SHAMLEY GREEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Ponds and Streams

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WATER

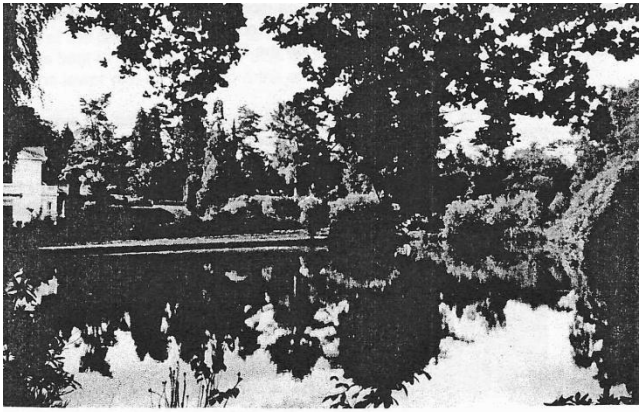
Preface

The year 2003 is designated by the United Nations as the International Year of fresh water.

Many of the world's religions place great stress on the value and use of water to clean and purify in ritual ablutions, in hygienic preparations of food and in washing of utensils.

People who live in arid areas are used to long seasonal periods of drought or those who live in deserts, where no precipitation can be relied on, all value water more than we do simply because it is scarce and difficult to obtain.

In the early part of 2003 here in Shamley Green we had several months of above average rainfall followed by two months with very little rain, until the afternoon of 17th June at the start of our History Society visit to the home of Colin and Sheila Jobson, a fifteenth century half timbered property. Suddenly, just as we were arriving, the heavens opened and a monsoonal type downpour began, which turned the B2128 road into a river. The storm lasted for about half an hour during which some of our members were trapped in their cars. Others had already arrived at the house.



Reflections on Woodhill Pond

To hold their interest until we were all assembled for our tour I began talking about how and where villagers obtained their water

before the coming of the mains supply in the mid 1920s. Eventually we were all assembled and began our house and garden tour in the usual way. Afterwards Betty Laws said she felt it would be helpful if I put pen to paper to record my views about local water supplies and that is how this came to be written.

Introduction

As so much of the surface of our planet is covered by vast oceans of salt water you could say that Earth is misnamed but, until now, people have always dwelt on the land masses and the theme of this booklet is about freshwater supplies and, in particular, about local water supply in our area of S.W. Surrey.

Water is vital to all of us but is all too frequently taken for granted, especially now when most of us have only to turn a tap to secure a crystal clear flow of safe drinkable water. Beware however, the supply is not inexhaustible. There is a hint of this when too many of us draw off water for hoses or sprinklers at the same time and the pressure drops.

At school we discovered or were told that water is an apparently simple compound in which hydrogen and oxygen combine in proportions of two to one giving us the well-known formula H_20. Adding other substances to water to create solutions still involves scientists in complex studies.

View across the duck pond towards Trefusis.

In conversation with Jack Derry he reminded me that whereas substances in general contract as they cool, in stark contrast when water temperatures drop to -4° it begins to expand as it turns to ice. As an important consequence ice floats on water

because it is less dense. Without water having this unique quality the world would lack its Antarctic Ice Shelf. Ponds would freeze from the bottom upwards instead of acquiring the surface

ice film, which shields aquatic life beneath and has to be tested with caution before we venture on to it. Much else follows from the behaviour of water and ice both in terms of climate and on the development of life forms on the Earth.

Water from Springs and Wells

Most people will have seen the television advertisements for Volvic spring water, which comes from below ground with enough Carbon Dioxide dissolved within it under pressure to make the bottled product naturally effervescent, so it gives off bubbles as soon as the bottle is opened.

Nowhere in Surrey is there anything like such products of former volcanic areas. The nearest comparison in our county is the Epsom salts associated with the spa site close to the famous racecourse.

Early Saxon inhabitants of our area had a very good appreciation of the value of a good pure water supply. This can be seen at many early farm sites, which were located near springs, or at suitable locations for shallow wells at places where gravel or sandy alluvium rests on heavy impervious clay. Most obvious of all are the sites located near the spring zone at the base of the sandy beds of the Lower Greensand, which overlie the Atherfield Clay. Other sites were where fresh flowing underground water supplies could be tapped by sinking wells into porous sands and gravels. Such wells are rarely more than fifteen to twenty feet deep at most. This was very convenient when much later the metal hydraulic hand operated pumps were available, as they could lift water to a maximum of thirty-two feet. Water from such sources was 'live' or sometimes described as 'sweet'. For example, the well on the site of what is now Elizabeth Hamilton's home Waverley Cottage, which replaced the previous dwelling on the same site called Sweetwater Cottage, provided such fresh clean drinking water. By contrast, if water only seeped slowly into a well especially in dry summers the water became more susceptible to contamination. It could accumulate a green slime, which was a sure sign that it was 'flat' or stale. Likewise, an isolated dwelling on the clay lowlands in the south of the parish might have to rely on pond water. If this were so it was always best to have two ponds side by side, the upper one for human needs and the lower one for cattle to drink or wallow in.

Excessive reliance on well water in our area had a down side to it in that the water from local sources other than from the chalk of the nearby North Downs was soft and contained relatively small quantities of trace elements with the possible exception of iron. People who relied totally on such

sources and failed to eat a regular weekly intake of fish could develop goitre due to a lack of iodine in their diet.

It is unwise to draw and drink untreated water from a flowing stream because of the risk of pollution from upstream. One possible exception was if water flowed freely, looked crystal clear and had watercress growing in it, as this plant is very intolerant of any form of contamination.

Natural processes quite rapidly clear contaminated water that flows into reed beds. Many environmentalists use this fact to encourage reed growth in filter beds to clear and clean polluted water.

In Victorian times some of the larger estate houses had water extracted from streams using the stream flow to operate hydraulic rams to pump water into reservoir tanks to supply household needs after filtration. One, which still functions on Darbyn's Brook feeds the reservoir tank on Derrys Hill and works the garden fountain at Derryswood. My grandfather installed that particular system in the early 1900s.

In Shamley Green, apart from wells the main pre 1920s source of water was the Dip Hole for the houses round the village green. It is located in the area of wildscape almost exactly opposite 'Timbers' and fairly close to, and on the same side of the road as, 'Shamley House'. Here there was a small wall with a pipe in it from which emerged a very reliable constant flow of clear water. The pipe was at a high enough level above the outflow for a small bucket or dipper to be used to catch the water for carrying back to the kitchen. Beneath the point when the water flowed out there was a small pool worn by the constantly emerging flow of water whenever no one was drawing it off into their cooking utensils, water pots or buckets.

Further evidence of the close link between working in a kitchen and the need for water to cook and clean is the fact that domestic wells are frequently located nine feet from the original back door kitchen entrance to the service area of many old half-timbered houses. This fact can sometimes be used to deduce how the former structure and interior layout of such dwellings changed over the years. Relocating a well was usually too much trouble.

In the early part of the twentieth century the availability of cheap mass-produced iron piping facilitated the laying of water mains and sewers. In

our area the drilling of deep wells at Netley in Shere provided the water source.

The pumping station is still drawing water from these bore holes located at the western edge of Gomshall beside the A25. The water was pumped up to the old water tower at Munstead. From there it could flow down under natural gravitational pressure. The mains water supply arrived in Shamley Green in the mid 1920s and mains drainage sewers were gradually installed soon after with effluent being directed to the sewage works near Barnett Farm on the banks of the Cranleigh Water branch of the River Wey. In recent years before a major refurbishment these works were sometimes overwhelmed and as a result effluent that was only partially treated flowed into the river and caused serious contamination. Thames Water were, I believe, fined for this infringement though they had not been responsible for building all the extra houses, road surfaces and drains that fed the storm waters into their system.

It is the Environment Agency which is responsible for enforcing the ever more rigorous standards for water purity and uncontaminated outflow under EU regulations. It is still uneconomic to install mains sewage links to more isolated dwellings and these still have to rely on their own septic tanks and periodic visits from the Waverley Blue Vehicle equipped with pumps and pipes to clear and revitalise these cesspits of putrid waste.

A change in rainfall type and patterns means we now experience more storms likely to cause flash flooding. Modern storm drains exacerbate the problem and the older more obstructed ditches and drains, which do not undergo such regular checking and cleaning as formerly become overwhelmed. A good example of this recently has been the frequent flooding in Woodhill Lane and at the bottom of Hul!brook Lane after periods of heavy rain. It is hoped that the additional outflows and drains now installed may help to minimise the risk of future problems. In addition, the stream bordering Lords Hill Common has been dredged.

To meet increased demand for water in the post war era additional boreholes were sunk at Netley into deeper strata below those of the Wealden series of rocks, but the supply remained of a very high quality from these deep aquifers or water bearing rock strata. In the 1990s Thames Water completed its huge ring main round London. The sizes of its underground structures are cathedral like in their dimensions.

This main brings water that has been abstracted and cleaned both directly from the River Thames and also from natural storage in the chalk downland around the Goring Gap. To even out supply and demand when the river flow is high during winter, water is abstracted, cleaned and then pumped into the chalk beds. Then in summer when river flow is less but demand is high, more water is extracted from the chalk aquifer to maintain supply. This is known as a compensation water storage system. It avoids unnecessary or excessive need to construct reservoirs as, by such ingenuity, the natural rock structures can be used for storage.

Climate change is making our summers, which were already rather dry, even more so with the chance of long periods of drought even higher. The current summer of 2003 has only served to reinforce our perceptions of that trend. It is important therefore to store and utilise rainwater wherever possible and to ensure that down pipes from roofs flow down into water butts or soak aways. It is illegal for them to flow direct into mains drainage. Many houses now have water meters fitted as an additional incentive to use available supplies efficiently. Selecting the right time of day to water plants either in the evening or early morning also makes the use of supplies more effective. When too many people keep hoses and sprinklers on either at the same time or for too long water pressure drops.

Let us hope that more thought will be given to the need to improve infrastructure capacity both for water supply and sewage disposal in order that it may cope with increasing demand and fluctuation levels, especially if the current policies of building more housing in the SE Region are relentlessly pursued. Some of us can remembers times when the taps ran dry in 1976 and in other dry summers before the great ring main was operational.

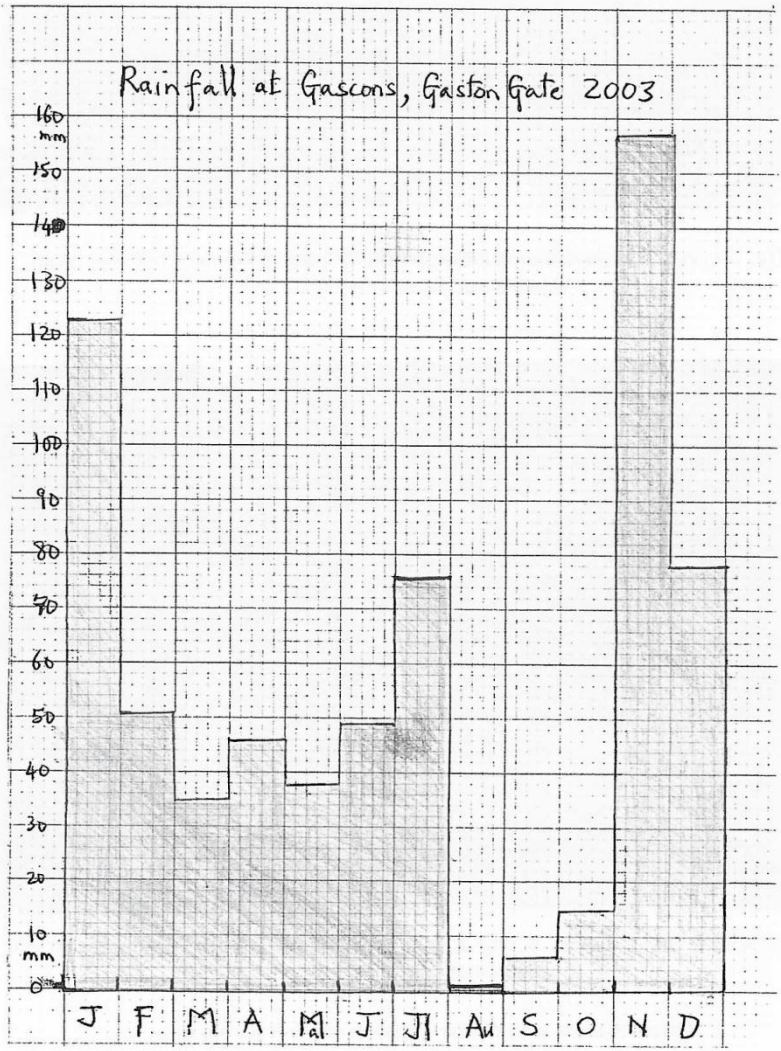
Another water supply problem is caused as a result of leaks. Many of the originally installed iron pipes of the 1920s and 30s are reaching the end of their useful lives as they rust, crack and collapse. Wherever this happens new blue plastic mains have to be installed.

In the late 1990s a large relief main was laid across the fields of the Shamley Wood Estate, across Woodhill Lane and on to the Alderbrook reservoir.

Although the Munstead tower has now been imaginatively converted from water tower into an unusual residence there are reservoirs adjacent and new mains were recently installed to feed them. As householders also convert their feed pipes from the road to their homes from iron to the recognisable thin blue plastic pipes it is no longer acceptable or recognised that electricity supplies can be earthed by linkage to water supply pipes as in former times.

Returning to the Dip Hole I recall tales of when elderly residents called on youngsters to go and fill a bucket of water for them. At that time the Heather family lived in Quoin Cottage and on one occasion Nellie Heather, now approaching her 100th birthday, remembers that as a girl on such a mission she fell into the small pool below the outfall between the stepping stones on which people stood while filling buckets. She had to be rescued and revived by her older brother.

After piped tap water arrived in houses many continued to have only one tap in the kitchen and no internal supply system. Some old timers refused to trust this new fangled piped water and continued to draw water from the Dip Hole for some years. Its source was a spring flowing out from the sandy deposits that formed the Nursery Hill fields. The water emerged on the side of the little valley cut by the stream flowing down from Woodhill. The stream has over the years laid down a narrow strip of fertile alluvial soil and the Dip Hole spring is located at the junction of the sand and gravel with the less porous alluvium. The source of the rill water flowing down the meadows beside Woodhill Lane, which gives Reel Hall its name, is also interesting. It is based on a geological feature called an "inlier". Due to the rock beds having been warped slightly from the horizontal millions of years ago and from the action of the constant wear of flowing water a window of underlying Atherfield Clay is exposed surrounded on all sides by the sandy Hythe Beds. As the clay is impervious and the sands are both pervious and more porous there is a spring zone all around this patch of clay on which are found the ponds opposite Woodhill Farm House and Woodhill Manor. Doug Chandler constructed the former pond in about 1960 for fishing and the Sparkes family created the ornamental ponds opposite Woodhill Manor in the early 1800s. They made it their home until the death of Admiral Copeland Sparkes in 1922. At that time the sunken road was like a ha-ha and there was an unbroken view from the house across to the ponds and rhododendrons beyond. Now a laurel hedge obscures the view of the ponds.


Rainfall at Gascons, Gaston Gate 2003
160 mm
150
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The Navvy's Hole is deep and dangerous for poor swimmers but was often frequented by skinny dippers.

Scaemel Mere with Canada geese grazing on the lawn.

Community volunteers remove excess aquatic vegetation –
a wet, muddy and smelly experience

Waverley Ranger Sarah Henderson and local residents view pond clearance
opposite the Bricklayers Arms.

The recently restored Smithwood Common pond
with an island wildlife refuge.

The old brick pit ponds at Marlow in Stroud Lane.

At the start of the 1939 war various works were undertaken to convince residents that the Government was doing everything possible to protect them. The old Dip Hole was victim to such a scheme. In front of it a large square cement cistern was constructed with a foot square tile sealed in the centre of the top. Supposedly, if houses were set on fire in the Blitz the exit could be blocked the cistern would fill with water and firemen could break the tile and draw out the water for their hoses to quench some nearby blaze.

It was of course never necessary to use this but at some stage the tile did get broken and rubbish dropped through the hole thus created did nothing for the purity of the water that still flowed out from its base. In recent years the whole site has become much overgrown and neglected. In an emergency, if mains water supplies were ever to fail perhaps its past importance would be restored. Contrast the inconvenience of the water fetching of previous generations with our own; just think of the time and effort it involved. Another change is of course that Nursery Hill is no longer agricultural land but is covered with houses, roads, drains and sewers. None of these are likely to improve the quality and purity of natural seepage and water flow.

Only when we have not got it do we appreciate how important and vital a good water supply is to all of us. After all 98% of some living organisms are constituted of water and human bodies are 60 to 70% water.

The pond which was located in front of the Malt House. After the installation of mains drainage it dried up! This left an uneven patch of common land which was subsequently levelled after the post war refurbishment of the Malt House.

Ponds

Commoners have a legal right to water their livestock at village ponds on the Green. There is a general presumption against horses being watered at the same place as cattle because horses tend to be more fastidious about the quality of water they drink. If it is clear and/or flowing there is no problem but they incline to avoid muddy, clouded water sources. When horses were more numerous, as important features of the transport system, our roads had special water troughs located in a variety of strategic positions to enable them to quench their thirst. One such trough survived outside Woodhill Farmhouse until about fifteen years ago. Another, in Cranleigh High Street, now serves as a giant flower tub.

An example of local byelaws about ponds and streams on village greens illustrates what is or is not legally permitted.

"No person shall bathe, wade or, without lawful authority, put any person or thing in any pond or stream on the Greens or wilfully, or carelessly, or negligently foul or pollute any such water, or take, injure or destroy, or attempt to take, injure or destroy, or wilfully disturb, or worry or ill treat any fish, or fowl in any such pond or stream, or take water from any pond or stream except for the purpose of watering cattle."

In our case of course by ancient custom people could draw water from the Dip Hole which was distinctive as being a spring fed water source rather than a pond or stream.

Excluding small ornamental garden ponds there are at least forty-four pond sites in our parish. You may know more. Ponds are usually man made features. Over time accumulation of humus and silt gradually fill them up so they are temporary features unless we act periodically to restore them. Ponds were formerly more important and more numerous than they are today as sources of water for livestock. Today their main value is to increase the diversity of wildlife.

Currently the Ranger Sarah Henderson is working on a project to dig out the former site of a substantial pond on the edge of Smithwood Common, close to where the road branches left towards Alderbrook and Farley Green. Old maps show several former ponds on this common. By restoring this pond, provided the rains yield sufficient surface water, there should be a significant incentive for a variety of water habitat creatures such as frogs, newts and dragonflies to return. Ponds were often located

close to Inns where coaches stopped so they could be used for watering horses. In some places, as previously mentioned, there were special horse troughs and when I was young some were still in use.

On the 1640 Montague estate map of Shamley Green a pond is marked on the common land in front of Potters on the corner of the Green where it narrows to Hulbrook Lane. By 1841 the Tithe Map shows it had been filled in and replaced by a pond on the opposite side of the road in front of what is now the Hullmead estate; some of us remember when the site was a chicken farm.

I well remember this particular pond; as a seven year old, sliding on the ice, which coated it in the cold winter of 1940, I suddenly fell through a hole that appeared, into the cold and muddy water. This pond was drained and filled in during the post war period when the Hullmead houses were built, though some subsequent drainage problems recur nearby after heavy rain. If a pond was still there it could take the surplus.

The larger of the two remaining ponds on the Green where the ducks have a small island and hut refuge to protect them from foxes, is located beside Woodhill Lane opposite Trefusis. A loyal band of local residents regularly feed the ducks and get a noisy welcome especially on those cold wet days when few parents take children to offer scraps of bread and biscuit. For very young toddlers this is always a very popular and enjoyable experience.

In former times a spring near Walnut Tree Cottage, the home of Bob Webster, served as the main water supply to this pond but the flow diminished so in the 1960s a ditch was cut from near the Bricklayers Arms to supplement the pond's water supply. It was beside the feeder lane to Woodhill and had to be cut deeper as it neared its destination in order for the water to flow along it. This was done when Leo Williams and his family lived at Trefusis. Richard Branson's mother Eve and Leo were among the prime movers in this restoration project. Eve also introduced a few exotic species of duck but foxes and/or poachers have subsequently ensured the demise of these ducks so we are now left with the normal variety and occasional visitations from Canada geese. At one time there was an old hollow elm tree on the verge in front of Walnut Tree Cottage, which fowl used as a roost and nesting place but it became diseased and had to be cut down and removed some fifteen or more years ago.

In 2001 Waverley Borough, the Parish Council and Village Society funded the dredging of the pond; the Ranger Sarah Henderson supervised the work. Removing the silt to another site would have doubled the cost so it was spread over part of the adjacent common land. After a few months it disappeared beneath the grass and rush vegetation. Since then the Environment Agency have introduced more strict rules about pond dredging so a sample of sediment has to be tested prior to any removal operation and then six months after dredging another sample from the dispersal site has to be tested. These regulations and tests add enormously to the costs of pond maintenance and will deter many Councils and owners from future pond refurbishment projects.

The pond opposite the Bricklayers Arms has for some time been a cause for concern as the intake pipe under the main B2128 road from the cellar of the Bricklayers evidently became blocked and broken. Highways have recognised there is a problem and promised to put it right. Meanwhile the Waverley Common Lands Ranger Sarah Henderson keeps an eye on the situation and organises vegetation cutting so that it does not become completely obscured. As the water level of the pond is now lower than the outlet the pond appears to be leaking as ground water saturation levels have dropped below that of the bond base. Perhaps the pond needs a new clay lining. Anyone interested in helping to puddle the clay? It can be a really messy job so might appeal to some folk who would enjoy the feel of soft wet clay between their toes.

There used to be a pond at the bottom of Hulbrook Lane on the left hand side near where the track along Long Commons branches off. There is still a pond belonging to Hu!brook Farm, which borders this track opposite to Hullhatch where the access route to the farm branches off, but this pond is much silted and very shallow now.

Further along Long Common there used to be a pond near Oriel Cottage but it was drained by having a deep ditch cut through it. A similar fate befell the pond on Lords Hill Common beside the aptly named Spring Cottage, Older inhabitants used to talk of a horse having drowned in this pond. The Shamley Green History contains a reference to the 1871 Oxford and Buckingham Light Infantry Silver Bugle that Deirdre Pyle found in the silt of this pond in 1943. Opposite Thanes Croft on the Lords Hill/Norley Lane the Shamley Green Anglers have their Club fishing pond adjacent to the stream. On Norley Common there was a pond opposite the entrance to what is now a Donkey Sanctuary. There is talk of a new pond being created nearer the crossroads on Norley Common.

Though common land ponds have decreased from seven to two there are many residents with large gardens who have created ornamental ponds. A good example is the one created beside the Woodhill stream when it flows through the aptly named curtilage of Scaemel Mere.

On Darbyns Brook/Northbrook, which crosses the main B2128 road, between Wonersh and Shamley Green at Lostiford there is a series of ponds, which were once primarily functional as cress beds near Haldish Farm or as millpond storage reservoirs such as those at Darbyns Brook, Upper Lostiford and Wonersh Mill. Now part of our Industrial Archaeology heritage they too have become ornamental landscape features though they still have practical value in helping to even out stream flow and minimise the damage potential of flash floods. They could also again be harnessed to generate electrical power.

Occasionally, as after a particularly heavy downpour on Blackheath in 1947, water levels rise so rapidly that millpond dams are overwhelmed. The breach then at the Wonersh Mill dam was so large that the pond drained completely. A new out spill overflow channel had to be constructed before the breach could be filled and the pond restored.

On the far side of the wooded ridge which forms the familiar rural Surrey Hills horizon, as seen from the village green, in the more distant part of the Shamley Wood Estate the land drops away fairly steeply towards Green Lane.

At the base of the steepest gradient, at the junction with the infertile Folkestone Beds with the Bargate/Sandgate Beds, there is a seepage line where water trickles out and makes soil damp. In ancient times sheep were moved slowly along the ridge-tops grazing the interfluve divides as they worked their way towards the sites of sheep fairs such as that formerly held every October on Norley Common. The October fair was granted by charter in the time of Oliver Cromwell. Sheep were also destined for town livestock markets such as the one in Guildford. Parts of our local woodlands are still designated as The Sheepwalk and the ridge crest route though somewhat diverted is still a well-used bridleway.

At a point about half way between the sandpit and the first Shamley Wood footpath junction a former permissive footpath descended into what locals called the Primrose Dell. About 100 yards down the slope at the geological boundary already mentioned as a water seepage issue, there were once two small ponds one slightly above the other. I was

told the upper one was used by shepherds for their needs and the lower for watering and freshening up the sheep so they looked their best when sold. The whole area was bulldozed some twenty years ago as a previous owner was intent on obtaining farming grants to reclaim land by woodland clearance. Either the grants ran out or the topography and mature holly trees defeated him. Perhaps his enthusiasm evaporated for the surrounding trees remained though the nearby once peaceful remote dell sometimes resounded to the noise of motorcycles on a speedway track created there.

Lower down near Green Lane at the junction of the Shamley Wood and Blackmoor properties is a relatively rare natural pond. Most ponds are located on impervious clay. This one is on sand and associated with a drift deposit of surface peat - hence the name Blackmoor. The isolated location of the pond made it a natural habitat for geese and other birds to congregate. The banks of the pond were surrounded by large mature willow trees. Subsequently, these trees fell or were all pushed over into the water. As willows are the natural source for the drug from which aspirin is made the effect on the water was not particularly beneficial and it became more sterile. It no longer supports the wildlife diversity it once did. As I have said this pond was unique and to a degree it still is. It has never been designated as an SSSI so technically nothing illegal has been done. However, the natural environment was damaged and it would not be either cheap or easy to restore this pond to its original state. No blame for this situation can be attached to the present owner, Mr Stirling, the damage was done before he purchased Shamley Wood.

One of the largest remaining farm ponds is the one adjacent to the old Barnett Farmhouse. Other ponds in our area on private land help to illustrate the diverse origins of these features which are so beneficial to wildlife. On Major Elliott's Whipley Farm at Run Common is the old Navvy's Hole created by 'navigators' when constructing the Wey/Arun Canal. At the Betlem's home, Marlow in Stroud Lane, the old brick pits have created a wonderful home for all their ducks.

At Willinghurst a series of ponds provide entertainment for many fishermen who have a well-supported club there. Hidden away on the southern edge of Wonersh Park near to where the Northbrook links up with Cranleigh Water is the largest body of fresh water in

our area. Wonersh Mere is inaccessible to all but local residents whose properties abut onto it. So hidden away is it that few are even aware of its existence.

The International Scene

In conclusion, the United Nations and their Agency The World Health Organisation chose to focus on Freshwater as their theme topic for 2002 as the best way to achieve the greatest improvement in the quality of life of the greatest number of people, because one billion people have no easy access to portable water. A very large number of young children die as a result of drinking polluted water, which causes diarrhoea and dehydration. In the past the best cure has been to provide small sachets of salt and sugar to put into the boiled water to re-hydrate victors. A recent discovery by the Swiss chemist Martin Wegelin is that by filling a plastic PET bottle with any water source and then exposing it to at least six hours of sunshine you can destroy all the dangerous pathogens in the water that cause diarrhoea. UVA light and heat do this by natural use of sunlight without the use of any additional energy cost or effort such as is required for boiling water. The plastic bottles we so carelessly discard could save thousands of lives.

Please evaluate the importance of water to you and your family. In our SE quadrant of the UK, especially at peak times, demand can easily exceed supply. Ask yourself if there is anything you can do to minimise waste, recycle, prevent taps dripping, urge suppliers to repair leaks promptly etc. One the simplest devices for water saving is to put a "hippo" water filled plastic bottle in the corner of an old style water closet cistern as these normally flush more water then is strictly necessary every time they are used.

Think of those whose water supplies are more precarious than yours and be thankful. Water is sometimes described as being the most wonderful substance in the world.

M Harding, 27.9.03

SHAMLEY GREEN HISTORY SOCIETY

The initiative for founding the Society came from Mrs. Edna Thompson of `Apple Trees', Guildford Road, at a meeting held at Northcote Farm, the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. Vaughan, in December 1982. In 1983 forty people enrolled as members at the official inaugural meeting of the Society; by 2002 membership stands at ninety.

In 1993 the Society produced a comprehensive book about the village. Other booklets similar to this one deal with specific aspects of history or village life. Two videos and a walks leaflet are also available. In addition to several previous exhibitions, the Society's main contribution and major event in May 2000 was a three day Millennium Exhibition.