

From Farmer's Field to Arboretum

In 1709 large areas of Guildford became the property of the Onslow family at Clandon Park. This included what now comprises Onslow Village, which was parkland, together with Manor Farm and Blackwell Farm west of the A3, now owned by the University of Surrey.

Lord Onslow sold 646 acres of land in 1918-19, including Manor Farm and Wilderness Farm, for £57 per acre and it was on this land that Onslow Village was to be built. A co-partnership with Guildford Corporation and the Ministry of Health was formed as a Public Utility Society, creating Onslow Village Ltd. But that's a story for another time.

What we now know as the Arboretum was land owned by Onslow Village Ltd which later became the property of Guildford Borough Council in 1951. It was leased out and farmed by the Weaver family, as part of Manor Farm, but eventually the lease came up for renewal and Farmer Weaver decided he no longer wished to farm it.

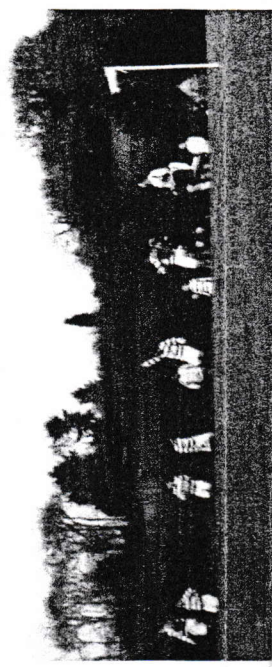
The 1980s was a turbulent period for the town in general and Onslow Village in particular, as it was in 1984 that Onslow Village Ltd was wound up. That decade also saw the fight against the building of a Sainsburys superstore at Burpham and a lesser fight against the development at Ladymead which had been a somewhat neglected site of commercial and industrial buildings and housing for some time. It is now the site of a variety of retail outlets, such as B&Q and Homebase.

Adjacent to Onslow Village was an area known as Bannister's Farm, again owned by Onslow Village Ltd and purchased by Guildford Borough Council in 1936. This became Bannister's Recreation Ground and featured a running track around its perimeter. A resident of Onslow Village, Mrs Linda Penny, organised a comprehensive



Lawn Tennis Club. In addition, 5th Guildford Scout Group held several popular fund raising "Family Day" fêtes for a number of years.

We are indeed lucky that the then Mayor, Cllr Bernard Parke, campaigned for the field to be incorporated with the Recreation Ground and that Guildford Borough Council decided to adopt the field as an Arboretum. Now with the many mature trees, benches, totem poles and picnic areas, together with the Recreation Ground, we possess a "green lung" and development buffer for the village and the surrounding area, as well as a wonderful asset for the



was apparently needed to build the new Spectrum Sports Centre and as a result, the Council asked for sealed bids from Asda, Co-op, Sainsbury and Tesco. As we know, the rest is history.

Then, as now, there was great pressure to build more houses and Guildford Borough Council identified the field now known as the Arboretum as a possible site. We were threatened, at short notice from the Council, with a proposal to build two hundred and fifty houses on this field, competing with the houses in Manor Way for access. This naturally prompted a campaign to fight the development.

A strong case was submitted stating that if Onslow lost Bannister's Recreation Ground, the Ward should be compensated for the loss of amenity ground. The campaign against the housing development on Farmer Weaver's old field was successful and it became part of Onslow Recreation Ground. The original concept was to grub out the dividing hedgerow and enclose the whole site as a large parkland.

Over the years, the Recreation Ground has provided facilities for many organisations including Onslow Village Cricket Club, unfortunately now long gone, but there is still a very active Football Club and of course Onslow Village



Photograph by courtesy of Bernard Parke

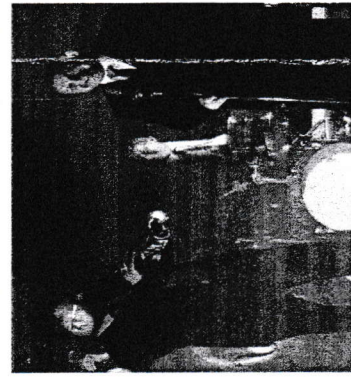
Mayor of Guildford, Cllr Keith Childs (left), with Rev. Brian Coleman (centre) and Matthew Alexander (second from right) in 1998-9 at the official planting of the memorial tree in the Arboretum to Mike Hawthorn, Formula 1 racing driver and 1959 Formula 1 Champion, who died in a car crash on the A3 in January 1959, adjacent to ground now occupied by the Arboretum. Can anyone identify the others present as well as the exact date?

My thanks to Bernard Parke and Richard Lingard of Guildford Borough Council for their contributions.

Angela Joule

(In compiling this article every effort has been made to check the accuracy of the information. No part of this article may be reproduced in any form without prior permission of the author.)

Music! Singing! Dancing! If you weren't at the OVRA Annual Party, here's what you missed!



An sell-out audience numbering more than 95 gathered in the Village Hall on 12th February, to enjoy a buffet supper, followed by a great evening's entertainment.

Thanks to a fantastic team effort, the committee laid on a varied, two-course buffet and for the rest of the evening, the Hall rang to the music of the **JJ Vinten Band**. The band members are all professional musicians who clearly love what they do and it wasn't long before their infectious jazz rhythms got people up and dancing.

Judging by the lively atmosphere in the Hall and the number of compliments received afterwards, it was a very successful evening and the committee can feel justifiably pleased with the fruits of their labours!

If you've enjoyed any of the Association's events and would like them to continue, please consider joining the committee. To offer your time and skills, please come along to the AGM or see right for contact details.



With so many to cater for at the party, the committee enlisted the help of **In the Pink**. This is a group of girls who hire themselves out, with a supervising adult, to assist with clearing and washing up after parties and functions, and they donate at least 10% of their fee to a breast cancer research charity. If you'd like to enquire about using In the Pink, please contact Sheila Zazzera on 01483 579731 or Clare Parsons on 01483 862392.

OVRA AGM Tuesday 8th March

All OVRA members are invited to join the committee at the **Annual General Meeting**: to show your support for the Association, to let the committee know what you would like them to be doing during the coming year and perhaps even to volunteer your services as a committee member*. A **complimentary glass of wine** (or soft drink) is on offer to all attendees and the AGM will be followed by a talk:

"A Journey Across Darkest Africa":

Hon Alderman

Bernard Parke will talk about his relative Surgeon Major Thomas Heazle Parke (right), Medical Officer on the notorious Stanley expedition to cross the Congo to relieve Emin Pasha, the besieged governor of Equatoria.

**The committee is looking for new members to help organise talks and social events and*

the committee itself

meets every other month or so. None of the posts requires a huge investment of time and whichever role you are interested in, you will have the support of an active committee. Please call Lesley for more information: 01483 533762.



COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

If you would like to tell Onslow Village residents about your group's forthcoming events, or issues that might interest them, please email ovra.news@ntlworld.com or ring 07866 076709.
Next copy date: 11th March for publication end March/early April.

Yvonne Arnaud welcomes 70-piece orchestra of talented young musicians

PH Productions is a bold, up-and-coming new non-professional musical theatre company in Guildford. Led by an eclectic team of five: a doctor a teacher and three university students, it has already established itself as a popular group in the area, focusing on producing concerts and musical theatre with high musical standards.



It all began as a collaboration between Onslow resident, Alex Parker, and Cath Humphrys whose concert 'Come One Come All' celebrated musical theatre numbers from the last 25 years at the Electric Theatre in Guildford. Since then there have been a further two concerts and two fully staged musicals – 'A Little Night Music' in September and 'Marguerite' this January.

PH constantly strives to expand its horizons and is delighted to announce its latest venture, 'The Art of the American' at the Yvonne Arnaud. It will encompass renditions of songs by Sondheim, 'symphonic dances' from Bernstein's beloved West Side Story and Copland's 'Appalachian Spring' – a glorious portrayal of the American frontier.

This concert will be played by a 70-piece orchestra established by Alex Parker and Emily Davis, another Guildford resident who now studies at the Royal Academy

DON'T LET THEM IN

We urge residents to be alert to a distraction burglary technique following an incident recently in which a 92-year-old householder in Onslow Village was targeted.

The pensioner opened the door of her home and was faced with a man claiming he needed to turn off the water supply to her home owing to work being carried out at the back of the property. The home owner allowed the caller into the house and the man went into the kitchen where he pretended to turn the water off and then demanded a call out fee of £30. He went on to say he needed to call his boss and after doing so returned to demand £600 for work which he said needed to be done.

The victim explained she did not have that sort of money in the house, handed over £30 and asked the offender to leave.

The suspect is described as a tall man with streaky blonde hair who was wearing workman's clothing.

DC Ford who is investigating the incident said: "I am appealing for anyone who may have been in the Onslow Village area on the afternoon of Tuesday 25th January and who may have noticed anyone acting suspiciously in the vicinity of the local infants school. Someone may have a snippet of information which could help this enquiry and I hope any details are passed to officers as soon as possible."

Neighbourhood Inspector Tim Shaw said: "This was an extremely callous and cowardly crime which preyed on a vulnerable member of our community and we are advising residents to stay vigilant. Neighbours of elderly homeowners can help by making them aware of the potential pitfalls and keeping an eye out for suspicious people around their properties."

"Under no circumstances should you let an unexpected visitor into your home. Always stop to think whether you are expecting any callers, use the chain if you do decide to answer the door and check for identification before letting anyone in. Don't be taken in by these con artists, however convincing their story may sound."

Anyone with information is asked to contact Surrey Police on 0845 125 2222 quoting reference GD/11/849. Alternatively Crimestoppers can be contacted anonymously and free of charge on 0800 555 111.

Picturing the Past

OVRA has a number of photos of the village as it was shortly after its foundation in the 1920s (viewable on our Facebook page) and it's interesting to compare them with how the same scenes look today. A relatively new website historypin.com allows people to post old photos on to a map, along with stories so that others can see and read about what their town

Date for your diary

The next **Bring and Take** is on Saturday 5 March at the Village Hall in Onslow Village from 10.00 to 11.30am.

For further information on any of the above please contact Lesley on 01483 533762

Vivace Chorus

On 5th March in Guildford Cathedral we are performing the most beautiful early Baroque and Baroque music at Guildford Cathedral and it is a glorious programme: Bach's 3rd Brandenburg Concerto, the ubiquitous Pachelbel Canon and Handel's Dixit Dominus. We are also singing Allegri's Miserere mei. It was a secret of the Sistine Chapel, only performed by that choir in that building ... until, that is, Mozart came to hear a performance, came home and notated the whole piece from memory! And what a secret it was! This is a work that has become regarded as one of the most sublime choral settings ever written, juxtaposing as it does, verses of plainsong with choral writing of the most exquisite beauty (including the famous soprano top C!).

Tickets are £11-£22 from Tourist Information 01483 444334.

The concert is preceded by a free pre-concert talk. For more details visit www.vivacechorus.org

The Curtain Raisers

The Curtain Raisers would like to announce a change of performance timetable for 2011.

This year, instead of a pantomime in January we are presenting a two evening event called "Something for Everyone" on the 11th and 12th March 2011 at Onslow Village Hall.

On Saturday, 15th January The Curtain Raisers held a very successful Open Day when an invitation had been given to come and browse the archives, watch a panto whilst enjoying some refreshments, and look over the very successful productions performed by all ages in the

or village was like in the past, and even overlay the old pictures with the streetviews of today.

Historypin was created by the social movement We Are What We Do, in partnership with Google, and is one in a series of projects created as part of We Are What We Do's campaign to get generations talking more, sharing more and coming together more often. A laudable aim indeed.

We hope to be able to add some of the Onslow Village photos to Historypin and will report back on our progress.

The Crossways in the 1920s and below, as it looks today



OVRA on Facebook & Twitter

Don't forget you can follow us on Facebook and Twitter and receive updates about all our events and news affecting Onslow Village. Just search for "Onslow Village Residents' Association" on Facebook, and on Twitter, find us at http://twitter.com/OVRA_ (Take care to include the underscore or you'll be following someone quite different!).

If you were a Group member of OVRA on Facebook, please note that **we have switched to a Page** instead, so to carry on receiving updates, you will need to find our Page and click "Like".



Comments/views/suggestions

OVRA is your Association, so if you'd like to suggest ideas for talks or events; offer to help with deliveries or at events; or there's an issue you think the committee might help with, please get in touch. Write to the OVRA Secretary, 68 High View Road, Guildford GU2 7RU or email ovrasec@googlemail.com.

past forty years. A great deal of interest was shown by our guests and if you were unable to come, below is an outline of our next production and if you are interested we shall be very pleased to hear from you.

"Something for Everyone" will include two, one-act plays (titles to be announced) and a 20 to 30 minute slot of musical numbers. The idea is to give everyone of varying abilities an opportunity to be involved whether on stage or back stage, whether it is the first time you have been involved in a play or not. Is there a song you would like to sing and have not had the opportunity? If so, then this could be the perfect event for you.

The Plays:

We have not yet appointed a producer/director for the two play slots, so again if you're interested in directing or producing then let us know. Rehearsals will start from mid January 2011 and will be worked to fit around the busy social lives of those cast members involved. The idea for the play and the musical slots is that whoever is involved will be required to do work at home (i.e. learning lines and words to songs) so we can keep rehearsals at a minimum as we know how busy everyone is. You must however be available on the late afternoon of Sunday 6th March – dress and technical rehearsal and the evening performances on the 11th and 12th March.

Musical Slot:

The theme for this is very open. We want YOU to suggest one or two songs that you would like to sing, whether solos, duets or small group numbers. Our aim is to have a good mix of song types, i.e. ballads, comedy, rock, pop, jazz, gospel etc you name it. We the committee will then select a good cross-section ensuring the audience has a nice variety. The songs can be from any era and genre. You will be required to audition your song(s). Songs may be accompanied by a pianist or a backing track.

If you wish to perform in the musical slot you must be available on Sunday 6th March (late afternoon) for a dress and technical rehearsal and the performances on the evening of the 11th and 12th March. All other rehearsals will be worked out around those involved and should only be one a week through February and March (if that).

If you are interested in the play, contact Fiona Gallacher on fionagallacher@hotmail.com. If you are interested in the musical slot or helping in some other capacity then contact Mandy Grealis at mandy.grealis@btinternet.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

of Music. It features no fewer than five former finalists from the 'Young Musician of the Year' competition. These musicians, mainly from the Royal Academy, will be faces to look out for in the years ahead.

Future productions include Sondheim's beautiful yet macabre 'Sweeney Todd' in April, and a revival of 'A Little Night Music', our first staged musical at the Yvonne Arnaud main stage. PH has an exciting year ahead and hope to see you soon!

The Art of the American – 3 April, Yvonne Arnaud, £16.50

Sweeney Todd – 20-23 April, Mill Studio, Guildford, £10

A Little Night Music – 1-4 September, Yvonne Arnaud, £21-23

For more information, or if you wish to get in touch see: www.p-h-productions.co.uk or email info@p-h-productions.co.uk

RECYCLING NEWS

Visit to the Wood Store, Brighton

On 2 November a group of Guildford Borough Council Recycling Volunteers went to Brighton to see the work started by Richard Hammet at the Wood Store in 1998. He collects wood from building firms in the area at a small price (cheaper than they would pay to send to land fill) and reuses and recycles it. He also collects pallets and boxes from packaging firms and from the public who have pieces of wood hanging around in their lofts and garages. He received a huge response from local firms who wished to sell him their spare wood and helpers who give up their free time to make the store work.

He also creates work and training opportunities for the unemployed and those who have special needs (ex offenders and the disabled) who work on a voluntary basis to give themselves work experience and get themselves into work. They mainly stay about seven months.

The reusable wood is sold as small lots to local handymen, the shorter pieces are made into items to be sold in the shop i.e. bird feeders and kitchen equipment, some is sold as fire wood or kindling, and the balance which has no use is sold to be chipped and used as a mulch or compost or used as fuel in power stations. So nothing is wasted.

Richard is now helping to set up franchises all over the country from Bristol to Perth. Each project is self-supporting although grants may be available from the Councils or WRAP.

If you are interested in finding out more about this project please visit www.woodrecycling.org.uk.