

The Desborough Scrapbook

November 2025



Issue 237

Produced by local enthusiasts for Desborough Folk

£2.50

Fire crews to move out for repairs on station roof

Firefighters are to move from their base temporarily so £30,000 of roof repairs can take place. The on-call response team for Desborough, Northamptonshire, will relocate to Rothwell Fire Station for about four weeks.

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service said the building, on King Street, built in 1975, had deteriorated over “many years”.

It reassured people that crews will be “able to respond to incidents as usual and keep their local communities safe”.

A red brick fire station, built in 1975, with two slanted roofs. There is a street sign in front of the building, saying King Street. There is grass in front and a tree to the left. The building has several small windows.

Mick Berry, area manager for response, said: “We understand that local communities, particularly in our villages, want to see their fire crews on location to respond to incidents.

“We want to reassure residents in the area that both the on-call crews of Desborough and Rothwell will be able to respond to incidents as usual and keep their local communities safe.

“The roof replacement is very important and unfortunately cannot be completed safely while there are staff in the building.”

He said the important investment was to “ensure the Desborough station is fit for purpose”.

Reproduced by courtesy of the BBC, 4th October, 2025.



The on-call team at Desborough is moving to another station for about a month. The fire service says the condition of the station in Desborough, built in 1975, has deteriorated.

Residential burglary in Dunkirk Avenue, Desborough

Did you see anyone acting suspiciously in or around Dunkirk Avenue in Desborough between 8.30pm and 9.15pm on Thursday, 9th October?

Witnesses are being sought following a residential burglary in which the offenders stole a set of car keys along with a safe containing cash, jewellery and documents.

They then used the keys to steal the occupant’s blue Ford Focus car, which was later found in Ettrick Close in Kettering.

Officers would like to hear from anyone who may have seen any suspicious activity between the stated times or who may have

relevant CCTV, doorbell or dash-cam footage of the car being stolen or abandoned.

Witnesses or anyone with information are asked to call Northamptonshire Police on 101 or alternatively contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Information can also be submitted online at Report Northamptonshire Police and Giving information Crimestoppers.

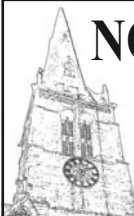
Please quote incident number 25000594752 when providing any information to make sure it gets to the right person as quickly as possible.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Northants Police, 9th October, 2025.



Contact point: you can email your story or photo to stephen.richards45@btinternet.com or dougdeans52@gmail.com. Please note that while the publisher takes care to be accurate, no liability will be accepted under any circumstances whatsoever, should any of the contents of the magazine be incorrect.





NOTES FROM ST. GILES CHURCH

WEDDING

20th September 2025, Joanne Howton to Simon Jowitt. The bride arrived on foot from Church House, 15 feet away from St. Giles Church Gate! Staff present Reverend Canon Neil Clarke, fellow clergyman Nick and curate Jo Giles.

The bride had a loose fitting white gown with veil, 3 bridesmaids in green dresses. The welcome was by Rev. Neil and curate Jo said the opening prayer and introduction and asked if any objections to wedding.

First hymn was the favourite "All things bright and beautiful". Rev. Neil read the vows, then hymn "Give me Joy in my heart". Neil read from 1 Corinthians 3, verses 1 to 13. Clergyman Nick spoke of the union of marriage, private and public, great happiness, the whole of one person to another. May be bumps in the road, through good and bad. 2nd reading (Rev. Neil) again from Matthew 26 verses 22-34 and 3rd reading Philipians Chapter 4.

Rev. Neil took the vows with the couple and best man on the chancel step. Closing hymn was "Lord of all hopefulness". Nick gave the blessing and Neil prayer again and final blessing. Signing of the Registers in the Lady Chapel. We were asked to exit via the tower door so the happy couple could go out through the front door for photos. Neil announced to the congregation "Please be upstanding for the bride and groom" as the organist (Samuel Steel) played the bridal march and we all clapped before leaving. The bells were ringing (senior ringer/tower captain Bill Adcock). Attendance was 100.

EVENSONG

Sunday 21st September 6pm, service conducted by David Cox, Steward/ Warden Emeritus, apologies, church historian William Featherstone – walking in Pyrenees! Book of Common Prayer and Mission Praise – piano Carolyn Rice. We heard Sentences of the Scriptures. Opening hymn was "Come Let us Sing". General confession. The Lord's prayer (sung). Open thou our lips (chant). Bible reading by Jane Marsh 1 Corinthians 13, verses 1 to 13. The Magnificat (sung). David gave the Homily – insight into well to do family complexities in the Old Testament. Hymn "Hymn Fill Thou my life". Sung Nunc Dimittis Apostles Creed (said). "O Lord shew thy mercy (chant). The collects (said). Closing hymn "The Lord's my shepherd". Grace. Evensong is held at 6pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month.

Bob Martin's Memorial Gathering

At 11 am on 26th September, Sylvia the widow of Bob Martin together with their children had a memorial gathering at the south of St Giles Church, Desborough – with an interment of ashes.

Belinda Humfrey put a note of this event in the Day Book of Desborough Heritage Centre for their volunteers, referring to the Memorial Garden, the title given to the area below the church yard.

Approach this by the Desborough to Rothwell footpath to the side of the church, going past that entrance to Desborough Millenium Green and along the Green's long



Mr Bob Martin.

mainly hawthorn hedge which is now grown tall again having been layed by Bob who in that process taught other Desborough worthies, including the late Bob Freeman and Arthur Mold, to lay a hedge.

Bob Martin, known locally for his extraordinarily brilliant, coloured glass models of a huge inventive range (on which he sometimes gave talks with demonstrations) – based on a seven years' apprenticeship, came to Desborough as a young postman, giving himself strong geographical and community knowledge.

For many years Bob's contribution to Desborough was quietly positive and constructive. For decades he was the unpaid Footpath Warden for the County Council, keeping clear the dozen footpaths which spiral from the town's centre and giving an annual report to the Town Council, leading Wildlife Trust Walks, laying hedges, generous with his art work (posters etc.), keeping colourful and detailed record books of town events in photography and artwork (now stored in the Heritage Centre), and a hard-working trustee of various town groups, especially the Desborough Millennium Green Trust. Desborough has much for which to thank him.



Desborough Town Cricket Club

FINAL MATCH

Desborough Town Cricket Club First XI went into their final match of the season already relegated from the Premier Division of the Northants League along with Kettering Town. Prior to the last day of the season, on September 20th, Desborough were above Kettering in the table but an 11th successive defeat resulted in them finishing bottom in the final placings.

Rushden and Higham won by five wickets at Desborough to complete a dismal season for Desborough's senior team. Desborough opening batters, Wayne Steed (67) and Simon Renshaw (32), made a good start and, at one stage, the home side were in a strong position at 126 for 1. However they collapsed to 175 all out, losing their last 9 wickets for just 49 runs. When Rushden and Higham reached 175 for 5, they hit a six to secure victory.

Desborough's Second XI also finished their season with defeat as they lost by three wickets at St Crispin Second XI. Lee Pollard (49) and Tajinder Singh, (40) were the leading run scorers in Desborough's total of 186 for 8. Rain stopped play during the home side's innings and the Duckworth Lewis Stern system was brought into operation and St Crispin needed 177 to win. They achieved that with the loss of 7 wickets. Lee Pollard was the best bowler for Desborough, taking 4 for 25.

John Clark



COFFEE MORNING

at the
**Heritage
Centre**
Station Road

First Saturday in the month,
10 - noon

Sales rocket after history buffs attend Desborough book launch

A new Desborough history book, launched in August, has taken the town by storm and local interest has rocketed.

Sue Purcell and Ron Hanson, the authors, said, “We are delighted to say that soaring sales have taken us quite by surprise, especially as the book was written with the intention of only selling locally. We have received some great reviews, too!”

The hardback cover of the tome is a vivid blue colour, in a soft touch quality, adorned with sketches of old Desborough by John Blackwell, a local artist. The pages are also soft touch, providing a comfortable read, and, I am told, it does look rather handsome on the bookshelf, or on a coffee table. *The History & Development of Desborough – A North Northamptonshire Community* is available to buy at Desborough Heritage Centre, who receive a small donation from the authors for every book sold.

Titled *The History & Development of Desborough – A North Northamptonshire Community*, by Sue Purcell and Ron Hanson, this new book made its initial appearance on Saturday, 9th August, at Desborough’s VJ Day: Picnic in the Park celebration where families congregated together to enjoy the warm sunshine and entertainments laid on by the Town Council. Amongst the many visitors to the stall was Kettering MP, Rosie Wrighting, who made a surprise visit and was attracted to purchase a copy for the coffee table in her office, where visitors could browse the interesting volume about a small town in her constituency.

The official book launch took place at Desborough Heritage Centre the following week, on Saturday, 16th August, when a large number of people attended to buy a copy and show their support for the handsome new edition, portraying Desborough’s history over the past 250-300 years, a compilation of information gathered from the public domain using genealogical resources, historical trade directories, newspaper articles from the 18th century to present, and other reliable sources, each being researched thoroughly for authenticity.

Amongst those who enjoyed the hospitality of the authors, including tea and cake, courtesy of the volunteers of the Heritage Centre, were the Mayors of Desborough and Kettering, Cllrs. Bill McElhinney and Ben Jameson; representatives of NNC Heritage & Culture, Matt Taylor and Billy Dalziel; local businesses, Dunkelmann & Son Ltd., who provided a fine display of their products for historical interest, and Lee-Dickens Ltd.; President of Kettering Civic Society, Richard Barnwell; Statistician at Dept. for Communities and Local Government, Andrew Presland; and founding chair of Desborough Civic Society and curator of Desborough Heritage Centre, Belinda Humfrey, who offered a few words about the Heritage Centre.



Town Mayors, Cllr. Bill McElhinney (Des.) and Cllr. Ben Jameson (Kett.) at the Book Launch 16th August.

In addition, there were numerous members of Desborough Civic Society and volunteers of the Heritage Centre, not forgetting friends and family of the authors, all contributing to a highly successful and enjoyable afternoon to discuss the attributes of the new history book, presented by the authors to the community of Desborough.

To provide readers with a flavour of *The History & Development of Desborough – A North Northamptonshire Community*, and not to deprive potential purchasers of the joy of opening their new book for the first time, and the smell that emanates therefrom, the easy-read book begins with a detailed introduction and good index as a finding tool.

The story begins with the well-documented sale of the Manor of Desborough by the Poulton family in the early 1700s and goes on to provide details of the life and times of the agricultural village, entering the Industrial Revolution and describing how employment came to Desborough, predominantly through wealthy industrialists in search of cheap labour. Of particular interest is a well-documented walking tour of Desborough taken on census night, in 1841, on the night of Rowell Fair. By 1855, the village had developed rapidly, even more so with the coming of the railway, bringing further employment, transportation and communication with other parts of the country.

Industries flourished and people from other areas came to Desborough in search of work, increasing the population and the demand for housing and facilities. New people, new ideas

and technological advancement brought development, and the town exuded a never-before-experienced affluence.

Later, the town, like many others, was blighted by the influence of war, but out of which developed a new phase of community life. Old houses were demolished and there was a new hunger to replace them with modern ones. A by-pass was constructed, and, with it, Desborough entered a new period of development, covered by the book right up to the present, some 300 years after the Poulton’s left a near-derelict agricultural community of less than 800 people, to release themselves from debt and find a new life in London.

And so it was that, through all these changes, Desborough community worked and toiled to improve their situation, with a certain pride in their achievements. The book follows many of the people who contributed to the community we know today, many of them with ancestors of the same name, who lived here for hundreds of years, ploughing, sowing and tilling the land.

It follows the changes to personal circumstances, successes and failures, good times and bad. And, as a little extra, interspersed through the chapters, there are imaginative tales providing atmosphere and credence to fictional events, incorporating non-fictional Desborough characters, written by Ron Hanson. The rest, as they say, is for the reader to discover.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Northants Telegraph, 4th September, 2025.



DBC News



We began October by celebrating the inauguration of our minister-in-training, now the Reverend Nicholas Cook. The ceremony was followed by tea and cake.

This month, we welcomed a representative of Open Doors, a national charity we are supporting this year. October also saw the first session of our Family Film Club, now a regular monthly feature on Saturday afternoons. For details of all our events, including the national churches' Big Quiz Night on the 15th November, please go to our website.

We are opposite the Station Road Co-op supermarket, and would love to see you, hopefully very soon! You can find out more about all our coming events on our website desboroughbaptist.org.uk. There you'll also see details of Sunday services and our wide range of midweek activities. You can contact us by email, too: secretary@desboroughbaptist.org.uk, or call 01536 760149.

Members of Desborough Family History Group outside of Burton Latimer Heritage Centre.

Desborough Family History Group recently visited Burton Latimer Heritage Centre and what a joyful experience it was. We were given a very warm welcome despite that we surprised them with a visiting party of nine.

Enthusiastic volunteers talked us through their excellent displays and encouraged the group to make use of their research room. With limited space they make use of every

inch of the area they work in and there is plenty to see.

The books they have produced about Burton Latimer and its history were mighty impressive and certainly gave us some ideas for a future production of ours. Also calendars and gifts were also available for sale.

We hope their volunteers will come and see us at Desborough and we can return their hospitality.

KNOCK-OUT SUCCESSES

Cup and Vase games have dominated Desborough's recent fixtures although they have also notched up two convincing home league wins: an 8-3 rout of Shefford and Campton in which defender Aidan Bradshaw recorded a hat-trick, including two penalties, and a 3-0 win against Irchesster. The knock-out competitions have seen Desborough beat new opponents: Tottenham 1-0 in the League Cup, and Welford Victoria 3-1 in the Northants Junior Cup. A penalty shoot-out at Clifton All Whites in Nottingham saw Ar Tarn progress to the last 64 of the FA Vase where they have a home draw against Daventry on 8 November. Comings and goings have seen Dom Wisocki arrive and Patrick Cihosz leave. The Reserves secured local bragging rights with a 6-1 home win against Rothwell Corinthian Reserves and have progressed in the Northants Lower



AR TARN CROW

Junior Cup, winning a close home game against Crick and then beating Woodford United Development 1-0 away. A reminder that Reserves' home games now kick off at 2 pm. Finally, the Youth Team, playing attractive football, are so much stronger than last season and unbeaten in five games.

All the fixtures are shown on the board outside the Clubhouse. Do come along and give us your support. A good atmosphere and a warm welcome await you.

We look forward to seeing you soon! *Crow*

Tale with happy ending as escape artist pet skunk found 25 miles from Braybrooke home

An escape artist skunk that did a runner from its Northamptonshire village home has been found safe and well 25 miles across the other side of the county.

Dominika, a female skunk, had been discovered missing by her owner Jayne McLaughlin from her home in Braybrooke near Desborough at the end of May.

Jayne had not seen hide nor hair of the stripy mammal for four months but after the *Northants Telegraph* published a story about the discovery of a skunk in Nassington near Oundle, friends alerted her.

She said: "I'm relieved. After the story was published I got so many messages. I rang the RSPCA but they couldn't find a microchip. I got hold of the sanctuary and they said they would have another go at finding it. We matched the numbers."

Dominika was spotted at the end of September under some garden decking in Station Road at Nassington by the homeowner who contacted the animal charity.

An RSPCA animal rescue officer went to the address and set a fox trap for the mammal. After being captured, the charity transported Dominika to be cared for temporarily at the Exotic Pet Refuge rescue centre near Peterborough.

Jayne is not surprised Dominika was found in 'immaculate' condition – and it's



Jayne McLaughlin with Dominika the escaping skunk /National World.

not the first time the 16-month-old pet has gone on-the-run.

In September 2024, the skunk was lost for five weeks but was found scavenging in bins after a 12 mile-trek to Corby via Market Harborough, and omnivorous, nocturnal Dominika is very capable of finding food.

Famously skunks have a notorious and smelly defence mechanism against predators, so her only concern was the pet finding enough water.

Jayne said: "She would have been finding food in bins. They have got very strong jaws and she's very intelligent. They are nocturnal and travel at night.

"As a pray animal she's fully loaded they can aspirate a brown liquid. If that gets on an animal's face they can't do anything for an hour. They can attack bears, so a dog or fox is nothing.

"I worried that in the height of summer she wouldn't have enough water, but she managed to drink from ponds."

With Dominika's skills at escaping, Jayne thinks returning her to live with her other skunks is unlikely.

She said: "She wasn't designed to be a pet. She's a free spirit. The others are happy to be house skunks. I think she was after a boyfriend.

"I've had skunks for over 16 years and they do make lovely pets, but she's the only one like this."

She is due to visit her pet and is looking to sponsor her at a zoo or rescue centre, rather than bringing her home.

Jayne added: "She's not a house skunk anymore!"

Reproduced by courtesy of the Northants Telegraph, 12th October, 2025.



Dominika the skunk walked from her home in Braybrooke to a garden in Nassington near Oundle/National World.

Ashberry Homes senior site manager in Desborough wins coveted industry award

The senior site manager at an Ashberry Homes development in Desborough has been recognised for the quality of his work with a coveted national award. Keith Grayson has secured a Quality Award in the National House Building Council's (NHBC) annual Pride in the Job competition for The Wickets, where Ashberry Homes – part of the Bellway Group – is building 350 new homes off Stoke Road.



Senior site manager Keith Grayson has won a NHBC Pride in the Job Quality Award for his work at The Wickets development in Desborough which is being built by Ashberry Homes, part of the Bellway Group.

He was among only 450 winners selected from a pool of more than 8,000 site managers whose developments have been inspected by the NHBC over the past year, placing him among an elite group within the industry.

This is the first Pride in the Job Quality Award that Keith has won during his four years as a senior site manager at Bellway.

Keith, 39, from Newark-on-Trent, started as a trainee bricklayer at the age of 17, qualified then switched to a management role and gained a degree in residential construction management from Sheffield Hallam University. After being promoted to the position of site manager, he joined Bellway as

senior site manager in 2021.

He said: "This is my first Quality Award and I feel elated and proud to have won it. But it is also an accolade for the whole team and I am indebted to my assistant site manager Joe Singh who has been a tremendous help to me. He has focused on making sure that customer care is excellent, allowing me to concentrate all my attention on the build programme.

"The build here is a technical challenge as it features the installation of solar panels and increased insulation which involve procedures new to many of us. All the homes will be fully compliant with the M4(2) regulations with adaptations such as wider doorways and level entry to the front and

back doors to make them accessible and adaptable for anyone with disability issues.

"The site not only features top-quality work but looks great too. We are using different but subtle rendering colours such as greens, greys and blues, which help produce a fabulous street scene and make the development really stand out. There are public open spaces already being enjoyed by the residents who have moved in and there is a wonderful fountain creating a grand entrance to the site."

The Pride in the Job awards involve a rigorous process including spot checks on the day-to-day running of a site. Each site manager is assessed across six key areas which are consistency, attention to detail, leadership, interpretation of drawings and specifications, technical expertise and health and safety.

Keith and the other Quality Award winners will go forward to the next stage of the competition – the NHBC's Seal of Excellence and Regional Awards, which will be announced this autumn.

Lee Wilkinson, Construction Director for Bellway East Midlands, said: "As you can see from the number of sites that are judged nationally, winning this award is no mean feat. The NHBC Quality Award is recognition of a job very well done and is universally respected throughout the construction industry as a mark of distinction.

"Keith and his site team should be incredibly proud of this achievement. It is a real testament to their hard work, commitment and attention to detail not to mention the extremely high standards that we set for ourselves throughout the business."

*To find out more about the homes at The Wickets, see:
<https://www.ashberryhomes.co.uk/new-homes/east-midlands/the-wickets>.*

Post War Living in Desborough

NOVEMBER 1954



November – Postwar government limitations on housebuilding are lifted.

1st: The vertical - takeoff - or - landing (VTOL) Convair XFY transitions from vertical to horizontal flight and back.



The radio programme *Hancock's Half Hour*, a pioneer in situation comedy, is first broadcast on BBC Radio. A television version would follow in 1956.

3rd: The first *Godzilla* film is premiered in Tokyo. Approximately 9,610,000 tickets are sold, making it the eighth best-attended film in Japan that year.

4th: Two by-elections are held in the UK: In the Sutton and Cheam by-election, brought about by the resignation of the Conservative MP Sydney Marshall, the seat is retained by the Conservative candidate Richard Sharples.

In the Morpeth by-election, brought about by the death of the incumbent Labour MP, Robert Taylor, Will Owen retains the seat for Labour.

7th: Soviet Air Force MiG-15 fighters shoot down a U.S. Air Force B-29 *Superfortress* off Hokkaidō, Japan. The Soviet Union claims the B-29 was spying.

12th: The main immigration port-of-entry in New York Harbor at Ellis Island closes permanently.

13th: Great Britain defeat France in the final of the 1954 Rugby League World Cup at Parc des Princes.

BBC Television broadcasts the first episode of *Fabian of the Yard*, the first British TV police procedural.



17th: A U.S. Air Force B-47 Stratojet is forced by bad weather to remain aloft

for 47 hours 35 minutes, needing nine aerial refuellings.

19th: The Korean Cold War between the communist North and the capitalist South begins over a year after the conclusion of the Korean War.

26th: Dutch coaster *Tarpo* sinks off The Lizard, Cornwall, with the loss of all twelve crew.

27th: The South Goodwin Lightship capsizes on the Goodwin Sands in the UK with the loss of all seven crewmen. The only survivor is a Ministry of Agriculture scientist who had been on board bird-watching.



30th: In Sylacauga, Alabama, USA, a four-kilogram piece of the Hodges Meteorite crashes through the roof of a house and badly bruises a napping woman, in the first documented case of an object from outer space hitting a person.

British cargo ship *Tresillian* founders in St George's Channel, 44 nautical miles (81 km) off Cork, Ireland with the loss of 24 of her 40 crew. Sixteen survivors are rescued by SS *Liparus* and transferred to the Irish navy ship *Maev* and land at Cobh.

Winston Churchill becomes the first, and to the present day, the only UK Prime Minister to celebrate his eightieth birthday whilst in office.

NOVEMBER
WEEK
ENDING



DESBOROUGH FOOTBALL CLUB

SUPPORTERS CLUB DANCE

Desborough Co-operative Hall

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 5th

Dancing 8 pm.—12

to the

NEW MAYFAIR BAND

Admission 3/-. Members 2/6

DESBOROUGH LORRY DRIVER FINED £5

When a Desborough lorry driver attempted to overtake another lorry on a bend at Brampton Ash on September 9th, he involved himself, the lorry he was overtaking and a lorry approaching from the opposite direction in a triple crash.

At Little Bowden Magistrates' Court on Tuesday, the first lorry driver, Ivan John Hamilton, Toll Bar Cafe, Harborough Road, Desborough was fined £3, with £3 2s costs for dangerous driving.

CHEQUERS HAS BEEN HER HOME FOR 49 YEARS

Rowell Fair days are much quieter now than when pubs stayed open from six in the morning until eleven at night, says 75-year-old Mrs. L. E. Hollis, landlady of The Chequers, one of Rothwell's oldest public houses.

Mrs. Hollis – affectionately known to regulars as Lizzie – should know. She has been The Chequers' landlady for 49 years and has seen fifty Rowell Fairs.

In the early years after she moved in, she said, it was the accepted thing to get drunk three times on Rowell Fair Day.

They started on rum and milk in the morning and having had their fill of Rothwell's

traditional Fair drink, the revelers would go home to recover.

Beer or spirits

Sobered up they would return for a lunch time session on beer or spirits. This would last until teatime then home again they would stagger.

At night, the merrymakers, a trifle paler and not quite so steady, would emerge once more for a final celebration.

On Fair days Mrs. Hollis used to put all moveable objects within range of the bar into safe keeping. Candlesticks, pictures, even pokers, were all locked away, otherwise they would disappear.

Too merry

Above the Chequers is a large room, once used for pig club dinners and other gay occasions. But it has remained unused since one Rowell Fair night 26 years ago. That was when the merry-makers got a bit too merry. Coconuts, ale and glasses were slung into the piano. Beer flooded the floor. And generally, everyone went mad.

"It was a terrible night," said Mrs. Hollis. I swore then that the room would never be licensed again."

Hardly anything is known about the history of the public house, apart from the date 1734, inscribed at the front.

But once it had its own brew house and also a quoit bed for the game was popular in the old days.

Stables still stand at the end of an arched drive-in.

Plays dominoes

Most of the work is now done by Mrs. Hollis' son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Cosby.



Lunch time dominoes is almost a ritual at the Chequers, Rothwell. Left to right are: Mr. O. Parker, Mr. Jim Arch, Mrs. L. E. Hollis (the licensee), and Mrs. E. M. Cosby.

But Mrs. Hollis is still a familiar figure in the bar and she enjoys a game of dominoes with some of the regulars.



A "CHEQUERS" sign has swung in the wind for 220 years at Rothwell.

The Rev. C. W. Hickman spoke to Desborough "Over 60" Welfare Club at their meeting on Monday. Mr. John Summerly presided; Mrs. Mary Ginns was the soloist and Mrs. Kate Panter gave a recitation.

Mrs. S. Wooding gave a talk on the International Co-operative Alliance Congress in Paris to Desborough Co-operative Women's Guild on Tuesday. Mrs. G. Johnson and Mrs. S. Blissett, secretary, proposed thanks.

Mr. C. Turner, Desborough, was re-elected secretary of Kettering and District Christian Endeavour Union at the annual assembly at Burton Latimer Baptist Church on Saturday. Other Desborians re-elected were Mrs. O. Tomkins (treasurer) and Miss M. Crick (auditor).



CITY PHOTOGRAPHY MODEL WEDS



Miss Barbara Vivienne Bird, who has modelled for Leicester Amateur Photographic Society was married at St. Peter's Church, Highfield, on Saturday to Mr. Roy Sinclair Barton, nephew of Mr. H. Timpson, a director of Toone and Co., Desborough.



They used to like their beer warm in the old days. Mrs. L. E. Hollis, licensee of The Chequers, Rothwell, shows a reporter an old conical-shaped warmer, which when filled was placed in the fire.

DESBOROUGH NEWS

Alterations to Desborough Library have nearly finished.

Desborough Town failed to end Spalding's long run of successes on Saturday, losing 4 - 0. The Reserves lost 2-0 at home to Bedford Avenue.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. P. H. Bird of 43, Berners Street, Leicester. The groom's parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Barton, live at 46, Regent Street, Desborough.

The bride who was given away by her father, wore a crinoline skirt of white lace and a sequin trimmed bodice with a head-dress in coronet style of French tulle with a matching veil. She carried an ivory prayer book, with a mauve orchid.

Bridesmaids were Miss Pauline Bird, only sister of the bride, Miss Dawn Bates, cousin of the bride and Miss Barbara Simmons, a niece of the bridegroom.

They wore white tulle crinoline dresses with a headdress of a wreath of white rosebuds.

The best man was Mr. T. Simmons, 135 Union Street, Desborough.

The bridegroom, who is a member of the Kettering Golf Club, is a representative with the firm of which his uncle is a director.

The reception was held at the Victory Hotel, Great Central Street, Leicester, following which the couple left for their honeymoon in London. The bride wore a stone travelling costume with tan accessories.

PUBLIC UTILITIES STREET WORKS ACT. 1950 – SECTION 27 DESBOROUGH, GLADSTONE STREET

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northamptonshire County Council as the highway authority for Gladstone Street Desborough, being satisfied that traffic on the said road should be prohibited by reason of works being executed or proposed to be executed thereon by the East Midlands Gas Board, have made an Order prohibiting for such period not exceeding three months as may be necessary the use by vehicles of any class or description of a length of 136 yards of the said road.

Any person who contravenes this Notice or who uses or permits the use of any vehicle in contravention of this Notice is liable in the case of a first offence to a fine not exceeding Five Pounds and in the case of a second or subsequent offence to a fine not exceeding Ten Pounds.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

New Street and Station Road

Dated this Eighth day of November 1954.

J. ALAN TURNER, Clerk of the Northamptonshire County Council, County Hall, Northampton.



DESBOROUGH NEWS

Desborough Town are bottom of the United Counties Football League, Division One. They have only three points from eight games with ten goals for and 25 against.

"Desborough, Then and Now," was the subject of a talk given by Mr. H. Goodman to Desboro' Co-operative Women's Guild on Tuesday evening.

Representatives of all Desborough churches took part in a Remembrance Service at the Parish Church on Sunday. The service was led by the Rev. Michael Webster, the vicar, and the Rev. R. S. Eldridge of the Baptist Church. Preacher was the Congregational minister, the Rev. H. Geoffrey Hayes and the lesson was read by Mr. F. Grocock of the Methodist Church.

NOVEMBER
WEEK
ENDING



KETTERING JUVENILE COURT

A Rothwell boy appeared in court and admitted stealing two cycle lamps, the property of Douglas Farey and Doreen Elizabeth Farey, at a Desborough car park while the owners were at the pictures. He was ordered to pay 11s 1d costs.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Desborough – Modern Semi-detached house, three bedrooms, bathroom, dining room, lounge, kitchen, Torwood boiler; good garden.

Vacant shortly – apply after 6.30 p.m. to 23 Copelands Road.

DESBOROUGH NEWS

The total of £145 collected in Desborough this year to aid the Earl Haig Poppy Fund was the largest ever raised in the town. In 1953 £5 less was collected, and in the previous year the total was £133.

Desborough Y.M.C.A. beat Rushden 3-1 last Friday in a Y.M.C.A. East Midlands Games League fixture. They won 5-0 at snooker, 13-12 at table tennis, 11-4 at darts, but lost 581-447 at billiards.

A number of Desborough bird fanciers took awards at the East Midlands Classic Open Show at Kettering last weekend. They included A. T. Woolerson who won first prize with his entry in a Norwich canary class.

Desborough Town lost a hard fought match on Saturday by the odd goal in five. Desborough's goals were scored by Draper and Vint. Main reason for the narrow defeat was the heavy ground conditions which affected the lighter Desborough side.

The new extension to Desborough Public Library was opened on Monday evening with a stock of 5,000 books – three times more than in the old library. The opening

SATRA – ARMY BOOTS



At Satra House they're putting a soft pedal on army boots by giving them solid rubber soles. Two shoemen look on as Mr. E. Hall, of the Research Association, explains the technicalities. The display, one of many, was put on by Satra House when members of the Rushden and District Shoe Manufacturers' Association held their quarterly meeting at the Express Hall, Irthlingborough on Tuesday.

ceremony was performed by Ald. Ewart Marlow, chairman of Northamptonshire County Council.

Services at a men's weekend at Desborough Baptist Church were conducted

by the Rev. C. H. Higgs, of Walgrave, a former minister of the church. Morning services at the Methodist Church on Sunday were led by the Rev. C. W. Hickman and in the evening by Mr. R. L. Denney.



Station Road, Health Clinic.

As the furniture and equipment at the present Desborough Infant Welfare Centre is in poor condition the Health Committee of Northamptonshire County Council have authorised an expenditure of about £300 on replacements and repainting. It is hoped the new centre at 39 Station Road will be ready at an early date.

Mr. Charles Mobbs, 42 Buckwell Street, Desborough, was admitted to Kettering General Hospital on Monday with an injured hip, sustained in an accident at work. The 72-year-old man was pinned between a truck and a roll of paper in the Harborough Road, Desborough, reel stock department of Rigid Containers, Ltd.



CARS FOR SALE

1953 Ford Prefect saloon, low mileage new condition throughout £445 or £125 deposit and balance over 36 months.

1948 Hillman Minx drophead coupe fitted with heater £325 or £100 deposit and balance over 30 months.

1948 Standard tourer, reconditioned engine recently fitted, good tyres, a very sound little car, £240 or £80 deposit and balance over 30 months.

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Girls Leaving School at Christmas wanted for all Departments

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DESBOROUGH HOUSE FOR SALE

Detached house, two reception rooms, kitchen, three large bedrooms, bathroom, w.c., cellar, glasshouse, good garden, out-buildings, outside w.c.

Apply before 7.30 p.m., 141 Rushton Road, Desborough.

MAN IN SEARCH OF WORK

Mr. Cecil Tailby has his own business in Desborough, taking up a lot of his time during the day. In the evenings he writes plays, film scripts and still he is looking for more "work." For he has just been appointed critic in Northamptonshire for the Amateur Stage Magazine.

This means he is available to local dramatic societies – either to give oral criticisms of plays performed, written criticisms or "write ups" in the magazine.

Looking at my diary I predict he will have quite a time this winter.

Burials in Desborough Cemetery –
November 1954

None.



DESBOROUGH OUTDOOR BOWLS CLUB



We had a great evening on Saturday 27th September at the end of season presentation, thanks to everyone who came.

Congratulations once again to all the winners.



AS TIME GOES BY ...

... 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

2nd: Eigiau Dam disaster kills seventeen in the North Wales village of Dolgarrog. In Australia, 100 police clashed with 1,000 striking seamen on the wharf in Fremantle as the officers tried to board a ship that the strikers were trying to damage; many were injured and 100 arrests were made.

3rd: Alfred Hitchcock's first (silent) film, *The Pleasure Garden*, completed (but not released in the UK until 16th January 1927).

7th: *The Morning Post*, a Conservative London newspaper, publishes a leaked report of the Irish Boundary Commission's (limited) proposals for altering the border between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, which are contrary to the Free State's view; publication effectively ends the work of the commission.

8th: The film *The Eagle*, starring Rudolph Valentino, was released.

10th: The Archbishop of Canterbury appointed a committee of six doctors and six clergymen to investigate the veracity of faith healing.

11th: Howard Carter and an autopsy team began the unwrapping of the mummy of Pharaoh Tutankhamun. The process was exceedingly difficult due to the extreme fragility of the bandages and the resinous coating that held the mummy fast inside the sarcophagus.



12th: The British submarine HMS *M1* sank with all 69 hands in the English Channel when it was hit by the Swedish ship *SS Vidar*.



16th: Carmaker Vauxhall Motors of Luton is purchased by American giant General Motors for \$2.5 million.

18th: The British House of Commons ratified the Locarno Treaties by a vote of 375 to 13.

19th: The autopsy of Tutankhamun concluded. The bad condition of the body and limited forensic science of the 1920s meant that little could be determined other than the age of the body being estimated to be about eighteen.

20th: A state funeral was held for Manfred von Richthofen as his repatriated remains were buried in the Invalidenfriedhof in Berlin. President Paul von Hindenburg led the proceedings.



25th: The film *The Phantom of the Opera* starring Lon Chaney was released.

26th: It was reported that the British government had advised Benito Mussolini not to attend the formal signing of the Locarno Treaties in London, as it could not protect him from being insulted in public. The British public was generally displeased by Mussolini's increasingly authoritarian rule, and labour factions were particularly angered over his suppression of Italian trade unions. Diplomat Vittorio Scialoja would be sent as the Italian representative instead.

27th: A state funeral was held at Westminster Abbey in London for Queen mother Alexandra. The kings of England, Denmark, Norway and Belgium marched behind the casket in the procession.



30th: The film *Cobra*, starring Rudolph Valentino and Nita Naldi, opened.

NOVEMBER
WEEK
ENDING

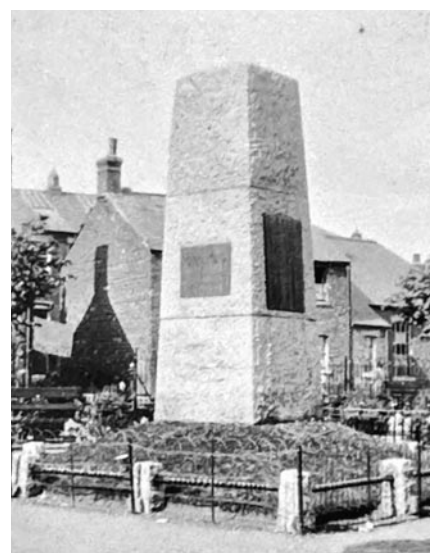
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DESBOROUGH NOTES

BY 'THE TATLER'

TWO-MINUTE SILENCE ABOLISHED

– It was not a little surprising to hear as I did from a public man this week that some Desborough people think the time has arrived when the two minutes' silence and the service on Armistice Sunday should be dropped. I was quite shocked at hearing this. For when six years ago the two minutes were first devoted to silent meditation upon the sacrifice made for their country by those who fell in the war, and the deeds of all our gallant heroes in defence of our hearths and homes, we had not the least doubt that the practice thus initiated would be followed for many decades, and that by this means the memory of the brave lads would be handed down to succeeding generations.



Now, after only six years, when the seventh celebration is about to stir our minds afresh on the subject, there are some who want it to be abolished, but I think the number of these people are greatly in the minority, and that the majority would like the two minutes' silence as well as the service at the memorial to be long continued. There is nothing more impressive in the whole year.

This is practically what I told the public man who addressed me on the subject, "How would you like it," he asked, "if you had a son killed in the war to be frequently reminded of it; we do not want to recall the manner of their death, or to think about the ghastly war." I reminded him that very many people who had had sons killed in the war derived consolation from the service and thought of their dear ones thereat, from the Christian standpoint. Indeed, the sacrifice made by our boys brings many to see a fresh light in the sacrifice at Calvary. Besides, what a disgrace it would be to the country to forget the gallant lads who did so much for us.

We have a massive memorial which for many centuries will hand down to posterity the memory of those who gave their lives for their country in the Great War, and I hope that for a very long time many people will surround it for a service on Armistice Sunday. To my friend who argued that these things should be forgotten, I remarked, "Go down to the cemetery this week and see the friends placing flowers on the graves of their loved ones. Ask them to desist from doing so. I am afraid you would get a stern rebuke," I said. Is it not very much the same with our annual service? To drop the memory of our gallant dead would be a reproach to the town.

I shall be surprised if there is not again a great concourse of people to take their part and to listen to the address of the Rev. F. J. Walkey, O.B.E., M.C., Area Superintendent of Baptist Churches, and chaplain to the

Northants Regiment in Palestine. The rev. gentleman, who is coming to Desborough, partly to speak at the Baptist Chapel anniversary, is an eloquent preacher, who has had experience with the forces and the fact that he is to address the gatherings should of itself be a great attraction.

EGYPTIAN DARKNESS – For some time, I have heard about the Egyptian darkness that prevails on the No. 1 Co-operative estate during the winter evenings and of people unpleasantly colliding with each other in that locality. If I remember rightly, I remarked upon the subject quite twelve months ago, but since the clock was put back this time and people have again come from their homes and returned in the dark, the complaints have been renewed with increased vigour. It seems, however, that the reason the appeal from the inhabitants to "lighten their darkness" has been made in vain is because the thoroughfare has not been taken over by the Urban Council. If the owners agreed for it to be taken over, the present state of things would soon be altered, but as this means the payment of money by the owners, and in the same thoroughfare land is held as allotments which will not be built upon for some time, the owners have not arrived at a consensus of opinion on the subject.

A good deal of jealousy appears to have arisen because the Council have naturally lighted public main roads in the vicinity of new houses. The Council could not, however, light a road that is not taken over; it would be establishing a precedent that

would have to be followed in other cases. The question is a very difficult one, and I have much sympathy for those who reside in a street which cannot be lighted at the public expense under existing conditions.

BUILD FLATS – The other day I heard one of our Councillors suggest that if some new houses were erected in flats the rents would not be so heavy as dwellings of the ordinary type, and that they would be welcomed by newly-married couples. Judging from the flats of various types which I have seen, I rather like the idea. Many such people in London reside in flats, and I have now and again, in going up a certain lift in London, passed on my way the front doors of several notabilities.

ODDFELLOWS – From what I hear, the local branch of the Manchester Unity of Oddfellows is very strong and making rapid strides. This is gratifying, for it is pleasing to hear of anything in the town that makes for thrift and provision for the future. Many people I know - especially if they have large families - cannot save just now, when trade is at a very low ebb, but where they can it is desirable to put by for a rainy day, and not trust entirely to the Old Age Pension. There are now no fewer than 1,200 National Insured members of the Lodge at Desborough, and I hear that many of the ordinary members will go to Wellingborough when the Grand Master and his lady visit that town in a few weeks.

COUNTY FRUIT SHOW – As Desborough is renowned for its orchards, the town naturally sent specimens of apples to the County Fruit Show at Northampton.

ALL EYES UPTURNED

Big Crowds Thrilled by Clever Aeroplane "Stunts" at Kettering



Sunday afternoon saw a constant stream of people making their way to the landing-ground of the Berkshire Aviation Tours, and the 'busses running to and fro did brisk business. The four aeroplanes did not lack for patronage, and when at 4.15 the "stunt" flying commenced, the

watchers felt that they had full value for their entrance money. The principal attraction was of course, the daring exploit of Captain Holmes, who walked the wings of his machine while flying - according to one of the officials - between eighty and ninety miles per hour. The aeroplanes, on landing, passed only a few feet above the spectator's

Everybody who saw them thought they were worthy of a prize. The Working Men's Club at Desborough competed as a body in the section for clubs and other institutions and associations. A very nice lot was also sent from our Council schools, not for competition. So that on the whole Desborough was well represented at the exhibition.

The Working Men's Club failed to win the Lawrence Cup, and that fact reminded me of the complaint made to me one day last week by one of the members responsible for getting together the dish of apples to represent the club at the show. One heard people boasting, he said, of the wonderful apples they had grown, but when they were asked for a contribution towards the club's exhibit it appeared that all these wonderful apples had somehow managed to get to the bottom of the box and were therefore quite inaccessible. By the way he uttered this complaint I gathered that what he was implying was not that his fellow members were unwilling to help the club to win the cup, but when they came to look at the apples they had boasted about, those apples were not quite so wonderful as they had thought. Before I leave the subject of the Fruit Show, by the way, I should like to congratulate Mr. Eli Coe, who upheld his reputation as an apple-grower by taking the first prize in the class for a dish of apples of specified varieties grown by amateurs.

DESBOROUGH BAND – Now that the long evenings have come once more, the question is again being raised as to whether a Desborough band cannot be formed. Surely there is enough musical talent here for that purpose. Rothwell is very musical, but surely Desborough is far from being unmusical, and the time has surely arrived when we could form a band on our own account. Who will take the initiative?

CRICKET CLUB – In aid of the funds of the Town Cricket Club a very successful whist drive was held in the Co-operative Hall on Monday evening, a large number being present. Valuable prizes were given, and were awarded as follows:— Ladies: 1 Miss M. M. Bonsor, 2 Miss M. Bonsor, 3 Miss M. Page, 4 Mrs. A. Kilborn. Gentlemen: 1 Mr. H. Bosworth, 2 Mr. T. Bryan, 3 Mr. F. Law, 4 Mr.

V. York. The special prize was secured by Mrs. Howes, and the sealed number prize by Mr. O. Page. The duties of M.C. were capably carried out by Mr. H. Sharman.

BUILDING FUND – With a view to augmenting the funds of the Baptist New Church Building Fund, an excellent concert was given to a large audience in the Baptist schoolroom on Thursday by "The Merry Elves," a children's concert party from Kettering. Songs, recitations, dances, concerted and humorous items were all contributed in splendid fashion, and judging by the applause they evoked were greatly enjoyed. Those taking part were Baby Kathleen, Miss V. Perrin, Miss J. Tingle, Miss J. Marlow, Miss E. Marlow, Miss M. Wright, and Miss R. Bosworth, with Miss E. Woolston at the piano. In addition, an amusing sketch, entitled "Laugh and Grow Fat," was admirably given.

RECHABITES – A meeting of the "Star of Desborough" Adult and Juvenile Tents of the Independent Order of Rechabites, was held at the Baptist Schoolroom on Monday evening, the Rev. C. H. Higgs, Baptist Minister, presiding, supported by Bro. C. H. Battle (Provincial Deputy Ruler, of Northampton), Bro. H. W. Beale (District Secretary of Wellingborough), Bro. A. Mash (District Treasurer, Northampton), Bros. S. J. B. Barnes, J.P. (Desborough), Mr. F. Chamberlain, B.A. (Rothwell), and Mr. C. Chamberlain. Bro. Battle gave a very instructive account of the growth and advantages of the Order, which now numbered over seven million members. Between the addresses Mr. G. Terry and Miss F. Terry very effectively rendered duets, accompanied by Mrs. W. Essex. Bro. W. Barnes, secretary of the Tents, was responsible for the arrangements.

Author's note:— Who were the Rechabites in the Bible? – The Rechabites (also Recabite, Rekabite) were a nomadic group known for their strict rules to abstain from wine, from building houses, from sowing seed, and from planting vineyards (Jeremiah 35:6-7).

then placed beneath the memorial, the proceedings closing with the singing of the National Anthem.

DESBOROUGH NOTES

BY 'THE TATLER.'

THE RACE – A good deal of the local talk this week concerns a race. No, it is not a horse-race this time, but it appears that the great event was initiated in a certain hostelry, and that the contest was between two well-known public men, of Desborough and Kettering respectively. It was to be a foot race, but when the two went to the meeting place - the Kettering Cricket Ground - in company with their supporters, each seemed surprised to see the other.

The Desborian was handicapped, but he soon passed his opponent, who was clearly defeated, to the chagrin of his supporters and the joy of the Desborians. I am told that much depended on the race beyond the winning of it. Well, I know nothing about that; all I am concerned about is that Desborough once more showed Kettering a clean pair of heels.

Am I a Buffalo? I was told that I certainly ought to be one, and that as a result of a number of Buffaloes coming over from Kettering a number had been enrolled at the George Hotel, and an initiation would be held there shortly. Well, I wish them luck and hope that some of any friends will soon be "knighted."

AUTOMATIC LAMPS – The vagaries of our automatic lamps are past all understanding. Some will send forth their welcome rays ten minutes or a quarter of an hour before the others. And I heard a Councillor declare this week: "I expressed congratulations upon the illumination outside my house on Sunday evening, but on Monday at 10.30 I had to feel my way along the wall." Smiles greeted the assertion, but we all felt quite sure it was entirely due to the darkness.

INDOOR REMEMBRANCE SERVICE – Amongst the Remembrance Day services that for the present year will be one of the best remembered. One reason was that many ex-soldiers of the First Fourth Northants were pleased to renew acquaintance with their old padre. And the other was that, on account of



DESBOROUGH MEMORIAL UNVEILED

A very impressive ceremony took place on Armistice Day at the Church of England Schools, when a war memorial panel was unveiled. The panel, which has been placed in the corridor of the school, was given by Captain Howard Burditt, M.C., and has inscribed upon it the names of the old scholars who made the great sacrifice. It was unveiled by the Rev C. Cole-Hamilton, M. C., chairman of the Managers. Flowers were

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the bitterly cold wind, the service was held for the first time, not at the Cenotaph, as originally arranged, but in the Oddfellows' Hall. It seemed strange for the hall to be so crowded on a Sunday, many people being unable to gain admittance; and it was, of course, unusual, too, for the musicians to go down from the service to the Cenotaph to sound the Reveille and the Last Post before the beautiful floral emblems were placed around the Memorial. But I think everybody felt it was the right course under the circumstances to have the service indoors. It was quite as impressive as if it had been in the open.

CHURCH ANNIVERSARY – Conspicuous success attended the special services in celebration of the church anniversary held at the Baptist Church on Saturday and Sunday. A large number were present at an excellent tea in the Schoolroom, kindly given by Mrs. Muskett. A well-attended service was afterwards held in the Baptist Church, when the famous Non-conformist minister, the Rev. S. W. Hughes, of Westbourne Park London, delivered a stirring sermon. Special services were continued on Sunday, conducted by the Rev. F. J. Walkey, O.B.E., M.C., of Northampton. At the evening service the choir rendered two anthems, Miss G. Harris presiding at the organ.

SCHOOL REPAIRS – The first of a series of entertainments in the Schoolroom last week, took the form of a whist drive arranged by the Misses W. Coleman and D. Gray. There was a good attendance, 14 tables being occupied. The proceeds were halved between the School Piano Fund and the School Repair Fund. The Rev. C. E. Hopkins said the school had been repaired and had now been passed by a Government inspector. The only thing that remained to be done was to raise the money to clear off the debt the repairs had incurred.

The prizewinners were: Ladies: 1 Mr. R. Coleman (Pytchley) (playing as a lady), 2 Miss A. Bailey, consolation, Miss K. Wood. Gentlemen: 1 Mr. E. Worthington, 2 Mr. G. Lowe, consolation Mr. H. J. Lowe. Competitions were won by Mr. and Mrs. H. Palmer (Brigstock Parks), and Mrs. F. Walpole.

HOUSES FOR DESBOROUGH

Built on Instalment Principle Suggested.

FEES AT MANFIELD HOSPITAL DISCUSSED

At the fortnightly meeting of the Desborough Urban Council on Tuesday evening Mr. F. T. Riley suggested that the Council erect houses on the instalment principle. Many methods were in practice, and he believed with great success - for instance, in Leicester. Young married people could look forward to purchasing their own houses. The Council would have no difficulty in

borrowing and building. They would be covered against loss by the insurance of the person who took the house.

Mr. Ginns asked whether there were not such facilities already – Mr. Burditt remarked upon what was being done by Building Societies. Mr. Dean asked whether the Council would in the first instance find the whole of the money or a quota.

Mr. Riley: We should build the house.

Mr. Dean thought the idea was an excellent one, but before long they would have as many houses as were needed.

Mr. Cox said if they built houses for sale the purchasers should have their own say as to the plans.

The Chairman said the Housing Committee could consider the question.

MANFIELD HOSPITAL

The Chairman stated he had received a letter from Mr. Schilizzi asking him to act as area superintendent of Manfield Crippled Hospital and asking him to do something in Desborough in support of that institution. He had declined the honour of acting as area superintendent, because he felt he could not possibly discharge the duty, but he would like Desborough to do something to assist the funds of the Home, and had stated that when efforts for hospitals and other funds came along he would raise the matter.

Mrs. Bosworth stated that the fee of £2 18s. per week would be too large for poor people to send a child to the institution if all had to pay that sum.

Mr. Riley said that the hospital was out to do good, and if it was to do any good it must be democratic and help people who could not help themselves. That was no doubt the object of Mr. Manfield. He (Mr. Riley) was sore about the manner in which his letter was received when he sent a bequest.

Mr. Cox said there was not much hope of help from their hospital funds for this institution unless benefits could be received by poor people who were in need of them.

Mr. Cox stated that they were constantly receiving complaints about children playing near the Memorial and doing damage. If the Press would kindly mention the matter it might put a stop to it.

Mr. Riley said they had a very good sale of crops, which realised £150. They found they needed this when they came to the Hospital Board contribution. The Chairman said that the amount they were called upon to pay was £190 – £40 above this Council's estimate, in addition to £105 for the treatment of smallpox patients. Mr. Riley observed that they had £134 in the bank, and were signing cheques for £615. He hoped they would remember that when he pressed for a working balance.

BURIAL FEES

Mr. Riley suggested that they consider the question of burial fees. The Church Councils

might be sounded on the question as to whether some guidance could be given in this direction. A minister who performs a duty should be entitled to something. In other places fees were fixed, and he thought the question should be considered in the interests of ministers. Another question for consideration was the use of the hearse and a man's time. One matter he had some diffidence in bringing forward was that of double graves. In many areas where the space was getting confined the system was adopted of burying two or more persons in one grave. The question of space would soon have to be dealt with.

Mr. Cox said it appeared that Mr. Riley was advocating that certain fees be charged. Would it be wise for the Council to give a guidance as to ministers' fees? Mr. Riley said that the question of minister's fees was purely his own idea. On the question of the hearse he was speaking for the committee. Mr. Fisher asked whether the hearse was used only for interments in the Cemetery.

The Chairman: It is sometimes taken to the Churchyard.

The Chairman expressed sympathy with Messrs. Palmer and Cox in their bereavement – the death of their grandchild – and the Council rose in testimony to their feelings.

The Chairman sealed a mortgage with the Desborough Industrial and Provident Co-operative Society, Ltd., to secure the repayment of a loan of £1,080.

A plan for a house in Pioneer Avenue for Mr. Tortoiseshell was approved, and a certificate of qualification for subsidy was issued. The Council also approved of an amended plan for a house in Pioneer Avenue for Mr. G. Coe.

A question had been raised at a meeting of the Streets and Buildings Committee respecting that portion of Lower King Street not yet taken over by the Council. The committee recommended that the Co-operative Society be written to asking whether they will complete the making up of Lower King Street in front of their cottages, on the understanding that on completion the Council will take over the future maintenance of this street.

It was reported at a meeting of the Streets and Buildings Committee that the whole of the lamps have now been fitted with automatic controllers, and that all lamps "had come under the new arrangement with the Gas Co."

The Clerk reported that the Temporary Order under the Infectious Disease Notification Act, 1889, making chickenpox a notifiable disease, had expired. The Medical Officer had suggested the advisability of extending the time for a further period of three months. The Medical Officer's suggestion was adopted by the Council.

There were present: Mr. S. J. B. Barnes, J.P. (chairman), Mr. F. T. Riley (vice-chairman), Mrs. Bosworth, Messrs. W. A.

Cox, H. Dean, R. Ginns, R. G. Marlow, H. Burditt, M.C., F. T. Fisher, Addin Tyldesley (clerk), and Mr. Harris (surveyor and inspector).



DESBOROUGH NOTES

BY 'THE TATLER'

LEAGUE OF NATIONS – Last week's League of Nations meeting showed that there is a very lively interest in Desborough in the work of the League. Considering that the local branch of the League of Nations Union was formed less than a year ago, the present membership of about 130 can be considered quite satisfactory. That the branch is still increasing in size is partly due, no doubt, to the fact that it has at its head two enthusiasts like Mr. A. E. Elkington, C.C., the president, and Mr. F. Grudgings, the hon. secretary. The committee meetings that are held from time to time are invariably full ones, and they accomplish much work that should have the effect of spreading the League gospel in the district. I understand that a whist drive has been arranged for the purpose of raising funds for the branch, and also that several public meetings like the one last week will be held in Desborough during the winter.

Although the membership of the branch, taking into account how short a time it has existed, is satisfactory when one considers the position of some neighbouring branches, the total of 130 out of the whole population of the town does seem a small one. The apathy of the general public towards the League of Nations is, of course, not merely local: all branches suffer through it. The thing is a little too abstract for the majority of people to take any immediate and practical interest in. People approve of it in a general and rather vague way but stir themselves no further than that. Yet such vague approval will not by itself establish the principle that the League stands for. There is work to be done, and in England that work is being done by the League of Nations Union. Real supporters of the League should join the Union and help in the work. Much in this, as in other things, depends upon propaganda, and I am glad to note that the Working Men's Club is a corporate member of the Union, and takes League literature which is placed in the club reading room, and so helps to advance the cause among its own members.

MEMORIAL PANEL – I shall be excused, I think, for jumping straight from the League of Nations to the subject of a War Memorial, for our War Memorials are, in one sense, silent propagandists on behalf of the League.

The memorial panel in the Church School to former pupils who fell in the Great War was unveiled by the Vicar, appropriately enough, on Armistice Day. It was given by Captain Burditt, and the names on it were inscribed by Mrs. Rochester. If any names of former scholars who were killed have been omitted from the panel, Mr. R. Ginns, the headmaster, hopes that relatives will notify him of the fact, so that they can be added. He tells me, also, that he will be pleased to welcome anyone who desires to inspect the panel.

CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOLROOMS

– I understand that the new Congregational schoolrooms are now nearly completed. Entirely re-planned and re-constructed out of the old chapel and schools, the new building will be a fine structure, with new and up-to-date lighting and heating apparatus. The building, I hear, is to be formally opened in a fortnight's time, and I have no doubt there will be a large and interested gathering at the ceremony, which is to wind up with a concert which Mr. C. Tailby's concert party have kindly arranged to give.

BILLIARDS VICTORY – The Kettering Rifle Band billiards' team, undoubtedly one of the strongest combinations of three club players in the county, had a shock last Saturday at Desborough. Consisting of "Twinny" Patrick, the champion of Kettering, Althorpe, a past champion, and Pamplin, one of the best of Kettering's younger players, the team no doubt anticipated a comfortable victory over the Working Men's Club team in the Clubs' County League. The shock was as follows:- A. Freer (Desborough) 191, Pamplin (Kettering) 200; W. Smith 200, Althorpe 134; A. Stratford 200, Patrick 189 – totals, Desborough 591, Kettering 523. It was a splendid victory for the Desborough men, who have now won three of their four games in the competition, the Kettering Working Men's Club, as well as the Rifle Band Club, being among their victims.

MAKING WAR DIFFICULT

LEAGUE OF NATIONS MEETING AT DESBOROUGH

A well-attended meeting under the auspices of the League of Nations Union was held on Thursday week, in the Baptist Schoolroom, Desborough, the chief speaker being Captain A. E. W. Thomas (overseas secretary of the Union). The chairman of the branch, Mr. A. E. Elkington C.C., was supported on the platform by Captain Thomas, Miss Schilizzi (secretary of the county organisation of the League of Nations Unions), Councillor S. J. B. Barnes, J.P. (chairman of the Urban Council), and Councillor R. G. Marlow.

Mr. Elkington said this was the third public meeting of the branch, and perhaps this meeting could not have been held in more fitting week than Armistice week. If

Rip Van Winkle had gone to sleep and had wakened up at the seventh anniversary of the Armistice, he would have thought some remarkable things had happened, and the most remarkable the setting up of the League of Nations.

Captain Thomas, who had a splendid reception, said the League had two ways of making war as difficult as possible - by substituting co-operation for armaments, and by open and above-board relationships instead of secret treaties.

There were 55 nations in the League, representing three quarters of the population of the world. This year the Assembly was presided over by a French-Canadian, which was a compliment to the British Empire. There were 30 or 40 organisations similar to the League of Nations in other countries, all in an International Society, in which we also were included, and all were striving against war. The happiness of our children's children would depend upon the League of Nations.

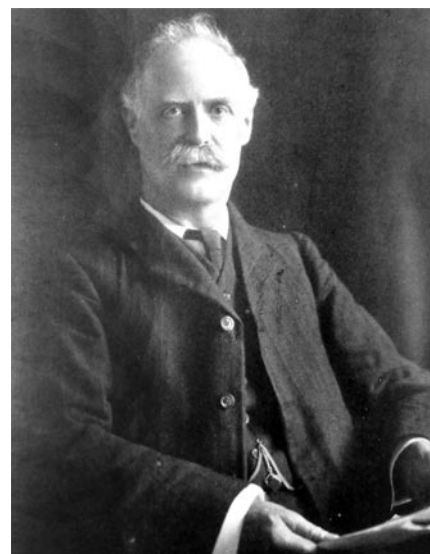
Miss Schilizzi, of Guilsborough Court, the secretary for the county organisation of the League of Nations' Union, followed with an admirable address, appealing first of all for enthusiastic propagation of the principles of the Union. The county organisation had only been formed about a year ago and was composed of 16 branches.

A hearty vote of thanks to the speakers was moved by Councillor Barnes and Councillor Marlow.



DESBOROUGH NOTES

BY 'THE TATLER'



Although the late Mr. George Marlow had at one time or another been actively engaged in public affairs – he was one of the members

of Desborough's first Urban Council – and in various matters on behalf of the local Wesleyan Church, he will be chiefly remembered as an almost lifelong worker in the Co-operative Movement, and as the president for over 30 years of the Desborough Society. It is a noteworthy fact that the first £10 he ever saved in his life was lent to the Society when it was a young and struggling organisation. How different is the position now from what it was then! Now the Society is in a sound and influential position, and, although the credit for this cannot possibly be assigned to any one man, I do not think anyone will dispute the statement that Mr. George Marlow's work and enthusiasm have been a considerable factor in the attaining of that position.

Apart from anything that he was able willingly to do for his Society, his Church, or his town, Mr. Marlow will be missed for what he was himself, a man of pleasant disposition who gained respect and affection from all his acquaintances, and who could retain that respect that affection through all disputes and contentions. In the Society's Jubilee Souvenir of a dozen years ago the late Mr. R. M. Sanders had an appreciation of Mr. Marlow, in the course of which he said: "The writer of this article has had many 'stacks up' with the President, but they have never impaired our friendship. Mr. Marlow's earnest endeavour is to live and work that he will leave the world just a wee bit better than he found it." That last sentence, written by a man who has now himself passed on, might serve as a fitting epitaph now that Mr. Marlow has followed him.

"You might ask," - A Desborough man said to me the other day, why Desborough is so short of work while Rothwell is on full time. "Well, I've asked the question a number of times before, but I don't in the least mind asking it again, for it presents a problem that has puzzled me as well as others. Of one thing I am certain: it isn't a matter of the quality of the boots produced

in Desborough, where the workmanship is as good as in any town turning out similar lines of footwear. Yet there must be some reason for the fact that, while Rothwell is on full-time, Desborough is, roughly speaking on only about half-time, with an occasional factory actually doing not more than 14 or 16 hours a week. The general slackness in the boot trade will account for an all-round shortness of work - but between two towns of about the same size, engaged on about the same kind of work, and only about a couple of miles apart. Well, what's the answer?

Christmas, I am afraid, will not be extraordinarily merry for some people in view of the present state of things. It is not as if we were experiencing at the moment a merely temporary slackness. We have been slack for many months, and the slight improvement that has come to other centres in the trade has passed us by. One gentleman who has lived in Desborough a good number of years told me that he cannot remember the position being worse. I daresay I shall be criticised for calling attention so pointedly to the fact. "Crying stinking fish" some people may say. That, in my opinion, is not the point. The point is that once a satisfactory answer is found to the question at the beginning of the last paragraph, once whatever shortcoming there may be is actually located, then we shall be able to do something to alter the position. If, that is, any shortcoming of ours is responsible for the position.

BIBLE SOCIETY – Somebody has asked me to "ginger up" Desborough concerning its interest in the British and Foreign Bible Society. I am told that the members of the Churches do not give the attention to the Society and its operations that it merits. All I can say is that those who read of the efforts of this Society will find that it is doing a tremendous and marvelous work in the spread of the Scriptures throughout the world, in many different languages, and that it has been a great help to missionary societies. It is undenominational and well deserves the hearty support of all Christian people.

TEMPERANCE INSTITUTE – A strenuous effort is, I am told, being made to make the Temperance Institute more enjoyable and attractive, and I hope that those who have the matter in hand will succeed. There is plenty of room for such an organisation in Desborough, which does not seem to cater very much for its young people, either in the summer or winter evenings, judging by the number who roam aimlessly about the streets with nothing better to do.

STREET REPAIRS COMPLETED – Talking of the streets, I am reminded of the recently completed repairing of

High Street and Rothwell Road. This work hung about for some time, and was a source of inconvenience, especially to motor transport, while it was being done, but now that it actually is done there can be no doubt that an immense improvement has been effected. It was, moreover, one that has long been required, and, in conjunction with the footpath improvement, it will make the chief parts of the town rather more comfortable to walk about during the week and slush of the winter nights.

MANY WINNERS – At the International Poultry Show, at the Crystal Palace, Mr. Ewart Marlow won a first, two seconds, and two fourths with Old English Game Bantams, and a first, third and fourth with White Leghorns.

Burials in Desborough Cemetery – November 1925

COE, Emmanuel – Farm labourer aged 80 years. Died at 71 Paddock Lane, Desborough and was buried on 1st November 1925; Rev. S. Iles officiated.

GEORGE, Arthur – Shoe hand aged 48 years. Died at 19 Harrington Road, Desborough and was buried on 10th November 1925; Rev. J. Richards officiated.

ROBINSON, William – Son of William Robinson aged 6 days. Died at 25 King Street, Desborough and was buried on 13th November 1925.

IRONS – Stillborn child of Percy Irons. Died at Gold Street, Desborough and was buried on 14th November 1925.

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THE HISTORY OF RAF DESBOROUGH

By Kevin Dopson

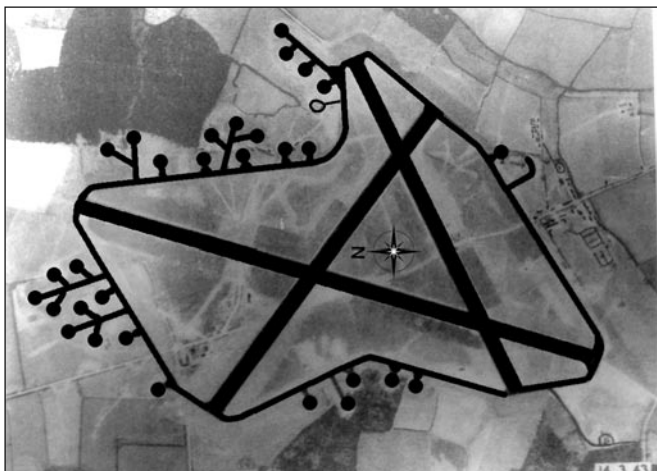
The Context of Airfield Construction Programme

After winning the Battle of Britain the RAF's focus turned to night bombing of Germany. At first strategic targets such as factories and railway lines were bombed but at the time navigation was very inaccurate and the majority of bombs failed to hit the target. Later the policy of carpet bombing was introduced where areas rather than specific locations were the main target. The intention was to disrupt production of equipment required for the Nazi war effort and to demoralise the civilian population. It was thought this could bring the war to an end without the need for an invasion of Europe.

To achieve this, new airfields were required. Of the 158 RAF Airfields that existed in 1939 most were grass and only 9 had concrete runways. It was decided that the eastern side of the country; Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and East Anglia, were to be the location of operational airfields as these were closest to Germany and occupied Europe. Operational training units were to be located in the Midlands as these were a little further away from potential air attacks.

There was a need for big heavy bombers with 4 engines to enable targets such as Berlin to be bombed. Grass airfields were not suitable for sustained use by the larger aircraft. The latest aircraft weighed 70,000 lbs and exerted a force of 50 lb per ft² as opposed to 15 lb per ft² for WW1 aircraft. Therefore, paved runways, taxiways and dispersals were needed.

The number of airfields grew dramatically during the war and in 1940 there were 229 and this rose to 623 by 1944 of which 133 were occupied by American forces. Airfield construction reached a peak in 1942 with a new airfield being started every 3 days. Building airfields was the largest construction programme in British history and employed a labour force of 60,000. The amount of material consumed in the airfield construction programme could have made a 9000 mile, 30-foot-wide road reaching from London to Beijing. Some of the hardcore was sourced from rubble produced by the Blitz. One million prefabricated buildings were erected to provide workshop, technical, training and accommodation facilities. The cost of building an airfield was £550k at the start of the war, this had risen to £1m towards the end of the war.



RAF Desborough's standard A class layout

The Development of the Desborough airfield

Approval for land acquisition for RAF Desborough was given in July 1941 and the airfield was originally to be used as an operational bomber airfield. It was first allocated to the American 8th Air Force in June 1942 but this decision was rescinded two months later.

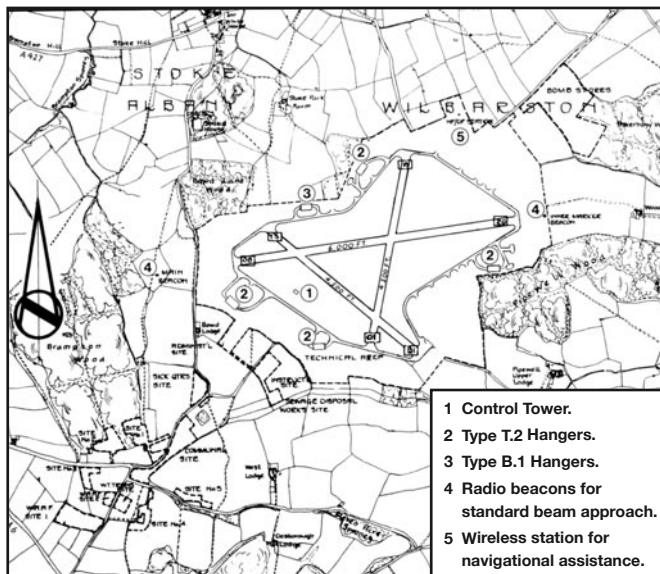
Work was started by Tarmac Ltd to build the airfield in late 1942 and work was completed in Summer 1943. Two roads, York and Rushton Roads, were closed during construction and never reinstated. The runway layout follows the Heavy Bomber triangular layout known as a Standard A Class airfield because from above it looks like the capital letter A.

The main runway was 2,000 yards long with two secondary runways of 1,400 yards each being 50 yards wide. The main runway is aligned to the prevailing wind and had lighting. There were 29 dispersal hard standings of the frying pan type each with a 125 – 150 ft circle. These were located around the perimeter track and none of them remain today. This is where aircraft were parked, dispatched and where routine maintenance was carried out. The perimeter track was 50 ft wide and is about 3 miles in length.



Part of the perimeter track showing some of the frying pan dispersals. The bomb dump is located at the bottom and the road from Wilbarston is in the top right.

Desborough Airfield Plan



There were 5 Hangers sited around the airfield of which 4 were type T2 and 1 was a type B1 hanger. Aircraft were only brought into them to carry out major overhauls such as engine changes.



The airfield showing the domestic area on the left, the iron ore quarry at West Lodge Farm in the right corner. The technical, administrative and instructional sites are shown in the centre of the photograph.

Bombs were stored in the bomb dump which was situated in a remote area to the north east of the airfield in Askershaw Wood away from the rest of the camp.

RAF Desborough was known as an austerity or temporary airfield and it included seven dispersed sites for domestic accommodation (two of which were for WAAFs), communal sites and sick quarters which were situated to the south west of the airfield. These sites were situated at Dobbs Hall where a number of industrial units, including Albany Aggregates, are now located.

A survey of WW2 airfields was carried out by Historic England in

2016 and, at 40%, Desborough had the highest percentage of buildings still standing of all 444 sites covered in the report. These buildings were well dispersed as a precaution against air raids. This was a requirement demanded by the Americans. British airfields tended to have the domestic sites located much closer to the airfield. The airfield had services for electricity, sewage and water. There were 2,000 military personnel living and working on the site.



Some of the surviving accommodation buildings

The Airfield in Use

The airfield was opened on 1st August 1943 as part of the RAF's No 92 Group commanded by AVM H K Thorold. On September 1st 1943, No 84 Operational Training Unit (OTU) was formed with an establishment of 54 Vickers Wellingtons (some Mark IIIs but later Mark X's) to train night bomber crews. It was one of 26 OTUs in operation and all but one operated Wellingtons.



Wellingtons were known as heavy bombers along with Harrows, Hampdens and Whiteleys but became regarded as medium bombers when they were superseded by heavier bombers, such as the Lancaster, later in the war.

Up to mid-1943 the Wellingtons used by the OTUs tended to be mostly war-weary aircraft that had been transferred out of operational squadrons and were more prone to engine failures and other defects.

Group Captain G Lowe was appointed as the unit's commander and remained in charge for its whole existence. Grp Capt Lowe had to make the arrangements for RAF Harrington's high profile opening for the American "Carpetbagging Operations" on 6th November 1943. The opening was marked by a fly-past of 3 of Desborough's Wellingtons. From November 1943 to March 1944 Harrington was used as RAF Desborough's standby airfield, known as a satellite airfield.

As RAF Desborough had a satellite airfield, it was classed as 1 unit. When RAF Harrington was eventually transferred to the Americans,

the OTU was reduced to ¾ of a unit as there was no replacement satellite airfield available. This reclassification to ¾ of a unit resulted in the reduction of the number of aircraft allocated to the OTU from 54 to 40.

Flying Operations

The OTU was just one stage in preparing aircrew for operations and the role of the OTU was to bond aircrew together as a team and give them operational training. Trained aircrew were required to replace the pre-war generation of aircrew who had been killed, promoted to non-operational roles or had been captured. Training at RAF Desborough was carried out for aircrew who were to carry out night operations over Germany and occupied Europe.

Aircrew came from the UK, Canada, NZ and Australia and every 2 weeks 11 sets of pilots, navigators/bomb aimers, wireless operators, observer/nose gunners, and tail gunners were posted in to form crews.

At the outset of the OTUs in May 1940 students were expected to complete a minimum of 55 flying hours of which at least 22 were to be at night. By 1941 due to pressure to produce trained aircrew this had reduced to 30 hours to take account of aircrew losses and the formation of new squadrons. But due to poor weather and the urgent need for replacement aircrew this was often reduced to 15 hours!

Early in 1942 the minimum was subsequently set at 45 hours and this was further increased to an average of 80 hours doubling the training programme in almost 2 years.

A strict regime was imposed during the 10-week course but aircraft serviceability had a serious impact as, on average, just 60% were serviceable at one time.

Loss of flying hours due to damaged aircraft and wasting valuable air time by, for instance, landing at another airfield at night were considered heinous crimes.

There were frequent taxiing accidents as aircraft moved from dispersal sites around the poorly lit airfield.

During 1943 No 92 Group trained over 2,160 crews and had flown 23,000 hours which averages out at 310 crews per OTU. During the same period there was one accident for every 440 flying hours. Some courses lost as many as 25% of their trainees before graduation. Wellingtons were not used operationally for bombing from early 1943 so OTUs were being supplied with new aircraft from then and the serviceability record improved accordingly.

The newly trained crews were then posted onto Heavy Conversion Units to train on heavy bombers which would be either Lancaster's, Halifax's or Stirling's which had a crew of 7 so a flight engineer and additional air gunner would join the crew at this time.

Miles Martinet aircraft were used for target towing to enable air gunners to be trained. One was lost at Desborough on 1st March 1944 due to engine failure rather than inaccurate firing at the target!

The last course started in April 1945 and was cancelled in June 1945, without finishing, when the OTU was disbanded. In all there had been 38 courses and over 410 crews had been trained in less than 2 years.

Flying Accidents

During the war there were 125,000 aircrew in Bomber Command. Of these, 55,573 died and of those 5,723 were killed in training and 3,113 were seriously injured. The average age of Bomber Command aircrew was 22 years and this inexperience, plus the age and condition of the aircraft used in training, accounts for these high numbers.

During the War 430 aircraft crashes were recorded in Northamptonshire, factors included inexperience, battle weary aircraft, navigation errors, weather and a few were due to encounters with the enemy. There were 17 aircraft accidents recorded at Desborough during the war and 35 fatalities. One of the first was an American Tomahawk fighter from Bruntingthorpe and the last was a Hurricane. In both cases the pilots were distracted and collided with vehicles on the ground.



The crew of the fatal crash of Wellington HF570 at Desborough.

AIRMAN SEARCH: Anthony Miller, of Sydney, has sent in this picture of a Second World War aircrew which includes a Toowoomba man Terry O'Neill (front, left). Mr Miller, who is researching Australia's involvement in the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command, is looking for relatives/friends/descendants of Mr O'Neill who was born on 5th October, 1924. He was the son of Francis Joseph O'Neill and lived at 8 Clifford Street. Terry (first names Terence Francis) enlisted in the RAAF on 29th January, 1943, at Brisbane and was posted to 84 Operational Training Unit at RAF Desborough on 27th June, 1944, flying Wellingtons. Terry survived the crash of Wellington HF 570 on 5th September, 1944, piloted by Plt Officer R. E. Byrne (Mr Miller's uncle). PO Byrne, of Sydney, was killed in the crash. Terry married Stella Doyal in London on 23rd June, 1945. He finished his service flying on Lancasters and was discharged on 5th April, 1946 and returned to Toowoomba. Stella passed away in the 1950s and Terry remarried. He died in 1987. Contact Anthony Miller on milerian@optusnet.com.au.



The Memorial that now marks the spot where the aircraft crashed.

IN MEMORY OF
PILOT OFFICER R.E. BYRNE (RAAF)
SERGEANT W.J. BARNETT (RAFVR)
SERGEANT E. BRISBOURNE (RAFVR)
WHO DIED NEAR THIS SPOT IN THE CRASH OF
WELLINGTON BOMBER HF570
ON THE 5TH OF SEPTEMBER 1944
AND OF THEIR UNSELFISH, GALLANT SACRIFICE
IN THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM.
THESE MEN WERE MEMBERS OF BOMBER COMMAND,
84 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT
BASED AT RAF DESBOROUGH.
WE ALSO RECOGNISE THE SACRIFICE OF
OTHER AIRMEN WHO LOST THEIR LIVES
DURING TRAINING AT RAF DESBOROUGH

HISTORY OF DESBOROUGH AIRFIELD

Aircraft Accidents at RAF Desborough or involving aircraft from RAF Desborough

5th Jan 1944	Curtis Tomahawk crashed into a tractor
21st Jan 1944	Engine failure and crashed in a wood near Geddington 3 crew died
27th Jan 1944	Crash near Arthingworth 5 killed
27th Jan 1944	On-board fire near Molesworth 6 killed
3rd Feb 1944	Stalled on landing at Worksop (full bomb load) 7 killed
10th Feb 1944	Overshot the runway a/c written off, no casualties
23rd Feb 1944	Engine failed in Wiltshire after a leaflet drop. Aircraft crash landed no casualties
1st Mar 1944	Miles Martinet crashed after engine failed, pilot injured
11th April 1944	Engine failure crashed at Glendon Road Rothwell 3 killed
19th July 1944	Take off aborted after hatch blew out, ran out of runway, no casualties
4th Sept 1944	A Wellington mark 10 crashed in Desborough on the corner of what is now Harrington Road and Green Lane on 5th September 1944. It was on a night navigation exercise starting at 21.10 and finishing at 02.05. It was making its final approach when the starboard engine failed and the aircraft crashed, there were 3 fatalities. The engine failure was thought to be due to the incorrect manipulation of the petrol cock.
13th Nov 1944	Engines misfired over Yorkshire, a/c hit pole and written off, no casualties
18th Nov 1944	Aircraft swung off the runway into another Wellington, pilot killed and a/c written off
5th Dec 1944	Aircraft lost over the North Sea and never found 7 killed
12th April 1945	Aircraft belly landed and burst into flames, no casualties
4th May 1945	Hurricane taxied into fuel bowser, undercarriage collapsed, no casualties

Post War Activities

In August 1945 there were just over 1m personnel in the RAF, 70k had been killed in action and 13k were held as PoWs. Hundreds of airfields became redundant at the end of the war and those that were retained were those that had been built in the 1930s during the expansion of the RAF and invariably had brick-built accommodation.

After the war RAF Desborough was used for landing and take-off practice by Dakotas of 107 OTU from Leicester Forest East. In November 1945 No 1381 (Transport) Conversion Unit moved in from Bramcote. It was established for 35 Dakotas to train transport pilots but initially used a mix of Wellingtons and Dakotas. After a year the TCU left for Dishforth in North Yorkshire.

Cadet gliders of No 108 Gliding School from Corby used the airfield from late 1945 for 4 years.

From May to November 1951 the airfield became a satellite for No 102 Flying Refresher School at North Luffenham. This was part of the panic expansion of flying training due to the Korean War. The school operated later mark Spitfires as well as Meteors and Vampires and it is thought that pilots made use of the runways at Desborough.

Later the hangars were used for the storage of Civil Defence equipment such as Green Goddess fire engines and is thought to include cardboard coffins to be used in the event of a nuclear attack.

The Airfield Today

Two of the five hangers survive. One was dismantled and one burnt down in 1979 and another in March 2025. 40% of the “temporary” buildings have survived on the dispersed site including the gymnasium. The airfield identifier, a concrete “DS” set into the ground, was renovated about 10 years ago. Some of the air-raised shelters still survive.

There was a proposal to build a Solar Farm on the airfield, and although plans were well advanced, it was never built. If it had gone ahead, it would have been the biggest solar farm in the country at that time.

The land is now used for agriculture. The two remaining hangars are used for storage and an area of the perimeter track is used to train large goods vehicle drivers. Local people use the airfield for walking, dog walking, cycling and running. It has previously been used for horse riding and motor sport.



A post war view of the airfield with the Stoke Albany – Desborough Road running along the bottom of the picture.

I THINK OF YOU

As I lay silent in the trench
Amongst the mud, the blood, the stench
I think of you

With shells and bullets flying overhead
My mates all around me lying dead
I think of you

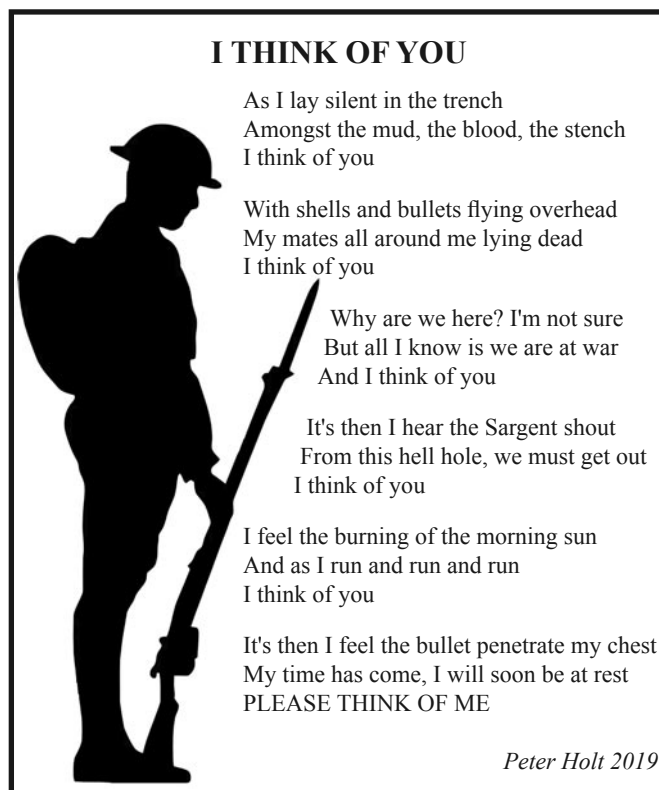
Why are we here? I'm not sure
But all I know is we are at war
And I think of you

It's then I hear the Sargent shout
From this hell hole, we must get out
I think of you

I feel the burning of the morning sun
And as I run and run and run
I think of you

It's then I feel the bullet penetrate my chest
My time has come, I will soon be at rest
PLEASE THINK OF ME

Peter Holt 2019





DOGS AND BONFIRE FIREWORKS

Fireworks can cause dogs significant anxiety and fear due to their sensitive hearing, leading to stress, panic, and potential injury. To help, keep dogs safely indoors, create a “den” for them, and use calming techniques like music and distractions. It’s crucial to never leave a dog outside or take them to displays and to ensure their ID and microchip information is up to date.

Why dogs are scared of fireworks

Loud noises: Dogs can hear frequencies and sounds at much greater distances than humans, making fireworks painful and frightening for them.

Unpredictability: The random and unpredictable nature of the bangs, flashes, and smells can trigger a dog’s fight-or-flight response.

Anxiety and phobia: These events can lead to a high level of stress, restlessness, panting, and, in some cases, panic that can result in them running away or injuring themselves.

Fight-or-flight response: The noise and unpredictability can trigger a fear response, causing a dog to bark, hide, or try to escape.

How to help your dog during fireworks

Keep them inside: Always keep your dog indoors with you when fireworks are being let off.

Create a safe space: Prepare a “den” in a quiet area of the house where your dog feels secure, such as under a bed. Allow them to hide there if they choose.

Block out the noise and light: Close windows and curtains to minimize the visual and auditory impact of the fireworks. You can also turn on the TV or play music to help mask the sounds.

Stay calm: Dogs can sense your anxiety, so try to act normally. If your dog seeks comfort, provide it calmly, but avoid punishing them for fearful behavior.

Prepare in advance: Take your dog for a walk earlier in the day. Make sure they have been fed and have had a chance to relieve themselves before the fireworks start.

Ensure ID is up to date: Make sure your dog is wearing an ID tag and is microchipped with your current contact details in case they do escape.

Use calming products: Consider using pheromone diffusers, collars, or sprays, which can help some dogs feel calmer.

Distract them: If your dog isn’t showing signs of panic, try to keep them busy with their favorite toys or games.

Consult your vet: If your dog has a severe phobia, talk to your veterinarian about long-term solutions and potentially prescription medication.

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOCAL AREA



Picture of Saxon Park from a drone flying from Straight Furlong - August 2025



Picture of The Wickets and Weaver's Fields taken from a microlight in September 2024.

Desborough Family History Group

Desborough On Film

at the
HERITAGE CENTRE
Station Road, Desborough

on
Saturday 13th December
at 2.00 pm

Vintage films of Desborough to include:

PRODUCTION	Early Ironstone Quarrying
SCENE	Desborough Corset Factory in the 1930's
DATE	Carnivals in the 1950's and 60's
DIRECTOR	Desborough Home Guard
CAMERA	Fire at Howes Farm • Victory Marches and much more

Tickets £5 to include Tea/Coffee and mince pies

St Giles Church Desborough

Christmas Tree Festival 2025

Displays in Church Friday 28th November
3.30pm - 9.00pm

Saturday 29th November
10am - 6pm plus evening event £5

Carols under the Christmas trees
with seasonal refreshments 7.30pm

Sunday 30th November
11.30am - 5.30pm

Songs of praise
1.30pm - 6.00pm Sunday 30th November

Admission to see the trees £2.50 card payment accepted
OAP reduced charge £1.50 on Friday only 12 noon - 1.30pm
Community Centre has free entry, open same times as church for Café Noel, Produce and Gift packs, Gift Stall and Decorations, Tombola, Raffle and Books

Santa's Grotto
Friday 28th November 6.00pm - 8.00pm
and Saturday 29th November 1pm - 3pm £3

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Are you passionate about history and heritage?

Desborough Heritage Centre is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to join our team. This is a fantastic chance to immerse yourself in the rich history of our town, meet like-minded people, and contribute to our community.

No specific experience is required, just a love for history and a friendly, positive attitude. Training will be provided, and you'll be part of a supportive and passionate team.

So, if you're looking for a rewarding way to give back to the community, we'd love to hear from you. Let's preserve and celebrate the rich history of Desborough together!

DESBOROUGH CIVIC SOCIETY

Registered Charity no 1086882

THE WOMEN'S LAND ARMY DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

By Helen Frost




Photo: By kind permission of Mrs Hilary Thomas.

Monday 24th November 2025
at
Desborough Heritage Centre
at 7.30pm

Admission £3 for members, £4 for non-members. Everyone welcome

The Desborough Civic Society wants more members. Are you interested? The aims of the Society are to: Encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Desborough; Stimulate public interest in and care for the history and character of the town and its surroundings; Encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or interest; Inspire a sense of civic pride. It is the Desborough Civic Society which runs Desborough Heritage Centre (free to visitors). See our website for full details of membership (£10 single p.a.).