

Wargrave Local History Society

Latest News - June 2026

Wargrave Village Festival

The activities of Wargrave Local History Society in alternate years are linked to the Wargrave Village Festival. For 2026, the society's displays at the village festival fete (*right*) included information about the history of the society itself, aerial photographs of the village at different times over the past century showing how the village had developed, and a section relating to transport serving the village - both by train and by bus. One picture from this section that created a lot of interest was the one below.

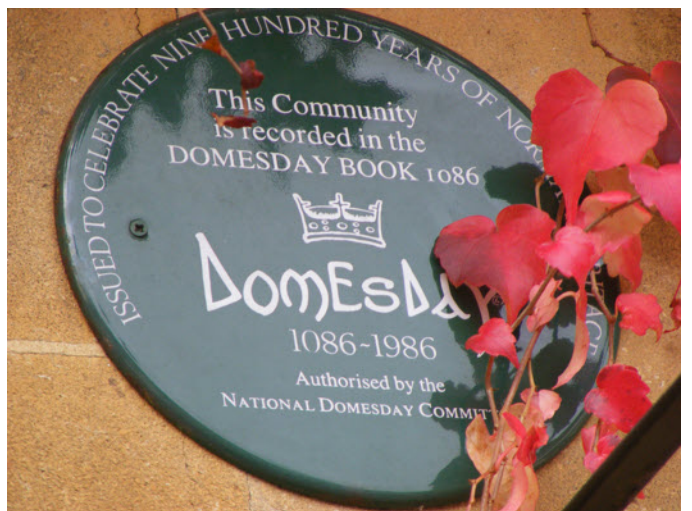


GWR design, it was demolished in 1988, and replaced by a simple glazed metal shelter. Visible to the right of the picture is the railway track. When the branch line was built in 1857, this was a single track to Brunel's broad gauge, converted to standard gauge in 1875, and then made into a double track in 1897, as seen here, which existed until June 1966, when it reverted to the present single track.

Visitors to the displays also took time to try and identify 20 photographs of 'Where is it in Wargrave?', such as the two examples below. Several people thought one of these was at Crazies Hill, although actually only about 100 yards from where they were stood!



Quite a few people thought that it had been taken at Twyford station, not realising that for many years the railway station at Wargrave had this substantial brick building on the platform, where tickets could be purchased, and waiting passengers kept warm in the winter months with a coal fire in the waiting room, amongst other facilities. Built in 1900 to the standard



The Historic Village Walk proved to be as popular as ever, with all tickets sold well before the event. Fortunately, the afternoon was not one of extreme heat, and although warm, the forecast rain did not arrive, and there was at times a gentle breeze. The participants were in 2 groups (for their safety in the High Street), and having started by the village memorial on Mill Green and looked round the churchyard, one group went clockwise along Church Street, the High Street to the foot of Wargrave Hill and back along the High Street to Station Road, whilst the other group covered the same route in the opposite direction - the guides pointing out places of interest along the way, and recounting stories of about village residents and incidents from time past.



A unique feature of this year's Historic Village Walk was the chance to visit the grounds of Wargrave Hall, by kind invitation of Terry Grouk, the grounds being open for the Village Festival Morris Dancing event.

Wargrave Hall has a place not only in village history (being where Lord Barrymore - who had a theatre in Wargrave in the 1790s - was tutored before attending Eton College), but also in national history, where members of the Cabinet met on occasion from just before and during World War 1, and also where discussions took place in the post war era that lead up to the establishment of the Irish Free State. The house at that time belonged to Edward Goulding, who was made Lord Wargrave in recognition of his involvement in these events. (Terry Grouk has produced a booklet on "The Hidden History of Wargrave Hall", which describes the ownership and events of the property from its building through to the present day - including its association with Morris Dancing).

In the photograph (*above left*), members of the 'anti-clockwise' group are seen enjoying the view upstream towards the railway bridge over the River Thames. (*above right*).

For more information about the society, visit our website at <https://www.wargravehistory.org.uk>
