beaker Burial (2300 BC). The burial was of a woman who was at least 35 years old. She was wearing a necklace of beads made from tubular sheet gold and lignate (similar to jet). Amber buttons and fasteners were also found in a row along her body, and other lignate beads suggest she may have been wearing a bracelet. A large pottery drinking vessel, or beaker, decorated with a comb-like stamp, was buried alongside her. Such prestigious materials suggest she must have been an important person in her community. The beaker and beads will all be on display at the British Museum's exhibition.

Kingsmead quarry is owned and run by Cemex which extracts sand and gravel from the site. Archaeological layers, which lie below the modern ground surface but above the natural gravel, are investigated before extraction can take place. A team from Wessex Archaeology has been investigating the site since 2003 and has already examined some 28 hectares. Further excavation is planned. Wessex Archaeology has also been excavating the Cemex site at Riding Court in Datchet where a Neolithic Causewayed Enclosure was discovered.

Click here for general information about the Wessex Archaeology excavations at Kingsmead. There is also a You Tube video here.



Above*: In Datchet Library, there's a display of finds from the excavations at Southlea DVS is liaising with Reading and Windsor Museums to request that this display is changed more frequently so other finds from the excavations can be on public view*



DATCHET FORGERIES

Ever wonder what the neighbours are up to behind closed doors?
A search through the archives of the *Illustrated London News* revealed that in Datchet in August 1865 two Frenchmen, Augustin Francois Barrel Ancenay and Adrian Nicolas, were counterfeiting money at Southlea Lodge where a printing press and other evidence of malpractice had been found. The duo were charged at Marlborough Street Police Court in London with being involved in the engraving and making of plates for the fabrication of forged Russian bank notes and having in their possession a large number of printing plates.

THE DATCHET WORKING MEN'S CLUB

Montagu House, now Datchet Library, was originally the Working Men's Club. It was built on land given by the Duke of Buccleuch in 1881, funded by public subscription, and was intended to contribute to the welfare of the working classes by providing a place where educational and improving leisure activities were available.
DVS was told about some jolly framed photographs of club members, ***below***, which are stored upstairs at the library, and we were given permission to photograph them. They seem to be of an annual WMC fancy dress event, with outfits ranging from pierrots and babies to policemen, suffragettes, and a 'Michelin Man', with a sign promising free beer at The Plough (now Tesco).

The Datchet Neighbourhood Plan is proposing that Montagu House is included in a local list of heritage assets, see: www.datchetneighbourhoodplan.org/local-list---non-designated-heritage-assets.html







Lt Richard Nugent of the Scots Guards

SHARING RESEARCH

We regularly receive emails about our research into Datchet's WWI soldiers. Late last year, we were contacted by the branch secretary/vice-president of the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Branch of the Scots Guards Association which meets each month in Datchet. He had read the history of Lieutenant Leslie (Richard) Nugent of the Scots Guards on our website and asked for permission to reprint it in their members' newsletter and share it with their Regimental Historical Committee and the Scots Guards Memorial Project.
We had discovered that Lt Nugent, who lived in The Avenue, was reported missing in action then, erroneously, reported wounded and a prisoner. His sister searched tirelessly for more information and followed up every clue. Eventually she had to conclude that her brother had been shot dead but there is remarkable evidence, detailed on our website, that Lt Nugent was buried by German soldiers during a Christmas Truce in December 1914. We were also fortunate enough to track down a descendant of the family who shared photographs and information with us.
Following on from this request, Major Randall Nicol, author of '*Till the Trumpet Sounds Again Volume 1: The Scots Guards 1914-19 in Their Own Words*', sent us more information about the circumstances surrounding Richard's death which we will add to the DVS website.

WEDDING MEMORABILIA

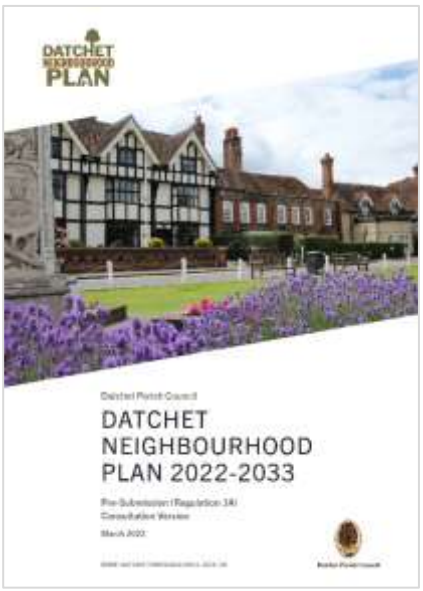
An unusual message arrived from someone who Googled 'John Christie Adam' and discovered our WWI research on his brother, Robert Adam. Some years earlier, the sender had purchased a 1918 wedding dress and waistcoat at auction with associated documents and photographs of the groom, John Christie Adam of Lambourn Woodlands, and his bride, Florence Herbert of Kingston Lisle.
'The time has come for them to have a new owner,' she wrote. She had read that we were in touch with a family member and wondered if they might be interested in these items. We have put them in touch with one another.

FAMILY TIES

Recently we heard from someone who was fascinated by our research on his ancestor Frederick Keeley. 'My great grandfather, John Keeley (1874-1958) of Medmenham, near Marlow, was Frederick's uncle', he wrote. Coincidentally, DVS had previously been contacted by a descendant of Frederick's sister who sent photographs of Frederick as a child, ***left***. Although our correspondents were distantly related, they were not aware of each other, so we put them in touch and have asked them to let us know if they make any new discoveries.



Frederick with his parents, Leonard and Alice





DATCHET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION OPENS

The Datchet Neighbourhood Plan team, which includes DVS committee members, has been working with local people to create a set of planning policies for Datchet which address the issues residents have raised. The draft Plan has now been published for the Regulation 14 public consultation which runs for eight weeks.

WHERE TO SEE THE PLAN

You can view the Plan during normal opening hours at Datchet Parish Council Office, Datchet Library and The Bridge café, and online at **www.datchetneighbourhoodplan.org** and **www.datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk**

Or go along to a drop-in session. The remaining sessions take place on:

- Wednesday 20 April, 12-3pm, The Bridge café
- Thursday 28 April, 7-7.40pm on Zoom

(email datchetnp@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk for a link)

The DNP team will also be presenting details of the plan at Datchet Parish Council's **Annual Parish Meeting** at 7pm on Monday 25 April. All are welcome.

HAVE YOUR SAY!

Don't miss your opportunity to comment on the Plan and help to shape future development in Datchet.

Comments must be in writing. You can pick up a response form at the Library, The Bridge or the Parish Council Office, or complete it online, see the websites above for details. Alternatively, you can send a letter with your comments c/o the Parish Council office (1 Allen Way, Datchet SL3 9HR) or an email to datchetnp@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk, stating clearly which chapter, paragraph and policy your comments relate to.

All comments must be received by midnight Sunday 15 May 2022

AFTER THE REG 14 CONSULTATION

All comments will be reviewed and a revised version of the Plan will be submitted to RBWM. In due course, there will be another consultation (known as Regulation 16) to help determine whether the Plan meets the 'basic conditions' with regard to legal requirements, national and local policy, sustainable development, etc. The Plan will then be sent for independent examination before a village-wide referendum is held where you can vote on whether you would like it to be used to help determine planning applications in our area.

TREES IN DATCHET



FOUR OAKS ON THE GREEN

The first Jubilee oak, on Jubilee Green, was transplanted from Ditton Manor in 1887 and planted by schoolchildren. It commemorates Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. (The Jubilee Cross commemorates her Diamond Jubilee in 1897.) Another oak was planted on North Green to celebrate Datchet winning Berkshire's Best Kept Village in 1983. In 2012, the second Jubilee oak, ***below****, was planted on Gossip Green by schoolchildren to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee. Benches on Jubilee Green and Gossip Green commemorate her Golden and Diamond Jubilees. A third Jubilee oak for the Platinum Jubilee was planted in February 2022,* ***top****.*







CHANGING THE HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE GREEN

In October 2021, the Parish Council proposed to discuss at a future meeting the location of a commemorative tree for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. It was planted, without ceremony or notice, on Memorial Green on 4 February 2022, in front of the listed Manor Houses, midway between the Grade II listed War Memorial and the flagpole. The DVS committee contacted Datchet Parish Council to respectfully ask them to reconsider the location. While there is no objection to planting trees in principle and marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee is welcomed, locating a third Jubilee Oak, in the centre of the largest section of this open space will change the character of The Green for future generations.

Historically, the centre has been open, from when a stream ran through the village, to the creation of the greens in the 1830s, to the present day. As the tree grows, it will obscure one of the most iconic, historic views in the village, across The Green to the Manor Houses. (See mock-up, ***top***.)

The Datchet Conservation Area Statement (a planning document which is intended to conserve the character and appearance of those aspects which define Datchet's special architectural and historic interest, including landscape and public spaces) supports this viewpoint.

It states that The Green is the most important focus in Datchet and emphasises the importance of retaining the character of this open space with its wide, open views. This document was not consulted.

On a practical level, Memorial Green is the location for village ceremonies and entertainments so there may be implications for events. As it grows, the oak will overshadow the listed war memorial; potentially its roots could cause issues to its foundations; and the flagpole will need to be repositioned. The condition of the grass may also be affected as the tree absorbs moisture from the soil and reduces the amount of sunlight. The tree is located about 3m north of the Barrel Arch drainage culvert which has already been damaged by the roots of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Oak. (We have been told that RBWM has set aside £200,000 to repair this culvert.)

Please note, the DVS does not claim to speak on behalf of its members, (except in instances where we have canvassed your views). Our role is to draw to your attention any planning matters which affect the character and appearance of Datchet. You may, or may not, approve of the tree's location. If you wish your views to be taken into account, please address them to DPC, c/o The Clerk, Datchet Parish Council, 1 Allen Way, Datchet SL3 9HR, email clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk



MILESTONE PLAQUE

For several years, DVS has been working with Datchet Parish Council to protect the milestone. In 2021 it was moved to a safe space at the edge of The Green and DVS has offered to commission a pavement plaque to mark its original site in London Road.

We had hoped to have some positive news to report but, unfortunately, progress has stalled while the question of liability insurance is clarified between RBWM and DPC. Once this is resolved, the plaque will be made (by the same company which made the pavement plaques in Eton) and tested for 'slipping', and it has to be approved by RBWM Conservation, Highways, Borough Councillors, *et al*, before being installed by an approved contractor. We'll keep you posted.



CEMETERY CHAPEL

For more than two years, there has been a warning notice and plastic fencing around the front of the Grade II-listed Cemetery Chapel in Ditton Road. The notice warns of the danger of falling masonry from the front gable. We understand that the Parish Council has consulted Andy Chalk, the stonemason, who has been very busy with other restoration work. We hope this will be repaired soon.

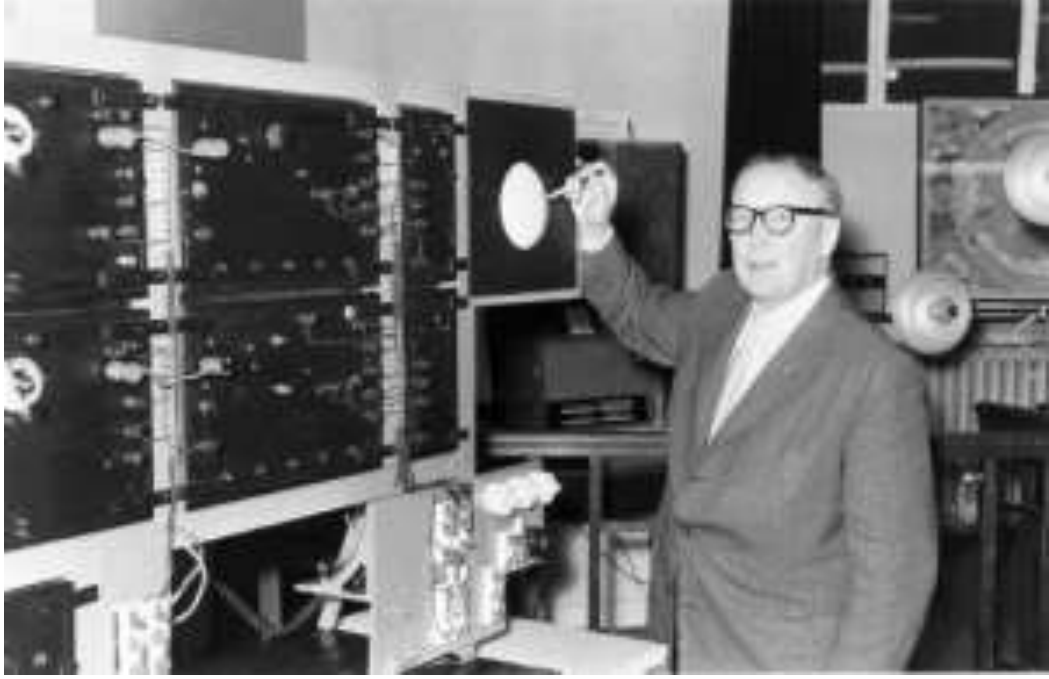


JUBILEE CROSS

The Jubilee Cross, erected for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, is proposed for designation as a local heritage asset in the Datchet Neighbourhood Plan. You can read more about its history on the Datchet Neighbourhood Plan website. The Parish Council is planning to add a fifth plaque this summer to commemorate our Queen's Platinum Jubilee and it is hoped that the monument might be cleaned by stonemason Andy Chalk in time for the celebrations.

For Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, village schoolchildren were presented with a Jubilee Commemoration Medal.

DVS tracked down and purchased one of these in 2017, see www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk/jubilee-commemoration-medal/



Right: *Robert Watson-Watt at the installation of his equipment at the Science Museum*

Newspaper articles
The Royal Borough Observer invited DVS to submit articles to its Nostalgia column. Here's a recent article, an edited extract from The Link Collection *by Janet Kennish*

LEADING THE WAY

Cutting-edge radio and space research at Ditton Park

The modern office blocks of Botanica (formerly Computer Associates) now stand on the site of the old Radio Research Station (RRS) at Ditton Park in Datchet. The Station, a government-run civilian organisation, was located there in 1920 because its Board's first chairman was Sir Henry Jackson, Admiral of the Fleet, and the Admiralty Compass Observatory was already established at Ditton House and Park.

During the 1920s, Edward Appleton and Robert Watson-Watt led research into the Earth's upper atmosphere. Using a transmitter in Windsor Great Park to send radio waves to Ditton, they proved the existence of radio-wave reflecting layers at a height of about 100kms which they referred to as the 'ionosphere'. This was the beginning of a scientifically-important series of ionospheric frequency measurements. Understanding of these phenomena also improved radio direction-finding, navigation aids and locating of thunderstorms.

Watson-Watt is particularly remembered for the wartime development of radar. In 1935 he had been approached by the Air Ministry which had the impractical notion that a 'death-ray' might be invented to disable pilots in enemy planes. Watson-Watt replied that 'attention is being turned to the still difficult but less unpromising problem of radio detection'. His memorandum titled *Detection and Location of Aircraft by Radio Methods* has been described as one of the most prophetic scientific documents ever produced. It suggested using reflected radio energy and proposed the use of rotating beams to show range and direction on a cathode-ray oscilloscope.

He proved his theory near Daventry, when apparatus from Ditton transmitted a beam which 'illuminated' the presence of an aircraft passing through it. (In 1958, the apparatus was rescued from a store hut in Ditton Park and presented to the Science Museum.)

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Right: *Appleton Laboratory Ditton Park, 1978*



Above: *A Datchet Village Society visit to Ditton House and Park, 2015*

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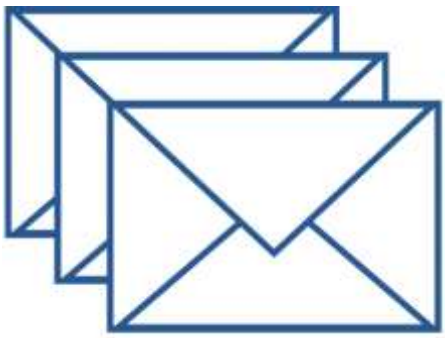
A strict security blanket was immediately imposed and several Ditton staff were moved to Bawdsey on the Suffolk coast where they formed the nucleus of what became the vast complex of Britain's wartime radar system. This was, of course, a decisive factor in the eventual defeat of the Luftwaffe.

During the International Geophysical Year of 1957, the RRS was one of four World Data Centres for the collection and exchange of ionospheric information. In the same year the first artificial satellite, Sputnik One, began to orbit Earth and provided a new tool for investigating the upper atmosphere.

From this time on, the Station's work was largely bound up with space science and although rockets were not launched from Ditton Park, many of the scientific experiments they carried were developed and controlled from there. The Station gained international recognition for its expertise in data observation, prediction and calculation.

In 1973 the RRS was renamed Appleton Laboratory and its major function was to support the growing British space programme. Investigations included the measurement of the Sun's corona and the Northern Lights. A few years later, the Ditton facilities and many of its staff were merged with the larger Rutherford Laboratory at Chilton, Oxfordshire, where technical resources were greater. This move was completed in 1981.

With thanks to the late Professor Henry Rishbeth, a former Deputy Director of the RSS, on whose talk to Datchet Village Society this article was based; and the Ditton Park Archive at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory.



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. A steady flow of enquiries keeps us busy making new discoveries to share.

HISTORY OF WESTFIELDS

We received an enquiry from the new owners of Westfields in Eton Road who are keen to find out more about its history. We were able to tell them that their new home was built around the turn of the century. The 1901 census shows Charles Norman Lacy living there with his wife, daughters and servants. He was a director of Barclays Bank. (The Lacy family had previously lived at Hambro Lodge, 141 Slough Road, which we discovered when we investigated the history of that house.)

By the following decade, the Lacys had moved on and the Rt. Hon. Sir Hercules Arthur Temple Robinson (1866-1933), 2nd Baron Rosmead, from Rosmead, County Westmeath, was living at Westfields with his wife Editha Louisa. Their son, Hercules, schooled at Eton, was working as a rancher in Canada. At the outbreak of war, he enlisted in the Alberta contingent. Hercules was fatally wounded at the Battle of Loos and is remembered on Datchet's war memorial. Their daughter, Norah, worked close to the front line as an orderly at the Abbaye de Royaumont British voluntary hospital, north of Paris. There's more information about both Hercules and Norah on the DVS website.

As renovation work continues, the house is revealing its history to its new owners, including the identities of the wallpaper hangers who signed and dated the walls before papering. The owners are very keen to find old photographs of the house so we suggested they try the Buckinghamshire Records Office or even RIBA's (Royal Institute of British Architects) archive.



*Westfields, **above**, may take its name from the historic West Field shown on the 1833 Enclosure map, **below***





WANTED. Good Donkey, Harness and Governess Cart. Apply by letter to L., Westfields, Datchet.

Local press archives are often a good source of information. The Lacys placed numerous adverts in the Slough, Eton & Windsor Observer, *including one for a donkey and cart for their children's governess*

SHACKLETON EXPEDITION

Recently the search for Ernest Shackleton's ship, *Endurance*, was in the news. Coincidentally Norah Robinson, who lived at Westfields, married John Lachlan Cope who was part of Shackleton's 1914-1917 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. The expedition required two ships, *Endurance* and *Aurora*, and Norah's husband, a biologist and medical officer, had sailed aboard *Aurora*. The couple married at St Mary's Church in Datchet and held their reception at Westfields.



Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

The Endurance in Antarctica

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.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ ABOUT?

Please tell us what you'd like to see in your DVS newsletters. We're always happy to receive feedback and ideas

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE

If you would like to continue to receive newsletters and invitations to DVS events, please make sure your membership is up to date. If you are unsure, you can contact Sandra Needham, details below.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Please note that membership runs from 1 April each year to 31 March the following year. The annual membership fee remains £10 per adult. Junior membership is £1.

How to pay

Bank transfer: Membership fees can be paid by bank transfer, Sort Code 09-01-29, Account 04339438, reference MEMBER and your surname.

By cheque: These should be made payable to 'Datchet Village Society' and sent to Sandra Needham, 114 Slough Road, Datchet, SL3 9AF.

You may also pay in person at the AGM on 4 May (see page 2).

If you have any queries, please call Sandra on 07721 667078.

MEMBERS' NEWS

We have received the very sad news that Matthew Jarvis and Valerie Butler passed away recently. Glyn Jenkins, a long-standing supporter of the DVS, also passed away on New Year's Day. All of them will be greatly missed. We send our condolences to their family and friends.

DVS MAIN CONTACTS

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Secretary: Marjorie Clasper
Tel 01753 545110, email marjorie.clasper@tiscali.co.uk
Websites: www.datchetvillagesociety.org.uk
www.datchethistory.org.uk

Current committee: President, Janet Kennish; Acting chair/sales and marketing, Alison Crampin; Treasurer, Adrian Needham; Secretary, Marjorie Clasper; Membership Secretary, Sandra Needham; Photography and Archive, Adrian Giddins; Committee Members, Glenda Croft, Lesley Giddins.