

"Some sort of periodical is an essential life-line in a village such as ours"

No 15 June 1976

With Special Footpaths Supplement

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- Saturday June 5th: The marriage of Mr Geoffrey Martin, of Warnham Cottages, to Miss Sheila Hooper, of Maidstone. 3.0pm
Cricket on the home ground against East Sutton 2.30
- Monday June 7th: Meeting of the Parish Council, 8.0pm. It makes history before it starts as being the first to be held in the church. Parishioners are entitled to sit in, but not to take part, and Councillors will be present half-an-hour before the meeting for consultation.
- Saturday June 19th: West Farleigh cricketers at home to Clarion Sports, 2.30
- Monday June 21st: Meeting of The Ladies Club at The Good Intent, 8.0pm. Mr T H Medhurst, of Maidstone, will be talking on "Making Wine at Home". Open to anyone who is interested.

END OF AN ERA ON THE GREEN

The happening which can affect the lives of more people in a village than any other is a change of ownership at its post office and stores. And now this has happened to West Farleigh. Mr & Mrs Baines, after eight years of happy collaboration in the lilliputian one-and-only shop in our parish, have made their exit from behind the counter in favour of the contrasting peace of Dove's Cottage. Their always-cheerful administration to the daily wants of the village will long be gratefully remembered; their capacity for finding the smallest item on shelves packed to capacity will remain a marvel. Now, into the retail hubbub of The Green come Mr and Mrs Richard Davison and their two children from Hayes, Kent. With our welcome should go no hasty resolve to change our shopping habits. Any conclusion within six months that we are winners or losers would be premature and unfair. Good luck Mr Baines! Good luck Mr Davison!

FARLEIGH AND ITS FOOTPATHS

Nothing published in Life-Line has aroused greater interest, both in the parish and beyond, than the references in the last two issues to West Farleigh footpaths. This month a Footpaths Supplement avoids the crowding out of other news. But recognition should be made here to the work of Miss Coralie Smith in promoting public interest - and this at a time when she has exams just ahead.

NEWS ABOUT PEOPLE

There will be many get-well-soon thoughts directed to Mrs Norman, who has undergone a major operation in a Guildford nursing home. Latest news tells of good progress. Evidence that something was seriously wrong came when she collapsed while away from West Farleigh Hall on holiday.

Evidence that something was seriously wrong came, too, to 'Bill' Philpott in the churchyard, when his mower jammed to a standstill with a resounding clatter. The cause: a one-inch marble. The encounter made little impression on the marble, but the damage to the church accounts is estimated at £10-£15.

Pain and suffering continue to haunt Mrs F T Hunter. Almost immediately after her arrival with her husband at their new home on Jersey she was again admitted to hospital with more trouble arising from her broken hip. Her many friends here will feel she was deserving of a better start to a new life under Channel Island skies reputed for happy living.

Changes in West Farleigh's population proceed apace. Mr & Mrs T H Ralph have left St Helens Lane to make a new home at Colliers Green, Goudhurst, and this month sees the departure of Mr & Mrs Michael Payne after 13 years at Green-oaks, of Major and Mrs Jourdier from Elmscroft, and of Lt-Col Kennedy DSO OBE from Elmscroft Annexe.

On the day of the Martin-Hooper wedding (June 5), Mr and Mrs E P Day will be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of their marriage in the same church. Tutsham workers have asked for their congratulations and good wishes to be conveyed by Life-Line.

NEWS ABOUT PEOPLE (contd)

Sympathy for the Philpott family following the death at the age of 86 of Frederick William Philpott was tempered with thanksgiving for merciful release. For his closing months he had been an invalid, having preferred to let nature run her course rather than submit to surgery. Born on Tutsham, and once a Tutsham worker, all his life was spent in and around West Farleigh.

Mrs F S Hooker of 'Lindos', St Helens Lane, wants to know: Are there any women between the ages of 16 and 65 who would be interested in keeping fit to music on a weekly or fortnightly basis? If so, she would be pleased to hear from them on Maidstone 27574.

Lynne Putman has succeeded Mrs Ralph as Life-Line distributor in the St Helens Lane area, and Mrs Morgan at Burnea has undertaken to handle the copies that were the responsibility of Mrs Hunter.

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL

Coming events cast their shadows before, and Miss Wakefield announces the following for sale: Two 10cwt concrete coal bunkers, £6 each; About a dozen Dunlop stair treads, £3.50; Parker Knoll fireside chair, £3; Four dining chairs, £2 each or £6 the set; Indian carpet, approx 9' x 9', £5. Tel 812315

NEWS FROM THE CRICKET FIELD

West Farleigh have started their cricket season disastrously. Out of the Haig, and without a Saturday win to their credit, the cricketers need to emulate their fellow footballers, who made an equally poor start, only to enjoy a successful 1975-76 season. The first day of May saw Farleigh making a fruitless journey to Marden. A win on the following day in the Haig at High Haldon brightened spirits, but on the ensuing Saturday against APM we were dismissed for 93 - never enough. Then the David Clark Cup loomed up, and we scraped a win against Leybourne. A Saturday draw with Northiam strengthened Farleigh's morale for the second Haig game against a very strong Wye side. Put into to bat, we could never contain the Wye attack, and were all out for 63. Wye scored the runs without much trouble, and so ended the disastrous four weeks. K J B

FIVE YEARS AGO - FANCY THAT!

"It took no more than five minutes for the auction hammer to knock West Farleigh Vicarage out of ecclesiastic existence. After the auctioneer's recital of the attractions of this 'spacious Victorian residence', the actual sale began at ten-past-three. By three-fifteen the Church Establishment stood to be £16,300 the richer, West Farleigh was the poorer for the snapping of a link with many happy associations, and forty spectators were none the wiser as to the purchaser's identity". - From the Parish Magazine of June 1971.

LIFE-LINE'S THOUGHT-LINE FOR THE MONTH

Man is shaped by circumstances, and it is he himself who causes them.

- Selvarajan Yesudian

IN CHURCH THIS MONTH

June 6th: Whit Sunday: 8.00am Holy Communion 10.30 Family Service

June 13th: Trinity Sunday: 11.00 Matins 6.30 Trinity Festival of Nine Lessons and Hymns in Teston Church

June 20th: 8.00 Holy Communion 11.00 Matins

June 27th: 11.00 Matins 6.30 Sung Holy Communion

Such was the success of the Ecumenical Service held in April that the Vicar proposes another for the end of October or early November. Although in the opinion of some who attended the first experiment, the Baptist preacher's address was too long by half, his imaginative treatment of the Bible story of Jesus and the colt claimed their attention from start to finish.

Church flowers: June 5th Mrs Jourdier; 12th Mrs Morgan; 19th Mrs Forrest, 26th Miss Wakefield.

Church cleaning: Week of 31st May and 7th June, Mrs Morgan; 14th Mrs Forrest; 21st and 28th Miss Wakefield.

LATE NEWS - At the final meeting of the School Managers before the School closes in July, Miss Wakefield was presented with a bouquet in appreciation of her 21 years as Headmistress. Special end-of-the-school issue next month.

Deadline date for contributions to the July issue: June 19th. Phone 812730

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THE WALK AND THE WAY IT WENT

Forty-three people and six dogs took part in the Footpath Preservation Walk at the end of April, writes Coralie Smith, and it was a great success. In all they walked about eight miles, omitting the path through Ewell Manor. When we entered upon Mr Goodwin's land he was kind enough to meet us, bid us cheerful welcome and escort us on our way.

We checked our route for need of repair and restoration, and a footpaths log book has been instituted so that people can sign against those they have walked. This will ensure that the paths are walked at least annually.

The Footpaths Officer for Maidstone Borough Council will be present in the church at 7.30 on Monday June 7th, half-an-hour before the Parish Council Meeting, to answer questions or tender advice.

LETTERS FROM THE FOOTPATH MAIL

From the Secretary Yalding and Nettleshead Protection Society: 17th May:
I enclose a letter to Life-Line from my colleague John Telling in reply to Mrs Cornwallis' letter.

The Yalding & Nettleshead Protection Society is a conservation and amenity group; one of the main interests of the Society is in public rights of way. For the past two years we have been active erecting stiles and sleeper bridges and clearing paths in the parishes of Yalding, Nettleshead and Hunton. This spring, in conjunction with Mr Dwight, Maidstone Borough's Footpaths Officer, we have been erecting signstones where footpaths leave tarred roads and also waymarking routes which are difficult to find. We were pleased to hear of the interest being taken in footpaths in West Farleigh.

If needed, members of the Protection Society would be very willing to lend a hand in the signstoning of paths in West Farleigh. In fact, the obstruction on FP30, the Ewell Manor path which Mrs Cornwallis mentioned, is actually in the Parish of Yalding - the barbed wire fence across the path at Smiths Hill. We have a number of members in Toston who are particularly interested in the paths in West Farleigh, and we have one member in West Farleigh itself!

There are plans afoot to start a Rights of Way Group covering the whole of the Maidstone Borough with the aim of supplying voluntary labour and advice to interested people in all the parishes. The intention is to produce ultimately an unobstructed network of readily identifiable paths throughout the district.

If we can be of help don't hesitate to ask us.

Yours sincerely, Anthony Fincham
Lees Lodge, Yalding

From Mr John E Telling: 14 Mount Avenue, Yalding: 16th May

I sympathise entirely with Mrs Jean Cornwallis over the damage to her land by vandals. However, in my experience this is most unlikely to have been caused by footpath walkers. They are just not that sort of person. People who use footpaths do so because they enjoy and value the countryside. They are the sort of people who check twice to see that gates are closed; who get annoyed when they see ponds used as dumps for farmers' rubbish, or poisoned birds lying around dead. The vandals Mrs Cornwallis suffers from will trespass whether or not footpaths exist.

The path Mrs Cornwallis refers to in her letter is, I believe, No 30 on the Maidstone Borough Council's Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way. Mrs Cornwallis is under a common misconception in thinking that she can close the path by proclamation. She would, in law, be committing an offence by obstructing it.

Admittedly the footpath network evolved partly from local access routes. But it is now the public's only protected means of access to the countryside. The "footpath" is my Sunday evening walk: it is also Mrs Cornwallis' week-end walk on the South Downs, or holiday walk along the Cornish coast.

Mrs Cornwallis may not be aware that the Borough will assist with the maintenance of certain paths. It may also not have occurred to her that if

the path is properly signstoned and waynamed, she is on much firmer ground in taking action against trespassers.

Yours faithfully, John E Telling

PATHWAY TO A HAPPY ENDING

Life-Line's intention to publish in its May issue Mrs Cornwallis' letter airing her views on the Swell Manor footpath was made known to her in a letter dated April 23. Six days later came a second letter from her, stating she had received "a very nice letter from a Miss C A Smith, of 7 Charlton Lane", and suggesting we should publish instead a revised text, from which we here quote:-

"She (Mrs Cornwallis) stresses that the inhabitants of West Farleigh are more than welcome to use the path, and that she feels she can rely on them to respect her property. It appears to be people from elsewhere who do not apparently have the same regard for the countryside. A new stile on Smiths Hill will now be erected as soon as the work can be done".
(The underlining is ours - Ed)

It is unfortunate the May Life-Line had gone to press when this good news came to hand, but the welcome West Farleigh will accord it will be none the less warm, and Life-Line is only too happy to report a happy ending

An information sheet from the Yalding and Nettlestead Protection Society says the Society was formed in 1974 because it was felt "it was time to stand up and do something before the bulldozer, the chainsaw, the heavy lorry, poison, brick and tar-macadam destroyed the few fragments of natural beauty remaining around us". Since then they have cleared sixteen obstructed footpaths and planted over 200 trees. They raise the money they need by collecting waste paper. They collect milk bottle tops, too, - for Guide Dogs for the Blind.