

Land Settlement Association

Bulletin No 36

(May 2019)

Sidlesham Heritage Trail



Weald and Downland

Longport Farmhouse (the former reception to the museum) is now an additional exhibition space and it may be home to an LSA display in the Autumn. It would be great if you could, as you have in the past, help to promote the LSA story by stewarding the display for a morning or afternoon session. I will be meeting with museum staff to discuss the format of the display and will then be able to advise you about actual dates and times.

You will recall that the Godfrey Shirt, who lived in the LSA house which is currently in storage, had also been a founder steward at the museum and has his name on a bench outside Bayleaf House. There is now another LSA/museum connection. Keith Coles, a volunteer at the museum working with the oxen, used to live at No 41 (Rookery Road) on the Chawston LSA in Bedfordshire for 20 years from 1991. The previous owner had purchased the property at the closure of the LSA in 1983. Keith and his wife Linda knew several former LSA tenants and I am currently trying to make contact with John Chinnery (No 22), who may have previously worked on an LSA smallholding in Sidlesham!

When you next visit the Weald and Downland you will see two new buildings and will soon be able to enjoy butter made at the **dairy** on bread baked at the **bakehouse** made from the flour which is ground at the nearby mill!

Sad News

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the death of one of the stars of our film - Freda Booth (No 15), who died peacefully at the end of January. Like so many others of you Freda not only made a huge contribution to the LSA, but also to the recording of its history. My condolences to Rosemary, Roger and Bernard.

Museum of English Rural Life (MERL)

I visited MERL again at the end of February to research the early LSA Annual Reports. You may be interested to know that Sidlesham was at the forefront of LSA innovations! In 1937 hen batteries were installed in preference to the more orthodox outdoor system and in 1938 Sidlesham (and Dedham LSA) became central training centres with 292 men admitted before the outbreak of war – 194 went to work on other LSAs and 98 'relinquished' training in the first 3 months.

PTO

Beamish Museum

In April I visited Beamish Museum in County Durham. There is a 1900s pit village there, complete with pit pony stables. Beamish also host an annual 'Yesterday belongs to You' event for local history groups and I have contacted the organisers in the hope of developing links with some of the families who came to Sidlesham, but then 'returned north'.

Foxash LSA

I have been contacted (via the website) by someone at Foxash LSA in Essex. Brian Howe came to the estate in 1941 at the age of six, when his father became Orchard Foreman. After the closure in 1983 Foxash Growers and Dedham Vale Nurseries were established, similar to Sidlesham Growers.

Sidlesham School

How times change!

In 1939 4 new classrooms had to be built to accommodate the influx of LSA families, at least one family had 10 children. The school population at that time increased from 120 to 284.

In 2019 a total of 11 children (of the 132 at the school) live in former LSA houses - 6 of them in one class which I led round part of the heritage trail earlier this week.

Tell me a story

I have now done 42 presentations to local groups and societies (with a total audience of more than 1600 people) as well as several heritage trail walks. 4 more dates are booked for 2019 so if you have friends or family who haven't seen the archive film, or would like to know more about the LSA and the heritage trail, let me know and I can share the dates.

Only 3 first names left

No 41 JE **Freeman** (1950s-60s),

No 70 Husband of Joan **Holley** (1950s-60s) Joan was Secretary of Fletchers Hut & **Boatman** also No 70 in the 1970s.

Thank you for all your continued support and assistance with this project.

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