

Your Haslemere

The Newsletter of The Haslemere Society
Autumn 2022

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Chairman's Welcome

Chris Harrison



Welcome to our Autumn 2022 newsletter.

As ever, we bring you news of the activities of our planning group, and Sonja Dullaway provides a very thorough update on the work of our planning committee and also provides insight into the current planning framework and its complexity, together with news on some of the more controversial and significant planning applications in the town.

Still on the subject of planning, I share an update on our project to capture Haslemere's buildings of local merit and the importance of this work.

It has been a number of years since the society has had an outing for members, and this year's trip on the Watercress line was by all accounts a great success. Gareth David provides an insight into the day, and the fascinating stories shared with participants both about the line and also some very unexpected goings-on in Arlesford.

My wife Shirley has taken a rest from submitting a 'Lost Sons of Haslemere' story in this edition as we bring you another historical Haslemere story. Member and historian Katherine Jessel provides a fascinating insight into her research into the Manley Hopkins family, and the time that poet Gerard Manley Hopkins spent in Haslemere.

We also continue with our series of articles on other organisations within the town. This edition focuses on the Haslemere Hospital's League of Friends. Trustee and Society member, Sarah Mulliner provides an insight into the work of the league, and the important activities that they carry out to preserve and enhance this treasured asset in our community.

The Society has been lucky enough to secure a number of copies of a lavishly illustrated new history of local churches written by local author and historian Alan Bott. Copies will be available to purchase at our AGM, and we also provide details of how you can secure a copy if you're not able to attend the AGM.

Thanks as ever to Di Keeley for compiling a list of forthcoming local events in Haslemere, and of course no edition of our newsletter is complete without one of Simon Mackie's cartoons. I hope you enjoy the newsletter, and please do let our editor, Gareth David, have any suggestions for future editions so that we can continue to provide content that is of interest to our members

Planning Round-up

By Sonja Dullaway

Planning Group activity

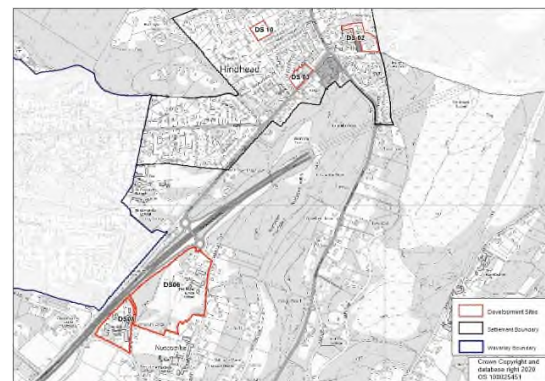
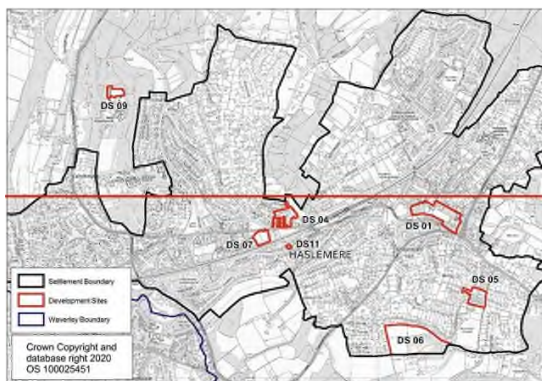
Since 1 March this year, the Planning Group has objected to 17 applications (several of these are repeats) and commented on a further three Listed Building Consent applications. Perhaps the most significant application we have commented on is the second phase of Red Court (application WA/2022/01887), a proposal to build 129 homes on AONB land outside the settlement boundary and adjacent to the already-permitted Phase 1 development of 49 dwellings. Haslemere Town Council has also objected to this application as have many others. It is not clear when a decision is likely to be made. Our letter of objection, as with all our letters, can be found on the Society's website.

It is worth noting here that WBC, like many other councils, appears to be suffering from a combination of staff shortages and a steep rise in the number of planning applications following the pandemic. The Royal Town Planning Institute has recently released research showing that total Local Authority expenditure on planning in England has fallen by 43% since 2009-10¹.

The Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2)

Readers may recall earlier instalments in this thrilling saga. The LPP2 forms a significant part of the framework against which Waverley Borough Council makes planning decisions, so it is important to all of us. The previous Local Plan dated back to 2002 and WBC has been working through the process of updating it.

The first part of the Plan (LPP1) largely covers the policies relating to permitted developments and has been updated. Part 2, which sets out the allocated sites on which WBC expect to meet the housing targets set by central government, has been rather more contentious. A consultation on a second draft of this document took place last year.



One of the key changes in the revised document was the removal of the allocated site at Red Court and the addition of an allocated site at Hindhead (also on AONB land), at the site of the Royal School Junior School by the A3. (Red Court shown as DS06 on the first map and The Royal Junior School shown as DS06 on the second map) Since the resubmission, permission has been granted (on appeal) for the development of 49 houses at the Red Court site. (Note, this was the Red Court Phase 1 application. The land referenced in the Phase 2 application has never been an allocated site.)

Following the statutory consultation, the revised LPP2 was submitted for examination to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on Wednesday, 22 December 2021. Public hearings were held 12-21 July and 6 September this year (and can be watched

on WBC's YouTube channel). On 31 October, the Inspector issued a note (available on the WBC website) stating that no further significant modifications are required beyond any already raised during the course of the consultation. No changes to the site allocations were required in order to make the plan sound and/or legally compliant. That strongly suggests that the LPP2 will be passed without major changes and that Waverley will thus avoid being put into special measures. If confirmed, that will be very good news.

Court ruling on the standing of AONB status in planning decisions

Readers may be aware of a long-running engagement about an application for planning permission at a site on Hedgehog Lane. There have been a number of applications to develop this site, which is both a designated 'green finger' in the Neighbourhood Plan, and (partly) AONB land.

A 2016 application to build 29 houses here has gone all the way through the court system after being rejected by WBC, and the process was finally completed when the Supreme Court declined to hear the case in February this year.

That leaves the Court of Appeal ruling as the final decision on this case. This upheld the Inspector's interpretation of the rules on the importance of AONB and agreed that, even where the local authority was not meeting the government's targets, damage to AONB *could* be sufficient justification in itself to deny planning permission. This is a helpful clarification given the amount of AONB land locally and is, of course, relevant to the Red Court Phase 2 application, The Royal Junior School proposals as well as the current Hedgehog Lane application.

Government policy

When I started writing this article, Liz Truss was still Prime Minister but had resigned and a leadership competition was underway. Reform of the planning system was to be a significant plank in Truss' proposed supply-side reforms and she had made a number of indicative comments about what those reforms might be, with proposals that requirements on affordable housing and environmental protections would be eased to make getting planning permission easier balanced by suggestions that formal housing requirement numbers would be removed and that local communities should have more say in planning decisions.

Separately, on fracking, Truss had removed the government moratorium but said that any development could only go ahead with local support, though no detail had been provided about what that would mean or how it could be assessed. The fracking proposal was widely unpopular and Sunak has already reinstated the moratorium.

In the meantime, the wide-ranging Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill, introduced in May this year, has been making its way through parliamentary procedure and is now at the Report Stage in the House of Commons but has not yet been through the House of Lords. If passed, this bill will make significant changes to the planning process, including limiting the scope of local plans to 'locally specific' matters, with issues that apply in most areas to be covered by a new suite of national policies, and facilitating and speeding up the process for implementation of 'nationally important' Crown developments.

A quick review suggests that it will make it easier to push through developments, including on greenfield sites, that support 'growth' while giving local communities more control over smaller details. While Truss was expected to make significant changes to the bill to make development even easier, Sunak has already expressed a clear preference for building on brownfield rather than greenfield sites so it perhaps unlikely that he will pursue Truss' planned changes. However, he has not expressed any specific opinion on the bill itself so it

is not clear if he will make any changes to it. CPRE and others remain concerned about the impact of the bill as it stands. We will have to wait and see.

Sign-off

We recognise of course that planning issues are often a matter of opinion and that there is always a balance to be struck between maintaining the character of the town and ossifying it. People will draw that balancing line in different places. We therefore welcome feedback from members on our activities, whether supportive or not, in agreement or not. You can reach us on info@haslemeresociety.org.uk or catch up with us in person at one of the Society's events. We would also be delighted to hear from anyone interested in joining the planning group.

¹ <https://www.lgcplus.com/politics/lgc-briefing/if-liz-truss-wants-to-shake-up-planning-she-needs-to-fund-it-properly-fund-22-09-2022/>

Identifying Haslemere's Buildings of Local Merit

By Chris Harrison

Back in 2020, the Society's planning group fought unsuccessfully for the preservation of the Arts and Crafts house designed by Herbert Hutchinson which was the central building of the former Haslemere Preparatory School known as The Heights.



The developer used the argument that the house was of no architectural merit, and central to their argument was the fact that it was not registered as a Building of Local Merit. In his ruling, to allow demolition, the Planning Inspector gave great weight to this argument.

Being concerned that other properties which we consider to have heritage value might suffer a similar fate, the Society decided to investigate this matter further.

National planning policy is largely provided by something called the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and last updated in 2021. The framework refers to heritage assets, ranging from sites and buildings of local historical value to those of high significance such as world heritage sites. The purpose of the record, is to help protect and preserve these heritage assets and to make information about them publicly accessible.

On further investigation, we learned that Waverley refers to its heritage assets as Buildings of Local Merit (BLMs) and on its website, states there are over 600 identified buildings in the borough. However, due to resource constraints, the council have relied on local working parties to produce this list.

For some reason, no such detailed list exists for Haslemere, with only a handful of existing structures being BLMs. The Society therefore decided to form a working group to address this, an initiative welcomed by Waverley. We are asked to cover the entire area covered by Haslemere Town Council.

Over the past 18 months our working group has been busy. This is arduous work, as we need to walk the streets, take photographs, identify GPS coordinates, work out postcodes, and document why we consider any chosen property qualifies as a BLM.

Additional desktop research is required, as we are required to consider many aspects of each property's historic and architectural interest. We need to consider historic fabric of the building, its technical interest, architectural design and any historic association.

Other considerations have more to do with situation: the townscape merit of the property, its group value (for example houses that collectively have historic or architectural interest) and also landscape value. For example, the team consider that properties designed by Herbert Hutchinson have a group value in Haslemere.



Different considerations also apply depending on the age of the property, and in simple terms the more recent the building, the higher the threshold for inclusion. Our working group has been careful to review the location of existing heritage assets (including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and BLMs) within the search area allocated to us by Waverley to avoid double counting.

So far, we have identified over 350 buildings which we think merit consider potential inclusion on the list. We still have some further roads to cover, and we also have more desktop research to undertake. However, it is hoped that by the end of the year we will have a list to present to Waverley for their consideration.

Once Waverley have confirmed this preliminary list, owners of the properties will be written to, to notify them of the intention to include their property on Waverley's BLM list and to invite them to share any complimentary historical information that they may have about their property. We hope that the list will be finally adopted and published in 2023.

What does it mean to be a BLM?

Designation as a BLM identifies a property as having heritage significance, and provides an opportunity for any of the information collected to become publicly available. It is also to be hoped that designation might increase the value of the property.

One of the concerns often expressed about having a property designated as a BLM is that it will restrict the owner's ability to modify the property. If a building is identified as a BLM, it becomes what is termed a non-designated heritage asset in NPPF terms. This means that if an application for planning permission is submitted this designation would be taken into account to ensure the proposals are sympathetic to the building, unless public benefits override any heritage harm that might arise from the proposals.

What this means is that it may be more difficult to demolish the asset than would otherwise be the case and that the planning authorities will pay greater attention to whether or not

any proposed extensions or alterations are sympathetic to the existing building. It is recommended that proposed amendments are discussed with the Waverley heritage team before any planning application is submitted. BLM status may also introduce eligibility for certain grants.

It should also be noted that BLMs that are in the Haslemere Town Conservation Area are already subject to planning constraints which do not apply outside the conservation area. Listed buildings are subject to a standalone consent process where Listed Building Consent and/or planning permission may be required for certain works.

As planning permission outside the conservation area is not required either for internal home insulation, double glazing or solar panels, it is hard to see that BLM status could have an impact where a homeowner wishes to invest in any of these energy-saving improvements, although individual homeowners may choose to make their own enquiries for peace of mind.

A Society trip to the Watercress Line

By Gareth David



On a day when no trains were running through our local station due to the latest National Rail Strike (Wednesday, 27 July) a group of 34 Haslemere Society members and their friends enjoyed a day out on the Watercress Line, with an AMK coach trip to Alton then a train ride to Alresford and back.

This was the Society's first day trip for almost a decade and once at Alresford members were given a guided tour of the town's delightful and acclaimed Millennium Trail, where they learned about the role played by the town's public conveniences in what was known as the Portland Spy Scandal, and the story behind burials in the nearby churchyard of French officers from the Napoleonic wars.



For the benefit of members who were unable to join the trip, the Portland Spy Ring dates back to April 1959 and a time when the CIA learned that Soviet agents were operating in southern England and that secrets from the British Underwater Research Establishment at Portland were being sent to Russia, notably information about the SONAR system for detecting submarines.

Information about the spies was passed to MI5, who eventually worked out that the source of the leaks was an ex-Navy petty officer called Harry Houghton, who was working as a civilian clerk at Portland. Houghton had been targeted by the Soviets as he had been involved in post war black market dealings in Warsaw, having worked at the British Embassy there after being demobbed from the Navy.

Houghton was a heavy drinker and was sent back to England in 1952 where for some unexplained reason he became a clerk at Portland and handled sensitive information. Very soon he was approached by Soviet agents and agreed to provide the information they needed to copy the SONAR.

Houghton then struck up a relationship with a lady named Ethel Gee (also known as Bunty), who lived locally and had a higher security clearance than him, and was able to access the documents that the Soviets wanted, which she would take for Houghton to copy overnight before she returned them the next day.

MI5 was alerted to Houghton and Gee due to their extravagant lifestyle, but the British security services were not aware that from mid-1959 their contact was a KGB agent known to them as Gordon Lonsdale, who posed as a Canadian businessman selling juke boxes around the country. Lonsdale would pass the documents to a couple known as Peter and Helen Kroger (real names Morris and Lona Cohen), who ran an antiquarian bookshop in Ruislip as cover for their work for the Soviets.

Peter Kroger would take the train to Alresford to visit an antiquarian bookshop in Broad Street, which is still there, and would call into the public toilets on his arrival, where he would retrieve a package from behind the door of the left hand cubicle and leave money for Houghton at the same time.



On 5th November 1960 Houghton went by car from Dorset to London, and was observed stopping off at the Alresford toilets before meeting Lonsdale in London. Lonsdale was then seen the following day visiting the Krogers in Ruislip, the first time that they came to the attention of MI5. Two months later, on 7th January 1960, Houghton, Gee and Lonsdale were all arrested in London and a lot of classified material was found in Ethel Gee's bag, including details of HMS Dreadnought, our first nuclear submarine.

Later that day the Krogers were arrested and a search of their bungalow unearthed radio equipment and intelligence in the form of microdots concealed in antiquarian books that were scheduled to be sent to Russia. All five were found guilty of spying after a trial in March 1961. Houghton and Gee were sentenced to 15 years each, the Krogers got 20 years and Lonsdale – real name Konon Molody – received a 25 year sentence.

Houghton and Gee were released after nine years, married and both died in the 1980s. Lonsdale was exchanged after three years for a British diplomat imprisoned in Russia named Greville Wynne, while the Krogers were also exchanged in 1969, made heroes of the Soviet Union and later commemorated on Soviet postage stamps.



Only yards from the public toilets in Station Road, where a plaque commemorates its role in the spy scandal, stands the 15th Century church of St. John the Baptist and in front of its tower are the graves of five Napoleonic soldiers, who had been captured and brought to Alresford as prisoners of war, one being a woman called, Marie Louise Fournier.

Alresford was one of 11 parole towns in Hampshire and as such received many French visitors, as there was no single prison where French prisoners were held. They were billeted around the town at what was considered suitable housing and were allowed certain freedoms but their movements were restricted. They could not venture more than a mile from the centre of town, nor could they go out after dark.

Napoleonic soldiers lucky enough to be of officer rank, received 1s 6d a day from the French directorship, which was supposed to be enough to feed and clothe them and provide lodging. In some cases they became part of the community earning extra money where they could. In some instances they gave French lessons, in others they made goods which they were allowed to sell at the market.

At first the French prisoners were unpopular with the local people, but this attitude changed when a fire broke out in the town and the French worked hard alongside the locals to extinguish it. The clock on the church tower is dated 1811 and is said to have been given by French prisoners on parole in the town, to thank the local population for the kindness they received during their imprisonment.



The circular walk then took members down to the picturesque River Alre, which is one of the main places for the growing of the watercress that has made the town and railway famous, before moving on to the Swan Hotel, close to the station, where they enjoyed a buffet lunch and heard a talk on the history of the Watercress Line by its acting chairman, Mervyn Dunwoody.

The Society's trustees were delighted by the success of this trip and would like run trips at least once a year, so would welcome any suggestions from members for future visits.

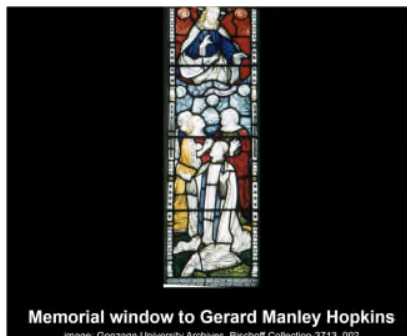
Gerard Manley Hopkins: his family and homes in Haslemere

By Katherine Jessel



Courts Hill Lodge

In August 1887 the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins came to visit his family in Haslemere at a house called Courts Hill Lodge. He had recently celebrated his 43rd birthday. Hopkins, a Jesuit priest, was at that time an unknown figure, and would remain so for a further 30 years after his death in Dublin from typhoid fever in 1889.



The following year his parents, Manley and Kate Hopkins, gave a slender lancet window to St Bartholomew's Church, Haslemere, dedicated to the memory of their eldest son: by a strange coincidence, the very much more elaborate memorial to Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was placed next to Hopkins's window in 1899. The extraordinary aptness of this juxtaposition would not be fully realized by the general public for many decades.

I had long been intrigued by the Hopkins window and why it was in St Bartholomew's at all? (Gerard was after all a Catholic.) Did his parents live in Haslemere – and if so, where and for how long? Had Hopkins ever visited the town? I resolved to find out the answers to these questions, and what follows is my personal voyage of discovery, focusing on the Hopkins' houses in Haslemere.

The Collected Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins (OUP) 2013 (recommended by The Hopkins Society) goes into some detail surrounding Gerard's Haslemere visit, and these letters gave the name of the family's first home in the town. The biography *Hopkins: A Critical Study*

by Norman White (OUP) 1992 was especially helpful, acknowledging the Haslemere connection, but not exploring this association in depth.

It revealed, however, another house, The Garth in High Lane, that was to become for over 60 years the family home – and is today the sole surviving house associated with Hopkins and his family in the UK.

For primary research, my first port of call was the Library at the Haslemere Museum. The house that the Hopkins family lived in on their arrival from Hampstead in 1886 had the name *Courts Hill Lodge* – but no full address was given in correspondence, and so the name was all we had to guide us. Indeed, it soon became apparent that the building no longer existed, and no record of it appeared to have survived.

However, obviously the house had been on Courts Hill, Haslemere, and probably close to the house belonging to JW Penfold the architect, which was also called Courts Hill. Fortunately, we had the 1891 census return confirming that Manley and Kate Hopkins, their youngest daughter Grace and three servants, were all living on Station Road in an unnamed house, but given the number 156. Courts Hill itself, named and described as being lived in by John Wornham Penfold was only two houses to the east, overlooking Town Meadow, at number 154.

It is possible that the house in between, number 155, was the still extant The Old Gables (now the Luxury Gap beauty salon.) Eventually, we found in an album of Penfold photographs, an image of 'Courts Hill Lodge' taken by Penfold himself in 1882, not long before the Hopkins family came to live there. To confuse things further Station Road no longer exists, having become at some point in the mid-twentieth century the continuation of Lower Street.

In later research two other important figures, associated with American Jesuit Universities, emerged: the work of both Father Bischoff of Gonzaga University and Father Schöder of Loyola University proved tremendously helpful in filling out the story that unfolded. They were discovered through the Society of Jesus in Farm Street, London, and had been indefatigable researchers and photographers of Hopkins' family during the 1940's and 1950's.

In addition, a unique and unpublished photograph of the Hopkins family taking tea in the back garden of Courts Hill Lodge c1890 was probably given to Father Bischoff by Gerard's nephew Gerard Walter Sturgiss Hopkins; it was found in Bischoff's photographic collection – which also included his own striking interiors of The Garth.



Photographs by Schöder from the late 1940's of Courts Hill Lodge were especially useful in locating more precisely the house's exact position, showing the lie of the land and the existence of cedar trees (these also appear in Bischoff's 'Hopkins family' photo) indicating that the house would have stood almost exactly where Cedar Court stands today in Lower Street.

The Hopkins family was fairly typical of those moving out of London to Haslemere in the 1880's – cultured, intelligent and professional middleclass – attracted by the artistic life of the area and its beautiful countryside. (Indeed, the Rector, Sanders Etheridge, worried that Haslemere was becoming 'too popular' and even Gerard himself believed it 'sought after and full of visitors.')

They were a large and highly-gifted family, producing two professional artists in Everard and Arthur Hopkins; a respected sinologist in Lionel Hopkins, and one of the greatest poets of the 19th century in Gerard Manley Hopkins. Of their parents Manley and Kate, Kate's own family, the Smiths, could claim the wit and political journalist the Rev. Sydney Smith, and a more distant relation in the artist Thomas Gainsborough.



Manley & Kate Hopkins

Manley however, was the driving force: a highly successful Average Adjuster, he was a published poet and author, whose efforts took the family in 1852 from their first home in Stratford, East London, to Oak Hill in Hampstead, where the family were brought up and lived until moving to Haslemere in 1886. Of these homes, Stratford was bombed in 1941, and Oak Hill was demolished to make way for development in 1961 – at much the same time that Courts Hill Lodge was destroyed to make way for Cedar Lodge.

Gerard Manley Hopkins arrived in Haslemere on or probably a little before 11 August 1887. One hopes he was not too dismayed by the proximity to the railway station (trains ran twice daily to and from London) nor the comparative smallness of the new dwelling.

There cannot have been much extra room after Gerard joined them, given the house was already accommodating six people, and we find him writing to his old Oxford friend the future Poet Laureate Robert Bridges 'that if you will come here, which will be delightful, we cannot, I am sorry to say, give you a bed, for the house will be full, but you can lodge either at the Railway inn almost next door or at Mrs Bush's at the Gables, which is perhaps preferable, and we will find what is possible and best.'

Bridges does not seem to have been tempted by the Railway Inn, and in fact it was Gerard who visited him briefly at his home at Yattenden in Berkshire during his stay in Haslemere.

A problem that had exercised Hopkins's mind in a birthday letter to his mother of 2 March 1887 was how during his stay he would be able to hear Mass daily (there being as yet, no Catholic Church in Haslemere) he finds *"going to Guildford or elsewhere once in a way, as on Sundays, is all very well, but every day is another thing. And the train as to those nearer places, as Liphook, is scarcely any convenience. No, it wd. be better and pleasanter to walk (all the way; that is after all only a third or a quarter more than I should still have to walk if I took the train) or else find some handy service of a butcher's cart or what not and so manage between one thing and another."*

In fact, Gerard would have found himself walking to Woolmer Lodge near Liphook, now known as Ludshott Manor, where a private Catholic Chapel had been built by Sir Archibald Keppel Macdonald for his wife Catherine Coulthurst (The chapel burned down in 1908). Gerard was quite correct as to distances, and it would have been pleasanter to walk the three miles along the old drovers' roads via Hammer and Hewshott than take the train, as Liphook Station was still some distance from Woolmer Lodge.



In 1887 Manley Hopkins published two books: a volume of verse, and, more intriguingly, *Cardinal Numbers*, a curious discussion that included the visualization of numbers, which a minority of people (some 12%) see in fixed patterns or arrangements, each pattern as individual as a fingerprint. This interest had stemmed from the researches of the renowned polymath Sir Francis Galton FRS (a resident of Haslemere in the last years of his life.)

Gerard himself visualized numbers and had contributed to his father's book as 'my near relative the Rev G. M. Hopkins, of University College, Dublin', so it is certain he would have interested himself in this curious production during his visit, either before or just after its publication. It is interesting that at this point in time Manley Hopkins was better known as a writer than his son.

Courts Hill Lodge had quickly become a centre for church life in Haslemere and the Hopkins were first recorded in the Parish Magazine in May 1887 as members of The Temperance Society. Kate and Manley and their daughter Grace were devout Anglicans – another daughter Millicent had become an Anglican nun – and they annually entertained the Band of Hope, with croquet being played on the lawn (probably on the flat area in front of the house) with the boys playing cricket on Town Meadow.

If Gerard was not caught up in this entertainment he would have likely met his parents' neighbor, John Penfold – who was to become the architect of the family's new home, The Garth – and perhaps other prominent members of the church such as (Sir) Robert Hunter and the banker, James Stewart Hodgson.

Gerard left Haslemere on 26 August, never to see his family or Haslemere again. We can only guess what influences might have come his way had he lived and visited the town over what could have been a long life. As it is, we do know that he returned to Dublin and almost at once in September 1887 wrote one of his last great poems, *Harry Ploughman*. 'I want Harry to be a vivid figure before the mind's eye,' he told a friend.

Could he have encountered Harry's prototype on his solitary walks to and from Woolmer Lodge along the country lanes of Hammer and Hewshott? Harry (in the first line) is described as having 'Hard as hurdle arms' and his limbs were 'beech bole firm.' Descriptions that would be recognizable even today among the hurdle-makers and woodsmen of the Haslemere area. In any event, Haslemere had cast its spell: 'On leaving town', he wrote to an old friend from Oxford days, Alexander Bailley, on 7 September 1887, 'I went down to Haslemere in Surrey and spent a fortnight in a very beautiful country...'

The Garth

After the death of his eldest son in 1889, Manley Hopkins began to make arrangements for his neighbour, the architect JW Penfold, to draw up plans for the family's new home in High Lane. On 30 April 1891 Edward Henry (Stanley) 15th Earl of Derby granted Manley Hopkins a 999 year-lease at a yearly rental of £5. It is probable that this may have been preceded by a building agreement, for the sale particulars of 1952 were to state that the house was built in 1890.



It is likely the family moved in late in the year 1891, for we know through the Census of 1891 that they were still living in Station Road in the spring of that year, yet Manley Hopkins signed his Will as from 'The Garth' in October 1891. Since 1893 was the year of the Hopkins' Golden Wedding Anniversary it is likely the family were well established at The Garth by then – and their first mention in the Parish Magazine, as from their new address, was in 1894.

The Garth was ideally situated for the Hopkins family, being but a short walk to St Bartholomew's Church and only a little further into the town. Set back from High Lane by a circular drive, it had a splendid position facing south-westwards at the rear over fields (as yet unbuilt over) towards their former home on Courts Hill. The surrounding garden extended, according to the agent's particulars of the 1952 sale, to over an acre, and would have been created by the family.

The gardens extended to a tea lawn with a mulberry tree, a tennis court, a formal rose garden and an orchard. Indoors there were three large reception rooms and the usual 'domestic offices' of a late Victorian household, with a back stair as well as the principal staircase. Upstairs, nine bedrooms ranged across two floors. A substantial dwelling, and

twice the size of their former home. Over the front door with its entrance porch and side seats, was the dedication of the house: *Deo Fatta Mandet*.

Manley Hopkins did not have long to enjoy his new creation, for in August 1897 he died (quite suddenly, for he was on the committee for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria) and was buried in the newly consecrated graveyard in Derby Road, just over the hedge from The Garth.

The Earl had died in 1893, and it is likely a good deal of new building and selling of land in the area had resulted. The house now became the property of Kate Hopkins, and later of her daughters Kate and Grace, and was to be the family home – and that of all her children – for the rest of their lives.

In 1908 they were joined by Mrs Hopkins' son, Lionel Hopkins. A distinguished sinologist and a former Consul-General in Tientsin, Lionel was destined to become a well-known local character. He was a specialist in *The Six Scripts*, a translation of which he had published in 1881. Like his father and brother he was fascinated by words and contentedly burrowed himself away in The Garth writing learned articles for the Royal Asiatic Council, aided by his remarkable collection of inscribed bone fragments.

Nevertheless, he emerged to interest himself in local affairs, and in 1916 was elected a member of the Hindhead Commons Committee – and later elected Treasurer. Other members of the family would come and go: Beatrice Hopkins, the daughter of Gerard and Lionel's brother Arthur, joined the family at The Garth after the death of Manley – leaving to marry Henry Forester Handley-Derry, a later witness to the Will of Grace Hopkins.

The Garth would be distinguished for two special moments in the history of English literature. It was in December 1918 that one of the first copies of a small edition of her son's collected poetry was put into the hands of Gerard's frail and bedridden mother. Kate Hopkins was 98 years old.

Ever since Gerard had begun writing poetry his old friend Robert Bridges had retained a copy of each of his verses, for Gerard had a singular lack of interest in the fate of his work, and had perhaps regarded his friend as a kind of poetic executor. Over many years Bridges gradually assembled and prepared these poems for publication. And here at last they had arrived at The Garth, with their dedication composed by a fellow-poet, A. E. Housman:

This book is dedicated to Catharine, in her ninety-eighth year, as a pledge of long-standing friendship, to be a memorial, though late, of her beloved son, a poet awaiting the praise due to his genius. RB

In due course Kate Hopkins and her children at The Garth were laid to rest in the graveyard in Derby Road, and by the time of Lionel's death in 1952, his grave was to be found in the new Weycombe Road Cemetery. All these graves can still be visited. The Garth was sold to the local property developer Rhodes, who was to divide the house into two separate dwellings – and so they remain today.



Shortly after Lionel's death, his executors invited to Haslemere a distinguished Hopkins scholar, Humphry House, who with his wife, Madeline, came for a week-end to investigate The Garth's teeming cupboards and drawers for the literary remains of Gerard Manley Hopkins. What happened next is best described by Madeline House herself:

'We had no special expectations beyond the belief that the library would be extremely interesting; but as we went through the contents of cupboards and desks, our excitement grew. The most important find was a carved box containing, in five packets, 74 letters, with one exception all from Hopkins to his mother – one enclosing a feather, another three primroses, in another two sonnets ('God's Grandeur' and The Starlight Night') and with these was Manley Hopkins's manuscript copy of his letter to Gerard of October, 1866, protesting at his decision to become a Roman Catholic.'

And there was more: albums of watercolours, sketches, invented board games, musical compositions, Gerard's school reports and a gold medal for Latin of 1862. These remarkable finds were all eventually conserved, and the correspondence forms part of the published collected letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Once the sale of The Garth to Rhodes had been made in 1952, there appears to have been an interregnum where by the house lay, like a kind of Sleeping Beauty, untouched and unvisited, until around 1956, when the property was divided by Rhodes into two dwellings.

It was during this period that Father Bischoff made his visit to The Garth and captured on camera the strange limbo into which the property had fallen. One image, which we may take to be Grace Hopkins' bedroom (she died in 1945), showed the room as she had left it, with its austere iron bedstead and picture of the crucifixion above – and the William Morris wallpaper rushing across the walls and ceiling.

On the wall hung the well-known photograph of her brother Gerard, and on another, a portrait of a nun – her sister Millicent – probably by her brother Arthur. In another photograph, there stands in the wintry rose garden, an amiable gentleman, almost certainly Gerard's nephew Gerard Walter Sturgis Hopkins (his image in the National Portrait Gallery is a good likeness.)

An editor and author and the son of the artist Everard Hopkins, he was described in 1952 as a surviving Trustee of the Will of Kate Hopkins who had died in 1933. Evidently it was he who had received Father Bischoff at The Garth, and had given to him as a keepsake the photo of the Hopkins family taking tea at Courts Hill Lodge.

Today, The Garth in High Lane remains as two dwellings, and is the last surviving home of the remarkable Hopkins family. The memorial window to Gerard Manley Hopkins is preserved in St Bartholomew's and a recent explanatory plaque has been set beneath by the Friends of the Parish of Haslemere and The Hopkins Society. It is equally important that The Garth, with its unique history, is not forgotten and remains a respected and cherished part of Haslemere's literary heritage.

Katherine Jessel has lived in and around Haslemere (where she was brought up) since 1948. She is an adviser to the Friends of the Parish of Haslemere for whom she wrote St Bartholomew's Parish Church, Haslemere: A short History, 1180 to the present day (2007). Under her maiden name of Hudson she is the author of several books, including A Royal Conflict: Sir John Conroy and the Young Victoria, Hodder & Stoughton (1994) and books for children on The Elizabethan Boy-Actors and Geoffrey Chaucer, Oxford University Press (1971 and 1973.)

Introducing Haslemere Hospital's League of Friends

By Sarah Mulliner



Haslemere Hospital will be celebrating its centenary in 2023, and for much of its 100 year existence has owed a huge debt of gratitude to a voluntary body called the League of Friends, which has campaigned to safeguard and improve facilities at the hospital and provided welcome support to its staff and patients.

In 1952 the League of Friends was formed, principally to raise money for equipment and facilities not otherwise provided and to offer voluntary help for the benefit of the patients, such as a trolley shop and refreshments in outpatients. The latter is no longer, but the trolley shop round the wards will continue once all Covid restrictions are lifted.

The League of Friends is run by a committee of trustees which meets six times a year. Originally its chief purpose was to raise funds and many will still remember the annual Ball held at the Haslemere Hall as one of the main events. Over the years several of the inpatient wards and the operating theatre have closed but the Outpatients and Minor Injuries Units have become increasingly important.

Community Hospitals, as Cottage Hospitals became in 1982, are always under threat of closure and the League of Friends is now much more active in questioning and campaigning, not only for the Hospital to remain but to increase and improve Services provided. There was the 'Bed Push' in 2000 when over two thousand people pushed a bed through the High Street and public meetings filled Haslemere Hall as local residents were roused to save the Hospital.

The League helped to have plans drawn up for a modern purpose built Outpatients and Minor Injuries building as the present Hospital is a hotchpotch of linked buildings of varying ages. This has yet to come to fruition. Money has been provided in the past for extra car parking for patients and staff.

Staffing can be a problem and remembering their facilities as well as those for the patients is also important. In the last year the League has thanked the staff for their hard work during the pandemic, most recently allocating money to fulfil the Queen's wish to give every member of NHS staff a small 'thank you' for what they did and the League has provided for a cupcake to be decorated with the George Cross, together with £10 M&S voucher.

Many and varied have been the projects and equipment supplied by the League for the benefit of the patients and staff at Haslemere Hospital. There have been major items of

equipment such as help with the purchase of an Optical Coherence Tomography Scanner, a vein scanner, new chairs for patients having blood taken which benefitted patients and staff.

The garden between the two wards has been developed and maintained by the League including benches. Those waiting outside Outpatients and Blood Testing or Minor Injuries in these restricted times may have taken advantage of the bench now placed outside those departments.



Wi-Fi has been installed in both the wards and a couple of I-pads provided for the use of patients. Whenever money is donated assurances are given that it is to be used for the benefit of Haslemere and not to be transferred elsewhere. There are regular commitments such as a sum of money given for inpatient gifts at Christmas.

The League not only provides money, but also volunteers to run the Trolley Shop, which has been put on hold during Covid restrictions but normally is taken round the wards twice a week. This is a trolley stocked with toiletries, soft drinks, confectionary, notelets and other bits and pieces which inpatients might enjoy. Volunteers go carol singing at Christmas on the wards and more recently helped with a Jubilee tea for the inpatients.

New members are always welcome to join the League, either those wishing to join the committee, or just to receive the annual newsletter, attend the AGM and take an interest in this very important asset to our town, which is continually under threat in these politically uncertain times. We want the very best that we can get for Haslemere, so do think about joining us.

Book offer: a new history of local churches



This lavishly-illustrated 136-page book on local churches has recently been published by local author and historian Alan Bott, who lives in Godalming. It is the latest in a series of books which the author has published on Surrey churches and features our local churches – St. Bartholomew’s and St. Christopher’s – as well as those in Hambledon, Busbridge, Farncombe and Milford.

The author has kindly donated copies of his book to St. Bartholomew’s Church to help with fund-raising and we are now pleased to be able to offer this attractive work to Society members at the special price of just £10.00 per copy. Most of the proceeds from any sales will be going to St. Bart’s, but the Society will earn a modest commission on any sales to members.

Copies of the book will be available for inspection at the Society’s AGM on Friday, 11th November, but if you would like one and are not able to attend the meeting you can reserve one by emailing the Society’s Chairman, Chris Harrison at info@haslemeresociety.org and we will be happy to save and deliver a copy to you.

Forthcoming events in Haslemere

Compiled by Di Keeley

We are fortunate in Haslemere to have an extremely wide and varied range of clubs, societies and other activities. We have briefly listed forthcoming events of just some of these. Further information can be obtained from the respective websites.

Haslemere Museum www.haslemeremuseum.co.uk/whatson/whatson.html

Some, but not all events have an entrance fee and need to be booked in advance.

- **Exhibitions:** *Rustic Renaissance – The Haslemere Peasant Arts Movement.* 7th November - 24th December.
Our Lady of Lourdes Nativity – exhibition of nativity scenes to celebrate the centenary of Our Lady of Lourdes. 2 – 24th December
- **Cards for Good Causes:** Charity Christmas cards sale.
- **Town Crier Talk:** Haslemere's Town Crier Christian Ashdown. 7 pm, 24th November
- **Creative & Wellbeing Workshop:** *A crafty Christmas.* 17th November
- **Violet:** Roger Sherburn Hall tells the story of his grandmother Violet, a local girl who married a Canadian lieutenant in the First World War. 22nd November 2.30 pm
- **A Crafty Get Together:** Join artist Diana Burch for a craft evening, taking inspiration from Victorian lacy Christmas cards. 23rd November 2.30 – 4.30 pm and 7-9 pm

Family Events & Workshops:

- **Nativity Scenes:** Creating Nativity scenes using simple art and craft materials. Age 5-11
3rd December 10.30 am – 12 pm
- **Haslemere Mummers:** Performance of a traditional play. 20 minutes of family fun.
17th December 11 am
- **As Quiet as a Mouse:** Fun action story and making a mouse finger puppet
18th November 1.30 – 2.30pm
- **We're going on a Bear Hunt:** Expedition to find a bear and act out the popular story.
2nd December 10.30 – 11.30 am
- **Visit Santa:** Santa will be at the Museum as part of the Christmas market. Visit him and receive a small gift. 4th December 11 am – 3 pm
- **Santa's Traditional Victorian Parlour:** Visit Santa to relax in his Victorian parlour
17 and 21- 23rd December 10.30am – 1pm and 2.00 – 4.30pm.
24th December 10.30 – 12.30pm.
19th December 10.30 -12 am: special opening for families with a child who has additional needs such as an Autism Spectrum condition.
- **Christmas Decorations:** Listen to a festive story and make a Christmas decoration to take home. 16th December 10.30 – 11.30 am
- **Merry Christmas Makes:** 5-11 years. A morning spent making a variety of Christmas crafts. 22nd December 10.30 – 12 noon

Haslemere Natural History Society www.haslemerenaturalhistorysociety.org.uk

- **Lecture at Haslemere Museum:** The Ecology of Rewilding. Matthew Phelps, safari guide at Knepps Estate. 12th November, 2.15 pm
- **Field Meetings:**

Birds at Tichfield Haven National Nature Reserve. 19th November. Meet there at 10.30 am
Winter Birds on Blackdown. 3rd December – meet there at 10.30 am.

Haslemere Town Council www.haslemeretc.org

- **Full Council meetings:** 17th November; 19th January
- **Amenities meeting:** 1st December
- **Planning and Highways:** 8th December; 5th January

The Arts Society Haslemere www.theartssocietyhaslemere.org

- **History and Culture of Al-Andalus:** the story of Moorish invasion and Christian reconquest, the surviving architecture and other areas of material culture. 15th November
- **Gilbert and Sullivan and the Savoy Tradition:** 22nd November. A full day- 3 lectures and lunch
- **Robed in Dreadful Majesty:** the music, poetry and traditions of Advent. 6th December
- **Caravaggio- The master of light and shadow:** 17th January 2023

Haslemere Musical Society www.hmsoc.org.uk

- **Concert - Chorus and Orchestra:** Vaughn Williams; Sibelius; Vivaldi; Adam. 3rd December, in the Haslemere Hall, 7.30 pm

Haslemere Gardening Society: www.haslemere-gardening-society.co.uk/events

- **Talk:** Shrubs – the backbone of your garden. Geoff Hawkins. 23rd November 7.45 pm
- **Excursion:** Christmas at Kew. To see the winter lights at Kew. 14th December

Farmers' Market: First Saturday of every month. Haslemere High Street, 10 am – 3pm

Haslemere Christmas Market: 4th December 10 am- 4 pm

Rotary Charities and Craft Fayre: Haslemere Hall. 19th November 9-11 am

Concerts at St. Christopher's Church:

<https://www.classicalevents.co.uk/concerts/st-christophers-church-haslemere>

All concerts start at 7.30 pm at St. Christophers Church

- Kate Lindsey - mezzo-soprano; Van Kuijk Quartet. 19th November
- Zoltan Fejervari: piano. 3rd December
- Indira Grier – cello; Daniel Lehardt – piano. 25th February 2023
- Novus String Quartet. 18th March 2023

Haslemere Hall www.haslemerehall.co.uk

- **Cinema screenings:** At least 9 different films showing in November and December
- **Events via satellite:** Live screenings from the Royal Opera; Royal Ballet; National Theatre.
- **Live Music:** Various from rock bands to classical
- **Live Theatre:** High School Musical; Dick Whittington pantomime; Kinky Boots

Haslemere Repair Shop [Repair Café — Love Haslemere Hate Waste](#)

Volunteers repair a range of items, from electrical tools, bikes and clothing. Book on website

Haslemere Art Society [newsletteraut2022.pdf \(haslemere.com\)](#)

Tuesday group at the Museum: drawing and painting in a variety of styles and mediums

Life Group: Friday afternoons 2-4, meeting in Camelsdale

'Harbours and Boats'. Pastels . Rick Holmes. 17th November 2 pm

'Figures in Pictures'. Saturday workshop in oils, with Roger Dellar. 26th November 2-4 pm

'Winter in the Dales'. Watercolour. Paul Talbot-Greaves **by Zoom** 1st December 7 pm

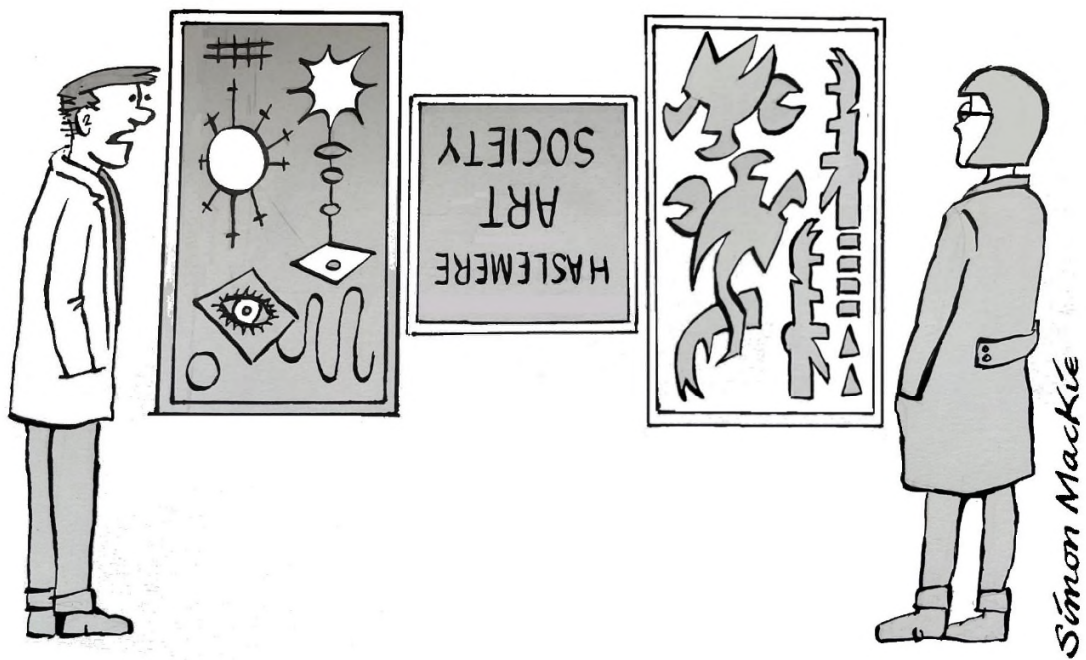
U3A Haslemere www.u3asites.org.uk/haslemere/contact

The Haslemere U3A has 60 active groups – check with the website.

Haslemere Library www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries

Open 9.30- 5pm Tuesday – Saturday. Booking necessary for most events

- **Library support** for Ukrainian nationals
- **Visible Mending Workshops:** Free help from members of the Haslemere Repair Café to repair and add flair to worn clothes. 12th November: Mending with embroidery
26th November: Patches and applique
10th December: Re-fashioning and upcycling
- **Library Direct Home Library Service** for vulnerable members of the community.
- **Pebble Rhymetime:** For babies and toddlers – sharing nursery rhymes, action songs and percussion music. Wednesdays 10-10.30 am
- **Storytime:** Age 2-5. Fridays from 10.30 am
- **Reading Groups**
Chatterbox: For children aged from 7. One Saturday a month 11.10 11.50 am .
Check with library for dates.
Adult Reading Group: First Wednesday of every month from 2.30 – 3.30 pm
- **Digital Buddy:** Help using the internet; IT related problems etc. Fortnightly on Tuesdays 10 – 12 noon. Book in advance
- **Games Club:** Every other Saturday 2-4 pm. Board and card games for anyone (all ages) who wants to join in.



Hmmn...Some interesting pieces but I'm not entirely sure they are all hanging the right way up!