

Downley Common Newsletter

Newsletter of the Downley Common Preservation Society Issue 35. April 2011

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Spring Member's Meeting

This is a reminder that our Spring Member's Meeting will be held on Thursday 24th March at 8.00pm in the Village Hall. The agenda will cover:

- Plans for Downley Walk
- Plans for Downley Day
- Suggestions for a Harvest Supper event
- Review of street-light proposals
- Work parties

Please let us know if you have any items to be added to the agenda.

Street-lights around the Common

The Parish Council have been told that the lighting units around the Common will need to be replaced to conform to new legislation banning the use of mercury lamps. The replacement units currently proposed are shown below although a more traditional style may also be possible



It would be helpful to get some feedback from residents on preferences, so we would welcome your opinions on the type and height of new lights or indeed if they are still wanted

Sunnybank Bramble Bash

You may have noticed that the plans for reshaping the top of Sunnybank didn't happen last autumn. This was due to the concern that the torchlight procession could be disrupted if we spread mud all over the place. So we have put this back to this spring and intend to do the work around the end of March.

For the future we may consider taking out the small trees to the right of the brambly area to open that area right up and improve the view from Moor Lane. Your comments on this would be welcome.

The Downley Triangle

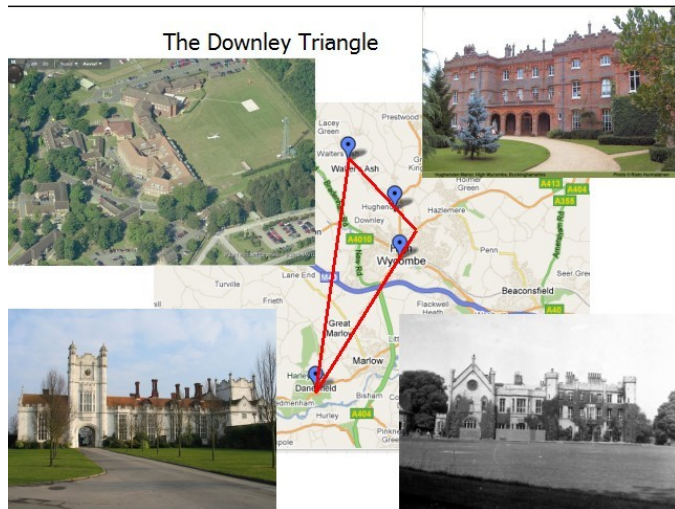
I would like to tell you tale of the Downley Triangle. Like its more famous counterpart, the Bermuda Triangle, it is shrouded in mystery, but after exhaustive enquiries we are now able to reveal a little of its secret.

Firstly, where is the Downley Triangle? Well, like all Downley phenomena, this triangle has 4 points, all relating to important participants in the secret war between Britain and Germany in 1939 to 45. It starts with Bomber Command located at Walter's Ash in the midst of the Chiltern Hills. Established there in 1938, RAF High Wycombe began unexpectedly from a remark, at the Air Ministry in 1936, by Wing Commander Alan Oakenshott of Hughendon village, during the discussions of a permanent site for the new Bomber Command. The site had to be in the South of England, in the country and well screened by trees. "Why not hide it

Diary

24th March 2011. 8pm	Spring Meeting	Village Hall
3rd April 2011, 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy
1st May 2011. 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy
29th May 2011. 2pm	Rogation Day Walk	Village Hall
5th June 2011. 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy
18th June 2011. 1pm	Downley Day	Commonside
3rd July 2011. 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy
16th July 2011. 7pm	Concert on the Common	Commonside
7th August 2011. 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy
4th September 2011. 10am	Working Party	Old Dairy

among the beechwoods of the Chiltern Hills?" asked the Wing Commander. Bomber Command was responsible for producing reconnaissance photographs which were brought back for processing at our next point on the triangle, Danesfield House at Medmenham.



RAF Medmenham was a Royal Air Force unit based at Danesfield House near Medmenham. The unit specialised in photographic intelligence, and was once the home of the RAF Intelligence Branch. RAF Medmenham was to imagery intelligence, what Bletchley Park was to signals intelligence. The Central Interpretation Unit (CIU) was set up in 1941 after its previous location at Wembley became short of space. In 1945 daily intake of material averaged 25,000 negatives and 60,000 prints.

Information from Danesfield would have been used in the preparation of maps for the RAF which took place at triangle point number 3, Hughenden Manor, codenamed 'Hillside'. Here, a team of artists, designers, architects and cartoonists created nearly all the target maps used by RAF bomber crews for missions such as the Dam Buster raids, airborne D-Day landings and for an attack on 'Eagle's Nest', Hitler's secret bunker at Berchtesgaden.

Finally, to square the circle, these maps will have been distributed to both Bomber Command and to the United States Eighth Air force, headquartered at the fourth point on our triangle, Wycombe Abbey.

Now the mystery. Why were these important locations, together with our old friend West Wycombe House, which were all known to the German High Command, never bombed?

First we need to examine the backgrounds of some of the principal players in this mystery.

Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring, the head of the Luftwaffe, was born in 1893 in Bavaria, the only son of Heinrich Göring, a member of the German

consular service.

Young Göring's father held diplomatic posts in Africa and in Haiti, climates considered too harsh for a young European child. This resulted in lengthy separation from his parents, and much of Hermann's very early childhood was spent with governesses and with his distant relatives, the English Gorings of Goring-on-Thames.

He is known to have spent summer holidays in England with his relatives at Goring, where he enjoyed

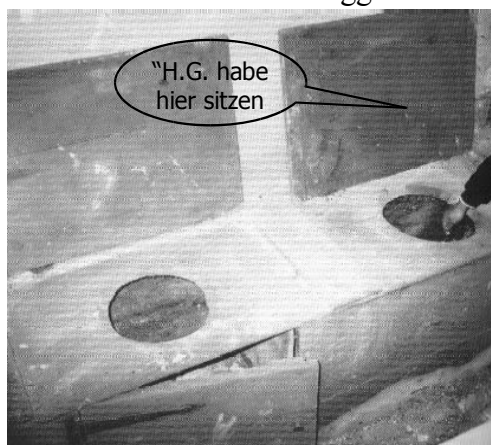


cycling through the Chiltern Hills. It is likely that he will have come to know the area well and to have been

familiar with the major country houses in the area.

It has long been suspected that the country houses of Buckinghamshire were reserved for use by the German High Command after a successful invasion of Britain and the family history described above supports the idea that this was on the personal recommendation of Herman Göring.

However, more definitive evidence in support of this theory has recently surfaced in the form of an account of the so-called "Spycalist" cycling tour in the summer of 1936 organised by the Hitler Youth. They landed at Hove and made their way to High Wycombe where the group leaders were accommodated at Mrs Miggins' boarding house on



Abercrombie Avenue. During a recent redevelopment of the property, an old privy was discovered bearing the inscription

"H.G habe hier sitzen" - conclusive evidence!.

So was this purely a reconnaissance mission to check out the local country estates? Or was there a more clandestine purpose to link up with the Japanese spy ring already established in Downley?

The truth is out there!