

The work of the Marden Society Footpaths Group largely goes unsung, apart from its Report to the AGM, which is normally given by Committee Member and Parish Councillor, Richard Adam. A part of his Reports usually mentions the Historic Paths continuing research. This covers those local footpaths that have been deleted from the definitive footpaths map and which should rightly be restored.

One such is the Clapper Farm Lane. As Richard reported in the Parish Pump of **March 2010**, Clapper Farm Lane is a minor public road located between Battle Lane and Marden Road, Staplehurst. It originally formed part of the main route between the villages until construction of the South Eastern Railway in 1842 when part of Howland Road was diverted. However, the old road was not stopped-up and a bridge was built over the railway at the eastern end (which is why it is also known as Overbridge Farm Lane). The ends are surfaced but the central section is a very rare example of a genuine 'green lane'. In recent years, the old road has been obstructed in a number of places and this has made Clapper Farm Lane virtually impassable to the public. The green lane has gradually become more overgrown because of lack of maintenance by Kent County Council (KCC), which has also failed to get the obstructions removed.

In spite of appeals for action by the KCC, nothing had been done. Richard organized a petition, perhaps you signed it? Finally, following a concerted campaign by Marden and Staplehurst Parish Councils and various local groups, such as the Ramblers Association, Kent County Council took action to get obstructions removed and overgrowth cleared.

Clapper Farm Lane forms an important link in the local walking network as part of the only direct route between Marden and Staplehurst avoiding busy roads with narrow or non-existent verges. As there are no bridleways in the area, it also offers the only chance for cyclists and equestrians to ride on the public highway away from fast traffic. It can also be used for round trips via the linking footpaths or combined with a visit to the nearby Marden Meadow nature reserve.

In the event that you experience any problems using the lane, please let the Parish Council know and it will take up the issue with the appropriate authority.

It is fair to say that were it not for Richard Adam's single mindedness the restoration of this old path would not have happened. He continues to pursue recognition for other Marden Historic Paths.

EDITH DAVIS

For detailed information about the village don't forget to visit the Society's very own website at [www.mardensociety.org.uk](http://www.mardensociety.org.uk)

The Parish Pump is distributed free to Members of The Marden Society every two months



For details of Membership please contact the Membership Secretary Aileen Hill on 01622 831418

## KENT SCANDALS - Sensational, Salacious and Sad!

A tall man with unruly curly hair, and dressed in open sandals, shorts, and looking slightly offbeat, entered the Memorial Hall in September to give an amusing insight into some of the scandals that have affected Kent and Sussex. He has written many books on a variety of well-researched subjects.

Do you know where the name 'Subbuteo' comes from? The game was invented in the 1920s but failed to catch on. However in 1947, before the days of iPads, Wii, mobile phones, Peter Adolphe of Langton Green re-invented the game for 7/6d, and advertised in the 'Boys' Magazine'. He and his wife then went to the USA for 6 weeks, during which time £10,000 was received in orders. He called the game The Hobby; a name turned down by the Patent Office and the search was on for a new name. As a bird watcher he loved the Hobby, which visited Britain from time to time in search for prey. Its Latin name was *Falcon Subbuteo*, so the name was found.



A 9-inch square flue was the smallest size of some chimneys, and small boys were required to climb these tall chimneys to sweep them. The boys were sold by their parents to be indentured for 7 years, 7 to 14. Most did not live beyond 18, succumbing to cancers, respiratory diseases etc.

Appalled, Jonah Hanway, a Quaker, tried to convince Parliament to stop this practice in 1775, but it took 102 years to 1877 before Lord Palmerston successfully brought this cruel employment to an end. **Note:** During these 102 years the American Colonies had freed themselves from Britain, fought the bloody Civil War some 80 years later, we had stopped the iniquitous slave trade and fought the Crimean War. The French had experienced the French Revolution. **And still we sent children up chimneys!**

The end of the Napoleonic Wars brought about the end of smuggling, with heavy duties put on luxury goods such as tea, tobacco, gin and brandy. This was big business with goods being bought in Europe and smuggled back to Britain, where willing buyers turned a blind eye in their desire for the products available. It was a ruthless trade killed eventually by its own brutality, which lost the sympathy of the public, and the advent of the railways and better and safer means of transporting goods. The Hawkhurst and Aldington gangs were the most infamous.

What to do with the criminal classes after we lost the American Colonies? Benjamin Franklin did not want our riff raff so Britain was left with a large prison population. Decommissioned naval ships seemed the solution on the Swale, Medway and Thames.

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So these rotting hulks accommodated hundreds of children, women and men locked up together for 12 hours at a time. This led to bullying, murder and rape, horrifying places to keep human beings. Many took their chances by jumping overboard; leading to mass graves on the Kent marshes. These proved ideal for the Resurrectionists, looking for dead bodies for the student surgeons in London. £20 bought a body, so a surgeon (who needed 3 before he could qualify), could pursue his studies with a clear conscience.

Edith Nesbitt was described by Noel Coward as the greatest Bohemian he knew. Her publisher insisted she use E.H.Nesbitt on her books to make her readers think she was male - of course a woman could not write with enough appeal! She consoled herself for her husband's infidelities (and the fact that his mistress and children lived with them) by a succession of admiring young lovers before as a widow marrying the younger Captain of the Woolwich Ferry. He proved a kind, loyal man, who cared for her during her two years cancer illness prior to her death.



Finally to Donald McGill, postcard artist. He produced 15,000 designs together with all the risqué jokes that finally brought him in the courts in 1953 for obscene publications. He was prosecuted three times for Obscenity under the 1869 Act. He died in 1962, having allowed his publisher the rights to his work, while he only got paid for work produced. His work, incidentally, was featured in the Tate Britain 2010 exhibition 'Rude Britain'.



We hope to have Chris back next year for another look at the absurdities of life.  
*MAUREEN CLAYTON*

## REMINDER FOR THE AGM -

Please remember that nominations for the election of Officers and to the Executive Committee shall be in writing to the Honorary Secretary seven days before each Annual General Meeting. These shall be supported by a seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained. Nominees, their proposers and seconds must all be fully paid up Members as at the date of such nomination. A simple secret ballot shall, if necessary, take place to determine the Officers and Members of the Executive Committee.

## NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 23 November 2011

**“ Zeebrugge 1987 ” - The Story of The Herald of Free Enterprise Tragedy**

Investigation and Old Bailey Trial

Speaker - Colin Breed

Raffle and refreshments

## MARDEN VINEYARD NEWSLETTER (5)

The launch of Marden's first wines has generated considerable press interest. Following coverage in GQ magazine (Newsletter 4) we received a review by the eminent wine critic Matthew Jukes. He described Herbert Hall 2009 Brut as 'the finest debut English sparkling wine I have ever tasted' and compared it with a 2002 Veuve Clicquot. This month we received further coverage in The Field where we are featured as one of the best English Sparkling wines.

Some of England's most famous restaurants have added the first vintage of Herbert Hall to their wine lists. These include The Goring Hotel, Simpson's in the Strand, Wilton's, Le Gavroche, Chez Bruce and a number of others. Tate Britain, famous not only for its art but also for its wine list has agreed to stock our wine and we have just become one of only three English sparkling wines to be sold at Harrods.

Earlier this month Raymon Blanc, the celebrated chef and owner of the Le Manoir aux Quat' Saisons visited the Marden vineyard and winery. He tasted our first wine and took samples back to his Head Sommelier at the Le Manoir.



The visit was part of trip that began with a tour of the organic apple orchard developed by my brother Peter.

*NICHOLAS HALL*

## MARDEN MEMORIAL HALL

The Committee agreed that the Society's contribution to the improvements would be to fund the cost of a Hearing Loop system. Members will be pleased to know that this has now been installed and is up and running in the Main Hall.

## MARDEN AS SEEN THROUGH OTHER EYES

*No.4 in a series - concluding Sir Charles Iggulden's "Saunter through Kent - 1900"*

Another building with which interesting traditions are connected is an old house at Marden Beech, which used to be called the Pest House, from its having been used by stricken parishioners during the Great Plague. It seems that many villagers were lost to it and even to the present day in the wood lodge of the old Pest House may be seen incised stones, which show that burials took place there....

Very many years ago, perhaps over a couple of centuries, Marden used to have an annual fair for toys and pedlary, and up to the setting up of Union Workhouses had its Parish poorhouse, which accommodated about 50 poor people per year, while the same number were relieved outside it. *(In 1283, Edward I commanded that an annual market be held in Marden, this took place on a Tuesday in October and was still being held until 1794)*

What a change is the modern Marden from the old! In place of a dense forest we find fertile hop and fruit plantations, and where once was only waste marsh land are now rich, luxuriant pastures.

*EUNICE DOSWELL*