



13 • Societies and Leisure

Homemade entertainment has always played a large part in the lives of those living in our villages. This was more so in the early days but local events and clubs are still important in village life today, as can be seen from the variety of leisure activities which have taken place in our parish during the past 100 years.

DRAMA

Homes for Little Boys and Infant School

Since 1894 the first record of dramatic productions in the villages seems to be of those produced at the Homes for Little Boys

*Scene from "Have you seen my lady" featuring Michael Dunne, Nigel Chambers, Marion Brooks and Ella Waters
Photograph courtesy of Kentish Times Newspapers*



including "Lectures, Dissolving Views and other Entertainments, which at intervals are given by various friends and in which the boys sometimes take part".

In 1942 it is recorded that Mr and Mrs Bell

produced *The Housemaster* by Ian Hay with the boys taking all parts. Later a small drama group was set up by Fred and Ella Walters, house parents, with girls from outside being invited to join the boys.

THE HOMES FOR BOYS, SOUTH DARENTH

THREE ONE ACT PLAYS

Presented by
*The Apprentices Social Club
and Friends*

In the Homes Dining Hall

On Friday, 16th March
and Saturday, 17th March, 1956

Commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Programme 3d.

Pupils from the Infant School entertained parents and friends with a programme of which "in spite of three hours entertainment the audience testified unwearied amusement" according to the Parish Magazine for December 1905. The Magazine went on: "The infants were charming; steady drill marked careful teaching; pretty chorus songs, fascinating actions, excellent dialogues and recitations; all was delightful". At the second

performance an extra song by Miss Chandler entitled *My Chamomile Tea* was included, while the Girls Friendly Society gave renditions of *Miss Honey* and *Ophelia Anna Iggs* (whatever happened to songs like that?). The entertainment raised £8 towards the cost of £24 for the new piano and was considered a good start.

Women's Institute Drama Group

The WI Drama Group had been active for some years with small scale productions but in 1962 the first WI pantomime was produced and went on to become a village tradition. This first effort was *Beastie and the Beaut*, produced by Daisy (Diz) Spice, with a cast as shown in the photograph plus Rae Romano, Doris Mills, Nan Urquhart, Betty Brown, Elsie Elliott and Margaret Latchford and, as pianist, Peggy Ovenden. Diz Spice's most vivid memory of this first production was the fact that the door stuck fast and the cast had to make its entrances through the fireplace!



A scene from "Beastie and the Beaut" featuring (L-R) Joyce Carne, Gwen Booth, Rosa Dunmall, Pat Draper and Audrey Taylor
Photograph courtesy of The Kentish Times

The WI Drama Group continued to perform twice a year, the summer production being a mixture of comedy and drama. They also entered floats for local fetes. Through the years the pantomime itself has become more ambitious and recently has included young students from the Ann Dunn and Kay Walker Dance Schools, more colourful costumes and elaborate sets. Special effects have included a space rocket, flying fairies and dry ice smoke that froze the legs of the actresses!

One of the "stars" of the pantomimes, Joyce Carne, went on to join the Wilmington Players and in 1985 won the award for Best Actress for her performance in *The Big Cats* in the Kentish Times One-Act Play Festival at the Orchard Theatre.

An innovation in recent years has been the special dress rehearsal performance for elderly residents brought in from all round the district by members of Farningham Lions Club.

The Holmesdale Players

In 1951 the Holmesdale Players was formed by a small group of enthusiasts and until 1969 performed such classics as *Arms and the Man*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *Blithe Spirit* and *Night Must Fall*. Members of the Geoffrey Whitworth Theatre at Crayford were invited to give their criticisms and the Players were always congratulated on the high standard of their performances. The Parish Council was well represented, as actors included such people as one-time Parish Councillor, Maurice Tripp, Parish Clerk, James Witheroe, as well as Eric Ovenden and Frank Tanner, both Parish Council Chairmen.



An April 1956 production of "Miss Mabel" by the Holmesdale Players. Doffing his hat is Rev Passmore. Others (L-R) C Best, C Neary, F Tanner, B Warman, M Corbett, C Tanner and J Lane.
Photograph courtesy of Marion Ellis

THE HOLMESDALE PLAYERS
presents
"MISS MABEL"
by R. C. SHERRIFF

THE PLAYERS (as they appear)	
THE MAID	MARION BROOKS
MARY	IBERYL WARIMAN
PETER	CLIVE TANNER
THE GARDENER	ALAN PASSMORE
THE LAWYER	FRANK TANNER
MISS MABEL	CLARE NEARY
THE VICAR	JAMES LANE
THE VICAR'S WIFE	MARY CORBETT
THE DOCTOR	CEDRIC BEST
POLICE INSPECTOR	ROBERT ROLPH
POLICE CONSTABLE	WILLIAM HAWKINS
Stage Manager	Ruth Best
Asst. Stage Managers	Olive Wainman Cedric Durnall
Electrician	Robert Rolph
Wardrobe Mistress	Audrey Ellis
The set was designed and built by	Cedric Best

The play produced by Arthur Linsley

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The play takes place in a small town during a week in the Spring of 1948.

- ACT I. The sitting-room in Miss Mabel's house.
ACT II. Scene 1. The following day.
Scene 2. Half an hour later.
ACT III. Scene 1. A little later.
Scene 2. Two days later.

The incidental music is provided by THE HOLMESDALE STRINGS to whom we offer our grateful thanks for their help and co-operation.

We would also express our indebtedness to Mr. and Mrs. R. Rogers for the use of their premises for rehearsals and to Mr. A.K. Fielder for the use of his store room.

Furniture and properties were loaned by members of the company.

The Valley Players

After the Holmesdale Players disbanded, the villages were without a drama group. However, in 1980 the Valley Players from Sutton-

at-Hone found themselves homeless (or rather stageless) when the new hall was built and transferred their productions to Horton

Their productions have alternated between comedy and drama and in 1984 Dorothy Maynard won the Best Actress Award in the Kentish Times One Act Drama Festival for her performance in *Intermezzo*. They celebrated their 40th year with J B Priestley's *When We Are Married*.

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The Minute Books of the Horton Kirby and South Darenth Women's Institute make fascinating reading - a complete record of its activities since its formation on 3 December 1925, with Mrs W Rashleigh as its first President.

Meetings have always been held on the third Thursday of each month. The first meeting, held in the village "hut", was "a social evening with 90 people enjoying games and dancing".

The evening always included singing of the WI hymn *Jerusalem* but at times members had something different to entertain them. On one occasion "Lady Emily Hart Dyke played solos on the kettle drums, accompanied by Mrs Spoor on the pianoforte".

The Institute's first outing was to Margate in the summer of 1926 and its first big purchase was a sewing machine for the "working party" at a cost of £6. Whist drives were the main source of fund-raising.

In May 1933 it is recorded that the Committee discussed a letter from a Miss Plumer about "90 old gentlemen to entertain at Mill House". The Committee agreed "to take part in giving them a good time"! In fact this was the start of an annual event for the next five years when the Institute entertained old gentlemen from the Canning Town Settlement. They

were given tea, played games and music was provided by "the wireless". As a parting gift they were handed tobacco and boot laces. This seems an odd choice of present until you realise that the



The cast of "When we are married"
Photograph courtesy of Kentish Times Newspapers

Kirby and South Darenth Village Hall. Founded in 1949, the Valley Players were already well-known in the area and have continued to produce two plays a year, with profits going to Cancer Research.

WI President's husband owned the factory in Horton Kirby which manufactured boot laces! This was Walter Millen whose wife, together with her sister-in-law, Mrs Crooks, were founders of the local WI.

Members continued to go on outings and in 1935 they went to Windsor, followed by a boat trip to Hampton Court (inclusive fare 7s 6d). Then came 1939 and life changed dramatically. For the first time ever a meeting was cancelled. Evacuees and barrage balloons arrived, and members spent a lot of time knitting soldiers' comforts. Fund-raising was concentrated on raising money to buy wool. The Parish Council Minutes for October 1939 reported that the WI had very generously agreed to provide and fix black curtains for the Committee Room.

In September 1940 a second meeting had to be cancelled, this time because of air raids. Meetings were held in the afternoon at the President's home instead of the Village Hall because of the blackout. By 1942 the Minutes stated that "knitting for the troops has been discontinued owing to the coupons".

When at last, arrangements were made for the Victory Tea, members contributed ingredients for the cake. However, victory did not make everything easy for WI members and as late as 1947 the Institute resolved that "it has been very unfair for years for the housewife to hoard coupons to be able to replace such things as sheets and curtains, and did urge the Government to allow every housewife docket especially for these things".

Today's members are as likely to hear talks on conservation, terrorist bombing in London or Beauty Without Cruelty as on those home-making topics more traditionally associated with the WI image. Fund-raising is directed at buying sophisticated hospital equipment such as a laser scanner. Many of today's younger members work outside the home and their interests are probably much wider, but their aims are the same as those original members - to enhance the position of women. The Institute itself seems set to last for many years yet.

BRITISH LEGION

The Horton Kirby and South Darenth branch of the British Legion was formed at a meeting in The Jolly Millers' Clubroom on a Sunday in late 1947. The room was packed with ex-Servicemen eager to join and Tom Farbrace was elected Chairman, with Major Brown MC as President.

Social Committee Secretary Cyril Bennett very quickly began organising outings to the Chatham Empire on Saturday evenings and visits to London theatres. On one occasion five coachloads of members' children made a trip to Bertram Mills Circus at Harringay. The cost of a 32-seater coach to Holborn Empire in those early days was just £3 8s 0d. Albert Woollard told us that Monty Hever, a well-known character and one-time Legion President, supplied the coaches from his transport company but always gave back half the money to go towards the children's Christmas party.



British Legion presentation to Major and Mrs Brown and Mr and Mrs Arthur Price on the occasion of their Golden Wedding in 1960. Albert Woollard is standing in the centre.

Photograph courtesy of J Parkinson, Dartford

Members were keen to have their own hall so whist drives and other social events were held to raise money for the Building Fund. In 1948 Albert Woollard was elected Chairman, an office he still held in 1994. Some social functions were held in Horton Kirby Paper Mill's hall in Devon Road, but a disastrous fire closed the hall. James Salmon offered the premises to the Legion but, as the Members had to clean it up themselves, he only charged the nominal fee of £5 per quarter.

At a sale of the late Miss Russell's estate, Morris Wheeler, the Legion's Vice-President, bought a piece of land opposite the present hall and sold a third of it to the Legion for £1,000. At a later date this land was sold to Dave Charnley for building purposes and the profit was spent on modernising the present hall.

Since 1955 the Branch has organised the Poppy Appeal covering this parish and neighbouring villages. The first year £201 16s 7d was collected. Collections to date total over £35,000.

The Women's Section is also flourishing and has won the Mary Toothill Cup for efficiency four times. The Service Committee helped many people after the War and is still functioning with Ken Williams as Secretary and Arthur "Jack" Jennings as Hall Secretary. Albert Woollard, Legion Gold Badge holder, was made a Life Member in 1987.

TOC-H

A branch of Toc-H, the inter-denominational service organisation with a Christian basis, was formed in Horton Kirby and South Darent by Robert Rolph after the 1939-45 War. It aimed to offer a place where anyone could go for a cup of tea and say a prayer.

Horton Kirby branch meetings were held in the Village Hall. Members helped others in the village by cutting grass, tidying the churchyard and providing an evening library at the hall. Senior Citizens were treated to an annual dinner and members of the Stroke Club were taken on a country coach trip each year. Sadly, after the death of Bob Rolph in 1984 the Toc-H branch was disbanded. At the time of writing, members Charlie Finnis and Sam Wells still live in the villages and the branch banner hangs in St Mary's Church.

DARENT VALLEY LIONS

Darent Valley Lions Club was formed in 1992 and much of its work in the early stages has been within Horton Kirby and South Darent. Part of Lions International, the world's largest service organisation, the Darent Valley Club was the first in the area to include women from the start. Its fund-raising activities have included quiz nights, race nights, a cockney evening and a Forties night. Under its first two Presidents, George Piller and Mike Medlen, the



A Lions fund-raising Forties Night in the Village Hall in 1992 (L-R) Angus & Pat Orridge, Pam Davis, Peg and Eric Ovenden.

Photograph courtesy of Yvonne Medlen

Club took over the annual Village Fete in South Darent and supports the Lions Hospice at Northfleet. More recently, with Barbara Bradley as its first woman President, a Befriending Scheme has been started when elderly people living in the area are taken out for a drive and later taken to a member's home for tea. Donations have been given to the Kids' Club in Saxon Place to enable the children to go on holiday and many other local people have been helped. The Club has also supported Lions International projects by purchasing a water well in Nepal and two eye camps in India.

DARBY AND JOAN CLUB

The Kentish Times for 28 September 1951 recorded that "Mrs

Mrs Talbot receiving the £10 cheque from the WVS representatives in 1951

Photograph courtesy of The Kentish Times Newspapers



Talbot, WVS representative, accepted a £10 cheque from Miss Margaret Ward, WVS County organiser, to mark the opening of the 100th WVS Darby and Joan Club in Region 12 (Kent, Surrey and Sussex), at Horton Kirby Village Hall”. The report went on to record that Richard Thear (81), the oldest man present, Mrs Henniker (76), the oldest lady, and Mr and Mrs Walter Millen, who had been married 54 years, all received gifts.



May Talbot celebrating her 90th birthday with her friends at the Darby and Joan Club in May 1988. Photograph courtesy of Kentish Times Newspapers

The paper stated that the opening of the Club was entirely due to Mrs Talbot and, in fact, May Talbot continued to run the club until her death in 1992 at the age of 94. As well as being a member of the WVS for more than 40 years, Mrs Talbot ran the chiropody and Meals on Wheels services for the villages and was an active member of the WI. She also continued to drive her car until well into her 90s! The Darby and Joan Club marked her 90th birthday with a lively version of “This is Your Life” and the same year she was awarded the British Empire Medal.

Numerous golden weddings have been celebrated by members of the Club including Bill and Mary Wilson, Arthur and Alice May, Rose and Fred Wickenden, Bertha and Reuben Cleaver and Ivy and Bill Austin. Another celebration was the 104th birthday of Mrs Lilian Curtis from New Road in 1980.

HORTON KIRBY VILLAGE SOCIETY

The Village Society was formed in March 1991 with the aim of “uniting the village community, increasing social and cultural activities and maintaining and improving the village environment”. Its first officers were President Sarah Ward, Chairman John Fraser, Secretary Karen Defries, Treasurer David Crowhurst and every resident in Horton Kirby automatically became a member. Fund-raising activities and social occasions such as barn dances and concerts in the Church help provide outings and improvements to the appearance of Horton Kirby. The village’s traditional Summer Fair in Westminster Field was first held in 1991.

YOUTH CLUBS

Many youth clubs have been started in the villages only to be short-lived. One such club in the late 1950s, organised by Yvonne Rogers and held in Court Lodge, was called The Monday Club. (This should not be confused with the Mother and Toddler Club of the same name which meets in the Village Hall). Malcolm Scott remembered that, as part of the youth club fund-raising, members regularly carried out small tasks such as cleaning and gardening for local people.



*The end of a Teen Beat Youth Club sponsored walk
Photograph courtesy of Ken Williams*

The Teenbeat Youth Club, formed in January 1966, was sponsored by Horton Kirby and South Darenth Labour Party's social committee with Ken Williams as a driving force. Membership quickly rose from 50 attending the first night to nearly 100 and many social and fund-raising events were arranged. Club members took part in five very successful 20-mile sponsored walks which raised £160 for West Hill Hospital and £439 for old age pensioners' Christmas parties.

The photograph shows the end of one such walk, which always ended with a paddle in the river at Westminster Field. The old green shed, which the Horton Kirby Football Club used as changing rooms before the existing pavilion was built, was used to provide the walkers with hot soup and sandwiches.

After five successful years the Club was closed because the organisers felt there was not enough support from local youngsters and too many outsiders were attending.

SODA, the South Darenth Youth Club was formed following the Rail Link battle in an attempt to bring some spirit back to the village. This first met in a room behind The Queen public house and then in the Environmental Studies Centre but sadly this too was disbanded after only a year through the lack of a suitable meeting place.

GIRLS FRIENDLY SOCIETY

References to the Girls Friendly Society have been found in early Parish Magazines which show that it was in existence in 1896 if not earlier. In 1903 prizes were awarded for

“needlework and wild flowers”. Young members were called candidates and older girls were associates and girls often stayed in the Society until they were 18 years of age. Both Queenie Drew and Kay Maggs have told us about their time in the Society and remember singing, dancing and acting. Queenie belonged in the 1940s when Mrs Gardiner was leader.

GUIDES, BROWNIES AND RAINBOWS

Official records show that the 1st Horton Kirby Guide Company held its first meeting in November 1933 and was registered in March 1934. However, the Guides actually formed in 1924 joining with the Girls Friendly Society for a short time before disbanding for four years between 1929 and 1933. One of its first leaders was Miss Best.



*The Guides assembled with Captain Lily England second from the right
Photograph courtesy of June Smith*

*The presentation of new flags for
the Brownie packs bought by Des
and Marjorie Seal (L) and Eileen
Hewitt (R) c 1979. Rev Leo
Laker is in the centre. Photograph
courtesy of Reporter Newspaper*



Guiding was a very important part of the young life of Freda Elliott. When she died at the age of fifteen a guide badge was engraved on her gravestone which is near the south door of St Mary's Church.

In 1939 the Company was run by Lily England and when she joined the WRAF, a school teacher from Dartford West Secondary School, Hilda Nuttall, became Captain. Later Lily returned and continued in her post until 1959 with her Lieutenant, June Haacke (now Smith).

In 1939 Lily England also formed the 1st Horton Kirby Brownie Pack, meeting at the school, now the Environmental Study Centre next to the Village Hall. In 1993, some of those original Brownies still live in the village, including Gwen French, Betty French, Betty Stevens, Christine Saunderson and June Haacke.

Meetings were held on Saturday mornings and when air raids became more frequent, they were held in Brown Owl's bungalow, No. 3 East Hill. It was there they rehearsed *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* as an entertainment for parents, with Irene Gunner as Snow White and Marjorie Dancer as the Prince.

Later demand was such that two Brownie packs were needed, meeting on separate evenings in the Village Hall, but in 1990 the two combined.

Camping was always a very important Guiding activity. At one time camp equipment was stored in outbuildings in Franks Hall and the Company camped in the top field in the grounds. Later the equipment was moved to Eglantine Villa and the Guides camped in the orchard.

In 1991 the Guides and Brownies were joined by younger sisters, the Rainbows.

SCOUTS, CUBS AND BEAVERS

A Horton Kirby Scout Troop was registered at Dartford in 1919 with Percy Kemp as Scoutmaster. However there appear to have

been Scouts in the parish much earlier as the photograph has been dated at around 1912. Peter Spencer identified the young lad with the bugle as his uncle, Harry Simmons. During the 1930s Frank Tanner was the Scoutmaster assisted by Ralph Rogers. There was also a thriving Scout Troop at the Homes for Little Boys from 1914.

In the late 1970s Ralph Rogers of Court Lodge gave the Group a plot of land on a 21-year lease, with the option of a further 21 years,



*Horton Kirby Scout Group c 1912
Photograph courtesy of Peter Spencer*

at a peppercorn rent of 10p a year. With the help of a £14,000 grant and by raising the remaining £8,000 themselves, the Scout Group had their own hut by May 1981.

FETES

Summer Fetes have always been a part of village life and many organisations hold these important fund-raising events.

In 1903 the Parish Magazine recorded "The Sale of Work and Garden Fete held in the grounds of Franks on Saturday and Monday July 4 and 6 is over, and splendidly over. The total sum collected (somewhere about £160) surpassed the wildest expectations of the old inhabitants of Horton Kirby".

Opened by Lady Dorchester, the Fete seems to have offered one or two unusual attractions such as an Electrical Display, Palmistry, Snakes and Chameleons, the writer of the report passing these last “with an ill-concealed shudder”.

The day ended with an entertainment in the picture gallery at Franks and included a “simply perfect” item by Mr and Mrs Sydney Spalding in *The Codicil*. The reporter commented that “while enjoying the beauty of the country we ask our friends to remember to give also of their substance. We hope and believe that they will not object and that they will freely respond to the appeal. Horton Kirby is a growing parish; the people are active, responsive and intelligent. If the amount resulting from

*Fete Committee Chairman Frank Tanner has just knocked Rev Passmore off the slippery pole
Photograph courtesy of J Parkinson, Dartford*

*Procession passing the Mill Owner's house 1908
Photograph courtesy of Phyllis Martin*



the Bazaar should prove considerable, a really useful Parish Room may be the result”.

In the same year, 1903, the Parish Magazine reported on a gymkhana, held on the August Bank Holiday, in Oliver Bicknell's meadow,



which was said to have provided much amusement for Horton Kirby.

From many affectionate reminiscences of village fetes, it is clear that these events were very important occasions to many people. Janet Carpenter remembered how in the 1950s she used to follow the steam fire engine driven by Freddy Ward as it made its way from the Paper Mill up New Road and down East Hill before going on to the fete on the Mill sports ground (now Darenth Heathside Football ground). She also recalled how much more exciting the stalls were then, including the greasy pole which the vicar, Reverend Passmore, would sit upon and defy anyone to knock him off with a pillow. There was also a lady in bed and if someone hit the target you were lucky enough to see her fall into a large

tub of water. Another favourite memory is the auction held at the close by Freddy Ward wearing his Union Jack hat!

In 1953 Joan Austin of Carleton Place (now Mrs Sargent) was selected "Miss Horton Kirby" and went on to become "Miss Dartford".

In 1954 American Air Force personnel from Manston took an active part in the Fete and provided entertainment for the crowd in the form of a softball demonstration and a Hillbilly show. They also took part in the tug o'war, being beaten by the Fete Champions, Horton Kirby Paper Mill Team 2. Mrs W Bryant won the ladies' ankle contest.



*Miss Horton Kirby at the 1953 Fete
Photograph courtesy of Patrick Sargent*

There were also races for all ages. Alan Brooks, who still works in the Paper Mill, recalled with pride how for several years in the 1960s he won the Annual Fete cross-country event.

Roy Martin of Montgomery Road reminded us how, on the same day as the Fete, there was always a produce show in the Village Hall. There were fruit, vegetable and flower competitions as well as wild flower arrangements and handwriting competitions for the children. He remembered how these were always well- supported

and regretted that village life, as represented by events such as these, has been eroded. Since 1991 the WI has tried to rekindle interest in such things by organising a village produce show in September.



*The Queen pub's victorious tug o'war team 1952
(L to R) Jimmy Woolley (Coach), Stan Cook, Billy Theobald, Eric Skey,
Len Gooding, Tom Gooding, Wally Theobald, No 7 unknown, Frank
Hollands (Anchorman)
Photograph courtesy of Stan Cook*

Others agreed that the Village Fete brought everyone together and all organisations co-operated to make this the one big event of the year. The nearest thing to this in recent times was when the battle with British Rail was at its height and the Rail Link Action Group held a fund-raising Fete at Heathside. The atmosphere on that day was very special.

JUBILEES AND STREET PARTIES

As in most villages up and down the land, Royal Jubilees and national events of all kinds have been celebrated, often with street parties.

In 1902, the Coronation of Edward VII was postponed until 9th August because of the King's health. However, the Palace directed that festivities should proceed on the original date of 28th June which was bright and sunny.

As a result of the Parish Council's decision not to have intoxicating liquors, 117 gallons of ginger beer were provided at a cost of £3 10s 2d.

Beef and ham tea for 600 adults and bread, cake and buns for 400 children were also provided. The planned bonfire and fireworks were saved until the actual Coronation day.

The Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935 was celebrated in Westminster Mill Meadows in great style. The Opening Ceremony, performed by William Rogers of Court Lodge, was followed during the afternoon by the presentation of souvenir beakers by Mrs Fooks. Children's races formed the main part of the event and Phyllis Martin (nee French) remembered winning the

The Parish of Horton Kirby



PROGRAMME of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations

TO BE HELD AT
Westminster Mill Meadows,
HORTON KIRBY
(By kind permission of WALTER MILLEN, Esq., C.C.)

On MONDAY, MAY 6, 1935,
Commencing at 2 p.m.

Chairman : COURTENAY C. S. FOOKS, Esq., J.P.

Hon. Secretary : W. W. BROWN, Esq. Hon. Treasurer : F. W. JARVIS, Esq.

Committee :

MRS. W. W. BROWN	MRS. S. M. SPOOR	WALTER MILLEN, Esq., C.C.
MRS. E. B. CANNELL	ARTHUR BROWN, Esq.	WM. ROGERS, Esq.
MRS. F. W. JARVIS	G. M. CROOK, Esq.	JAMES SALMON, Esq.
MRS. M. OVERTON	WM. HUTTON, Esq.	T. SEWELL, Esq.
MRS. R. PERRY	A. C. MATTHEWS, Esq.	J. STIMPSON, Esq.



Celebrating another Silver Jubilee in the Parish this time in 1977. The Bradley and Stevenson families in procession in Paddock Close



*Horton Kirby's Street party 1977 held in rasbleigh Way
Photograph courtesy of Sylvia Ayris*

girls' 100 yard race. The day also included a ladies' egg and spoon race, 50 yards (married ladies only), 60 yards (single ladies only) and a married couples' race. All this was followed by a pageant and display, folk dancing and a maypole dance by children from the Primary School.

For the 1953 Coronation, £21 19s 1d from the Fete Committee plus £53 from the Parish Council was spent entertaining the elderly parishioners and children.

OUTINGS

Days out played an important part in the working life of villagers before they had paid holidays and many such days are recorded in early Parish Magazines. In 1903 the Choir was reported to have spent an enjoyable day at Folkestone, while employees of the Paper Mill and the Bible Class boys went to Margate and Ramsgate. Apparently this was the first such excursion by Paper Mill employees for 20 years. Four hundred people descended on Hastings in 1904 and decided “a day isn’t long enough for Hastings, one wants a week there”.



In the 1950s, as Janet Carpenter remembered, there was a special train arranged by the Paper Mill for its employees’ day out to Margate. Extra carriages were added to the 6 am mail train from Farningham Road and a huge decorated shield was attached to the front of the engine specially for the day.

Even today, when so many have access to private transport, coach outings are an important part of the entertainment programmes of clubs and societies.

Fighting Cocks outing to Windsor 1947

Photograph courtesy of George Spearman, Windsor, supplied by Jim Austin



*Horton Kirby Paper mills outing c 1910
Photograph courtesy of James Salmon*