

MEMORIES
A VILLAGE REMEMBERED

THE
ASHTEAD
RESIDENTS'
ASSOCIATION
1996

(Although prepared for publication this document was never actually published)

THE ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1945 – 1995

MEMORIES
OF A
VILLAGE

A compilation of memories to commemorate the Jubilee of the Association

The compilers wish to thank all those who took the trouble at the end of 1994 and early 1995 to put onto paper their memories of Ashtead. We hope that as a result the present generation will understand why so many have sought to keep Ashtead the special place that it is.

ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The following article was published in *The Ashtead Resident* in December 1966, to mark the 21st birthday of the Association. It was written from notes sent by Mr Baker, a founder member of the Association, Hon. Treasurer and Road Steward for many years, who retired to live at Findon near Worthing the previous year.

“On this 21st Birthday of the Ashtead Residents' Association, members who have joined since November 1945 may like to know how it all began.

It was the idea of 22 local residents who were very much alarmed by the rapid development of Ashtead, which at that time was showing clear signs of becoming extensive after the lull of the war years. The demand for new houses was understandably very heavy. Proposals were submitted in increasing numbers for new streets of many houses, the wholesale felling of trees to make way for the new development and the loss of many hitherto open spaces, such as Ashtead Park, where the building of houses was envisaged.

It was feared that development would soon become excessive so that all the rural character of Ashtead would be lost forever. Indeed, there was a measure of local opinion that considered it desirable to cover the district with houses, so that Ashtead would become part of London and the Green Belt should start beyond Dorking.

There were other domestic issues affecting the well-being of the district, and it was decided to call a public meeting to ascertain the feeling of residents about forming an Association to preserve as far as possible, existing amenities and look after their interests.

Mr Barry Applebee, the well known cartoonist, produced an eye-catching poster depicting a family staring in amazement at a notice board erected on an open space intimating that housing development was to take place there.

The first open meeting, held at the Peace Memorial Hall in November 1945, attracted an overflow audience who unanimously and enthusiastically agreed that there was a need for a strong Association. Since all present were residents it was decided that the name should be the “Ashtead Residents' Association” rather than “Ratepayers Association”.

A caretaker committee was elected from the body of the hall and also road stewards who undertook to distribute to all residents a letter setting out the aims and objectives of the Association, and including a form of application for membership.

The result was overwhelming and by December 1946, over 1,000 residents had applied for, and become members; this figure progressively increased year by year and now stands at well over 2,000.

During the first very busy year, Sub-committees were formed, including Publicity, Education and Social. Among the many successes achieved early in our history, was the obtaining of an increased representation on the Leatherhead Urban District Council by two "additional" Councillors, Messrs Fuller Clark and Stanley Sulston, both of whom subsequently became Chairman of the Council.

These two members stood as "Independents" and their undoubted success in this capacity confirmed the Association in its decision to resist the intrusion of party politics in our local Government, and to support candidates for the local Council who accepted this, and the other objectives of the Association.

Another matter of very active concern to the newly formed Association was to obtain from British Railways, the right of residents to use the cattle crossing between Overdale and St. Stephens Avenue. It is difficult to realise the amount of correspondence this, and other similar negotiations, entailed.

On the social side, it was felt that the Association should organise opportunities for members to meet together, and a very successful Gramophone Society, Discussion Group and Table Tennis Club gave a great deal of enjoyment to many for several years.

Also a long series of Whist Drives and Dances were organised by the Association, and the profits made were used to provide Christmas Parties or visits to a pantomime for the children. Later these functions provided funds for Christmas parcels to many elderly and needy in the District.

From the lengthy and impressive list of successes obtained by the Association for the well being of Ashted during the past 21 years, all members must surely agree that the decision taken at the meeting in November 1945 has been abundantly justified. The aim of the next 21 years must be an even stronger and livelier Association working with the whole-hearted support of every member to maintain and improve all that is worthwhile in our District."

And now 50 years have passed and the Association continues in the same vein. Spare a few moments to recall what some would call better days.....

Arthur Cotton Writes:

I remember when there was no bank in Ashtead. Once a week a cashier from the Westminster Bank at Epsom, carrying a substantial leather bag containing the cash, would be driven over from Epsom in a horse drawn trap. (There was no need for a security guard). He had the use of a room in one of the shops in The Street, near the corner of Grove Road, and would stay there for a few hours to transact business and would then be driven back to Epsom. This was about 1912 and, on occasions, as a small boy I was allowed to drive with him—much to my joy. Approximately opposite that shop was "The Limes", a house occupied by the Misses Heida and Norma Sayer and their brother Bruce. Their father, George, had the brewery at the corner of Woodfield Lane and also ran the Brewery Inn. A rival brewery was The Swan at Leatherhead and their beer was delivered in wooden barrels to houses in Ashtead. The drayman was a good testimonial to his employer's wares!

Also, as a small boy I remember tobogganing with elder relatives on frosty moonlight nights down the hill from Epsom Common towards Ashtead. This was quite safe as there was very little traffic and it was a popular activity. Although I then lived in Epsom I have happy memories of the delightful rural village of Ashtead in those days.

When I was a youth the factory building at the junction of West Hill and Greville Park Road, now the site of Lime Tree Court was used for the manufacture of Stanley steam cars and subsequently became the works of Ashtead Potters. As a young man I helped my father and Anthony Lowther in excavating the Roman Villa on the Common, camping near the site.

Marion Nelson Writes:

The house in Woodfield Lane where Moat Court now stands which was a school (I don't recall the name but they wore a grey uniform with red braiding) and the dentist's surgery just before the service road in Woodfield Lane.

The cafe in Craddocks Parade (where Flair is now?) and the wet-fish shop next door.

Frewins, where the Mogul Dynasty is, and a butchers next door. Mr Moat, the chemist, next door again. Then Henrys, toyshop and newsagents, and the Post Office.

When Richard had his hairdressers, instead of Craddocks Antiques. A greengrocers in the "new" parade (where Garlands is?) and Edmunds Butchers (still same shop) with Mr Edmunds in his straw boater.

Budgens supermarket, before it became the Village Store, and the dry cleaners next door.

The wonderful smell of fresh bread from Pauls, the bakers on the corner site opposite where Ashtead Television now is and the thrill of getting there just before 11.00 to get a warm loaf from their latest batch.

Bob, the porter on Ashtead station. The second footbridge, linking both the platforms and also the common with Woodfield Road.

Astridges, ironmongers, first in the main village, then where Superfish now stands (formerly Haynes, furnishers). Their orange removal vans were also a common sight.

Venus & Spong, former owners of the electrical shop next to the alleyway from the car park in the village.

A grocers shop in Barnett Wood Lane (now occupied by the butchers and Unwin) which used to deliver! This was in addition to Goldings, now an office suppliers. And, of course, SAGSA days at Murrays Court before it was redeveloped.

B N Angus Writes:

I remember when I was taken by train to Ashtead in the 1920's.

The area near the station was used as a picnic attraction and where we now have an engineering company there was a cafe serving teas and cakes.

On the common side there were no houses between the station and Epsom. This area was often under water in the winter.

Cliff Connick Writes:

I remember the early 1930's when I used to cycle from my home in Croydon to visit a school friend. He lived in a flat over the shop in The Street that is now Ashtead Post Office — I don't know what the shop was called then.

A craze at that time was to collect car registration numbers and my friend and I used to copy down the numbers of the few passing vehicles — either from the balcony over the shop — or sitting on the curbside in The Street. Also, I went swimming in the pond in the garden of The Floral Bungalow in The Chase.

However, I regret to say that my most abiding memory of the time is of scrumping apples from the garden of a house in Park Lane! Now in to my seventies I sometimes complain about “the youth of to-day” — I wonder if we were any better?

Gwen Gale Writes:

One of my vivid memories of wartime Ashtead is of the “Pig Club”.

This was run by the residents of Overdale, to provide extra food and thereby help the war effort. The pig was housed in a pen on a spare plot of land in Overdale.

It was fed on swill made from left over food scraps provided by Members of the club. My brother and I regularly carried buckets of scraps to the site and always stopped to stroke the pig.

I was very upset when the time came for it to be killed and joints of meat distributed to members. When my portion of roast pork was placed before me I burst into tears and left the table, much to my mother's annoyance.

Meredith Worsfold Writes:

I remember the Annual Sunday-School Outing to the seaside, usually Bognor or Littlehampton. The early trips were by char-a-banc and for many of us the only opportunity to experience the thrill of the sea until the same event next year. Then came the year in the early thirties when the Ashtead churches joined forces to hire a special train. On that day streams of people were seen converging from all directions towards Ashtead Station. There was great excitement when the children realised that the train was new Southern Railway stock and made up with corridor coaches, and provided the great adventure of moving through the corridor connection from one carriage to the next whilst the train was moving. In-train toilets were an innovation too.

Then with buckets and spades by the quickest route to the beach. A large embroidered banner stabilised in the sand provided territorial rights, a focal point and an assembly point for tea-time when it came. The resorts were well organised in those days to cater for hundreds of children at the same time for a quick tea. Back to the station, after a last while at the sea, then home. Coloured streamers flowing from the carriage windows for the length of the train. At last, Ashtead Station where Mums and Dads welcomed their tired and happy children at the end of a wonderful day.

Peggy Sime Writes:

My memories of an earlier Ashtead are only of forty years ago, when we moved from London. But, and this is strange, much clearer in my mind are those told to me by my cousin, probably because her recall went back to 1919, and old age repeats itself.

My uncle and his family moved to Ashtead in 1919 when he bought a farmhouse in the centre of The Street; when he moved he sold to Prewitt's Dairy, now the site of the Esso Petrol Station. My Uncle, Edwin Wood, bought a great deal of land, which now comprises Park Lane, Grays Lane, Ralliwood Road and Crampshaw Lane. A Mr Ralli sold his magnificent house in Ashtead Park to the City of London, whence came City Freeman's School. Mr Wood built the first house in Park Lane – Berryfields – for himself and family in 1925, and old photographs show a lone house with fields surrounding. Crampshaw Lane was a field of oats.

I remember, in the 1950's, when the small Post Office was in Grove Road, now a hairdresser. From where we lived in Old Court a footpath led to Ottways Lane, where Marsdens's Nursery stood – now in Pleasure Pit Road.

When we moved to Fowlers Cottage in Rectory Lane an elderly neighbour told us with a certain pleasure that Mr Fowler used to arrange funerals. The coffins would stand in his downstairs room, until the handcart arrived, with the mourners following on foot; even in those days not everyone could afford a horse-drawn carriage.

I am sure many residents remember The Kettle Sings in Rectory Lane, where we would meet for coffee and enjoy a good gossip. Am I right in remembering Ashtead forty years ago as perhaps friendlier, more a village, than today with yellow lines everywhere and traffic problems? One thing is certainly true. Whilst with old age you cannot always recall what you did the day before yesterday, you can clearly remember events that happened fifty or sixty years ago.

David Cotton Writes:

I remember when as a small boy during the Second World War, that I visited my grandparents, who lived in Park Lane, Ashtead, with my parents and brother. My grandmother had a wonderfully antique piano-type instrument in her bedroom, which, when I was allowed to touch the keys, sounded like a harpsichord or spinet, as it probably was. This impressed me not a little. And not only that, she also had a four poster bed in which she slept – which impressed me even more. But on that visit, a sombre chord was struck, when she told us that an enemy bomb had recently landed in the vicinity at night, and its blast had brought down the plaster of the ceiling of the bedroom: fortunately the cornice of the four poster

had saved the plaster from landing on her head as she slept, otherwise she would not have lived (she said, pulling an appropriate face) to tell the tale. All the diamond leaded windowpanes in the house had also to be replaced with plain glass, because of bomb blast. The men folk were called up for the war and without help for the large garden, my grandmother said she had to dig it herself – "like a man" she said, demonstrating with forceful action the way she handled an imaginary fork. "Dig for Victory" was our proud cry on the Home Front, amidst the former flowerbeds and rose gardens. To us youngsters, these stories were all a normal part and parcel of life, and I think we, who had known no different time of peace, probably took them in our stride more easily than our elders.

Bill Archer Writes:

I remember when I was living with my grandparents in Park Lane, Ashted during the Second World War. There was a verandah at the back of the house that was overlooked by the window of my grandfather's study; the verandah was stacked with sandbags to protect the study from bomb blasts and it was in the study that we all used to shelter at nights during air raids.

Four houses up the road, there was a house called "Oaken Coppice" that had become a small camp for Canadian soldiers. I am told that we used to invite them in and that they used to look at me in my pram and say, "Gee, I guess that makes me kinda lonesome".

A Doodlebug (V1) landed just inside the wall of the park, immediately after the left-handed "dog-leg" at the top of Park Lane, going towards Headley. It made a big hole in the park wall and partly demolished the house opposite; the house was subsequently rebuilt and is there today. Two people sleeping in that house when the Doodlebug landed lived to tell the tale. I was taken to see the crater that, to a five-year old seemed enormous. The blast of the exploding Doodlebug brought down the plaster from the ceilings of several rooms in our house, including the one in which I was sleeping. The Doodlebug made almost a direct hit on "Oaken Coppice" but I expect it was after D-Day so it is likely that there were few, if any, Canadian troops there then.

My grandmother used to take me down to the village when she went shopping. I particularly remember Gadsby's which was an "old fashioned" store with lots of people to serve you. Its building is still to be seen in The Street.

Chalk Lane was a rough, unmade-up road and there were fields where Oaken Coppice (the road of that name), Ralliwood Road and the extension of Grays Lane (south of Chalk Lane) now are. In the 1970's, we were inspecting a house in Oaken Coppice for which we were thinking of making an offer; I went into the garden and there was a large oak tree: I recognised it as one that had stood in the corner of one of the fields. As a small boy, I had played under that tree.

Bill was the cousin of David Cotton who wrote the previous Memory around the same events. In *"Ashtead – a village transformed"* published in 1977 by the Leatherhead & District Local History Society the Doodlebug (V 1) mentioned in this Memory is recorded as a V2 Rocket

Bill Archer Writes:

I remember the days at Ashtead Cricket Club in the years immediately after the Second World War when the Club was a real force to be reckoned with. There were 400-500 spectators regularly at the ground in Woodfield Lane. Of the many fine cricketers who played for Ashtead, I particularly remember Reg Henty, Cecil Weller, Dick Robertson and Dennis Fox-Male.

A Surrey side sometimes used to play against Ashtead and there was the annual "big match" when a team of well-known cricketers would come and play on a Sunday against Ashtead. I can recall three England captains – Peter May, Colin Cowdrey and Tony Lewis – and one Australian captain – Richie Benaud – playing at Ashtead. Other famous names I remember include Alec Bedser, Dennis Compton, the New Zealand test cricketer, Martin Donnelly, and the much-loved commentator, Brian Johnston.

There was one famous innings that people still talk about. It was against Esher, away in 1953. Cecil Weller and Jack Witney opened the innings for Ashtead at 11.30 a.m. on a tricky wet wicket. Cecil was strangely out of touch but it was Jack who was first out – for 48 when the score had reached 60. Soon after that, Cecil took control and there were fours and sixes in all directions. After the lunch break, Cecil went on relentlessly in the same vein. He was joined at about 2 p.m. by Keith Harding who made 50 in about fifteen minutes, after which Ashtead declared their innings closed with Cecil's score standing at a remarkable and unprecedented **203 not out**. Cecil had hit twenty five fours and six sixes. By the close of play, Esher had scored just under 200 runs with nine wickets down so, in the end, they just managed to force a draw. The Ashtead captain took several Esher wickets: he was none other than Cecil Weller! Cecil's extraordinary day's cricket was all the more remarkable because, at the time, he was over the age of forty.

Yvonne Chappell Writes

We came to Ashtead in November 1960. The shops on Craddocks Parade in those days were: No.1 (now the Indian Restaurant) was Locketts a grocer, which later became Frewin's. Next came a butcher. Then there was an electrical shop – Bradbury's run by Mr & Mrs Bradbury who sold out to Brian Hayes later. It is now the flower shop. There has always been a chemist there – first it was Mr Mote, who also ran an optician's consulting room at the back. After him came another chemist, then Vivian Stitt, Cross & Herbert and lastly Lloyds, though I fancy I may have missed someone else. Henry's toyshop and confectionery/newspapers/post

office came next then I think it has always been Threshers. What came next I can't remember but there was a hardware shop, run by Mr Dean but named after his father-in-law who had had it before him. Mr Dean was a member of Ashtead Players; it changed its name to Palmers before closing down. Then, there was the greengrocer, which has had quite a number of owners, followed by a wet fish shop and finally Bridgers, the Estate Agents.

On the other side of the road was Jean Pierre now David Last (Jean Pierre/John Peter was the name of the son of the first owner). Knitcraft has always been there since we came. Where Garland Wine is was a launderette but I am not sure if it was there when we first came. Next to that was a greengrocer – now a bakers. Mrs Edmonds had the butcher's shop but what came next I'm not certain. There was a dry-cleaners then the two shops now comprising the Village Store I think may have been two separate shops. The last one for certain sold prams, cots and other baby equipment.

Going up Woodfield Lane where Peter Firth is now, previously the Westminster Bank and before that Paul's bakery – with Stan Paul of Petters Road, son of the baker, running his sign-writing business from premises behind the bakery. Where Superfish is was Haynes (Furnishers) and before them Astridges – another hardware store. Allen (estate agent) was a hairdresser. Where Burgerland is now was Barclays Bank. When they moved out it became a beauty salon for a while and then the Snooty Fox restaurant. Abbey National was Arnolds the estate agents; Farquharsons was West the butchers; Mr Stonebridge the optician, Osentons the estate agents and Victoria Wine. The electrical shop was Venus & Spong; then Sweet Things, the China Glass, a bakers and also there was a dress/underwear/haberdashers before the Esso Garage. After the garage was Haynes (before they moved to Woodfield Lane) and the Co-Op. The Co-Op became Bordeaux Direct before the present owners. The four new shops were Ashtead Travel, Caroline's (a grocer), a hairdresser and another launderette.

When Vinroy's was being done up years ago and a new fascia being fixed, behind it was the original which gave the name(???) – Cowkeeper. I believe that behind the shop there was evidence of the Cowkeeper's existence. Michael Everett (estate agent) was Johnson's, a very fine stationers. Before my time I'm told the Post Office was a sub-office in this shop. That was prior to the building of the post office/telephone exchange up the hill. The single building (with two antique shops in it) opposite Esso was Gadsby's, a very fine grocers.

Up Rectory Lane the last shop on the left was run by Gwen Pizzey (whose husband was much involved with the church and its choir). She sold table linen, towels, tea towels etc. Opposite was The Kettle Sings – the bakers and a tea shop. Next to it a dress shop, a toyshop, followed by the fishmongers and, of course, Mr. Robbins in his tiny shop selling and

repairing watches. The Citroen garage was a petrol station originally – selling Regent petrol I think.

Apart from shops I remember the village pound in the Marld. When Pound Court was built that last house was/is called Pound House and originally the pound was in the corner of the garden. Over the years the fence was renewed and it disappeared from existence – a pity.

The Catholic Church was in a small building where Broadmead is now, the present one being built in, I guess, 1966. The pavement in Woodfield Lane in front of the Catholic Church along to the cricket ground was not made up – just flattened earth which became muddy and slippery in wet weather.

The station buildings were nearer to Woodfield Lane than they are now. The stationmaster had a house on the north side of the railway – there is still an apple tree left from his garden.

Monica McAllister Writes:

I remember my, or rather our, first weekend in Ashtead. We had moved into our house in Craddocks Avenue (where we still live) on a Friday in late November 1969. We spent much of the Saturday sorting out our belongings and shopping for food and other basic necessities. There was no lack of choice with three grocers in The Street and two more in Craddocks Parade, as well as a choice of butchers and greengrocers. It was not these amenities which made it a weekend to remember but the Sunday morning when, for the first time, we entered St. Michael's Catholic Church.

The nearly brand new non-traditional building was to both of us a cultural shock. We had been used to large neo-gothic style churches and even the new ones we had visited had invariably been built on that sort of plan. Here was an octagonal church with a wide sanctuary occupying the front two thirds of the building and not separated in any way from the rest of the church. The seating was such that everyone was near to the altar. The timber cladding and the presence of large amounts of frosted glass in the side walls, together with the copper clad timber had resulted in a church that was light and airy. Church in Ashtead was, we felt, going to be different.

It was only when researching the history of St. Michael's that I discovered that it had very nearly not been built. Fellow parishioners, sharing their memories with me recalled the purchasing of the bombed property, called Mawmead Shaw in 1944. The garage of this property, and then an ex-army hut erected in its place, were where Catholics of Ashtead worshipped until October 1967. After much fund raising, plans for a new traditional style church were drawn up but planning permission was refused.

This was because of opposition by some local people, including members of the Ashtead Residents' Association! It was thought that members of the congregation would never use the car park but would cause congestion in Woodfield Lane. They were sure that the peace of those living nearby would be disturbed on a Sunday morning by the noise that the Catholics made coming out of church after Mass. Finally, said some, the presence of a church in Woodfield Lane would be inappropriate, as the land should be used for housing.

Sufficient to say that, following a Public Inquiry in 1964, planning permission was finally given. By this time the original plans were too expensive and not in keeping with new approaches to church architecture. Hence the church we entered that first Sunday was designed and finally completed in 1967. Slowly we began to appreciate it and to experience the sense of unity the building gave to the priest and the people.

Now many members of the congregation are active members of the ARA and the controversy over the building of St. Michael's has, I'm sure, long since been forgotten. Over the years we have grown to love and to feel at home in the church, but entering it for the first time will be our strongest early memory of Ashtead.

Meredith Worsfold Writes:

I remember the days of Ashtead Potters when my Grandmother lived at "Woodside", which was the house next to the Pottery. Over the fence at the end of the garden was the factory's dumping ground whereon lay the days rejects. Sometimes coloured, sometimes natural, chipped, misshapen and often lying around in a heap of wet clay, many useless little treasures found their way over the fence.

Another memory of those days was when Mr Porter who occupied 'The Limes' next door in The Street, was trading as a timber merchant. He owned a monkey, which would sometimes come and sit on the fence right opposite Grannies back door. It would frighten her out of her wits, although it was chained and the fence was the limit of its freedom. 'The Limes', which was a wooden building, later became the base of a car hire firm, Ashtead Streamline.

As children we enjoyed sitting in Grannies front garden on Derby Day with pencil and paper, making lists of the names of the coaches as they passed on their way to the Downs. There was little traffic control in those days and vehicles would often be stationary for ages.

"Woodside" and "The Limes" were demolished in 1962 to provide the site for development of the Ashtead Park Petrol Station.

Brian Chappell sends a copy of an invoice from T. Furniss & Son Ltd., the coal merchants who had an office roughly where there are now offices near the station – the present car park was the site of railway sidings

where the coal was delivered. On the invoice is the telephone number (Ashtead 236) – only three digits and reminded him of the time when we swapped from picking up the phone and telling the operator the number you want to dialling it yourself. This prompted him to recall this letter from the GPO at Worples Road, Wimbledon, dated June 1964:

Dear Sir/Madam

ASHTEAD EXCHANGE AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SERVICE

You will be pleased to know that work is in progress to bring automatic telephone services to Ashtead.

The automatic equipment will be housed in the recently completed extension to the rear of the telephone exchange, and I anticipate that you will be dialling your own numbers in the summer of 1965. To make this possible, dials must be fitted to all telephones in Ashtead, and where this has not been done an engineer will visit you to do this work in a few months time.

You may be interested in the enclosed leaflet illustrating our range of modern coloured telephones, which can be installed at a reduced charge of £1 0s 0d, if ordered in time to be supplied when the engineer calls. If you wish to accept this offer will you please complete the enclosed form and return it to this office using the postage paid label. The full range of telephones can be seen in The Post Office, The Street, Ashtead.

I enclose a leaflet describing the automatic service, which will include the direct dialling of many of your trunk calls. Details of the exchanges you will be able to dial and the method of dialling them will be sent to you nearer the date of conversion. I will advise you later of the exact date and time of the changeover to automatic working, but in the meantime will you please continue to make calls in the same way as at present, even after the fitting of the dial. Until the automatic exchange is working use of the dial will be unnecessary and might cause delay in obtaining the exchange operator.

Work on the underground cables will also be in progress and may cause slight tinkling of your telephone bell. If this occurs I hope you will ignore it; you may be assured that disturbance of your telephone service will be avoided wherever possible.

If you would like any more information about the new system, my staff on Derwent 3874 will be only too pleased to help.

Yours faithfully,
C. G. Brooks
TELEPHONE MANAGER

Doug Street Writes:

I am proud of my family name and have been blessed to have lived all my life in this village, except of course for those years that were spent in Her Majesty's Service during the last war. My age at the moment is showing signs of getting ancient, 77 to be exact. I was born in the head gardener's cottage at Parsons Mead School on the 14th June 1917 and apparently was assisted into this life by the school doctor, the late Henry King Dawson who, until his death, was also our family physician. I also am very proud to have known the school founder, Miss Jessi Elliston, who, though only small of stature, was a very strict disciplinarian but who was however very well disposed to my mother and father. I can well recall one early evening Miss Elliston walking round the school caught me red-handed nicking my Dad's peaches off the peach wall. I was immediately marched off by the small lady to our cottage and handed over to my mother for admonishment, which I duly received by getting a good hiding round my backside with a dog whip which I can assure you left its mark in more ways than one!

Living on school property had other advantages too, because when the pupils were away on holidays, other local boys picked up cricket and football skills by playing all day in the school playing fields – Ted Richardson, Doug Chambers and Algy Winter would recall those days too. The cottage at Parsons Mead was my home until I married. The wedding reception was, through Miss Elliston's generosity, held in the Gate House and with similar generosity Ralph Sayer, the landlord at the Brewery Inn supplied, as a wedding gift, all the spirits and alcoholic drinks, flatly refusing any thought of payment. Another memory is of the bakery, which supplied bread to the local area, being baked in "The Old Cottage" opposite Maple Road. I was often sent to purchase a cottage loaf and a small tin loaf. To procure the same, one had to knock on the side window, which was slid up and the transaction made through the open window. We were also taught to swim in Littlewoods swimming pool by Mrs Brooker, which helped bring success to the Church of England school in Dene Road, as for two consecutive years we lifted the Surrey Schools championship, both boys and girls, held at Guildford. Yes! Ashted has been a happy place to have lived, and I still believe it has its own character and charm.

Joan Messenger Writes:

I remember when, on leaving school in 1938 I came with my parents and grandparents, to live in Ashted. I was to live in the country and my delight at being free from a noisy, busy part of London was exciting. We knew Ashted only as the place where my parents had friends and as the destination of so many Sunday-School outings from London. Dozens of children used to arrive at the weekends to play on the Common and in the woods. By the "iron steps" over the railway Line – on the common side – were the tearooms and a mini playground for the children, with helter-skelter and swings, etc.

As soon as we moved in – my parents to 9 Cray Avenue and my grandparents next door, tradesmen called wishing to serve the family. There was Precepts, dairyman with his cart, milk coming from a herd in Farm Lane. The local baker with his large wicker basket full of crusty loaves, calling daily. Locketts, the Craddocks Parade grocer and butcher, arriving with a large box of chocolates, asking how they could serve us. The Chitty family, coal merchants in Woodfield Lane, welcomed us with free coal and Coppins, greengrocers, with a basket of fruit. How things have changed!

While waiting to go to University I had taken a temporary job with the Prudential in High Holborn. Never being a willing riser in the mornings I was often seen pounding down St. Stephens Avenue to the station. The friendly chap in the signal box used to shout “Hurry up love, can't keep the train waiting much longer!” The station was a lovely country-style one, waiting rooms with open coal fires and a very friendly staff. The “up line” had the destination board as “ASHTHEAD”, but the “down line” platform board told passengers they were at “ASHSTEAD”. This remained as such for many years.

Although the actual road for Bramley Way was laid by 1938 – as was Petters Road where I now live – there had been very few houses built. Bramley Way was fenced off at the bottom of 2, Chaffers Mead's garden and no houses on the far side of the fence. From our front bay window at Cray Avenue I used to watch the nuns on the other side of the fence exercising quietly round the area with their rosaries—so peaceful to watch.

Life didn't change much until the autumn of 1939 – the war years. The air raid shelter was built in the garden and we waited to see what would happen. Were we far enough out of London? We found out later. The occasional siren was heard and of course planes flying over. Still we waited. The fence was taken down at the end of Cray Avenue and some of the ground allocated to those who wished to cultivate it “for the war effort”. Digging was limited to 2 feet deep as the land was to be built on later. It became such a friendly meeting place.

Things began to get short in the shops. News of supplies arriving, such as eggs, bananas and oranges, was quickly passed round by means of the “Ashtead Jungle System”. This meant long queues, sometimes of over an hour, but time passed quickly with the friendly atmosphere that developed between those of us who became “regular queuers”. The fish shop on the parade was owned by Rosie and Ben Burns. Fish was not exactly in short supply, but rather erratic in deliveries. Queues again and our Rosie really enjoyed seeing them and would keep us waiting. One day as the queue slowly moved along my mother and I found ourselves within the next five or six to be served. Then it happened! The lady at the head of the queue started to prod the fish on the slab. Rosie picked up a kipper and slapped the customer round the face with it several times. She then ordered us all to clear off, wielding the kipper around dangerously. Rosie

then called my mother back with the statement – “I'll serve you dearie, you're one of us". Puzzled at first we then began to understand. My mother had broken her nose when young and it hadn't been set properly – obviously giving Rosie the impression that mother was of the chosen race, as was our Rosie. We did very well with fish after that!

At this time there were not very many shops on Craddocks Parade and the station side wasn't developed. Before the war planning permission had been sought for a Public House to be built there. This fell through owing to the war and was renewed afterwards. Shops were built on the site several years later.

Jean Edwards Writes:

I remember when Ashted really was a village of 8,000 or so inhabitants, rather than a conurbation as it is now. This was just before World War 2, when I was 15 years old. My father was William Edwards, and he had bought a practice and a house called "Penlee" in Oakfield Road. War was imminent, and we had decided to move away from the inner suburbs and into a more countrified and (as we thought) safer area.

We were among the first evacuees. Later it became a flood and Ashted swelled into something much vaster than a village. My father's practice grew to almost unmanageable proportions. There were no health centres in those days, no receptionists or secretaries. Surgeries were held at the doctor's own house, and the doctor's wife was his receptionist.

Our family consisted of my father and mother, myself and my brother who was eleven years old in 1939. I fell in love with Ashted as soon as I saw the beautiful pond in Barnett Wood Lane, backed with those picturesque little houses, redolent with age. Everything I saw was a new delight: the hoary old woods with the little brook, even the helter-skelter which was soon after demolished, The Street with the old bow-fronted grocers (the bow front was demolished some years ago and the look of the shop completely spoiled).

My first sight of Parsons Mead School, where I was to spend two years from 1939 – 1941, was like a dream come true. Looking around for someone to contact, my parents spied a very old lady pottering in the garden. This was Miss Elliston, the founder of the school. She was totally deaf and when we said I wanted to come to the school, her reply was “Please throw an apple to that horse!” (There was an ancient horse mysteriously at large in the lacrosse field). We got it sorted out later, of course, and I became a happy pupil in September 1939. My pleasure at taking part in a relay-swimming race against Downsends School at Littlewoods Swimming Pool (opposite the school) and at playing in an away netball match against Sutton High School, almost outweighed the gloom and apprehension at the outbreak of war.

Many things happened in the war. An old lady, who still dressed in skirts down to the ground, was chased, so she said, down The Street by a German bomber with guns blazing! A landmine landed in Gaywood Road, obliterating nearly all of it. A bomb scored a direct hit on a house in the Marld, where the Catholic Church now stands and the schoolgirl sleeping upstairs fell, bed and all, to ground level, unscathed. Another landmine wiped out the St. Andrews Convent School building in Grange Road. All the borders were fortunately in the shelter and unhurt but the nuns nearer the shelter entrance sustained cuts and bruises. My father was in the Mobile Unit, a first aid van that toured the district during air raids to find and treat casualties. He found two nuns and brought them home to my mother's dismay—we were on rations, of course, and had very little food. I was instructed not to eat any supper and was branded as "delicate" in consequence by the nuns who noticed my behaviour.

We had a great many bombs, landmines, V 1's and V 2's (doodle-bugs and rockets) for so small a place. The reason was there was a ring of guns round London, so the bombers unloaded their bombs at random outside the guns and headed for home. Some of them fell harmlessly on the Common. We used to go hunting for shrapnel there.

Another reason for the bombing may have been the small factories, which in peacetime harmlessly made mackintoshes, vacuum cleaners, etc., turned over to "hush-hush" work for the war effort making bomb parts and so on. These were the Goblin Works in Ermyn Way and the Celestair in the village. The "doodle-bugs", V 1's were small pilotless planes full of explosives with noisy rocket motors, which cut out when their fuel was spent. The silence was eerie and one waited for the inevitable explosion when it hit the ground.

Some remarkable people were living in Ashted at that time: Sir R H Davis who invented the escape apparatus; Edward MacCurdy who translated the notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci and was a member of the Athenaeum; A W G Lowther, the archaeologist who excavated the Roman villa on Ashted Common and Commander Gould of the Brains Trust, who always began his perorations on the wireless with "When I was in Patagonia.....".

My father, unknown to his patients, was writing popular medical articles for "The People" under the name of Dr Goodenough. Patients would sometimes tell him that Dr. Goodenough's remedies were superior to his own and he had a quiet chuckle at this!

Meredith Worsfold Writes:

I remember the annual May Concert in the Peace Memorial Hall, which was provided by the scholars of St.Giles School. There were sketches, dancing recitations, Maypole dances and the highlight of the evening the crowning of the May Queen. The whole evening was highly entertaining and enjoyed by families and friends.

The Ashted Scouts also put on some excellent shows, sometimes a pantomime, and usually worked in a witty reference to a topical event such as the advent of the Green Line bus service, or the controversial siting of electricity pylons across Ashted Common. I was told later that, as a very small cub playing a very small part as a villainous crew member on a pirate ship, I was supposed to be scanning the horizon with a telescope, but it seemed to get heavier and gradually lowered and I spent much time studying the ship's deck! The care of the Halls in those days was in the able hands of Walter Haynes.

I also remember how local lads with bicycles derived much pleasure from the pit in Crampshaw Lane. Its position was in the centre of the crescent of properties, which is now Druids Close. The pit was surrounded by magnificent beech trees. Its attraction was the "figure of eight" track at the bottom of the bowl, which could be approached from the rim by gradients of varying degrees of difficulty. Many enjoyable and exciting hours were spent there.

Joan Messenger Writes:

I remember when the Canadian soldiers arrived in Ashted during the war. Some were billeted in 1 -5 Petters Road – the only three bungalows built in the road before the war.

They set up a sentry post just outside our garage and the side entrance to the house, which was situated in Chaffers Mead. Every time we went in or out we were challenged "Halt, who goes there?" At first I found it terribly funny, but after a few weeks it became irritating and really so unnecessary as they know us by then. The only time we didn't get challenged was when we offered refreshment!

It would seem the enemy knew the Canadians were there as they started to target the area. The shelter almost became our bedroom for many weeks. One night, things began to get very noisy in our area and after a long wait in the shelter there was a tremendous bang – one of the houses had been hit. After the "All Clear" had been sounded we cautiously crept back to the house – a house with only half a roof. Yes, we'd received the blast from a "Flying Bomb", one that had landed right in the middle of our allotment. It was the only time we received any damage, but we had to evacuate while repairs were done.

The years passed – they seemed never ending. Many bombs were released in and around Ashted. Life continued, with difficulty; part life in the air raid shelter with broken nights and trying to obtain food on the small allowance the ration books allowed. The W V S (as it was then) set up a canteen during the war where the Youth Centre now exists in Barnett Wood lane. It was possible to get a cheap non-rationed meal to eat there or to take away. This became very popular. Clothes and furnishings were a luxury. I remember being given some parachute material (used) and

spending hours converting it into underclothes for family and friends. It was considered a luxury!

When the news came that the war was over it was hard to believe. So many rumours had circulated in the past. There were street parties and much jubilation. Read and Taylor Roads were outstanding. Decorations all down the roads and trestle tables from top to bottom, sheet covered and loaded with any food that could be spared. We all seemed to go mad with joy.

It took some time to get "back to normal", but the relief that the war was over made us strive to make the best of things. Ashtead Cinema existed before the war and for a short while after. It was situated in Church Road off Barnett Wood Lane, showing all the old black and white films. Later the building was taken over by Astridges as a storage place.

In 1946, houses were once more being built. I moved into Petters Road, round the corner from Cray Avenue in 1947 – the last house in Ashtead built with wooden floors for several years. The cost of the semi was £1250. Oh for the good old days!

Meredith Worsfold Writes:

I remember when the boathouse still stood in Ashtead Park. The building then was in a sorry state, being a timber structure on a brick base. The staging was still in place but rotting, and where boats once floated in the boathouse there was only mud. Deer were a common sight in the Park in the twenties, and although I am told that deer are sometimes nowadays seen they have not shown themselves to me.

I also remember when filming was taking place in Ashtead Park with costumed actors dashing around on horseback. Another filming incident occurred one day on the way to school. My route, walking of course, was by way of Ottways lane, Linden Pit Path, and the (then) new Leatherhead By-pass and so to Kingston Road and Leatherhead Central School. My chum and I were astonished to see a car rolling down the By-pass apparently without a driver, but followed by a car with a mounted camera and cameraman. We later learned that scenes were being taken for "The Invisible Man", and the car was adapted for the car to be driven by a stunt man in a prone position.

Those shops we have tried to remember!

Ursula Macfarlane has come to our rescue and lent us a copy of Kemp's Leatherhead and District Local Directory for 1968 - 9. These are the shops in the three main shopping areas of Ashted:

THE VILLAGE

The Street (South-East Side)

Here is Parkers Lane

2 Brifex (Coated Fabrics Manufacturers)
10 Ken Hewlett (Cycle Dealer)
14 A Moring Ltd. (Shoe Repairs)
16 J E Sheppard (General Stores)
18 Applebee (Fancy Goods, Books, Furniture etc)
24 Clarke (Shoe Dealers)
34 The Snack Bar (Transport Cafe)
40 Blue Star Garages

Here is Rectory Lane

42 & 44 Ashted Florists (Greengrocers and Fruiterers)
46 International Stores (Grocers)
48 Leg of Mutton & Cauliflower Public House
50 Westminster Bank Ltd.
Lloyd & Davey (Solicitors)
52 Mortimer (Chemists)
54 Vinroy (Hardware)
56 Midland Bank

Here is Grove Road

58 H B Johnson (Stationer)
60 Page (Butcher)
Theodore, Bell & Cotton (Solicitors)
62 Suzanne (Ladies' Hairdresser)
64 P M Parker (Wool Shop)
66 Tudor House: M F Mager FDS, RCS(Eng) (Dental Surgeon)
M Gillespy Smith LDS, RCS(Eng)
66 Douglas & Co. FALPA (Estate Agents)
68 Lloyds Bank Ltd.
70 J & A Supplies (Wallpaper, Paints, etc)
72 Joan Mavell (Gown Shop)
74 Wisbys (Fruiterer)
76 Jennifer's Cake Shop (Bakers & Restaurant)
78 The Rosery (Confectioners & Tobacconists)
80 Ensign Cleaners (Dry Cleaners)
82 Wilcox & Son (Butchers)
84 Gentlemen's Hairdresser
86 Camerons (Horticulturals)
90 Gadsby's Stores (Grocers)
96 & 98 Vernon (Hairdressers) Ltd. (Ladies Hairdresser)
100 Kathleen (Florist)
102 The Man's Shop (Outfitters)
104 Ashted Village Club
106 Nova (Stationer)
112 Tiffanys (Restaurant)
114 Vanessa (Hair Fashions)
118 R Probert (Betting Office)
120 Willis (Dentist)
122 Dr Irene Rajaratnam (Surgery)

Here is Park Lane

The Street (North-West Side)

Here is Greville Park Road

1 Ashe laboratories Ltd.

3 Yarsley, Research & Testing Laboratories
7 Ashtead Park Service Station
9 Herriot Associates Ltd.
11 New Dawn (Laundry & Dyers & Cleaners)
13 G P O & Telephone Exchange
15 The Brewery Inn

Here is Woodfield Lane

17 Lynda (Ladies Hairdresser)
19 vacant
21 Barclays Bank Ltd.
23 Arnold & Son (Estate Agents)
25 West (Butchers)
27 Evelyn's (Confectionery & Tobacco)
29 E Whiteacre (Fruiterer & Greengrocer)
31 Eric H Stonebridge FBOA, D.orth, (Optician)
33 J A Garrett MRCVS & Miss J A Bunting MRCVS (Veterinary Surgery)
35 Charles Osenton & Co. (Estate Agents)
35a Tyler & Co Ltd. (Wine Merchants)
37 Venus & Spong (Radio & TV)
39 A & W Bowes (Confectionery, Tobacco & Library)
41 Ann Fleming (Ladies Wear)
Mason's (Solicitors)
Ashtead Boiler Co Ltd.
43 The China Glass
45 Sally Ann (Florist)
49 Coombs (Bakers)
51 D & H Smith (Ladies Wear)
53 Ashtead Motor Works Co. (Garage)
61 South Suburban Co-Op Society (Grocers & Butchers)
6la Haynes (Ashtead) Ltd.
Jackson Friendship Travel Centre
69 Marc Hayden (Ladies' Hairdresser)
Ashtead Coin-op Dry Cleaning

Here is The Marld

Rectory Lane (East Side)

Here is The Street

1 Lesley's (Hairdresser)
3 Ashtead Electronics
5 Ashtead Antiques
5b Linda Grey (Ladies Wear)
5c Gwen Pizzey (Household Linen)

Rectory lane (West Side)

Here is The Street

2 W Robbins (Watchmaker)
4 Ashtead Fisheries
6 Maynards (Newsagents)
8 Vanity Fair (Children's Wear)
10 The Kettle Sings (Restaurant)

Woodfield Lane (East Side)

2 & 4 J Astridge (Hardware) Ltd. (ironmongers)

LOWER ASHTEAD

Craddocks Parade (South Side)

Here ends Craddocks Avenue

1 L Frewin Ltd. (Grocers)
2 G A Langley (Butcher)
3 K J Bradbury & Son Ltd. (Electrical Dealer)
4 S G Mote FBOA (Optician)
E J Dracott MPS (Chemist)
5 & 6 Henry's (Stationer & Newsagent)
7 The Wine Cellars Ltd. (Wine Merchants)
8 Jane Shelley (Ladies & Children's Outfitters)
9 P D Grout (Hardware)
10 H Card (Fruiterers)
11 W J Thompson (Fishmonger)
12 C Bridger & Sons (Estate Agents)

Here is Nash's Corner
H R Nash (Motor Agents)

Craddocks Parade (North Side)

Here is Woodfield Lane
14 Budgen (Supermarket)
16 Dale Dry Cleaning (Dyers & Cleaners)
17 Decorative Colours Ltd. (Decorators Merchants)
18 Edmonds & Son (Butchers) Ltd.
19 H Card & Son (Greengrocer, Florist and Horticultural Supplies)
20 Launderette
21 Knitcraft (Art Needlework & Wools)
22 Jean Pierre (Ladies Hairdresser)

Barnett Wood Lane (South Side)

196 T V Steer (Grocer)

Here is Glebe Road
198 Norman Roundhill & Co (Garage)
200 M Cox (Grocers)
202 Grimditch & Webb (Butchers)
204 Diane (M E Boot) (Art Needlework & Wools)
206 H W Stripe (Confectioner & Tobacconist)
208 Ashtead Fruiterers (P A Gorton) (Fruiterer)
210 Louise Fraser (Ladies Hairdresser)
212 Constitutional Hall
214 J A Gardiner (Fishmonger)
222 B Slade (Transport Cafe)
224 M J Evans Ltd. (Chemists)
226 A H Golding (Grocer)
228 Tyler & Co Ltd. (Wine Merchant)
230 A & C Harris Ltd.

Here is Church Road
Barnett Wood Lane Post Office

Here is Oakfield Road
St George's Church
The Woodman Public House

Here is Recreation Ground.

Gwen Gale has given us her late husband, Michael's, speaking notes for his popular talks on **SCOUTING IN ASHTEAD**.

Let us start in 1941. Since the Group's H Q had been requisitioned, the Pack started meeting on alternate Saturday afternoons in the Guide Hut in Barnett Wood Lane.

Within their limited capacity the Scouts did their best to further the war effort. A memorandum from Mr R J Hurst, Deputy Divisional Warden dated March 1941, records that a scheme had been devised whereby Scouts over the age of 16 would, in the event of the failure of the telephone service, act as messengers. The first four messengers named were R J Clatworthy, E Pritchard, J C R Smith and P Smith. They were provided with anti-shrapnel helmets and Civil Defence gas masks

In 1942, the Pelham Hut was returned to the Group in a damaged condition. The Troop Summer Camp was held at Broadstone Warren. In charge was Patrol Leader W J S Batho, assisted by Patrol Leaders J C R Smith and M Gale. All the assistant leaders had been called up into the Forces. The Group was left in the charge of G J Gollin (Group Leader), G Bonner (Scouts) and Mrs S White (Cubs).

In 1943, the Civil Defence was warned that there might be an attempt by the Germans to fire the crops in summer by means of incendiary bombs. The Scouts were asked to lend a hand in an emergency and a Duty Patrol, the "Pelican", was established consisting of Tom Bates, David Walker, Fred Brewer, Peter Pengilly and Don Phillips. It was hoped that by 'phone the Patrol could be assembled in a Brief time and it was also hoped that "Operation Matchbox" would not be called during school hours!

From time to time the local committee for War Savings organised special Gala Days and for these the Scouts acted as messengers and also provided demonstrations of Scout skills. The Chairman of the District War Savings Committee, Mr S Blaxland Stubbs, said that it was the strong support he had

received from the Scouts during the war that influenced him to accept the position as first Chairman of the new Leatherhead and District Scout Association.

In 1945, the ending of the War was celebrated by a bonfire and fireworks display on the Common, organised by the Pelham Group.

During the war over 140 one-time members of the Group had served in the Forces. Six are known to have given their lives for their country – D Girdler over Cologne; W Wayling at sea; J Palmer at Arnhem; V Chinick in an aircraft accident; G Peto in Italy and W Pritchard in Norway.

Due to the generosity of Lady Warburg the District Camp Site of 12 acres at Boidier Hurst adjoining Headley Common, was opened with the Pelham's G Bonner as Warden. During the next few years his Pelham Rover Crew laboured continuously to create a good camping site with many separate patrol camping sites.

Mrs White resigned as Cub Leader and the large Pack was then divided into two with Mr Goodway in charge of Red Pack and Mr F Damprey in charge of Brown Pack. Weekly subscriptions to the Scouts and Cubs were doubled to 2d! Mr G Bonner started preparing plans for a new HQ to cater for the growing size of the Group which was soon to have a Senior Scout Section for over 15's led by Mr Michael Gale, on his return from the Fleet Air Arm.

In 1947, when the Pelham Group Committee seemed to have lost its impetus as a money raiser, Mr E Chater, closely connected with the Group and Mr C Cockram, who had been a Rover Scout before the war, were urged by Mr M Gale and Miss G Chater to form the Ashtead Scouts and Guides Supporters Association. A public meeting was held in the Peace Memorial Hall in the autumn of 1947 and the Association has thrived ever since. The annual garden fete, held on the last Saturday in June, has become an Ashtead annual fixture. The success of this hard-working body has left the Scout and Guide leaders with a freer hand to get on with their primary job – the training of the boys and girls.

By 1949, The Rover Crew numbered 23 and was believed to be the largest in Surrey. Six Pelham Rovers and six from the Dittons attended the 4th International Rover Moot at Skjak in Norway, led by Mr G Bonner. He was appointed District Rover Leader and Mr K Godway became Assistant District Commissioner for Cubs.

In the summer of 1949, some of the senior boarders at the City of London Freeman's School, who had been members of the Scout Movement in their home districts, decided that there should be a School Troop and this was supported by Mr Eric Fielden, then Headmaster.

After a month or two it appeared that the project might founder for the lack of adult leaders, but Mr M Gale took control to the end of the summer term when he left to take up a place in a teachers training college. Meanwhile, Mr Gollin took over as Scout Leader of the 2nd (CLF) Group and it was formally registered on 2nd November 1949 with the Headmaster as Group Scout Leader: a post which he held until he left the school in July 1963. Mr Gollin handed over the reins to Mr M Gale in 1954 and Mr G A Clark became Senior Scout Leader of the Pelham (He was to become Group Scout leader of the Pelhams 21 years later!).

In 1954, the 1st Ashtead (Pelham) Group had nearly doubled in size, and included two Cub Packs, two Troops, a Senior Scout Section and Rover Crew. The 2nd Ashtead (CLF) Group was also "bulging" albeit mainly from boarders – and there was clearly a need for another Group to cater for the many boys living at the south end of the village.

Accordingly, Mr Jack Stratford, Hon. Secretary of the Leatherhead Local Scout Association, and a resident of Ashtead, with his sister Joan (now widow of the late Arnold Gardiner) agreed to start another Group: the 3rd Ashtead. Initially there was a small Cub Pack meeting in a small wooden garage lent by Mr & Mrs Vigor of Parkers Hill. Later, when the pack grew and a Troop was formed, lack of space forced a move to St.Giles School in Dene Road. Sir David Cairns became President, the first Group Scout Leader was Mr Reg Vaughan (who had also helped with the 2nd Ashtead) and Mr Geoffrey Gifton-Salmond was the Scout Leader. Mr Arnold Gardiner led an enthusiastic Parents Committee.

Eventually permission was granted for a new HQ to be erected at the eastern side of the entrance to The Warren. By years of hard work, and helped by SAGSA (Ashtead Scouts and Guides Supporters Association), the Group had raised enough funds to buy and erect an attractive Scout Hut, opened in 1966 by Mrs Vigor, the original owner of the site.

The Group benefits from the use of a small campsite on Ranmore Common, in the grounds of the late Clifford Gardiner's home. As a tribute to him the boys wear an emblem of a Seahorse (a pun on his initials C G G) on their yellow scarves. In 1994, the group had flourished for 40 years. It then consisted of a Beaver Colony, a Cub Pack, Scout Troop and Senior Scouts with Mr John Laver as its leader.

Two years after the 3rd Ashted Group was formed work on the new Pelham HQ began. The old tin hut had shown signs of serious deterioration towards the end of the war and it became doubtful whether money should be devoted to its repair. For most of its occupation the Group had paid a nominal rent of £10 pa to the Trustees who held the Freehold. This passed into the hands of a nearby builder, from whom it was purchased in 1956. Adjacent land had also to be purchased so that a HQ 70' x 40' could be erected. The original plans were elaborated by Mr Philip Goodhew, the parent of a Scout, who gave his services both to produce new plans and to act as Clerk of Works.

Under the guidance of Mr Millar, who had become Chairman of the Group's Executive Committee in 1951, it was eventually found possible to construct the HQ on the accumulation of gifts from Scout HQ, national grants, help from SAGSA and favourable loans.

The completion of the new brick HQ proved a god send to the Local Education Authority since at that time the nearby primary school had no dining hall. This resulted in the conclusion of a profitable lease, and the clearing of all outstanding debts within a few years.

On 19th October 1957, the new HQ "Pelham Palace" was officially opened by Chief Scouts' Commissioner Ralph Reader (of Gang Show fame). By 1963 the Group's cash turnover exceeded £1000. After 23 years Mr G J Gollin relinquished the post of Group Scout Master and was succeeded by Mr R E Collins. Lord Barnby accepted the office of President of the Group, which he held until his death in 1982. He allowed the Scouts to have their own campsite in Ashted Woods and followed the affairs of the Group with interest and enthusiasm.

In 1966, the subscription for Cubs and Scouts was raised to £2 per annum. In 1967, the National Advance Party's report on the future of Scouting was implemented. Among many changes Senior Scouts and Rover Scouts were amalgamated, becoming known as Venture Scouts with an age limit of 21. Four of the five Venture Scouts making up the Colour Party at the National Parade of Queen's Scouts on St. George's Day Sunday at Windsor Castle, were provided by the Pelhams.

In 1968 Mr W Millar resigned as Group Chairman after 17 years at the helm and Mr M Gale was appointed in his place. In 1969, the ninth annual Pelham Gang Show (called "Pelham Picnic") was held. This time the Guides from the 1st Ashted Company (Captain Mrs M Gale) were in the cast. In the last two decades the Group has seen its annual membership almost reach 200. Two Beaver Colonies (the section for boys under Cub age) have flourished, as has the one in the 3rd Ashted.

Sadly the 2nd Ashted (CLF) Scout Group closed in 1988 when no more adult leaders could be found to take over. It had continued to flourish in the 60's and 70's under the Headmastership of Mr Michael Kemp, but it became more and more difficult to staff it, especially as the needs of the other two Scout Groups for leaders became more and more demanding.

The future of the Scout and Guide groups and SAGSA would seem to lie in the infusion of new blood as leaders and officers to replace the many "veterans" who have given up such a large slice of their lives to be involved in Scouting and Guiding activities.

ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objects of the Association are:

1. to preserve the existing rural character of Ashted;
2. to improve the amenities of the area for the general benefit of the inhabitants and ratepayers;

3. to seek to ensure that the income raised by and the expenditure incurred by the District and/or the Surrey County Council is relevant to the needs and generally serves the best interests of the inhabitants and ratepayers;
4. to organise such social events as would appear to the Committee to be the general wish of members.

To assist in achieving these objectives the Association shall elect a Committee who shall:

1. maintain a careful watch upon all matters , particularly those concerning planning and development;
2. seek and make known to the appropriate authorities or persons the views of members concerning any proposed or actual alterations to the amenities and general character of the neighbourhood;
3. seek, encourage and support suitable candidates for the District Council and the Surrey County Council who agree to stand independent of national party ties;
4. continue to support by considered suggestion and constructive criticism the efforts of elected councillors;
5. keep members generally informed of relevant matters by means of meetings, notices and circulars and by publishing from time to time a magazine to be known as " The Ashtead Resident";
6. ensure that satisfactory financial and membership records are kept;
7. combine with or affiliate to other organisations as may be considered appropriate.