

# BEECH HURST NEWS



**Cover picture: -**

*With A Fair Wind:* This years extravagant bonfire effort came together on Saturday November 4<sup>th</sup>, based loosely on a sailing boat of sorts a hardy group cobbled together the boat, complete with three masts and a 'skull & crossbones' that afternoon. More details follow inside...

**Joint Editors**

Mark Allen  
10 By Sunte  
Lindfield  
West Sussex  
RH16 2DF

Andrew Brock  
189 The Welkin  
Lindfield  
West Sussex  
RH16 2PW

Mark.Allen@SJMG.net

andy.brock15@btinternet.com

SMLS Ltd, The Clubhouse, Bolnore Road, Haywards Heath,  
West Sussex, RH16 4BX.

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## **Editors' Notes**

Well the end of another year is fast approaching and as many of you read this issue you may well be tucking into the Nosh Night. All things considered it has been a very satisfactory year with another good running season, our fourth busiest ever in terms of 'bums on seats' - long may that trend continue! Time has seemingly flown by over the last 12 months and it is amazing to think that we are a stones throw from Christmas, temperatures are averaging near '60 and no real signs of winter yet – quite surreal!

Thanks as ever to the contributors to the last newsletter, namely, Ron Harris' with an excellent article on the construction of his 9 cylinder 'Wasp' aero engine, Enid Marten with more jokes, Andrew with a couple of articles + the 'regulars'.

With this edition there are articles from Chris and Stephen on passenger statistics and website statistics respectively for the previous year, a timely article courtesy of Jack Pitt, jokes from Enid Marten, Ray and Norman + all the regular columnists and a Christmas quiz to have a bash at!

Also Mike Porter having only just arrived back from Canada (hence no Chairman's notes), may we on behalf of Mike and also from ourselves through these pages wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year, by the time the February edition is ready, running will be but a month away and 2007 will be nearly two months old! Enjoy...

**Andrew & Mark**

## **2007 Subscriptions**

I'm afraid it is that time of year again! Sub's for 2007 will be due shortly and the usual excellent rates apply, £5 (Under 18's and Over 60's) and £10 the rest! I will almost certainly be at the club every weekend throughout the Christmas and New Year period and also New Years' Day. If I am not around then please leave any subscriptions on the Treasurer clip and I will duly cross you off my list and membership cards will be issued shortly afterwards. Alternatively you can post your subscriptions to either of the following addresses for my attention, thanks:

FAO Andrew Brock  
The Clubhouse  
Bolnore Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 4BX

Or

FAO Andrew Brock  
189 The Welkin  
Lindfield  
West Sussex  
RH16 2PW

**Andrew**

## **Website Update**

Included later in the newsletter are some interesting usage statistics from our website over the last twelve months, but Stephen has also been busy at work on the website. There is an updated gallery section with recently taken photo's from 2006, another with photo's from the 55<sup>th</sup> day, with a selection of photographs for each engine that ran that day and also in the members section, all the newsletters from the last 4 years are available from a link on that page to either be downloaded or viewed electronically as desired.

With that in mind, if you currently receive a paper copy of the news or get an e-mail version you can now view the latest edition via the website and it will be available at the same time or just before each edition is printed. If you would like to see the newsletter in this way, then either let Stephen, Andrew or Mark know and the news tick list can be updated so that a paper copy is not sent and that you can view it in your own time.

**Stephen, Andrew & Mark**

## **Forthcoming Events**

With Christmas almost up on us, thoughts start to turn towards the New Year, New Year's Day will be a 'fun run' day and as with previous years we will start from about 10:00 till whenever the light or weather allows us.

The date for the AGM has yet to be decided and will be included in the February newsletter, but is likely to be the first Saturday in March, however minutes and agenda's will be sent by John Baldwin in due course.

The new 2007 running season will then almost certainly commence on the first weekend of April, with Easter the following weekend.

**Andrew & Mark**

## **Winter Work**

With Christmas now in sight and the last edition of the newsletter some two months past, it is now time to give an update on the winter work that has been completed so far.

Mike has lifted the section of track from the steaming bays to the point, the steel work painted, sleepers re-laid and new track laid, replacing the worn out rail, also Geoff has continued to 'turn' two further sections, one in the 'jungle' and the other opposite the pneumatic point to gain additional grip until they are completely refurbished. With a good crowd of volunteers the first section was completed by the beginning of November and the turning a couple of weeks after that, the track will be complete for New Years Day, with a little more track work possible before the beginning of March. Work has also been continuing on the additional siding off the turntable, John Gange, Andrew and Mark have concreted additional bases for the iron feet that support the steel work where the sidings meet the point, the three original feet are being turned around so they sit under the steel work, rather than protruding out from it, an additional leg has also been made and once in, will form the additional siding that will be around 24 feet long to aid shunting manoeuvres during the running season.

Peter Chapman has also been busy, degreasing, cleaning and painting the steaming bays themselves; they are all receiving a new coat of grey paint. In addition the length of siding from the turntable to the extremity of the head shunt has been cleaned and a fresh coat of bitumen applied. In addition to the jobs above, other smaller projects are continuing, including replacing truck bearings where necessary and alterations to the 'old' braked end of the 'new set' (work that one out!) so the brakes release correctly. On the gardening front, John Midderigh has been avidly collecting leaves and overgrown brambles over the last few weekends, assisted in collection by youngsters, Andrew Strongitharm and Peter Bridges, whilst Brian and John West have edged the rear lawn and path area to keep the grass tidy. And as recently as last weekend the remaining 4 'old' signal posts were chopped down by Andrew and Mark, ably assisted by a powerful angle grinder and smoky generator! A further updated work report will appear in the February edition.

**Andrew & Mark**

### **Recent Social Events: Bonfire Night**

As the front cover suggests, we held our annual bonfire night on 4<sup>th</sup> November this year, with a 'boat' (ish) theme. Having already collected a good pile of wood, another transit van load had arrived on the previous Saturday purely to supplement the already large quantity that had been collected, including quite a number of trees that had been removed from the crowded banks in the cuttings leading up to the 'long' tunnel. The day itself was spent moving this gargantuan pile to the rear field and erect some kind of 'boat' (the word is used very loosely here!). Although an exact replica of the 'Victory' was suggested, that was considered too much work in an afternoon, so an outline of a 'clipper' type boat, with 3 masts and flying a 'skull and crossbones' was the end result, in what must honestly be the biggest fire we have had to date. With the scene set, the fire was duly lit (only a small quantity of accelerants used!) and bets taken as to how long it would take to completely destroy the flag. In all and despite several close calls it lasted 32 minutes, the prize fund won by Andrew's brother Chris.

With the bonfire now going well we all headed inside for hotdogs and rolls, a pleasant change from the baked potatoes of previous years, with cakes etc... for pudding.

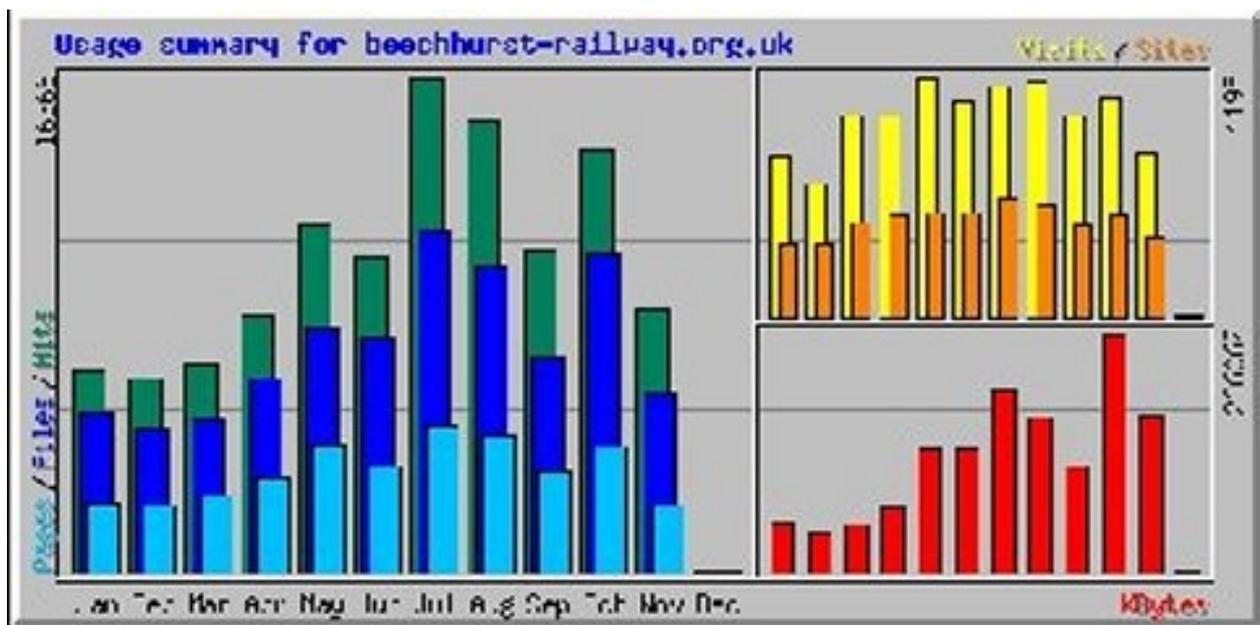
Then followed the firework display that lasted about 30 minutes or so, mind you next year we may have to find somewhere else to buy our pyrotechnics as the place near Ringmer where Andrew normally buys our haul catastrophically burnt down recently, making national news! For a free display it must have been hard to beat, but was seriously dangerous and cost two fire fighters their lives!

Thanks to everyone who helped to build and bonfire, either on the day or shifting wood beforehand, also to Val and John for the superb catering and all those who helped tidy up afterwards, it was a long and tiring day, but very worthwhile all the same, only problem is what next(?) we've gone outwards, how about upwards!!

**Andrew & Mark**

## Website Statistics – Courtesy of Stephen Hutton

With the internet an increasingly used tool for information and everything else it is interesting to see how our own website is currently doing. Stephen Hutton who now runs the day-to-day site updates has recently obtained the two charts below that indicate how many users have looked at the site during the previous twelve months, most of the information is generally superfluous to the normal person, with the number of 'visits' and the number of 'hits' the most important pieces of information. The graph below depicts the figures from the chart on the next page, but in summary the website was 'visited' just over 11,000 times this year, with just over 115,000 'hits' scored on any of the site's web pages during that period. Usage does seem to be greater towards the middle of the year when the railway is running, but only in January and February of this year did the monthly total not reach 1,000 'visits' during that month, all other months the score was over 1,000 visits, peaking in July and August. Hopefully this usage will continue to grow over the coming years' and Stephen has worked very hard this year to add new sections and generally keep the site very up to date all the time and must be congratulated for his efforts with this, lucky his job is just like his hobby!



**Graph Above:** This depicts the usage statistics by way of a bar graph for the eleven months up to and including November 2006.

**Chart Overleaf:** This depicts the number of 'visits' and number of 'hits' during the same period from January to November 2006 inclusive. It does show that the website is being used and has seen over 11,000 visits this year alone.

Summary by Month										
Month	Daily Avg					Monthly Totals				
	Hits	Files	Pages	Visits	Sites	KBytes	Visits	Pages	Files	Hits
<a href="#">Dec 2006</a>	30	25	19	7	7	650	7	19	25	30
<a href="#">Nov 2006</a>	291	198	74	27	391	174760	821	2230	5949	8730
<a href="#">Oct 2006</a>	451	339	134	35	510	266062	1094	4155	10521	13981
<a href="#">Sep 2006</a>	355	237	111	33	452	118672	1011	3345	7133	10652
<a href="#">Aug 2006</a>	481	327	147	37	559	173319	1171	4558	10151	14916
<a href="#">Jul 2006</a>	527	364	157	37	591	202237	1158	4887	11290	16366
<a href="#">Jun 2006</a>	349	260	116	35	517	137568	1076	3496	7810	10474
<a href="#">May 2006</a>	370	261	137	38	518	135757	1195	4258	8096	11470
<a href="#">Apr 2006</a>	284	214	103	33	503	72336	1004	3100	6439	8533
<a href="#">Mar 2006</a>	223	163	81	32	473	52564	1002	2521	5078	6926
<a href="#">Feb 2006</a>	228	167	79	23	355	43643	668	2234	4700	6388
<a href="#">Jan 2006</a>	214	171	74	25	357	54418	798	2318	5302	6641
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1431987</b>	<b>11005</b>	<b>37121</b>	<b>82494</b>	<b>115107</b>					

## For The Future – With A Difference! – From Jack Pitt

### *My Birthday Prayer ...*

*Today, dear Lord, I am 80, yet there's still so much I haven't done,  
So I hope, dear Lord, you'll let me stay ... until I'm 81.*

*But then if I haven't finished all I want to do, would you let me  
Stay around here a little longer ... till I get to 82?*

*There are many places I want to visit, so many things I want to see.  
So, dear Lord, do you think you could manage ... to make it 83?*

*The world is changing very fast, but there's lots more to explore,  
So I'd like to go on enjoying life ... until I'm at least 84.*

*If by then I'm still compos mentis, or as they say "in full drive"  
Maybe you'd let me continue meeting friends ... till I get to 85.*

*And even then, though walking with the aid of two sticks,  
Perhaps you wouldn't mind if I kept hanging on till I reach 86.*

*I know, dear Lord, it's a lot to ask, and it must be nice in heaven,  
But I'd really like to stay down here ... at least until I'm 87.*

*I know by then I won't be agile, and sometimes I'll be late,  
But it would be so very pleasant to still be around ... at 88.*

*I will have seen so many things, and had such a wonderful time,  
So I'm sure I'll be quite willing to say goodbye ... when I'm 89.*

*But even then, if I totter on, still not feeling it's time to go,  
Maybe you could let me stay ... till I reach the big Nine-O!*

BETTY ARKWRIGHT

This exert that we recently received from Jack Pitt will be quite appropriate next year with at least 3 members heading towards 80 years of age. Those persons shall remain nameless, but needless to say they are known about(!) and as it is a very big milestone to reach in anyone's life we thought it would be nice to include this piece in the newsletter. Us youngsters are always told that when you get to a certain age you tend to look at each year in turn rather than say, getting to 18 or 20, then worrying about 30..., 40 and so on till you get nearer to retirement! We might just find out one day!

## Operating Statistics For Our 53<sup>rd</sup> Operating Year

As those who have operated the railway on a regular basis will know we had another busy year.

At times it seemed not to be as manic as we have experienced in recent seasons, but don't be fooled.

We had another very busy year, our 4<sup>th</sup> busiest since we started way back in 1954.

We carried an annual total of 35,423 passengers!

The grand total since we started has now reached the staggering number of 1,209,973.

During the year I calculated that we might just reach one and a quarter million in 2007, but it now looks like that will have to wait till early in the 2008 season, another milestone to be recorded in our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary book (if there is to be one).

Loco mileages were probably slightly down this year as there was a greater spread of locomotive power, however the usual stalwarts will have clocked up many hundreds of service miles.

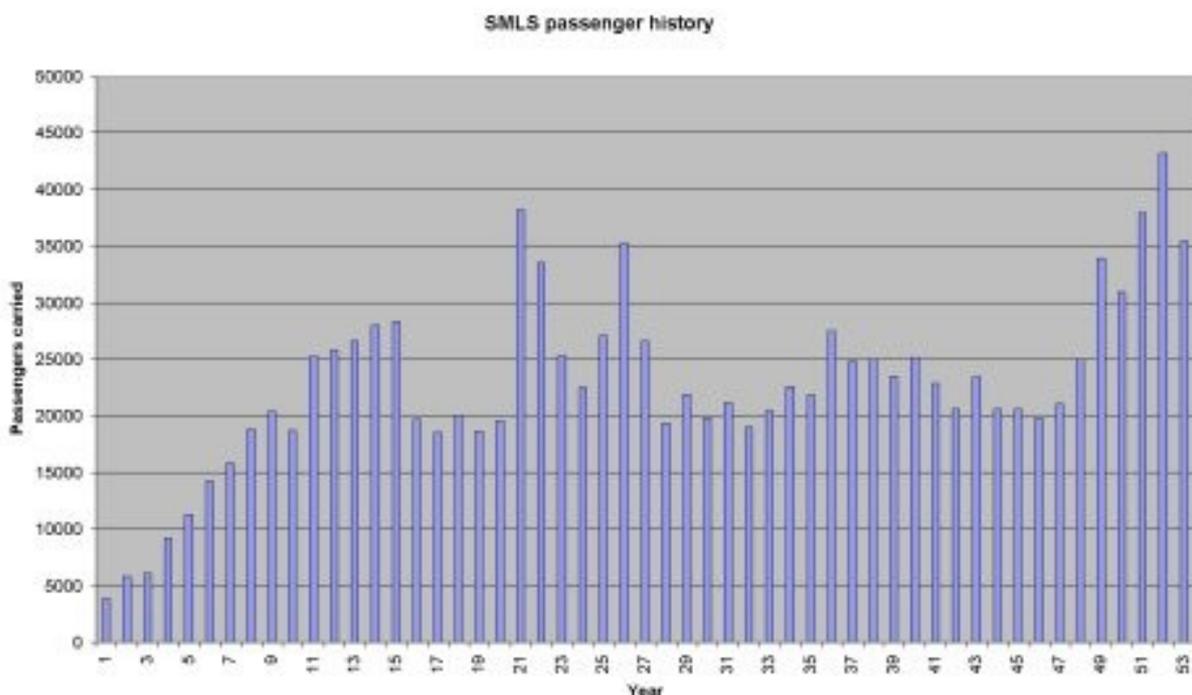
Train laps were recorded at 8983, slightly down on 2005 but gives a clue as to why the rails need attention!

Over the season we ran during 28 weeks and fortunately only had 3 "washouts"

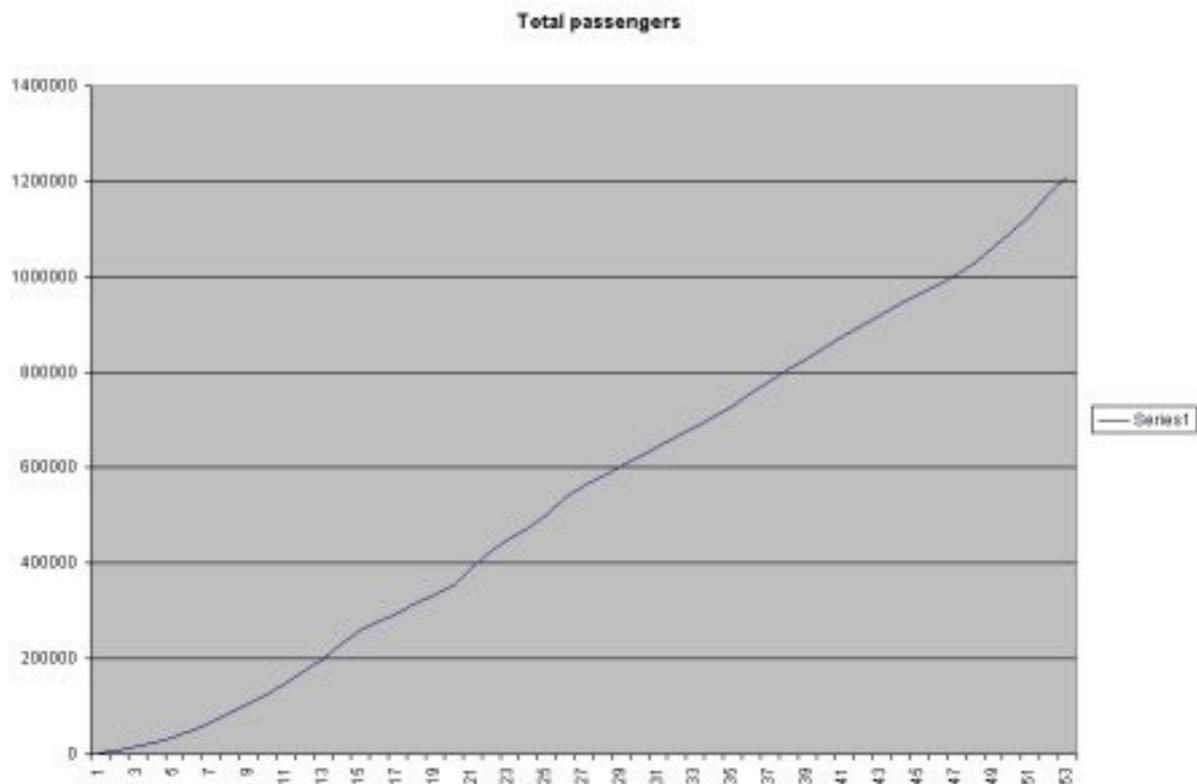
For those who might be interested I have attached two of my graphs, this year showing the passenger totals growing from our first season in 1954 till this September.

**Chris**

**Graph 1 Below:** Passenger numbers per season, each year till ongoing.



**Graph 2 Below:** Cumulative passenger numbers, each year till ongoing.



## Diary Of Events

1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 – New Years Day Run – Will start at approx. 1000.

4<sup>th</sup> January 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

1<sup>st</sup> February 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

1<sup>st</sup> March 2007 – Club Night – Will start at approx. 1900.

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2007 – Provisional date for AGM, details TBC in due course.

31<sup>st</sup> Mar/1<sup>st</sup> Apr 2007 – Provisional date for commencement of 2007 running season, TBC and timetable to be produced early in the New Year.

N.B. Other events are not always shown in the diary of events because they have been arranged at short notice; check black/notice board at the clubhouse for more details.

**Andrew & Mark**

**Jokes 1 – No Comment! (Study Pictures Carefully!) – Enid Marten**



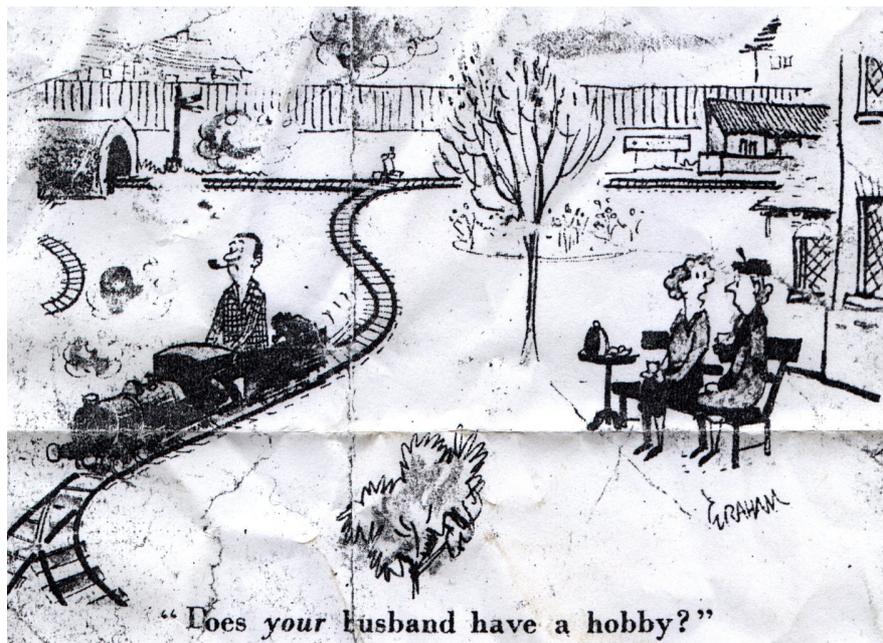
## Jokes 2 – Ministry of Defence – Voice Mail Message – Ray Parsons

Thank you for calling the MoD. I'm sorry but all our units are out at the moment or are otherwise engaged. Please leave a message with your country, name of organisation, the region, the specific crisis and a number at which we can call you. As soon as we have sorted out the Balkans, Iraq, Northern Ireland, marching up and down bits of tarmac in London and compulsory Equal Opportunities training, we will return your call. Please speak after the tone or, if you require more options, please listen to the following numbers:

- If your crisis is small and close to the sea, press 1 for the Royal Marines.
- If your concern is distant, with tropical climate, good hotels and can be solved by one or two low risk bombing runs, please press # for the Royal Air Force. *Please note this service is not available after 1630 hours or at weekends.*
- If your enquiry concerns a situation that can be resolved by a grey funnel, some bunting, flags, a damn good cocktail party and a first class marching band, please write, well in advance, to the First Sea Lord, The Ministry of Defence, Whitehall, London, SW1.
- If your enquiry is not urgent, please press 2 for the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps.
- If you are in real trouble, please press 3 and your call will be re-routed to Sandline International.

Have a pleasant day and thank you for trying to contact the MoD.

## Jokes 3 – Very Appropriate For Us! – Norman Payne



Christmas Quiz

Having used the same 'guest' publication for the past couple of years for the Christmas quiz it is perhaps time for something slightly different. There are three different quizzes below, one contains questions relating to Sussex and the other two are Kent and Hampshire. Since most of our members live in Sussex, you should be able to have a fair shot at these and just for something a little more taxing, try 10 of each from our near neighbours.

### **Sussex Quiz**

1. Which of the following is the county town of East Sussex?  
**Hastings, Lewes, Eastbourne or Angmering-On-Sea**
2. In which sport (though I use the term advisedly) does the World Championship get held every Good Friday at The Greyhound pub, Tinsley Green?  
**Pitch & Toss, Tiddlywinks, Marbles or Conkers**
3. Sussex is home to many beautiful parks and gardens that are open to the public. Which of the following parks and gardens are in East Sussex as opposed to West Sussex?  
**Nymans, Leonardslee, Sheffield Park & Wakehurst Place**
4. Winston Churchill's grandson, Nicholas Soames, was first elected to parliament for which constituency?  
**Brighton Pavilion, Bexhill & Battle, Mid-Sussex or Crawley**
5. Which famous poet of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, lived at Burwash in Sussex?  
**Rudyard Kipling, Lord Byron, William Butler Yeats or Samuel Taylor Colerige**
6. As Sussex is fairly close to the continent, it is no surprise that many fortifications have been built in the county. Which of the following castles is in West Sussex as opposed to East Sussex?  
**Pevensey Castle, Herstmonceux Castle, Bramber Castle & Bodiam Castle**
7. In the churchyard of St Swithin's, East Grinstead is a memorial to three poor souls burned at the stake in East Grinstead in July 1556. What offence had they committed?  
**Littering on a Sunday, Witchcraft, Heresy or Treason**
8. In 1973 a Grand Prix was held at Wisborough Green, the first time this particular event had been held. But what sort of transport were they using to race?  
**Lawn Mowers, Motorised Barstools, Tractors or Traction Engines**
9. In 1993 Richard Thompson, ex Fairport Convention guitarist and singer-songwriter recorded a live album at which Sussex venue?  
**The Hawth (Crawley), The Assembly Rooms (Worthing),**

## **The Saffrons (Eastbourne) or The Brighton Pavilion**

10. The word Martlet is to be frequently found around Sussex. What is a Martlet?  
**Bird of Prey, Pond on the Downs, Dialect word for Town Centre or Heraldic Device**

### **Kent Quiz**

1. Which of these seaside resorts is not in Kent?  
**Folkestone, Margate, Hastings or Hythe**
2. What is the county town of Kent?  
**Ashford, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks or Maidstone**
3. How many of the seven oaks after which Sevenoaks is named, survived the great storm of 1987?  
**3, 4, 2 or 1**
4. Opened in 1999 Kent is home to Europe's largest shopping centre, what is it called?  
**Lakeside, Meadowhall, The Metro Centre or Bluewater**
5. Which of these towns in West Kent has a castle in the town centre?  
**Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Tonbridge or Sevenoaks**
6. The name of the major river that runs through Kent is?  
**The Eden, The Medway, The Thames or The Stour**
7. Nelson's HMS Victory was built in Chatham?  
**True or False**
8. The Neolithic standing stones of Kits Coty are located in which Kent Borough?  
**Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone or Medway**
9. Which Kent Council features a dinosaur on its coat of arms?  
**Thanet, Sevenoaks, Maidstone or Dover**
10. How many motorways run through Kent?  
**3, 4, 5 or 2**

### **Hampshire Quiz**

1. What is the name of the stretch of water separating the Isle of Wight from Hampshire?  
**Southampton Water, Portsmouth Harbour, St George's Channel or The Solent**
2. How are the three precipitous rock stacks off the west coast of the Isle Of Wight known?  
**The Needles, The Spikes, The Pins or The Towers**
3. Much of this monarch's life was spent at Osborne House, on the Isle of Wight, which one?  
**Edward VIII, George I, Victoria or George IV**
4. According to legend, King Knut I ordered the tide to retreat at Southampton – and to everyone's amazement, it did.  
**True or False**
5. Which of these famous ships cannot be seen in Portsmouth?  
**Cutty Sark, The Victory, The Mary Rose or HMS Warrior**
6. Who built the earliest parts of Portchester Castle, near Portsmouth?  
**Eight-Century Saxons, An Eighteenth-Century Aristocrat, Thirteenth-Century Normans or Third-Century Romans**
7. In which north Hampshire town are the headquarters of the British Army?  
**Farnborough, Basingstoke, Fleet or Aldershot**
8. Which famous female novelist lived at Chawton, in central Hampshire?  
**Enid Blyton, Virginia Woolf, Jane Austen or George Eliot**
9. Which supposed Arthurian relic can be viewed in Winchester's Great Hall?  
**The Round Table, The Holy Grail, Excalibur or King Arthur's Crown**
10. Which forest and national park lies in Hampshire?  
**Forest of Dean, Forest of Bowland, Sherwood Forest or The New Forest**

We hope that was enjoyable, answers will be published in the February edition.

**Andrew & Mark**