

# HILL & VALLEY

NEWSLETTER OF THE ABBERLEY HILLS PRESERVATION SOCIETY. TEME VALLEY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

## What Price the Countryside?



The countryside is changing. It has always changed and nothing will stop it changing in the future. What price are YOU prepared to pay, in cash or in effort, to channel that change to conserve the best that is left?

PHIL DRABBLE

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### ABBERLEY HILLS PRESERVATION SOCIETY - PATRONS

Christopher Cadbury, M.V.D.Haggard, G.Howard Heaton,  
Sir Berwick Lechmere, Bart., C.A.Norris,  
the Right Hon.The Lord Sandys, the Right Rev. Robin Woods, K.C.V.O.



#### WHAT PRICE THE COUNTRYSIDE?

This is the title of a Lecture by Phil Drabble which is to be held on Thursday March 24th, 7.00 p.m. at Ashton Hall, Abberley Hall School by the kind permission of Mr M.V.D.Haggard. To mark the occasion, the tickets at £2 each include one year's free Membership of the Society.

The future Membership fee is to be £2 a year, but it is hoped that Friends of the Society will contribute a minimum of £5 a year. It would help the organisation of the Society if this could be paid by Bankers Order, or better still by a Covenant which would have the advantage of giving tax relief. There is a minimum Corporate Membership fee of £25 a year.

For information on Lecture Tickets and Membership fees, please contact the Treasurer: Mr J.M.Perrin, 'Byways', Wynniatts Way, Abberley, Worcester. Tel: Gt.Witley 255

Tickets may also be obtained from the Hon. Secretary: Dr.R.F.Baird, 'Glebe', Abberley, Worcester. Tel: Great Witley 484

and from the Vice-Chairman: Dr.J.L.Moilliet. 'The Jaylands', Abberley, Worcester. Tel: Great Witley 375

#### PROFILE - PHIL DRABBLE

It is difficult to believe that Naturalist Phil Drabble, a country doctor's son, started his career as an Engineer. When he was eight he acquired a part-bred bull terrier and has owned a dog ever since. It was his love of animals and the Countryside that persuaded him to become a freelance professional writer and lecturer.

Together with his wife, Jess, he extended his Staffordshire home, Victorian 'Goat Lodge'. Rooms at the back have large windows overlooking the garden and surrounding woodlands that have become his "Beloved Wilderness". Here he encourages the wildlife which include deer and badgers and there is a small lake for water creatures.

Who else would think of introducing colonies of bats to discourage wood-worm in the attics?

He believes that with enthusiasm and the right knowledge, we too can help the wildlife in our own plot - however large or small.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Why do we need a Preservation Society?

A. Because the Countryside is changing all the time. This process has taken place since the dawn of History. The pace of change has increased during the last two hundred years, but never with such rapidity as at present. If we wish to preserve the best of our countryside - WE MUST ACT NOW.

Q. What has the Society achieved so far?

A. We have saved the WOODED SKYLINE of Abberley Hill. The Company who at that time owned Shaver's End Quarry, first proposed to lower the ridge along the full length of the Quarry. Next they sought permission to extend the existing workings beyond the area granted by Planning Permission in 1951.

Q. How did the Society counteract these proposals?

A. By employing two expert Consultants, a Planner and a Geologist. The Quarry Company was persuaded to win most of the stone by quarrying deeper and not to excavate nearer to the ridge than 45 metres; also that provisions should be made for future landscaping.

Q. Could the Society have prevented future Quarrying?

A. Probably not. This County is responsible for providing an agreed Quota of stone for our local road systems. Its policy is to use existing quarries rather than to open new ones.

Q. Is that the end of the Society's involvement with the Quarry?

A. No. The Society suggested a Liaison Committee between the present Quarry Company - English China Clay, the County Council, the Parish Councils and the Society, which is chaired by our local County Councillor. This is an effective means of liaison between the Company and local residents.

Q. Is this enough?

A. Members of the Society regularly walk the Hill. The Liaison Committee has agreed that the representatives of the Parish Councils and the Society should visit the Quarry periodically to see that the planning conditions, including the marking of the 45 metre line, should be adhered to.

Q. What else has the Society achieved?

A. They have prevented an 80 foot RADIO MAST and a TRANSMITTING STATION from being erected on the ridge of Abberley Hills.

Q. Why was this mast and accompanying buildings thought necessary?

A. Because Racal Vodaphone are setting up a series of radio masts to service the new telephone 'cell' network. These masts will appear all over the country as this service expands.

Q. How was this prevented?

A. By once again employing our Planning Consultant to put our case when Malvern Hills District Council suggested a meeting between the Society and Racal Vodaphone.

Q. Where does the money come from to employ the Consultant on OUR behalf?

A. From the Society's funds which come from the membership fees and donations.

Q. Have we enough money left to fight another battle?

A. No. This is why we need YOUR HELP. It is in the interest of everyone who loves this area to join and support the Society, to take an active part where possible, and to ensure the protection of the Countryside for future generations.

A fuller report will be available at the Lecture meeting on March 24th and is also featured in Newsletter No.18, March 1987



WINTER TREES

on

ABBERLEY HILL

## ABBERLEY - THE CHANGING VILLAGE

The wooded skylines of the Abberley Hills have been a feature of the Worcestershire landscape for generations. It was here that St. Augustin is said to have met the Welsh Bishops in the year 603, on the site marked by the present Apostles Oak. Here that Henry IV fought the 'Battle That Never Was' against Owen Glyndower, camped on nearby Woodbury Hill.

The Manor of Abberley remained in the de Toden family for eight generations from the time of William the Conqueror. Abberley Lodge later became Abberley Hall and the Estate together with farms, provided employment for the surrounding village.

Victorian Abberley was self-sufficient with saw-mills, lime kilns, drift mines for local coal, a brick-yard and clay pits. Shops included a butcher, fishmonger and bakery as well as grocers. Among Tradesmen, were a carpenter, tailor and black-smith.

Farming has changed, with deer herds in addition to dairy cattle and cherry and damson orchards giving way to soft fruit. The number of houses has increased while the population remains much the same. Over the years improved roads have brought people into the Village from the surrounding rural areas. Abberley may be continually changing - but it is still a thriving Community.

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends and fellow Members. We do hope that you like our new-style newsletter. The aim is to include items that are of interest not only to the people who live in this "Area of Benefit" - but also to those who have moved away, or for whom the Abberley Hills have always held a special delight.

Each paid-up Member is entitled to a copy of the Newsletter and there will be from two to three copies a year. A 'Profile' of a member of the Society will be featured in each issue and details of any local news that affects the Society.

Future Editions would include items for children on the back page - Competitions, a Nature Quiz; as well as local stories from past and present.

It is hoped to arrange Nature Walks and Rambles on the Hill and possibly to form a Photographic or Sketching Club. This is YOUR Newsletter, if you have any more ideas - do please write and let me know.

ANGELA THOMPSON

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