



Nostalgia

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The parish of Funtington and some of the history of the area

Changing Times

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The parish of Funtington includes West Ashling, East Ashling and West Stoke within its bounds. The Ashlings and West Stoke are near springs and streams emerging from the chalk on the sheltered side of the Downs.

Their names have a Saxon origin. Funtington relates to the settlement of the dwellers by the funta or stream, Ashling or Aescelingas to the people of Aescal, and Stoke or Stoc to the gathering place of stock, or, perhaps people.

The hamlets of Funtington were 'tythings' of the Manor of Bosham in Domesday, except West Stoke that was separate in the Hundred of Benestede in a different manor. Being part of Bosham, villagers were expected to make the three-mile walk to attend church there. By 1200, a Chapel of Ease was built in Funtington, this later became St Mary's Church.

In the churchyard are two notable graves, one of Richard Churcher, founder of Churcher's College, Petersfield, and the other of Provo William Parry Wallis, a boy from Halifax who was entered on the Naval Roll by his parents when he was just four. He had a distinguished naval career rising to Admiral of the Fleet. He died at Funtington House aged 100 in 1892. The house later became a Radar Training

School during World War Two. To the south of the parish was the advanced landing ground of RAF Funtington.

The Grade II listed village pub, the Fox and Hounds, dates back to the mid-17th century. It was run by George Weston until 1958 when it was taken over by Mr and Mrs Rowland, who provided a bed and breakfast service. Up to the 1970s, before traffic became too dangerous, the Hunt with hounds would regularly meet there. On either side of the pub are an old stable block and a forge. In 2012 planning consent was granted to convert the disused stables into a shop, as the Country Fare store had closed the previous year.

Both East and West Ashling have their own village pubs – the Horse and Groom at East Ashling, which dates to 1758, and the Richmond Arms at West Ashling, which dates to about 1780.

West Ashling was also home to a 17th century corn mill. The site is currently occupied by a brick building built in 1825, known as Hacketts Mill. It was one of only six paper mills in Sussex. By 1850 the mill had closed. It later reopened but was converted to a corn and flour mill. As water levels were unreliable, a windmill was erected, which kept it in use until World War One.

West Stoke is located in an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB). Immediately north of Stoke Clump lies a prehistoric flint mine. Three of the pits were excavated during the early 20th century. These excavations revealed that the flint mines survived to a depth of up to 4.5m.



The village is home to St Andrew's Church, dating from the 11th century. During renovations in 1990 fragments of wall paintings dating to around 1200 were discovered and restored.

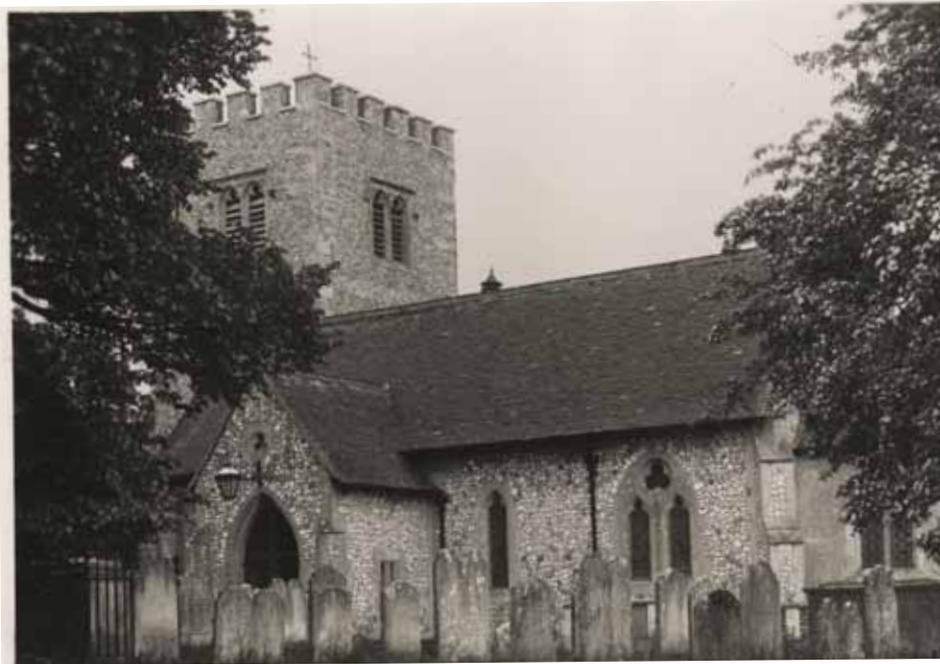
West Stoke also has its own village hall. In around 1820, the 5th Duke of Richmond bequeathed the hall to the village to be used as a school for local children.

In 1903 a document was signed by the then Duke, which stated that if the school ceased to exist, which it did in

**Print of West Stoke House,
 18th to 19th century**

1922, the building should be used for the good of the community.

The 2nd Duke of Richmond had ties with the village having purchased West Stoke House, which his son Lord George Lennox lived in in the late 1700s. In 1913 the 7th Duke of Richmond sold the property. In 2000 the property was purchased by the Leach family home. In 2003 eight guestrooms were opened at the property. Later it evolved to include a restaurant, gaining its first Michelin Star in 2008. It sadly closed in 2010.



Funtington Church in 1939



West Ashling Mill, date unknown