

You will no doubt be aware of plans for several major developments in Marden, to meet the Government's and Maidstone Borough Council's targets for new homes to ease the housing shortage. If all the proposed developments were to go ahead (which is most unlikely) there could be around 1800 new homes surrounding Marden, as we know it.

The Marden Neighbourhood Plan Group has been set up to enable local residents to have some input into this process, and has held two open days to show these proposed developments and invite comments. The Group recognises that there has to be some development in Marden, and is developing a Neighbourhood Plan to ensure the views of Marden residents are taken into account.

For those who were not able to attend the recent open day on 22nd June, the Group has put full details of all the 16 proposed development sites on their website and is inviting residents to feedback comments, and to rank all the sites in order of preference. This can be found at:

<http://marden-neighbourhood-plan.org.uk/sites/feedback/>

I would encourage you to have a look at the website and give your thoughts on the various proposed sites as feedback to the Group, if you have not already done so. You can also e mail mardenvillagedevelopmentforum@hotmail.co.uk and be added to the mailing list to receive information

Maureen Clayton - Chairman

For detailed information about the village don't forget to visit the Society's very own website at www.mardensociety.org.uk

ADVANCE NOTICE
8 p m
WEDNESDAY - 23 OCTOBER
John Reuter
"Bugs, Plagues and Pestilences"

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

The History of Toys - Helen Allinson

Men (and women) have played games since they first learnt to use their hands; Stone Age man is known to have played with clay marbles. And evidence of games is found in every culture, many of which are still being played all over the world. Groups of intense men in Turkey in cafes playing backgammon, Baule in many French villages are just two instances.

Now new toys are invented every year, designed and planned throughout the year to hit the shops in time for Christmas. The Chinese invented playing cards and the games that can be played with these are endless. There is even a Guild of Playing Card Manufacturers in the City of London, with a display in the Guildhall.

Helen Allinson, our Speaker, gave us a talk on the types of toys that have been popular, and brought along many examples. German wooden dolls were very popular in Victorian times and remained the best 'must have' for the better off child even when the cheaper more sophisticated Parisian dolls appeared. Helen's grandmother's doll was dressed in a costume made to the original design with stockings, garters, and layers of clothes. Dolls were not sold with clothes, but as everyone could sew this was not a problem.

Toys are influenced by current events – buggies when man landed on the moon, TV characters become plastic models for children to play with, and since the advent of the Action Man, even boys are permitted to play with 'dolls'. Edwardian boys were allowed to have a teddy bear. The legend is that Teddy Roosevelt was offered an opportunity for a photograph alongside a bear tied to a stake, but he felt this was unsportsmanlike and declined. This started the 20th century love of the cuddly bear. The most valuable are the Steiffer bears.

Gollywogs were an Edwardian toy for boys or girls. Robertson's Marmalade took the golly as their famous symbol in the 1950s, with a large golly decorated on their factory at Catford. It was in the 1970s that this became politically incorrect, but they are appearing again now, as the golly is not regarded as a racial insult to such an extent now.

The Victorian fascination with photographs led to the kaleidoscope, a round gadget which could be moved quickly- the wheel went round and it seemed as if the figures were moving. In the 1940s the Viewmaster was produced, made in Bakelite (which in itself makes it collectable now) and images would appear.

After WW1 ex-servicemen could be seen on street corners selling toys they had made. Wooden pegs were often turned into dolls in a more inventive less affluent age. Dolls house furniture could be made with matchboxes stuck together and glued. Until the last couple of decades children only received toys on birthdays or Christmastime.

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The game of consequences will be remembered by many, and charades. Tiddlywinks was a Victorian game, as were Snakes and Ladders and Dominoes. Tiddlywinks is now played at a very high and serious level by the Tiddlywinks League, with felt of a special thickness used to ensure maximum 'flipping'.

Boys played with Meccano, Hornby sets, Lego was played by boys and girls and has managed to re-invent itself and now has Legoland play theme parks in Windsor and the original Legoland in Denmark. Boys also played with their toy soldiers.

As children started to attend school in the late 1800s, books became popular. Firstly the stories had to have a suitable uplifting moral and this theme continued until well into the 1950s. Beatrix Potter insisted her books were made in a small size, convenient for the little hands. Christmas Annuals became popular and expensive, based on comics or TV programmes.

Children played with Post Office sets, little typewriters, printing sets, cigarette cards, stamp collecting and even noting train numbers.

MAUREEN CLAYTON

HARRY POTTER of Marden



Who would have thought, when I asked if anyone knew anything about the Harry Potter who advertised his garden business in a pre-war Parish Magazine, that such an interesting story would emerge?

It is thanks firstly, to Eunice Doswell who told me that the garden was situated in the area we know as the Rookery and that there was a picture of Harry's staff in the History Groups records. It

is shown here, a bit fuzzy. The man sitting on the top of the cab is not Harry. Apparently it was Cyril Collins, who sometimes did electrical work there.

My second helper was Mike Judd, who admitted that he didn't know Harry but was able to give me the information about the family, which is what made it all so very interesting. Harry's brother Bert was a partner in the business but he moved away from Marden after Harry's death. Harry had been married twice, (possibly his first wife died). She was the mother of their son, Jack Potter, born 1910, who trained as a teacher. When the Boys, Head at Marden School left, Jack applied for the position and got it in 1938. Although the School was not a church school, the church always retained an interest and in 1944, the Rev Finch and Jack fell out. Jack, whose wife was a Roman Catholic, was, as Mike described it "on the way to Rome", left and went to another school. In the 1950s Jack was appointed Head of a large Comprehensive School in London.

Interestingly, Mike said that Harry's father, Dickie Potter was a "bit of a lad"! His and Harry's graves are in the Churchyard of St Michael and All Angels, here. Harry's is the one with a tree growing out of it.

There will be more about the Marden Potter family in a later edition

EDITH DAVIS

Birds... are sensitive indicators of the environment, a sort of "ecological litmus paper"... The observation of birds leads inevitably to environmental awareness.

Roger Tory Peterson

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Society has been busy supporting the Village events this summer. We sold strawberries and cream at the Picnic in the Park and repeated the Giant Jenga and Skittles alley at the village fete. Both these events were well supported by the village.

Our summer outing this year, which attracted over 23 members, was a visit to Brattle Farm Museum, courtesy of Anita and Brian. They showed us their amazing collection of farm artefacts, old cars and vans, bicycles, lawn mowers, and much more. Tea and coffee was provided – the Museum is a tribute to their dedication in collecting these old exhibits, and we would like to thank them very much.

MAUREEN CLAYTON - Chairman

A PICTURE OF 19TH CENTURY MARDEN

MARDEN is an extensive village, eight miles from both Cranbrook and Maidstone, and has a station on the South Eastern railway. The church of St. Michael is an ancient edifice. The living is a vicarage, in the presentation of the see of Canterbury; the Rev. Julius Deedes, M.A., is the incumbent. The population in 1851 was 2,296. Here are places of worship for the Wesleyans and Independents.

POST-OFFICE.—William Jude, Postmaster. Letters arrive from Staplehurst, which is also the nearest Money Order Office.

GENTRY.

Austen, Mr. Stephen
Barling, Mrs.
Beafe, Thomas, Esq., Dare House
Deedes, Rev. Julius, M.A., Vicarage
Hooker, Mrs.

Leedes, Mrs.
Osborne, Samuel, Esq.
Perry, Robert, Esq.
Swort, Mrs.

TRADERS.

Adams, Thomas, farmer
Amos, William, farmer
Austen, Mrs. Fanny, farmer
Austen, William, farmer

Bailey, Henry, farmer
Bartholomew, James, farmer
Boorman, Richard, farmer
Boots, Horace, wheelwright

NEXT MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER

7.30 pm

Ian Porter

"The East End Murders -1811 -1911"

Facts about the 1500s

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."