

The OdSoc UPDATE

Newsletter from the Odiham Society

Issue No. 12 - May 2010

Edited and compiled by Ted Johns

THE ODIHAM SOCIETY'S JOURNAL: RESIGNATION OF SHEILA MILLARD MBE AS EDITOR

It is with great sorrow and regret that we have to announce that Sheila Millard MBE has announced her resignation as Editor of the Society's *Journal*.

Sheila has produced the *Journal* for over 25 years, and says that it's now time for someone else to take the helm. Yet it is she who has been responsible – largely single-handed – for creating a publication which is universally respected and admired for the quality of its erudition, the accessibility of its articles, and the professionalism of its production.

The *Journal* is a flagship product for the Odiham Society and it will remain a lasting testament to Sheila's vision, determination and commitment. It is, I believe, one of the major reasons why people join the Odiham Society (certainly it's the only reason I did, when we first came to live here 14 years ago), and we are determined that even if the *Journal* in the future undergoes some changes, it should continue in a way that upholds the values which Sheila has consistently brought to it.

Whilst we are distressed about Sheila's departure as Editor of the *Journal*, we are also delighted that she remains the Society's Archivist and Vice-President.

HOME ON THE RANGE THE SOCIETY'S SUMMER FESTIVITY – FRIDAY 2 JULY

You can't have failed to miss the fact that the final page of this Newsletter promotes our Summer Party, held as always at the Cross Barn but featuring, this time, a 'Home on the Range' country-and-western theme. Once again we've had a brilliant flyer designed for us by Dominique (Min) Broughton of Fingerprint Design.

The treats in store include a glass of moonshine punch (don't ask) to begin with, some live C&W background music and singing, a demonstration of line dancing (conceivably with some audience 'volunteers' bringing added pleasure to the performance), and barbecue-style food with a southern American flavour. The catering supremo is Matthew Fleet: with him in charge, we've already learned, nothing can go wrong.

The title for our Summer Party was chosen after a diligent search through some C&W song titles failed to disclose anything suitable. If I tell you that these titles (perhaps not all of them authentic) ranged from "Mama Get a Hammer, There's a Fly on Papa's Head" to "I'm So Miserable Without You, It's Like Having You Here" and "How Can You Believe Me When I Say I Love You When You Know I've Been a Liar All my Life?", then you'll see why none of these masterpieces quite captured the mood we wanted to convey.

THE SOUTH EAST PLAN: ODIHAM STAYS IN THE 'REST OF HAMPSHIRE'

In our August 2009 newsletter we told you about the Society's reaction to Hart District Council's draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) paper. Our major concerns were two fold:

(1) The document failed to recognise that Odiham and North Warnborough are already classified as part of the 'Rest of Hampshire' area, required to find land for just 100 houses between now and 2026. To make it absolutely clear, Odiham and North Warnborough are not within the major segment of Hart, which is expected to secure sites for 4300 houses. This is clearly a crucial distinction for those who care about the future of the Parish as an independent physical, cultural and geographical entity.

(2) In Hart's draft SHLAA paper, a few fields in the Odiham locality were specifically earmarked as potential sites for far more development than was needed to meet the basic obligation for 100 houses in the 'Rest of Hampshire'.

Well, the final version of the SHLAA document has now been published. As a result of our representations (and those of others), we are delighted to report that Odiham and North Warnborough are now very clearly identified as part of the 'Rest of Hampshire', with its much lower performance expectations so far as new building is concerned.

A small number of new potential building sites has been added to the draft list. However, we are assured that these SHLAA "candidate sites" are simply an inventory of places where developers and builders want to build: there is no inference whatsoever that because they are named in the SHLAA they have some kind of implicit encouragement from Hart that a planning application could succeed.

This is very good news indeed (though less so if you're a builder). On behalf of the Society I want to thank Andrew Burnett for his diligence in monitoring developments like these and for ensuring that the Society's views are properly represented in the corridors of power.

NEW BLOOD ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: WELCOME TO PAULINE TWINEHAM

I'm personally very pleased to confirm that your Society's Executive Committee has just been strengthened by a new member, Pauline Twineham, who's been unanimously co-opted until her appointment can be confirmed at the next AGM.

Pauline herself writes: "My family moved to Odiham in 1992 to be near to a marketing and communications business I was setting up in Basingstoke and which I still manage. Prior to that I enjoyed a long and fascinating career with IBM – in sales, marketing and business management – both in the UK and and in continental Europe.

"We find Odiham village and the surrounding countryside a delightful area to live in. Contributing to the Odiham Society gives me the opportunity to 'give a little back' by becoming more involved in protecting and enhancing this delightful corner of Hampshire."

Pauline has already begun to make her mark, and I'm sure she will be an indispensable member of the OdSoc team.

NEW BOOK
ODIHAM ORIGINALS
BY PHILIP HUMPHREY

Odiham Originals is the story of three men who lived, worked and died in and around Odiham. Undoubtedly the central character – in every sense of the word – is Archie Weaver, postman, upholsterer, part-time fireman, enthusiastic gardener and committed Christian. He's the central character because he became a member of the author's family for the best part of 30 years.

However, there are two other leading roles, occupied by equally distinguished individuals, whose contributions to the book are particularly notable because they were written by the participants themselves: Alf Gary, ambulance driver, with links to the British Red Cross and the local brass and silver bands, and Bill Bane, fireman, musician, and expert (as a 'customer') on the facilities on offer at the Odiham Cottage Hospital. Both have lively, colourful and absorbing stories to tell – made more interesting, too, because the style of their writing is so immediate and authentic.

For instance, Bill Bane describes the time when he'd had his tonsils out in hospital. "I lay there for a time, then I lit up a fag, and no sooner had I done so I was pounced on by the nurse and asked, was I daft or did I want to get blown to bits." The objection to smoking in those days was nothing to do with cancer, but more to do with the fear that anaesthetic was explosive.

Those were the days, my friends.

Odiham Originals is by Philip Humphrey, with a Foreword by Dora L. Dingwall MA and an Address by the Rt.Hon. The Lord Puttnam CBE. It's published by the Ellingham Press, 2009, on behalf of the Odiham Health Centre Trust Fund. You can obtain copies from the OHCTF, PO Box 7036, Hook, Hampshire RG27 7EF, for £8 (paper) plus £3 postage. Cheques should be payable to OHCTF.

MARY BENNETT : APOLOGY
ODIHAM COMMON – AN HISTORICAL SURVEY

In March you should have received the Spring 2010 issue of the Society's *Journal*. Enclosed was a print version of *Odiham Common – An Historical Survey*, the paper commissioned by Hart District Council from local historian Mary Bennett, as part of the Odiham Common 'Common Purpose' Procedure to assist in the development of a Management Plan for the Common.

Unfortunately the document failed to provide a formal acknowledgment of the fact that its copyright ownership resides with the author, Mary Bennett. We are sorry for this mistake.

If you have a copy of Mary Bennett's paper, therefore, please be aware that normal copyright conditions apply to it. No part may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The sun and the moon and the stars would have disappeared long ago had they happened to be within reach of predatory human hands. Havelock Ellis

*The Chairman of the Odiham Society is Dr Ted Johns, who can be contacted at
Prosper House, Palace Gate Farm, Odiham RG29 1JX
Téléphone: 01256 703636 Email: Ted.Johns@btconnect.com
See the Odiham Society's website: www.odiham-society.org*
