



The Westerham Society Newsletter

October 2015

Dear Members,

Welcome to the latest newsletter. Please find below details of the remaining events in 2015 as well as early 2016 dates for your diary. Booking forms for the Churchill Dinner and Christmas Social are at the end of this newsletter.

Forthcoming Events

Friday 30th October, Westerham Hall – “Darent River Villages” - Talk by Rod Shelton

A wonderful look at historic and current use of the Darent River. In times gone by, boats came up river from the Thames as far as Otford. Locally, there are still remnants of the mills which used the Darent and its tributaries on which Westerham depended. This talk, called *“Well I never knew that!”* highlights some unusual and little known details about the river and villages along it. Rod’s book, aptly titled “Darent”, is well researched and covers very early history to the current day. Rod is a local man and lives in Otford.

Highlights of the book include over 1000 photos, illustrations and paintings, village and market town histories, places of interest, where the water mills were, stunning wildlife photos - from butterflies to winter waders, how paper was first made along the river and world-changing inventions that made the river famous.



As ever, the evening starts at 7:30 for drinks and then the talk at 8:00. The evening is free for members and is £5 for non members.

Monday 30th November– The annual Sir Winston Churchill dinner at Chartwell, 7.30pm for 8.00pm



In the year that we commemorate 50 years since the death of Sir Winston Churchill, it is with great pleasure that we welcome a Churchill family member, Rupert Soames, as guest speaker at this year's Churchill Dinner.

Rupert Soames is the grandson of Sir Winston Churchill, the son of Mary Soames and the great nephew of Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Scout Movement. His parents and older siblings lived at Chartwell Farm, next to Chartwell, in the 1950's. He read Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Worcester College, Oxford during which time he worked as a DJ at the nightclub Annabel's and was President of the Oxford Union. He is currently the Group Chief Executive of Serco after serving 11 years as Chief Executive of the temporary power business Aggreko. His brother is the Conservative MP Nicholas Soames. Rupert was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2010 New Year Honours List.

Tickets cost £50 for the evening, which begins with a Pol Roger champagne reception followed by a three course dinner and coffee. The dress code is black tie. The booking form is at the end of the newsletter.

Places are reserved on a **“first come, first served”** basis upon receipt of a completed application form and cheque. Places will not be held for members on the promise of a cheque. Society Members have priority. Requests for tickets for guests will be satisfied on a “first come first served” basis once all member applications have been attended to prior to a cut-off date of 16 November 2015. Tickets will be sent to you if your application is successful. If you are unsuccessful, your cheque will be returned.

Please note that tickets for this dinner are limited to 80 this year, so please book promptly to avoid disappointment.

Sunday 13th December - Members' Christmas Social, Church Gate, 15 The Green. 12.00-2.30pm

We are delighted that Jane Hunter has once again generously offered to host the 2015 Christmas Social in her lovely home in the heart of Westerham, right next door to St Mary's Church. This festive and convivial gathering is restricted to 60 adult members only. The price of £10 per person includes drinks and canapés. Places must be booked using the booking form at the end of the newsletter.



We do not send out tickets for the Christmas Social, but you will receive confirmation of your booking.

Eligibility for the above events are for 2015 subscription holders

Friday 29th January, 8pm, Westerham Hall “The Westerham Press Family” – Talk by Paul and Francis Atterbury

Following the very popular talk by Francis Atterbury on Westerham Press in 2014 I have managed to persuade Francis to come back and talk to us again, accompanied by brother Paul of ‘Antiques Roadshow’ fame.

This should be a fascinating talk as they will discuss their memories of growing up in Westerham as Rowley Atterbury set up Westerham Press from the garage in Buckham Thorns. Both sons will discuss their emerging lives in Westerham, and Rowley’s influence, as their father developed a pioneering print business that developed exponentially from the Sergeant’s Mess building in post war Biggin Hill Aerodrome, to High Street Westerham and finally to the purpose built Westerham Press industrial production works opposite the railway station.

They will be able to give us their insight into the ‘Westerham Press’ story, with all the wonderful people involved, and how the family reacted to the subsequent sale of the flagship and the impact this had on their own development.

Francis and Paul Atterbury are now both very well established in successful careers for themselves, which they will outline, and reveal the influence their parents had on their career directions.

This should be a most entertaining evening with many anecdotes and the chance to ask questions of both Francis and Paul in their formative years.



Rowley Atterbury, founder of the Westerham Press

Rowley Atterbury, worked as a typographer and printer using innovative techniques. In 1950 he founded the Westerham Press, employing some of the most advanced colour-reproduction techniques as well as implementing forward-looking management practices.

Friday 26th February, 8pm, Westerham Hall, “Westerham Brewery” - Talk By Robert Wicks

Robert Wicks is the founder and chief brewer of Westerham Brewery which was established in 2004. With a rich brewing heritage, Westerham can once again be proud of a local brewery.

Robert will take us through the history of brewing in Westerham from the well known Black Eagle brewery of yesteryear to the establishment of his current business and the latest plans for development of a bespoke new brewing site at Charman’s Farm.

What is of great interest is how the famous hops of the Kent hop farms of the pre and post war years have been preserved and by careful selection the new Westerham Brewery has been able, again, to source these hops and produce ales with a distinct yet traditional flavour. In addition to this the local hard water, which percolates through the Lower Greensand Ridge to the south of Westerham, is excellent for brewing ales such as the IPA for which Westerham was once famous.

Westerham’s future may well be influenced by the success of ventures such as the Westerham Brewery and the Westerham Valley vineyards at Charman’s Farm and we look forward to Robert’s talk and perhaps a taster or two.



Friday 25th March, 8pm, Westerham Hall “Healing the Ravages of Time - conservation for publishing” Talk by Bill Curtis (to follow the Westerham Society AGM)

Old photographs and documents, creased and split with damaged edges, but they are 150 years old and possibly the only copy. Drawing-pin holes and rust marks from pins and paperclips; some photographs would make you shudder, but they’re pretty much all fixable in the digital age.

Bill Curtis, author of four books on nineteenth and twentieth century Westerham history and the proprietor of the publishing company **Past Times Press**, has been loaned hundreds of documents, letters, posters and photographs, some of which were in terrible condition, but unique images of a world left far behind.

Using before and after examples, and maybe a little bit of live restoration before his audience, Bill will explain the techniques which he has learned in part from his career as a lighting cameraman and photographer. He has teamed these skills with his desire to reproduce, with the best quality possible, old images of the town and its people for current and future generations to enjoy and to enhance understanding of the social history of a small market town in rural Kent.



Other Events

13th November - RNLI Fundraising Event - 7pm at Westerham Hall : Supper & Lecture

The Plimsoll Line - The speaker, Nicolette Jones, has written a best-selling book on the subject. She is also a journalist, broadcaster and literary critic, and by all accounts a very entertaining speaker.

As before, this RNLI event will consist of supper, some preliminary entertainment, followed by the talk.

Doors open 7pm, supper at 7.30pm. There will be tables of 8, and you can either book a table of up to 8, or as an individual, when you will be put at a table with congenial company. The cost will be £25 per head. There will be a bar, raffle, and RNLI Christmas cards for sale.



Tickets available from Karrisons, Westerham or John Edwards, Grosvenor House, Vicarage Hill, Westerham , TN16 1TJ ; telephone 01959 564063; email grosvenor.house@hotmail.com.

2016 subscription fees

Annual subscriptions fall due in January and it is a great help to our Membership Secretary, Jacs, if members opt for the Standing Order method. A form for your bank is available on the website or you could simply use the following key information:

Westerham Society ; Sort code 20-76-55 ; Account 63709892 ; Barclays Bank

Subscription rates for 2016 remain at £12 for an individual and £22 per family. For any assistance, please contact Jacs Taylor-Smith using the details below.

Email reminder

If you use email, please provide the Society with your email address to enable a more efficient and cost effective means of communicating with you. Please send your email address to Jacs Taylor-Smith at: djtaylor-smith@aol.com . The Society will email you the newsletter and other information relating to the Society. Your email address will not be divulged to any third party.

The Westerham Society Diary for 2015 and early 2016 in brief

Unless stated to the contrary, all meetings are free for members and £5 for guests and will be held at 7.30pm for 8pm in Westerham Hall, Quebec Avenue, Westerham. Guests are most welcome.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
Friday 30 th October	Talk “The River Darent” - by Rod Shelton
Monday 30 th November	Annual Sir Winston Churchill Dinner at Chartwell, with Rupert Soames
Sunday 13 th December	Christmas Social at Church Gate, Westerham, 12.00-2.30pm
Friday 29 th January	Talk “The Westerham Press Family” - by Paul & Francis Atterbury
Friday 26 th February	Talk “The Westerham Brewery” - by Robert Wicks
Friday 25 th March	Talk “Healing The Ravages of Time”- by Bill Curtis (after the AGM)
Sunday 24 th April	St. George’s Day Breakfast at the George and Dragon
Sunday 1 st May	Beating The Bounds - Westerham’s premier ‘walk’ event & barbeque
Friday 3 rd June	Talk - to be confirmed
Monday 4 th July	American Independence Day Picnic - details to be confirmed
Tuesday 12 th July	Visit to Penshurst Place - tour of House & Gardens plus tea

Westerham Society Contacts :

Gordon Rodgers, Westerham Society **Chairman’s** details are c/o The Westerham Society, 2 Yew Tree Mews, Market Square Westerham TN16 1BF, on telephone number 01959 564140 or at email address: gordonrodgers@btinternet.com

For information on **events** you can contact Mitch Young c/o The Westerham Society, at 1 Croft Hall, Off London Road, Westerham TN16 1BD, on telephone number 01959 561073 or at email address: mitch.young1@btinternet.com

The **membership secretary**, Jacs Taylor-Smith, can be contacted at c/o The Westerham Society, The Old Barn, Dunsdale, Westerham TN16 1QL, on telephone number 01959 561265 or at email address: djtaylor-smith@aol.com

The Westerham web site is at www.visitwesterham.org.uk
The Westerham Society’s web site is at www.westerhamsociety.org.uk

Please contact us if you are interested in joining the Westerham Society Committee as we would welcome new ideas and new blood and urgently seek a secretary and committee member for 2016.

Booking Form

Churchill Dinner - Monday, 30th November 2015

Members:
.....

(Please print name(s) as it / they will appear on the table plan)

Address
.....Postcode.....

Email address: Tel:

Guests (if any):
.....

Vegetarian meals: I require member vegetarian meals I require guest vegetarian meals

Table host

(Seating arrangements are at the discretion of the committee. Tables for 10 people will be allocated in advance and the seating plan will be on display. If you wish to sit on a particular table, please quote the name of your table host).

I have enclosed a cheque/cash made payable to 'The Westerham Society' for £ (£50 per person)

Please complete this form and return it together with your cheque to :
Churchill Dinner, c/o The Old Barn, Dunsdale, Westerham TN16 1QL

Please note that places will be reserved on a first come, first served basis upon receipt of a completed application form and cheque. Society Members have priority. Requests for tickets for guests will be satisfied on a "first come first served" basis once all member applications have been satisfied prior to a cut-off date of 16 November 2015. Tickets will be sent to you if your application is successful. If you are unsuccessful, your cheque will be returned.

If you are attending both events, please write two separate cheques

X-----cut along this line-----X

Booking Form

Christmas Social - Sunday 13th December 2015

I wish to reserve places at the Christmas Social.

Name(s) of member(s) attending
.....

Telephone number: Email address:

I enclose a cheque for £.....made payable to 'The Westerham Society' (£10 per person)

Name..... Date.....

This is a "members only" event for adults only. Please complete this form and return it together with your cheque to:
Christmas Social, c/o The Old Barn, Dunsdale, Westerham TN16 1QL