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Local Walks

A stroll along 'The Street' - [PRINT THIS WALK](#)



The approaches to the village are marked at either end by wrought iron signs mounted on oak posts. Below each sign there is a commemorative plaque with the date when the signs were erected by the Albury Trust - 1982. The signs depict the "Pugin chimneys" which are immediately recognizable on several buildings in The Street. The chimneys are a hallmark of the village skyline and give a special flavour to the character of its architecture.

Just past the Albury sign on the road from Newlands Corner is the large walled garden of Weston House. In recent times this house was owned by the well-known naturalist and author, Dr. Maurice Burton, who lived there for many years and became a father figure in the village until his death in 1992 at the age of 94.

There is a tradition that a Saxon manor stood in what is now the garden of Weston House; certainly a Palladian house later stood on the site. That house was gutted by fire and rebuilt; the house we now know was built by Henry Drummond, who is said to have demolished the former building because he did not wish to have nearby such an imposing house to rival his own Albury Park Mansion!

A Tudor pigeon house stands in Weston Yard which was for centuries the farmyard of the Manor of Weston. It is probably the oldest building in the parish of Albury apart from the Saxon Church in Albury Park and is the only tangible reminder of the Manor. It is remarkable for being octagonal and brick-built, most pigeon houses being round and built of stone. It housed over 600 pigeons which were kept for their meat in winter and also for their droppings which were used as fertiliser and in the manufacture of gunpowder in the neighbouring village of Chilworth.

Work on restoring the pigeon house was put in hand in 1979, and the success of the whole project was due in large part to the determination and generosity of Dr. Burton who received an award from the Civic Trust in 1982 for the renovation. The pigeon house stands on private land belonging to the Albury Estate. Anyone wishing to visit it should seek permission from the Estate Office (Tel. 202323) at the entrance to Weston Yard.

Across the road is the Estate Fishery for trout fishing. Instruction is available and details can be had from the Estate Office.

The next building on the right is Albury Mill. As early as 1255 there was a mill powered by the Tillingbourne serving the Manor of Weston. It was timber-framed, but in 1830 a man named Warner was found guilty of burning it down. The conviction was challenged by Henry Drummond but nonetheless Warner was hanged and has the doubtful distinction of being the last man in England to suffer capital punishment for arson.

The present building was then erected incorporating a water turbine which powered rollers to produce very fine flour. It was operated for many years by C. A. Botting & Sons, , one of the last family millers in Britain. Milling was moved to Postford Lower Mill in 1910, at which time the mansion in Albury Park was illuminated by electricity produced by generators powered by the turbines in Albury Mill. The building later became a private house but it has since been developed as offices and laboratories.



Opposite the Mill is Albury House, now also used as offices. A house has stood on this site since the 13th Century and part of the existing house dates from the 17th Century. Two notable men, who between them spanned the 18th and 19th Centuries, owned it. One was the artist Anthony Devis, known locally as the Man Mushroom because he was the first person to be seen in the neighbourhood under an umbrella (in those days coloured white and used as a shield against the sun). The other owner was Martin Tupper, a prolific Victorian poet and, most famously, the author of *Proverbial Philosophy*. This became one of the most popular books of its time and was for many years a stock present for weddings and birthdays. It was translated into 25 languages and was much admired by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Martin Tupper also wrote many other books, one of which, *Stephen Langton* was especially popular. Such was his renown that before Lord Tennyson was made Poet Laureate, it was widely expected that Tupper would receive the appointment himself.

Midway along The Street is the Albury Hall and its car park. A wooden Millennium sculpture is on the riverbank behind the car park. Hard by the Hall is the Memorial Library which was built as a memorial to the men of Albury who served in the Second World War. It is no longer a lending library and is now used for small exhibitions and meetings.

The style of the Hall is typical of the early 19th Century. It was built on the last piece of glebe land in the parish, and was originally the village school with two classrooms said to provide for 70 boys and 80 girls! The school was moved in 1895 to a new building on land on Albury Heath given by the 7th Duke of Northumberland. It was closed in its turn in 1974.

The Hall is leased to the Village by the Albury Estate for use as a Village Hall. In 1982, after a bus had crashed into it, the main entrance was moved to the car-park side of the building where it still is, and in 1993 a completely refurbished building and car park were created to provide a new community room together with accommodation for business use in the rest of the building. The design and execution of this work was the result of close cooperation between the Albury Estate and the Parish and creates a central feature for the Village.

Next to the Albury Hall is the old Schoolmaster's s House and next to that a larger building divided into three houses notable for its chimneys. The house now called Not the Old Pharmacy used to be a



Post Office'.

haberdasher's, then a doctor's surgery and later a chemist. When it was sold in 1957, the new owners were not allowed to call their house The Old Pharmacy, so, ingeniously, they hit upon the present name. The front window, which is dated 1760 came from the Manor at Steventon, the village where Jane Austen was born. The central part of the building is known as Farriers Cottage - the brick building opposite having been the forge. On the wall of the forge, the family crest of the Northumberlands can be seen, carved in stone. The west end of the building used to be the village Post Office, hence its name 'the Old

Albury Game Angling occupies the site of the village garage on the ground floor, whilst the upper floor was originally the premises of an undertaker. Next to it was a beer shop with its own brewery. A hostelry next door, called the Running Horse, was demolished and replaced by the present inn, the Drummond Arms. This is now one of two hostelries in the parish, the other being the William IV in Little London.



Opposite the Drummond, Old Bakery Mews was built in 1980 on the site of a bakery. The local baker, George King, used to bake by day and deliver bread around the district late into the night. What a sad reflection on today that as recently as the 1970s, residents were quite happy to leave their houses unlocked at night so that the baker could leave his fresh bread for them inside the house while they slept!

Whitcroft, adjacent to the old bakery, was originally the village butcher's shop. March Cottage over the road was a men's tailor, and later a dairy, next-door to Forge Cottages, an erstwhile smithy. So the centre of the village

up to the 1960s boasted much trade and activity. Now there remains only the Post Office in a village which once supported a Butcher, Baker, Haberdasher, Chemist, Garage, Dairy, Men's Tailor, Photographer, Grocer, Blacksmith, and Undertaker.

In 1811 the Rector of Albury instituted a May Day Fair and he gave a maypole which was set up of the bottom of Church Lane. Today a signpost stands here on what must be one of the smallest village greens in the country. There is room for little else except the signpost! But it is a handsome feature



restored by the Albury Trust in 1983, albeit without the lantern that formerly capped its post and was lit every evening by a lamplighter. Further restoration took place in 2000.

On your left, as you leave the centre of the Village, lies Weston Farm which now comprises several small businesses after it was restored and refurbished by the Albury Estate in the 1990's.

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