

THE GREAT GLEN WAY WE DID IT!

My daughter Elaine and I completed the walk in 7 days. It was tough at times, but we kept going due to the wonderful support we got from everyone. We walked along the Caledonian Canal, saw Neptune's staircase



a series of locks and another set of locks at Fort Augustus, and several swing bridges for the passing of ships and small craft. Passed a few lochs the most famous one being Loch Ness, but we didn't get to see Nessy. Walked through a lot of forestry and the path was good. Our hardest day was on the 5th day as it was more up and down. Lots of different scenery. The last day we came into Inverness and the finish was at the castle. Unfortunately, the castle was surrounded by scaffolding so didn't get to see it but the board for the finish was there (see Picture). We only had one day of rain while walking so we felt we were lucky with the weather as being in Scotland it could have been every day. The sense of achievement was huge, we were both quite emotional at the finish knowing that we had done it. Elaine and I want to say a huge Thank you to everyone who supported us and to those who donated to the PKD charity. So far, we have raised over £1,300. I'm hoping to give a full total in next month's Focus

Thankyou
Kathy Thompson



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Church Times

St James' Services for November

5 th	11.00am	Holy Communion
12 th	10.30am	Remembrance Service
19 th	11.00am	Creative Communion
26 th	11.00am	Holy Communion

Sidesmen Readers Intercessions

R Margerrison	R Margerrison	J Margerrison
P Moyles		
I Lamberton	I Lamberton	J Brigden
R Margerrison	R Margerrison	J Margerrison

Church Key November: Tracy Taylor 712231

ROAD CLOSURE

As in previous years, St James' has been given temporary road closure on Sunday 12th November 2023. This is for a wreath laying ceremony during the Remembrance Service at St James's Church, Great Horwood. The road closure will be in force between 10:45am and 11:15am

The road in question is as always, between the old Swan Public House/Pilch Lane and the corner of Nash Road/Little Horwood Road.

Please could you try to avoid using your motor vehicles in this area at this time, as a mark of respect, as well as for the safety of the congregation of St James.'

Many thanks, C. Finnemore Secretary St James' PCC

GREAT HORWOOD GIRLGUIDING

Welcome to all the new members who've joined us recently, including our new Assistant Brownie Leader, Helen - a.k.a. Tawny Owl. We're delighted to have you with us and to see our numbers growing again.

Some of the girls have achieved their special, section awards. Congratulations to Ashley and Rebecca for achieving their Brownie Bronze Awards, Hannah for gaining Bronze and Silver Rainbow Awards, Juno for Bronze, Silver and Gold Rainbow Awards, Stevie for Bronze, Silver and Gold Brownie Awards and Joanna for achieving her Gold Guide Award. Well Done!

The girls are enjoying a busy term with lots of different activities, including building a golf course and clubs from rubbish, planting bulbs in the school nature area, blackberry picking, cooking, learning to finger spell and playing lots of funny games. We're looking forward to a visit from some exotic rescue animals and the older girls will be going ice-skating with a group of Guides from Bedfordshire. The girls are also earning lots of badges this term. We still have places available for more Brownies, Guides and Rangers. If you have a daughter who might be interested in joining, please register her at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child/> or contact me on 07501 636037 or claremartin71@btinternet.com

Clare Martin

GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL AWARDS

He's only gone and Done it!

It gives me great pleasure to announce that our one and only Darren (Sid) Sirett has only gone and WON the Berks & Bucks Football Association Volunteer of the Year Award 2023. This is a great achievement, considering entries were submitted from clubs across the whole of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. This award recognises the enormous time and effort put into our Great Horwood Football Club by Sid over many, many years and is fully deserved.

Congratulations Darren.



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GREAT HORWOOD SILVER BAND

As the nights draw in, the Band would like to thank those that came to listen to us at our Concerts on the Green over the last few months. We have finished these events for 2023, but please keep an eye out for their return in 2024.

We are now entering a very busy period for the Band in the run up to Christmas, beginning with the Remembrance services that we are always proud to be a part of and ending on Christmas Eve with our traditional carols around the village. We would like to put out an early request for people who are willing to come and help us collect on Christmas Eve. If you are available and would be prepared to give up some time and come and help, please contact the Band on the details below for more details. Any help is very much appreciated.

As you know, the Village Hall is now closed for refurbishment and the Band have had to temporarily change rehearsal location for the duration of the work. We are still rehearsing on a Wednesday evening but have moved venue to the Hall at Great Horwood School and we thank the school for welcoming us so that we may continue playing within the village. Our annual Christmas Concert on Sunday the 3rd of December will also be held at the school this year.

We are always on the look-out for new players, so if you are interested in learning a new skill or are already a brass player, please contact the Band if you would like to come along or for more information.

Please find below a list of upcoming events for the Band and we look forward to seeing you and thank you for your continued support.

Saturday 11th Nov – Remembrance Service - Preston Bissett Church

Sunday 12th Nov – Remembrance Day Parade – Winslow

Saturday 18th Nov – Beachborough School Christmas Fayre 10.30am until 1.00pm

Thursday 23rd Nov – Buckingham Light Switch on – Buckingham – 5.30pm

Thursday 30th Nov - Winslow Christmas Fayre Winslow Market Square 5.30pm-8.00pm

Saturday 2nd Dec – Tingewick Christmas Lights – Tingewick – 4.30pm

Sunday 3rd Dec – ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT Gt Horwood School 3.00pm

Saturday 9th Dec – Carols at Watermead, Aylesbury

Friday 15th Dec – Little Horwood Carols – Little Horwood

Thursday 21st Dec – Carols Around the Christmas Tree – Adstock

Friday 22nd Dec - Carols at Slapton – Slapton

Sunday 24th Dec - Carols around Great Horwood – 4.00pm start

Contact details:

Website:

www.greathorwoodband.com

Email:

ghsbsecretary@gmail.com

Facebook: Great Horwood Silver Band

WINSLOW AND DISTRICT ART SOCIETY

On the evening of Thursday 28th September members and non-members of WADAS enjoyed listening to and joining in with two speakers at the Winslow Bowls club. Our first speaker told us all about the history of picture framing; explaining the techniques of making frames, mostly by hand, and then went on to describe the positive difference the right style of frame has to the picture.

We then went on to enjoy, with some hilarity, a multi-choice quiz which was great fun, especially as some of us had to guess the answers.

Our next demonstration will be **16th November** Leanne Ellis on Abstract mixed media. As always visitors will be very welcome for the small cost of £5 entrance which also includes refreshments.

Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 pm start.

Of course, our weekly WADAS Groups continue to meet on a Tuesday and Thursday morning in Padbury and Winslow. We are always delighted to welcome new members and so if you're interested just contact any of the people listed below for more information.

Chair Cheryl Willyman 01296 640755

Treasurer Jackie Chambers 01296 713607

Secretary Monica Gilbey 01296 711915

MEN IN SHEDS

If you've ever popped in, then you'll know we have plenty of space- great for larger projects and great for the chance it gives to spread out if you need a bit of elbow room. We're lucky to have this flexibility but not so much at this time of the year when only our smaller workshop and our social area have heating! No problem if your project involves a warming work-out with hand tools but quite tricky for model making, painting and general tinkering. A few Sheddors have been chatting.

about how better use might be made of our social area with (maybe) some 'crafting' tables and (definitely) a good tidy up. Plenty of space for comfy chairs to relax in does, of course, remain a priority. If you have ideas here or fancy helping, then do get in touch or just call in. Once again, we have registered as an official 'Warm Welcome Space' this winter. We don't envisage changing our priorities or what we do but if being registered encourages anyone to venture out, enjoy a bit of social time and have a warm-up and a hot drink on us then we think it has to be a good idea. Keeping warm is likely to be a priority later this month when we'll be in Market Square for the annual Town Christmas Fair on the 30th of November. Preparations are well under way with a range of seasonal goodies already in production. Also in production are 200 kits for Winslow schools, Scouts and Guides to transform into Christmas lanterns for the Lions 'Carols and Lanterns' event in December. Keith, Ray and Brian are heading - up our crack team on this so it should be quite a spectacle! Hope to see you there!

The Shed is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 – 4:00. Unit 4, Station Road Ind. Estate.
www.MenInShedsWinslow.org.uk

Or for more info call Dave Saunders; 01296 714164

Continued from Focus October 2023

THE INTELLIGENCE ZONE

The many sites of the Whaddon Web

7 of 8;

Leighton/Linslade: freedom's forgotten citadel

This series of articles deals with the many hilltop sites on which MI6's communications section (HQ at Whaddon) put up aerials to support the Allied war effort. But that network - **The Whaddon Web** - was but one small part of Allied intelligence activity in the Second World War. Leighton Buzzard is one place where Whaddon's activities overlapped with others. While MI6 put up the aerials at nearby Royal Air Force (RAF) Stoke Hammond (for sending secure messages to the far east), the station itself was run from RAF Stanbridge, just up the road...

World War Two was the first major war in which aircraft played a crucial part. It was no coincidence that all of the three main Royal Air Force command headquarters (Fighter, Bomber and Coastal) were in the Intelligence Zone. Less well-known was a fourth major, secret, RAF station. This was the aforementioned RAF Stanbridge, on the outskirts of Leighton Buzzard. Its codename, 'Q Central', kept its role deliberately vague. It was the place which ran nearly all communications with British forces overseas (as well as dealing with a good deal of Britain's telephone services). It was, in effect, a vast telephone exchange; the Allied equivalent of the German, Italian and Japanese (Axis) command centres which Bletchley Park listened into. The major difference was that while Bletchley Park broke the Axis codes, the Axis intelligence services never broke the Allied codes used by Q Central. The machines that the RAF used to encode and send the messages were teleprinters, essentially like the German enigma machines but with many more 'wheels'. Q Central was very very hush-hush. It had no airfield, but plenty of communication masts. Its commander was a highly intelligent RAF officer called Oswyn Lywood. RAF Stanbridge/Q Central was only one of many critically important wartime sites spurred off from Britain's telephone backbone, which ran up Watling Street (the A5). Whaddon was another, Bletchley Park another. With a staff of about 600 servicemen and women, Q Central had become operational in May 1939, 6 months before the war began. It is a popular myth that Britain entered the war all unprepared and 'winged it' to victory. Nothing can be further from the truth, It had been preparing for war for years. Q Central needed plenty of bandwidth as it was the largest telephone and teleprinter exchange in the world. Alan Turing worked on the development of this technology for a while. Again, this is no coincidence. The world's first electronic digital computer - Colossus, a cornerstone of the modern world - grew directly from British telephone technology. Because of its importance, every effort was made to camouflage the site. The personnel were largely underground; but in case the Luftwaffe was short of

somewhere to bomb, dummy roads and buildings were built 'topside', complete with dummy cars. These were, needless to say, at some distance from the subterranean communication halls. The scale of the operation is staggering. Upwards of a hundred operators were working in the various underground sections at any one time, night and day, seven days a week. The forethought and sheer intelligence of these operations is sobering: one of the sections was solely concerned with sending out dummy traffic, to confuse the enemy.



Eileen Younghusband

Apart from (and because of) its communication links, the women of the RAF (WAAFs) who were to work as radar plotters in Fighter Command were also trained at Q Central. Eileen Younghusband was one of them. In her fascinating autobiography *One Woman's war* she says: *'Everything was highly camouflaged. The buildings were covered by a heavy green fabric ...matching the colours of the fields... I wondered what was so important here to receive this treatment.'* As well as disguising the camp from the air, the number of real buildings above ground were kept to a minimum. There were just two station buildings and only twenty-four married quarters. Proposals to build more were quashed so as not to draw attention to the site. Instead, the airmen and women (and more than half of the personnel were women: WAAFs), were billeted in the town of Leighton Buzzard - in the men's case in Marley Tiles' disused storage sheds, in the women's (including Eileen) in the old Poor House (which still exists) - neither of which was conducive to cleanliness or comfort. All of the radar stations around the coasts of Britain had communication lines leading into Q Central (lines also went to RAF Fighter Command HQ at Bentley Priory) and the backup Operations Room for Fighter Command was also based there.

The one thing about Q Central that could not be camouflaged, of course, were the ninety-foot high masts that stood above it. There were eventually thirty eight of them. However, there is safety in numbers. North Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire were a web of masts. Leighton Buzzard's thirty eight were little more than a drop in the ocean when compared to the arrays of Whaddon, Chicksands, Bletchley, Hanslope, Beaumanor and all the other local sites (as I explain in *The Intelligence Zone*) - not to mention the web on the Dunstable Downs surrounding the Meteorological Office. The Luftwaffe - no fools - did photograph the site, although they never bombed it. As well as Q Central, **60 Group** - the organisation that looked after the construction, maintenance and communications of the coastal radar sites - was also based at Leighton Buzzard (in

the suburb of Linslade). Sixty Group were a key reason (along with the RAF, Spitfires and Hurricanes) why Britain won the Battle of Britain.

Leighton Buzzard (Leighton/Linslade) grew enormously because of its key role in the Intelligence Zone. As well as the airmen and women of Q Central and Sixty Group, it was home to many workers from Bletchley Park - which was one stop further up the railway line. The population of this attractive little English market town doubled from eight to sixteen thousand during the war. It is quite astonishing that Leighton Buzzard has no museum to celebrate its role during the war. If a museum can be built celebrating the cracking of enemy codes, surely some small space could be found to celebrate the hub of Britain's radar and the islands' secret communication hub?

German air reconnaissance photo of the Q Central site. Germans intelligence has marked the 'main building' (3). This was a decoy. The site was underground and underneath the fields to the east. Reproduced from 'The secrets of Q Central' (Spellmount).



My next and final blog in this series will be about the foreign services that MI6 provided aerials for; and a little more about the irrepressible supremo of Whaddon, Richard Gambier Parry.

Alan Biggins Copyright September 2023

These blogs can also be found on the blog page of my website www.theintelligencezone.com

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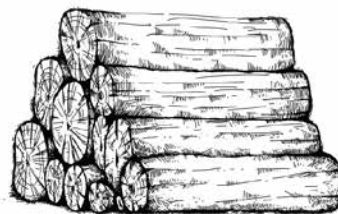
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November 2023

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from Winslow, through Gt Horwood, Little Horwood, Mursley and Swanbourne, arriving in Aylesbury just after 10am.

Drop off at the new Sainsbury's at Gateway and Broadfields on request.

Departing Aylesbury Bus station at 12.15pm. FREE with a bus pass, otherwise only £4.50 return.

Winslow Market Service

54abc - runs every Wednesday morning

This service picks up in the surrounding villages and then into Winslow, (Swanbourne, Mursley, Great Horwood, Whaddon, Nash and The Claydons). Pick up times vary according to village. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £3.00 return.

Buckingham Bus Service

Tuesday 7th November and Tuesday 5th December

Picking up in Winslow and surrounding villages. 1 hour in town then 1 hour in Tesco, or 2 hours in Tesco. Door to door service. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £4.50 return.

Westcroft Shopping

Thursday 9th and 23th November

Picking up in surrounding villages. Morrisons, Boots, Aldi, etc. Bus passes accepted, otherwise £4.50 return. Ring to book.

Asda

Monday 27th November

Bus passes are not accepted on this trip and will cost £5.00 Picking up in Winslow and surrounding villages Asda Shopping with the option to drop at Stadium MK1 for M&S, Primark, Next and more. Drop off at Matalan and Tesco on request.

Haddenham Garden Centre

Monday 13th November - £8 travel.

Enjoy a little early Christmas shopping at this family run, independent garden centre, restaurant and Shop. Christmas displays as well as in store brands including Edinburgh Wollen Mill, The Works & Joules.

Bath Christmas Market Thursday 30th

November, £25 travel Walk through a winter wonderland in the historic city of Bath. Bath Christmas market spans the picturesque city centre with sparkling chalets nestled amongst iconic monuments and mulled wine on every corner.

Please contact the WDCB Coordinator for more details of any trips.

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GREAT HORWOOD & SINGLEBOROUGH WI

Talking Rubbish at the WI

Great Horwood & Singleborough WI were delighted to welcome Jez Elkin, Waste Awareness & Education Manager from FCC Environment, at their October meeting to talk about what happens to household rubbish in Buckinghamshire. He spoke about the volume of rubbish in the county (300,000 tonnes a year) and the scale of food waste (for example, 1m loaves of bread, 500m bags of salad) and said how better fridge management could reduce the amount of food thrown away. He also explained the difference between use by dates (shouldn't be consumed after this date for health reasons) and best before dates which refer to the quality of the product.

Jez also spoke about what can and what shouldn't be put in the recycling bin and said that people putting nappies into the recycling bin was the biggest contaminant. He also said that the Bucks Waste Wizard on the council website is an interactive tool where people can check which items can be recycled.

Interestingly, the Greatmoor Energy from Waste (EfW) facility enables non-recyclable waste to be diverted from landfill and instead enter a treatment process to generate electricity. More than 25 megawatts of energy is recovered from the process, enough to power 40,000 homes. Over 30 years it will have saved Bucks taxpayers around £150m compared to if the rubbish had gone to landfill.

Afterwards members took part in a fun environmental quiz and chatted about the subject over tea and coffee. One member sent a text the next day to say "Just want to say thank you for organising yet another great speaker. I was not truly interested beforehand but learnt a lot and have changed my approach to recycling". A visit to Greatmoor Recycling is to be arranged in the near future.

In October, members also enjoyed a trip to the quaint village of Earls Barton in Northamptonshire for a private tour of the fascinating Jeyes museum where we also had lunch.

Our meetings, held every second Tuesday each month, are currently held at the Cricket Club while the Village Hall is being refurbished. We're very pleased to decamp here temporarily and would like to thank Lynda Sirett for her help in opening the club for us. If you'd like to join our friendly group or would like more information, please contact Ann Biggins - annieqqmk@gmail.com / 07961 960802.

See photo on page 10

**Copy and advertising deadline for next
issue of Focus - 15 NOVEMBER.**

editor@ghfocus.com

GREAT HORWOOD & SINGLEBOROUGH WI



The waste bunker at Greatmoor.
Photo: courtesy of FCC Environment



Nook Park flooding.

NOOK PARK

The *Bucks Free Press* has published more about the difficulties being faced by the residents of Nook Park as well as farmers on adjoining land.

Bucks Free Press

News Sport Best of Bucks More

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Nook Park: Farmer 'outraged' at homes boss 'trespassing'

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Farmer alleges Joe Burns (R) has trespassed onto his land (Image: Elizabeth Phillips)

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PARISH PUMP



Great Horwood
Parish Council

FOOTPATHS

I hope that you all made good use of your Footpaths Map which was included as a loose leaf sheet in the last edition of Focus.

PARISH COUNCILLORS

I am pleased to report that Thomas Lee attended his first meeting as a new Parish Councillor at our October meeting, however Andy Waller has decided that he is not able to devote the time that he would like to his duties as a Parish Councillor and so has resigned from the council. This means that we once again have two vacancies on the council. If you think you might be interested in volunteering to serve your local community in this way please email me and we can arrange to have a chat about the role and see if it is suited to you.

VILLAGE PLANTERS

We have no volunteers come forward in the village to take responsibility for planting and maintaining the 5 planters placed at the entrances to the parish and so we are currently seeking commercial quotations to carry out the work.



FUNDS FOR LOCAL CAUSES

Applications closed for this funding source on 31st October and the decisions on which organisations will receive the money will be made at the parish council meeting on 14th November and payments will be made at the meeting on 12th December.



SPEEDWATCH

I am still receiving reports of speeding vehicles in the village including along Little Horwood road but unfortunately as I write this I have only had one volunteer come forward to join me in operating the Speedwatch camera. This is the only method that we have for officially recording the speed of vehicles at fixed points in the parish and from which action can be taken by Thames Valley Police with the information that we feedback to them over the internet.



So if you are really concerned about speeding in the village and worried about the dangers to your children and pets there is something you can do about it.

You will need to undertake an online training course

and pass the online test at the end of the course. Once up and running the team will monitor speeds of vehicles at certain agreed spots in the parish and report the details direct to Thames Valley Police who will be able to take warning actions against speeding drivers. Cllr. John Gilbey johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com



THE CROWN

The Parish Council has once again contacted Buckinghamshire Council Planning Enforcement and the Heritage function to try to ensure that The Crown (a listed building) is protected from falling into a state of major disrepair.

VILLAGE HALL REFURBISHMENT

The refurbishment of the village hall is now well under way with the process of removing all the asbestos in the hall having already been completed. More than £150,000 is being contributed to the overall cost by the Parish Council with a large part of it coming from the Section 106 agreement for the Neighbourhood Plan development which has been built at East Field and Crabtree Close.

WELCOME PACK

If you are new to the village and have not yet received a Welcome pack please email as shown below with your address and I will drop one off to you.

FOCUS ONLINE

Did you know that there is an online edition of Focus with every copy from February 2012?

So, if you have mislaid your copy and can't find the information you need, just log onto

<https://e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/focus-magazine/>

NEXT MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th November at 7.30pm in the Scout Hut (this will be our normal venue whilst the Village Hall is being refurbished.)

There is always a public participation period when members of the public can have their say. The Notice of the meeting is advertised on the Great Horwood Facebook page, the Parish Council website and the noticeboard in the High Street.

Minutes of meetings can be found on the noticeboard and the Parish Council website e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/

Cllr. John Gilbey, Chairman of the Council
johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com

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Useful contact details

Members of the Parish Council:

Please note that councillors now have a dedicated Parish Council email address. This is in order to comply with new Data Protection Regulations that came into force in 2018. It is good policy to keep council emails separate from private emails.

John Gilbey	Chairman	01296 711915	johnwgilbeypc@gmail.com
Caroline Cousin	Vice Chairman	07903 549339	carolinecousinghpc@gmail.com
Jackie Goss		01296 713135	jackiegossghpc@gmail.com
Jonathan Evans		07470 298324	jjevans.ghpc@gmail.com
Thomas Lee		07901 944996	tlee.ghpc@gmail.com

Clerk to the Council

Mrs. Sarah Biswell	01296 715803	clerk@greathorwoodpc.org.uk
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Parish Council Website

Great Horwood Village Hall Bookings	01296 715968	www.e-voice.org.uk/ghpc/
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Winslow and District Community Bus	01296 715786	
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Community Police Officers

PCSO Andy Piotrowski	Tel: 101	Andrew.Piotrowski@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk
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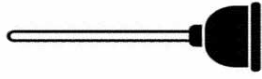
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THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

Roger Mason is an accomplished writer and public speaker who recently gave a talk on The Great Train Robbery to the Great Horwood W.I. This was well received by the Great Horwood W.I. and is summarised here for the Focus Magazine readers.

On the evening of August 7 1963 a Royal Mail Train left Glasgow en route to Euston Station in London. The first two carriages carried sacks containing used bank notes and six men guarding them. The remaining ten carriages were a travelling sorting office and carried seventy staff. The train made a number of stops to pick up more money and mail. In the early hours of August 8 sixteen men waited for the train on a railway embarkment just a few miles south of Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. Fifteen of them were hardened criminals from two established criminal gangs. The sixteenth was a retired train driver with no criminal record.

The robbers stopped the train at Sears Crossing by tampering with the signals. Then one of them uncoupled the rear ten carriages from the engine and two carriages in front. The engine driver was coshed and their replacement driver was told to drive the engine and front two carriages on to Bridego Bridge. It took a short time for the pressure to build up and they wrongly thought that their driver could not do it. The original driver was told to do so, and he did.

The gang smashed their way into the carriages containing the money, then transferred the sacks to their lorry. They then sped back to Leatherslade Farm. This was their base 27 miles away where they had gathered two days earlier. They divided up the money which exceeded £2,700,000 (around £70 million in today's money), then left the farm and went their separate ways. They left behind many fingerprints and other clues, and incredibly these included the empty mail sacks.

It was a brilliant plan and brilliantly executed, but from the point of view of the robbers what followed was a disaster and a fiasco. They had not planned and co-ordinated what would happen afterwards. Following a tip off and just five days after the robbery the police discovered Leatherslade Farm. They

gathered the fingerprints and the other evidence and set about using it. Rewards were offered. Suspicions and information came in from the public. A great number of people knew far too much. Many of the robbers had told their girlfriends, wives, other family members, friends, associates, and people helping them launder the money. To coin a phrase – when more than a hundred people know a secret it is not a secret.

The trials started 165 days after the robbery and 41 days after the last arrest. How many months or more likely years would it take now? The did things differently then.

Nine of the robbers faced trial and so did a solicitor's managing clerk who had helped them. The retired engine driver and the three others had not and never have been identified. Three of the robbers had gone on the run and had not been arrested. One was declared not guilty after a ruling that there was no case to answer. Nevertheless, it is very widely believed that he was not innocent. One of the remaining eight pleaded guilty. The other seven and the solicitor's managing clerk pleaded not guilty. All were convicted and exceedingly harsh sentences were imposed. Several of them got 30 years in prison. Predictably, though, they did not fully serve them. They were released on licence after about ten years.

The police work continued. One of the men on the run, Buster Edwards, gave himself up after three years. After imprisonment he went straight and ran a flower stall outside Waterloo Station. He committed suicide in 1994. The other two, Jimmy White and Bruce Reynolds were captured and served terms of imprisonment. Charlie Wilson and Ronnie Biggs escaped from prison early in their sentences. Wilson was recaptured in Canada and returned to prison. Biggs spent most of the rest of his life in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. He returned to Britain close to the end of his life.

Roger Mason has written 31 books, and he gives talks on a range of subjects. In addition to The Great Train Robbery, they include Robert Maxwell, Did he fall or was he pushed? Prime Ministers' Extra-Marital Affairs 1721-1945 and Votes for Women to name a few.

Roger Mason

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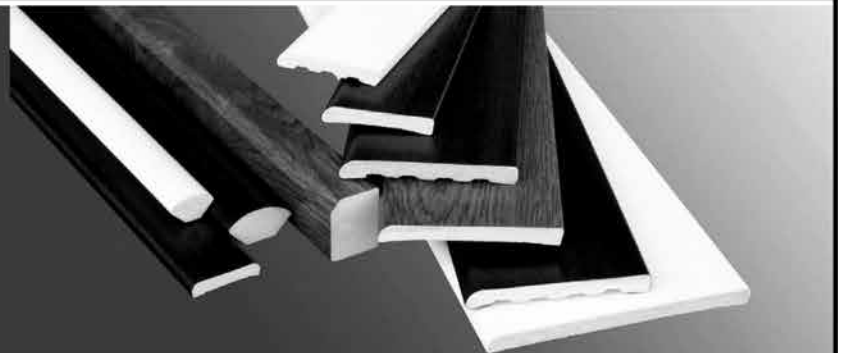
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