

COMPAID VOICE

1986

Celebrating Compaid's 25 years
of support to disabled people

2011

Hello again and welcome to the fourth issue of *Compaid Voice*, the final one for 2011.



What a year it's been for all of us!

I can hardly believe that we are nearing the end of our 25th anniversary year, but we've marked it in style. As most of you know, we have now moved into our lovely new premises at Eastlands in Paddock Wood, where Activities Centre

clients have been enjoying the new surroundings since the middle of October. The feedback from clients, staff and volunteers has been warm and encouraging, which means a great deal after all the hard work that has gone into making our dream of a new home a reality. If you haven't seen Eastlands for yourself, please do drop by.

Elsewhere in this block-buster issue, you can read all about our recent 25th Anniversary Ball, when we were joined by many friends, including relatives of our late founder, Lorna Ridgway. Almost £30,000 was raised to help fund our continuing services to the community - a huge thank you to everyone who so enthusiastically and generously took part. A fantastic night was had by all, and we hope to hold an even bigger and brighter Ball next year.

In the meantime, 2012 sees two exciting Compaid events at Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells.

On Saturday 14th January we are staging Big Blue Box, a one day Doctor Who convention (a subject very close to my heart). More details on this super event can be found on this page. Then, on Saturday 19th May, we will be hosting the second 'Compaid's Got Talent' show.

More information on this will follow in the New Year. We know Compaid's got talent - so let's hear from you!

Until then, it leaves me to wish you all a very merry Christmas, and to raise a virtual glass to Compaid's next 25 amazing years.

Stephen Elsdon-Chief Executive

Doctor Who stars to gather in Tunbridge Wells for charity.

Yes it's true!

Doctor Who enthusiasts will be thrilled to learn that stars of the long running science fiction show Doctor Who will be attending a one day convention in January to help raise funds for Compaid.

The event, entitled Big Blue Box, takes place on Saturday 14th January 2012 at Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells. Special screenings, panel discussions, signings and more are planned to give local Doctor Who and science fiction fans a day to remember.

Among those taking part are actresses Louise Jameson, who played opposite Tom Baker as Leela, and Susan Jameson, who has recently played Mrs Wibbsey opposite Baker in Doctor Who audio plays. They will be joined by Doctor Who writers, including John Dorney, Paul Magrs and Jonathan Morris.

Several companies are backing the event, including local publisher Panini who produce Doctor Who Magazine, Doctor Who licence holders AudioGo and Big Finish, and the Tunbridge Wells branch of Waterstones,

All profits from the event will go towards Compaid's work with disabled people in the local area.

Stephen Elsdon, Chief Executive of Compaid says, "Big Blue Box marks the first ever fan convention for Doctor Who in Tunbridge Wells, which has a long history of associations with the show. From a screening of a classic Peter Cushing Dalek movie to more recent fan films, we will be taking full advantage of Trinity's superb theatre."

Tickets cost £25 for the day, and are available from Trinity Theatre's box office on 01892 678678 or online at www.trinitytheatre.net

Don't delay - they're sure to be in huge demand!

**BIG
BLUE
BOX**

Compaid's Appeals Manager retires

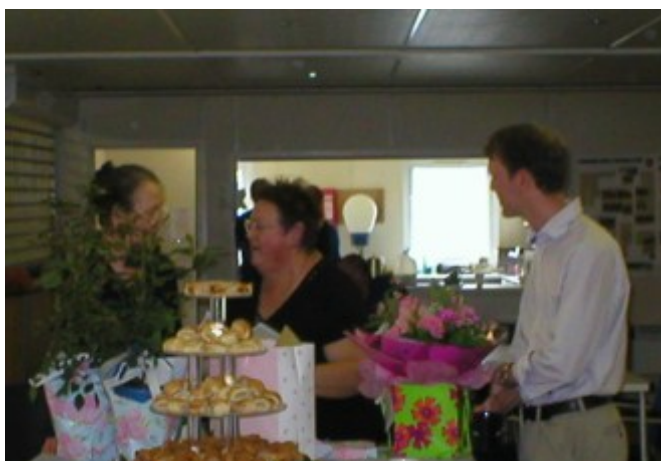
Compaid lost the diligent services of Appeals Manager Anne Campbell, when she retired at the end of August 2011 after 21 years with Compaid.

She had started working as a part time Secretary for Lorna Ridgway, the founder of Compaid, at the beginning of 1990 but when Lorna died in 1994 Anne took over the difficult position of Appeals Manager. In this position, Anne was very much 'behind the scenes' throughout most of her career and yet much of the equipment Compaid has used in the past, accessible vehicles used by the Transport Department, and indeed, much of the general running costs of the organisation, would not have been possible without Anne's methodical and tenacious attention to the complex business of applying for funding from a wide range of sponsors.

In the first few years, Anne felt that funding was relatively easy to obtain but, with the various dips in the economy, all this changed, so imaginative and diverse ways had to be found to raise much needed funds.

Never was this more necessary than when Compaid was required to leave the site at Pembury Hospital at the end of 2006 to make way for the new build. An urgent SOS appeal was put into place and because of this and the publicity it gave, Compaid has been able to carry on, now under the excellent guidance and leadership of Chief Executive, Stephen Elsdon.

Compaid held a leaving party for Anne where she thanked everyone for their kind words and lovely gifts.



She wished them well for their future move to Paddock Wood in the autumn saying how delighted she was that she had been able to see Compaid grow into what it is today and how pleased she was to have been a large part of that.

Stephen, Trustees and members of staff also invited Anne and her husband, John, for an evening out to a local Italian restaurant which was enjoyed by all.

Anne said that although she was really enjoying the freedom of retirement, she would never forget her years spent working for such a worthwhile cause and the fascinating people she had met. She wishes her successor, Davina Morgans, the very best of luck with all her endeavours.

So Anne, from all of us at Compaid - thank you for all that you did for Compaid and we wish you every happiness and good health for the future.



The jigsaw puzzle of **GILLIAN**

I always enjoyed learning as a child. I started being interested in graphic design and spent five years of study ending with an MA in 'Information Design'. I put together a small company with a colleague I'd met at the Royal College of Art, which was successful enough to keep me financially alive. It gave me a huge amount of satisfaction and I'm told by my friends that I was engrossed in my work to the extent that they were frustrated by the lack of time I left for socialising.

I found a small house close to my business which was easily accessible by car. Everything went well until I caught a virus. It started with an ordinary cold which I took no notice of because I was working so hard on a vital project that had to be finished quickly. This was in May 1982 when I was rushed into hospital in a coma and nearly died from encephalitis.

Ever since then I've suffered from epilepsy and a damaged memory. I have no true memory of the years before my illness and I can rely on my short term memory for no more than a few weeks. My memory is stored in the diary writing I was persuaded to keep, giving evidence to myself that my epilepsy was slowly improving. That gave me self-confidence and some reason to keep trying for a better, more active form of life.

Many changes in medication, environments and friends ensued over the next twenty-two years. I was satisfied by living alone with a reasonably active life, though my epileptic seizures still disabled me. I had become cynical about marriage for myself after all the unsuccessful relationships I'd experienced. My graphic design abilities were out of date because the world of computers had taken over all commercial business. Such facilities had been virtually unheard of when I'd been at work and my damaged memory was too frail to study enough to keep me up realistically.

Things have changed dramatically, whilst being taught at Compaid by Ian, one of the volunteers there. He was able to satisfy me with answers for my questions about using the computer as my tool for design. During early conversation we soon realised that not only had we both been trained as graphic designers, but lived close during childhood, been to schools in the same town, been to the same foundation college and worked in the same subject with just one year between us. Everyone took pleasure at the idea of seeing Compaid as a 'Dating Agency' which was uncannily responsible for our getting together!

Having become so close in mind and body we are now married and share most of our social and intellectual time together. It seems as though our lives have been put together in some form of jigsaw!

Gillian King-Compaid Client



Guess Who?

Congratulations to those who correctly identified the schoolgirl in our last issue as Pam Nelson. The first name out of the hat was **Tony Riddick**, Compaid Trustee and Activities Centre Volunteer.

The psychedelic pop group Jason Crest was formed in Tonbridge in the late 1960s. The band consisted of Terry Clarke (vocals) Terry Dobson (lead guitar), Derek Smallcombe (rhythm guitar), Roger Siggery (drums) and the chap back right wearing the blue tie.

Who is he?

Answers please to either Val Spratt on: assessment@compaid.org.uk or to Mike Butterfield in the Day Centre.

Kevin Brooker 20th November 1965-16th November 2011

Kevin Brooker came to us as an Activities Centre client for only seven short months before succumbing, very suddenly in November, to the effects of a rapidly deteriorating terminal medical condition, which had been diagnosed only a year previously. Despite attending for such a short time, he made many friends at Compaid, and we all feel his loss keenly.

However, it is uplifting to know that during this period he not only continued to use the computer effectively and creatively with support from our staff and volunteers, but through contacts made at the Centre, he learnt about the Jubilee Sailing Trust and went on the trip of a lifetime on a tall ship in October, only a month before he died. He wrote the following piece on his return, which is as overflowing with enthusiasm as he was. It is lavishly adorned with just a few of the many photos, complete with his own captions, taken during his wonderful adventure. It is a fitting tribute to a super guy whose friendly, cheerful, dignified and courageous demeanour endeared him in such a brief time to so many here at Compaid.

Kevin's Tall Ship Adventure-October 2011

Hi - My name's Kevin (known as Burt to all my friends) and I wanted to share the most brill thing that has ever happened to me. Some many months ago someone mentioned to me the Jubilee Sailing Trust (<http://www.jst.org.uk/>). They are a charity that runs two tall ships, which are specially adapted to allow people with disabilities to have a tall ship sailing experience. The ships are the Lord Nelson and the Tenacious. I mentioned it to Pam at Compaid (spookily her surname is Nelson) and she told me her husband Mike had been an able bodied crew member on a number of voyages. The way she described it I just knew I wanted to have a go. So with the help of my brother Gary (who said he wanted to come along too,) we made an application. There are loads of voyages to choose from and we picked one that lasted about a week and went from Southampton to Cherbourg, took part in a race and seemed just the ticket.

The total cost of the trip was about £1200 for the pair of us but there are grants available that help. We had to buy some waterproof gear and stuff but I just couldn't wait for the trip. So October 10th arrived and we drove down to Southampton. And saw the two boats for the first time. Wow!!! was my reaction - I'd never seen anything like it.

We had been allocated Tenacious and went aboard. The sleeping accommodation was OK (bunk rather than hammock!) with plenty of space for my chair and luggage. We stayed in port that night and set sail the next day. Over the next week we had the most brilliant time:

- * We raced against our sister ship, the Lord Nelson, and sadly lost, although we crossed the finishing line first! I still don't understand that rule!
- * I was lifted up to the crow's nest in my wheelchair (and down again) - one of the most fantastic things I've ever done.
- * I met loads of really nice people.
- * I saw Cherbourg and had some really good times ashore (!!)
- * The food was brill but I can't say the same for French cider.

All in all I would really recommend the experience for anyone able-bodied as well as wheelchair people. The ship is well equipped to cope with wheelchairs and like me I'm sure you could have the experience of a lifetime!



Me and my brother Gary

These are just six of the many photographs taken on Kevin's 'trip of a lifetime', shown here with his own captions



On the way up to the crow's nest-Brill!



Finally up there 😊



Tenacious at sea in the English Channel October 2011



Me and my fellow shipmates



At times it looked like we were in a washing machine 😊



Chilling with a glass of local cider (yuk!) at the end of a nice day in Cherbourg

25th Anniversary Ball



Over 140 people partied into the night at Mountains Country House in Hildenborough to celebrate Compaid's 25th anniversary. Amongst the guests were relatives of our founder, Lorna Ridgway and a number of the volunteers who made our move to Eastlands possible.

The guests enjoyed a three-course meal and entertainment from West End Jazz, Tunbridge Wells Operatic and Dramatic Society and Apollo Funk Discos, plus there were fantastic donated prizes in the raffle, silent auction and main auction.

Our client Trustee **Rob Atkinson** (pictured right with Compaid's Chief Executive Stephen Elsdon) gave a passionate speech about what Compaid means to him, and there is no doubt that this helped with the fundraising on the night.

The Ball has become a real highlight of our fundraising calendar and by the end of the evening we had raised an incredible £27,000, and with pledged donations we expect that total to reach £30,000.



A special thanks to volunteer organizers Helen Tinworth, Sally Way and Shirley Spencer who helped make the event such a success.

Davina Morgans

**Appeals and Fundraising
Manager**

Volunteer News

Welcome to New Volunteers

Since moving to our super new home in Paddock Wood staff and clients may have noticed that they have been joined by some new faces in the Activities Centre lately.

Recent advertising has resulted in contacts from some generous hearted new volunteers from the local community who have kindly agreed to give up some of their free time to support the work of Compaid.

So **Welcome** and **Thank You**. We're sure that you will enjoy being with Compaid as much as we will enjoy having you with us!

Volunteer Awards Scheme for under 25's

If you are under 25 and volunteering regularly you can get recognition for your volunteering, through vInspired the national young volunteers service. To find out more log onto <http://vinspired.com>

If you have any ideas, articles or topics that you would like to be included in this section, please let me know.

Judith Williams

Volunteering Manager

Open Day-Saturday 3rd December 2011

The Mayor of Tunbridge Wells joined over 50 guests at a very successful open afternoon at our new Premises in Eastlands on Saturday 3rd December. Clients, staff, volunteers and trustees came along to meet and chat to supporters, both existing and new. Clients demonstrated their work and staff and volunteers were on hand to show the various pieces of specialist equipment that are used.



Stephen Elsdon and Rob Atkinson, made speeches to say how excited everyone is in our new permanent home and the Mayor also said a few words to say how delighted she was that we had moved to Paddock Wood and she hopes that the people of Paddock Wood support us.

She spent a couple of hours at the Activities Centre chatting to clients and

looking at their work. She also spent some time speaking to Mark Gettings about transport and had a look around one of the vehicles.



Nearly £5,000 was received during the day including cheques which

were presented by Tunbridge Wells Operatic and Dramatic Society after collections were made during their Brigadoon series and by Paddock Wood Angling Society from a recent fundraising event.

Davina Morgans-Fundraising and Appeals Manager

10 things you didn't know about.....Pam Nelson

1. I once dated Noel Edmonds.
2. I used to do Jiving Exhibitions.
3. I used to work for Rank Xerox.
4. Whilst driving I knocked a man off his ladder. He fell into a pile of dustbins and came out covered in paint. I asked him if he was 'emulsionally disturbed'. Fortunately he was not hurt and started laughing and didn't take me to court.
5. Aged 11 I won a teddy bear in a talent contest singing 'Dancing in the Street'.
6. Whilst skiing in France we got caught in a 'white-out'. I hit a pile of snow and my skis stopped but I didn't. I dislocated my shoulder and had to be carried off the mountain on a stretcher.
7. I completed a seventy five mile sponsored cycle ride in South Africa in 6 hours and 53 minutes. The time allowed was 7 hours.
8. I was once thrown into Bewl Water so that I could be rescued by a Newfoundland. The dog swam out to me, turned round and swam back to shore, leaving me in the middle of Bewl Water.
9. I was nearly eaten by a hippopotamus on Lake Kariba in Zimbabwe.
10. On a long weekend in Prague with my firm, I stood up on stage and did an impression of Frank Spencer.



Adrian Bernatek 1948-2011

All the clients and staff of Compaid were very saddened to hear of the sudden death of former client Adrian Bernatek.

His wife Jean preceded him as a client and it was at Compaid that they met and later married, some fifteen years ago. Adrian, like Jean, was a very accomplished artist, as the two paintings shown demonstrate.



His friend of many years, client Jane Sanderson, has penned the following tribute.

"Adrian, who was a client at Compaid for many years, sadly died very suddenly on September 1st 2011.

He really enjoyed his time here and was particularly well known for his artwork using photo paint and a graphics pad.

Adrian, his wife, Jean and myself spent many a happy time travelling to Compaid together from our homes in Hastings. He was always smiling and having a laugh with other clients.

Adrian and Jean decided to leave Compaid before we moved to the Tunbridge Wells Football Club premises but he is well remembered by many clients and staff".

Jane Sanderson-Compaid Client



Featured Artist-Sharon Mitchell

Hi, my name is Sharon Mitchell. When asked to write this article I froze. After thinking about it, Compaid has been such a release to me, so here goes!

In 2002, after suffering with Lupus, I had a severe bleed of the brain where I lost everything. I became like a cabbage, totally dependent on others. Fortunately, through the years, my ability to swallow, my speech and most of my movement has returned to normal, except the old memory. So I became very withdrawn, as people around me could not cope with not having the person I was before. I started painting again. The painting on the left is one of my early attempts and the picture right was about a year later.



I had stopped going out, but I did attend an art class where I painted the scene, below left, in about a quarter of an hour.

It was after this that my Care Worker suggested that I should consider attending Compaid.

The afternoon I visited Compaid I knew that I was at home, yes, I was going to learn about how to use computers - a frightening thought as I knew nothing about them!!



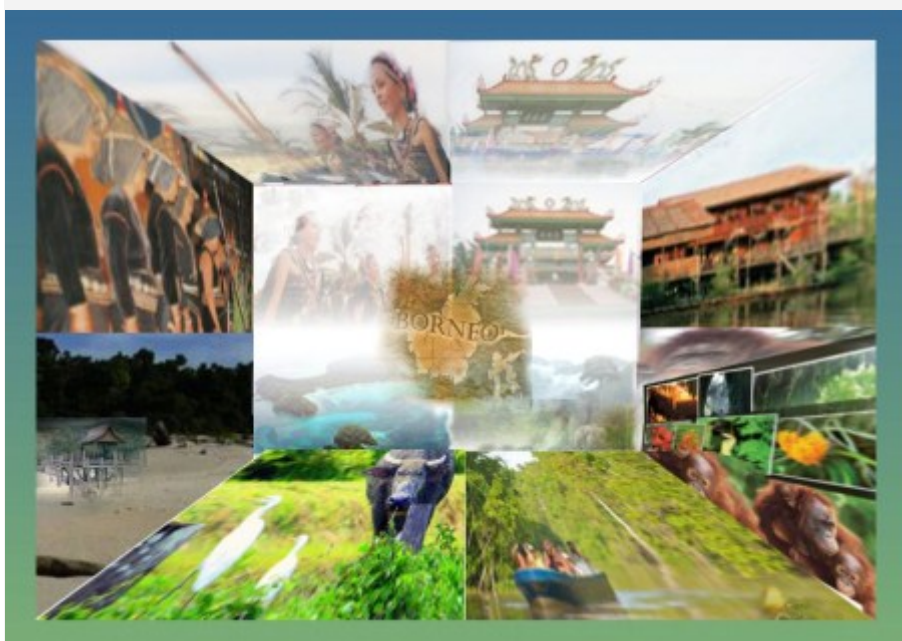
Since then I have learnt Corel Draw, Corel Paint and how to create greetings cards for friends and family. I have now also introduced to the group new ways to create cards on the computer, as I make handmade cards at home.

The welcome I received from the staff and volunteers on that day started to fill an emptiness I had felt for a very long time. Since then I have gone from strength to strength. My aim now is to help

other people who come to Compaid and to continue learning new techniques myself.

The peony on the right was my first painting on the computer at Compaid.

It was shortly after I started that we had a visit from Jane Churchill and I was introduced to the 'Eye Wish' project.



I took Borneo as

my subject because many years ago my children, then aged six and seven, and myself were due to fly out to join my husband who was working there.

Having had all our injections, his firm called him home, so we never got there and the 'Eye Wish' project is the nearest I have ever got to a holiday in Borneo.

Sharon Mitchell-Compaid Client



Steve Kew remembers

In my late twenties I was working for The Post Office, then British Telecom. I unfortunately became ill during that time and had to leave my job. I decided to take a computer and typing course and at that time was told of Compaid. I live in Langton Green and knew of Lorna Ridgway who lived there. I joined Compaid in the late 80s, firstly as a member of staff, and then when my illness became worse, I became a volunteer, my health has improved greatly, but I still am a volunteer for three days a week, which I still enjoy immensely.

My first memory is of walking through the grounds of Pembury Hospital and finding the prefabricated huts that housed Compaid, I was looking forward to helping people with special needs. Lorna Ridgway was in charge, she was a very nice lady, she was patient, talked to the clients and when she had the time, she offered her services to us all. I used a BBC computer with a 26" television as the screen. We used a package called Flying Colours, which was a basic painting package. We used many more discs than there are nowadays. I played various word games with clients to help improve vocabulary. About five years later, we were able to use Microsoft packages.

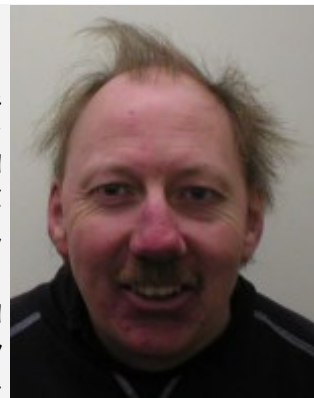
Caroline Frawley was my line manager; she was in charge of the day centre. She was not a hands-on manager but was very supportive. We had some challenging clients in those days, but I still enjoyed my job. As well as the computer assistance, I also helped on the Compaid transport, mainly taking old people shopping etc. I would sit with the driver and assist with shopping bags etc.

When we lost Lorna it left a great void. Betty Howell, with whom I enjoyed working immensely, took over the running of Compaid. I was often talking to Karl, who worked on reception and he became a good friend of mine. Claire Wilkinson began a month after me and was a great help to me and taught me a lot. We had some good times in those days. When we were at Pembury, Headway was next door. My brother Jeff attended there, so I used to check what he was doing! He did not come to Compaid. The woods were cleared behind Compaid and a garden area made, a pond was landscaped as a memorial to Lorna. Some of the clients supplied plants to the surrounds of the pond.

I have been to every one of the Christmas Celebration dinners that Compaid have and see different faces each year!

Several well known people have visited Compaid, donating money and raising awareness. I have met Roy Hudd, and the Duchess of Kent. Each year the new Mayor of Tunbridge Wells comes to visit us. I have seen a lot of people come and go, we have had volunteers from many walks of life and abroad, who have been very interesting to talk to.

Steve Kew-Compaid Volunteer



The boy next door

David was my best friend, and we always hung out together building tree houses, looking for snakes, lizards, tadpoles, and always having adventures.

I think I was 3 years old when we moved next door to David; he was a short stocky lad, with a round face and goofy teeth, large round brown eyes and freckles on a round grubby face, and longish mousey hair. As for me, I was small with medium length very blond hair, a bit of a tomboy who liked to do the things that the boys did, it was much more exciting than playing with dolls and dressing up. I was a bit of a wild child, who daydreamed a lot, and a bit of a loner, spending a lot of my time on my own and not having many friends because I was so shy.

David and I had so many adventures together; one of my memories of the time we spent together is of a place we used to play, called the horse fields. It was such a wonderful place and we had so much fun. There was an old shelter from the war and the ruins of farm buildings, a large pond with trees and foliage all around it, and a rope swing that David and I put up. When swinging on it, we went right out across the lake, and many a time we got wet and hurt ourselves, but we never told our parents, not that they would have cared anyway. We would go looking for slowworms under sheets of old metal and stones, and I can remember one time we uncovered an adder, and on that day I don't think that we both had ever run so fast. Of course it did not come after us, it was probably more scared of us than we were of it.

I can also remember the fun of riding the old cart horses bare backed, and we used to make out that we were cowboys and Indians. I felt so free and it was so much fun, now as I look back it was also so dangerous but wonderful. Of course it was not all plain sailing with our friendship, we had our fallouts, and on one of these upsets David threw my hard shoe at me which caught me on the head, and I ended up with four stitches. Another time we had a fight and he punched me on the nose which made it bleed. He was a bit bigger than me and as I was a slim tiny little girl if he started a fight I always came off worse. We also had so much fun riding our bikes down the hills and having races and of course we came off a lot, scraping our knees and getting covered with bruises.

This time spent with David will always stay with me, I did meet him on passing once when we were adults but we only said hello and no more. He had grown into a lovely looking man, very smartly dressed and very well groomed and as far as I know life has been good to him.

Gina Stiles-Compaid Client



Christmas Cards 2011-painted by Compaid Clients



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Skiing	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Christmas Santa	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Christmas Shop	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Christmas Post	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Trees	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Pink Tree	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Snowman	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Bethlehem at Night	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Candle	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Northern Lights	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Reindeer	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Donkey Family	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Chimney	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Christmas Cupcake	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Candelabra	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Robin in snow	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Xmas Pud	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Snowman	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Penguins	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....	Snow Rabbit	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....
Pear Tree	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....		TOTAL.....TOTAL.....
Three Kings	Single @ 45p No.... Pack (5) @ £2.00 No....		TOTAL AMOUNT DUE.....

All designs are original artworks by Compaid Clients and are printed on A6 cards.

Please return your Order Form to:

Compaid
Unit 1, Eastlands
Maidstone Road
Paddock Wood
Kent TN12 6BU

Or email to officebureau@compaid.org.uk

Or telephone the office on **01892 834539**

NB: Cards sent by mail incur an additional handling and postage charge.

Living history (Part 1)

We all know about tracing your own family history, but have you ever thought about the houses which people live in.

Do you live in an old house?



If you are interested in how the house was built and the people who lived there, then the process is very similar to family history. I am lucky to live in a small part of a large Victorian building in Tunbridge Wells, so having already become involved in family history I decided to find out what I could about Oakfield Court.

Start with what you know. Well, that was nothing except the architect, Decimus Burton. Talking to a friend in the Civic Society, I was given an excerpt from James Colbran's Handbook and Directory

of 1847 in which he describes Oakfield Court as: *'one of the excellent residences in the neighbourhood, among the most recently built being Oakfield Court, a beautiful stone-faced mansion belonging to Demetrius Grevis-James Esq.'* I now had a name, so off I went to the Public Library. After much searching I found a small paperback about Ightham, in which there was a complete history of the James family, including a biography of Demetrius.

As a Captain of Marines, he served under Nelson at The Battle of Copenhagen. In 1817 he and his wife Mary found themselves at Ightham Court when Demetrius inherited the manors of Ightham, Wrotham and Stansted. In 1833 he was High Sheriff of Kent (pictured right in his uniform), responsible for implementing the 1832 Reform Act. In 1842 his favourite daughter Frances Maria told her father she wished to marry a tenant farmer on the estate and in spite of his protests she married Thomas Charlton in Ightham Church. In a fit of pique Demetrius left Ightham Court and moved to Tunbridge Wells where he built himself *'a fine house in spacious grounds, which he called Oakfield Court'*.



By using the Census we can then trace the residents until 1911. Demetrius, JP and Deputy-Lieutenant of Kent lived there, with five servants, until he died on 5th August 1861, eight years after Mary and the house was bought by Henry Warden.

Henry was a paper manufacturer, born in Birmingham. He had married into the Turner family of Penshurst, owners of Chafford Mill at Fordcombe, and other mills along the Medway through to Maidstone. In 1861 he was living with his family in Chafford House. Chafford Mill, thought to be the third oldest in the country, produced paper of exceptional quality and due to its immunity to white ants, it produced all the paper for the Government of India, as well as banknotes for The Bank of England and postage stamps. Having moved back to Chafford House in 1893 (he died there on 8th January 1897) we find new occupants of Oakfield Court.

The Reverend Thomas Borlase Coulson MA BA, his wife Charlotte Elizabeth (a grandniece of the 2nd Earl Grey, Prime Minister from 1830 to 1834, after whom the tea is named) and their spinster daughters Mary and Maud are now in residence. Thomas died in 1895. Just 10 days later Henry Warden's last will and testament was notarised. It stated that Oakfield Court may be let, but was to remain unsold for at least 21 years, thus enabling Charlotte Coulson, when she was widowed, to remain there until her death in 1922.

In 1910 the lower half of the estate was sold for development to local builders W. Hobbs & Sons, who erected nine houses in what is now Oakfield Court Road.

Part 2, in the next issue, will show us how to follow the ownership and occupancy of a property through the twentieth century.

Mike Butterfield (Genealogy Guru)

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