

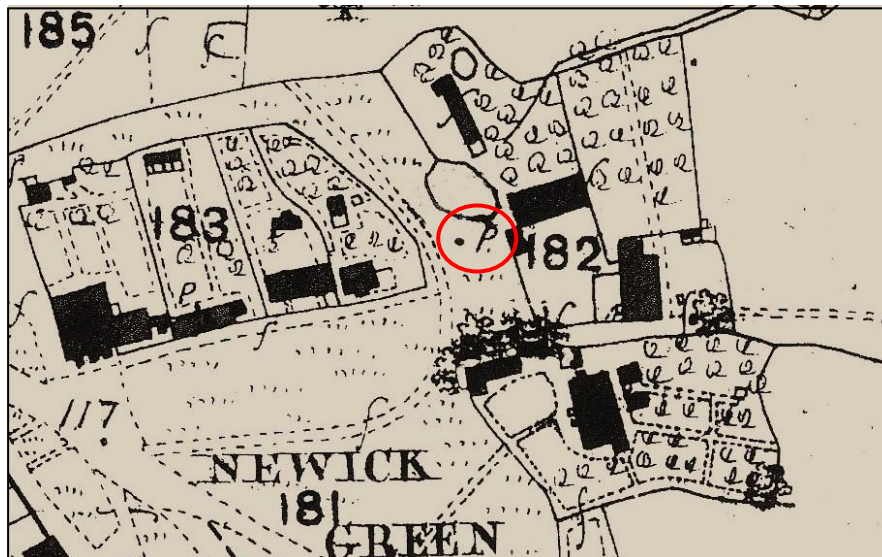
THE VILLAGE PUMP, NEWICK, SUSSEX



Postcard photograph about 1911-1916

The Village Pump at Newick

The residents of Newick village used to obtain their drinking water from their own wells or shared wells or from the spring by the northern corner of the village green. A pump was provided at that spring in about the 1840's by J Hurdis. When the pump was damaged by youths he had it repaired at his own expense. Below is an extract from the 1875 Ordnance Survey map showing the village green and a 'P' marking the site of the old pump (also shown here with a red circle). A group of adjacent trees on the original map has been deleted on this extract for clarity.



1875 Ordnance Survey map extract

Later, a runaway horse and cart, belonging to Mr Drawbridge of Scaynes Hill, knocked over and smashed the pump. It was not replaced until many years after, although the spring always remained available for use by the public.

For the Queen Victoria jubilee celebration in 1887 (50 years on the throne) consideration was given to providing a new pump on the village green. The idea was strongly advocated by W H Hallett and G Wood. However, it was not pursued further, although there was plenty of other celebration in the village.

The Queen's next jubilee in 1897, to celebrate 60 years on the throne, brought forward various suggestions on how to celebrate the event. The village considered gas

lamps or a free bed at the cottage hospital etc, but the favoured choice was the erection of a new pump in the middle of the village green. Below is a photograph of the village green taken before the pump had been erected.



The green in about 1897

The proposed design for the pump was very much a joint effort by the people of the village. The overall shape and design was by the Newick artist Percy Gravelly. He also designed the metal spout representing a lion's head. Percy Freeland, from the shop on the green, designed the metal letters and figures on the cap stone at the top. The village doctor Richard Gravelly designed the handle to represent a lion's tail. On the front of the pump were the metal dedication plate and a crown above it. An aluminium cup was provided on a chain for drinking. P H Hare designed the water-flow arrangement with the horse trough and a dog trough.

The internal pump mechanism was provided by E H and R Fuller, the village plumbers. The 22 feet deep well was provided by the Wood brothers. The external metalwork was completed in 'gun metal' by J Every from the Phoenix Iron Works, Lewes. The stonework was by C F Bridgman from Lewes. J Grainger was involved with kerbing and foundations.

The total works were co-ordinated by a committee comprising Richard Gravelly, Alfred Tidy, William Freeland, Wood Wood, and P H Hare.

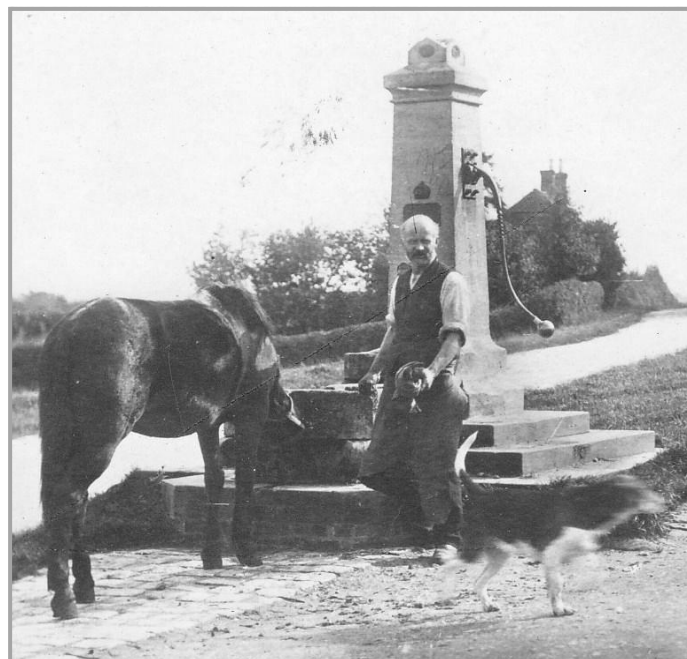
There was an unfortunate delay in building the pump and the well because of, as stated in the newspaper, 'village rights, common rights, water rights, vested rights, uprights and downrights' ! Indeed, it was not built in the jubilee year but a year later in

1898. The inauguration ceremony was in July, performed by Mrs Clement Powell, wife of the rector, with the assembled dignitaries and those responsible for the construction. The photograph below shows the inauguration event. Every person in the picture has a hat. The ladies sampled the water which was declared of excellent quality.



The inauguration ceremony in July 1898

The postcard photograph below, probably taken in about 1906 or before, shows the the village blacksmith by the pump. The horse is on a hard-standing.



Postcard photograph taken in about 1906 or before

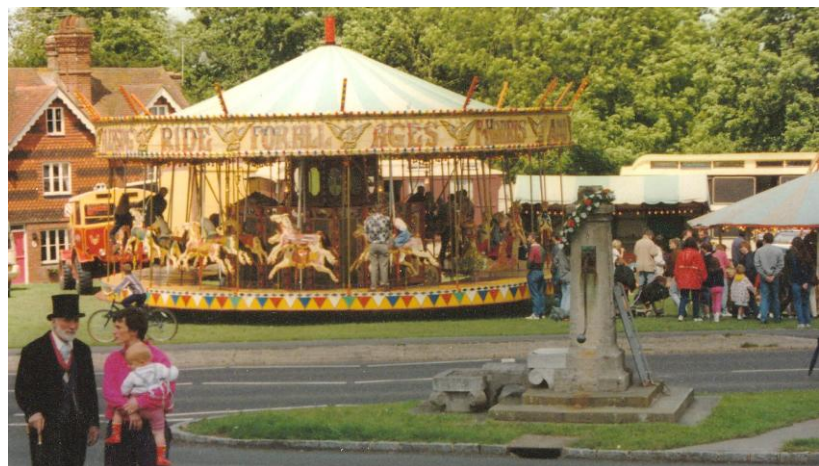
In 1907 another plaque was added on the front, above the commemoration plate and the crown, showing that the pump was not to be used for filling steam engines. The filling of the large boiler of a traction engine could have emptied the well. This additional plaque is useful for the dating of old photographs.

Below is a postcard photograph taken after the additional plaque had been provided. It can be seen that part of the shaft of the pump handle has a 'barley twist' decoration, so the present handle (with no such decoration) is a replacement.



Postcard photograph probably taken about 1907-1910

Over many years the repair and maintenance of the pump has regularly exercised the minds of Parish Council members. It was declared a listed building of architectural and historic interest in 1952. In 1997 there was a centenary commemoration held including a funfair on the green and a garland hung over the top of the pump.



The pump centenary celebration 1997

The photographs below were taken in November 2010 when a couple of brackets on the fulcrum plate needed to be replaced. The metal brackets were made at the Bluebell Railway workshops at Sheffield Park railway station. The interior of the pump is shown, including some of the now unused and disconnected internal mechanism, and also revealing grooves of the original stone masons work.



Repair works to the pump in 2010

Former Newick resident Roland Reynolds explained to the authors of the book *A272 An Ode to a Road* about the pump.... 'The working mechanism is located on a ledge down the well shaft. To get to it, two men (one of small stature) enter a man-hole a few feet away and crawl along a short tunnel. The smaller man stands in a rope loop and is lowered down the shaft. He disconnects the pump which is pulled up to be worked on, on the surface. The reverse manoeuvre is carried out to reinstall it'

The pump still remains a prominent and well-loved feature of the village, even though it is no longer in use for pumping water.

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Information sources:

1875 Ordnance Survey map

Reports on the pump and the inauguration ceremony appeared in the local newspapers *East Sussex News* and *Sussex Express* in 1897 and 1898. The *East Sussex News* 21st June 1901 refers to the earlier pump being provided by 'J D Hurdis' from the house 'Ketches', although this was probably in fact James Henry Hurdis, the renowned artist and engraver of Newick.

At the East Sussex Record Office are the minutes of the Parish Council Pump Committee of 1897-1901 (ref: P 428/2/2) and also regular references to the repair and maintenance of the pump in the parish council minutes. Further details are in the archive of the Oldaker family of Newick (ref:AMS 5785/20)

Photograph of the 1898 inauguration ceremony kindly supplied by the late John Wood

Photograph of village green, before the pump was built, in *Sussex County Magazine* volume 4, 1930, page 762

Article entitled 'I Remember Newick' by C W Bennett in *Sussex County Magazine* volume 18 1944 page 213

Postcard photographs and modern photographs from author's private collection

An informative book on village pumps is *Village Pumps* by Richard K Williams (Shire Publications) 2009. One of the photographs in the book shows a pump at Aldgate, London with a spout representing a wolf's head, which is somewhat similar to the spout on the Newick pump.

A272 - An Ode to a Road Pieter and Rita Boogaart 3rd edition 2011 page 215

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