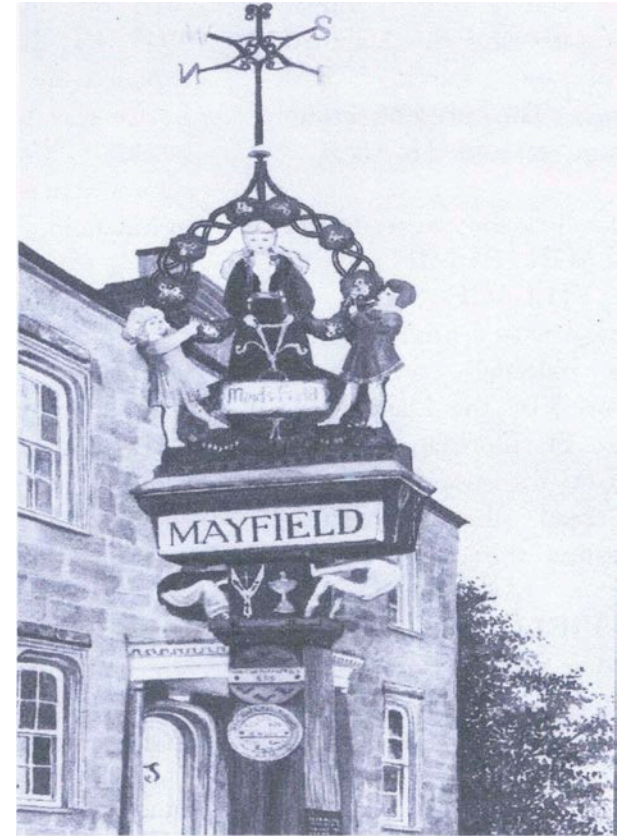


**NOTE:**

Much of the information in this leaflet is based on the "*Short Guide to Mayfield Past and Present*" on sale in the Village and published by the **Mayfield Local History Society** and "*Mayfield*" by E.M. Bell-Irving published by East Sussex County Library

# MAYFIELD



# VILLAGE WALK

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**50p**

**50p**

The walk starts by the **WAR MEMORIAL** ① in the High Street. First of all look across the street at **STONE COURT** ② a timber-framed building (possibly of Tudor origin) which has been the Star Inn, the Parish Workhouse and the Mayfield School of Carving and Gilding. The present stone frontage was added in 1860.

Then follow the arrows to the **VILLAGE PUMP** and to the **VILLAGE SIGN** ③ The sign won a prize in 1920 in a competition which was nationally organised by the Daily Mail. Notice St. Dunstan and the Devil on the supporting post and read the inscription suggesting the origin of the name Mayfield. Next we pass **ST JOSEPH'S** ④ (also referred to as Stone House); built about 1730, it is constructed almost entirely from materials taken from the ruins of the nearby Old Palace. The **MAYFIELD CANNON** ⑤ was dug out of one of the cinder beds of the Mayfield furnace in 1824 and was mounted in its present position in 1977. It was cast in the 16th

Century at the Mayfield furnace, which operated from early in the 16th Century and finally closed in 1712. On the opposite side of the street stands the **MIDDLE HOUSE** ⑥ built in 1575 and was a private residence until 1926 when it became an Inn. The Baker family owned the building between 1669 and 1841. **WALNUT TREE HOUSE** ⑦ was at one time faced with tiles, but the restoration in 1949 by the Lester family exposed the old beams. Fred Lester was the author of the book "Looking Back", being reminiscences of his early life in Mayfield.

On the same side as the cannon, next comes the **GATEHOUSE** ⑧ (partly 15th Century) leading to **THE OLD PALACE** ⑨ The Great Hall was built about 1325; the arches spanning the hall are original and are among the largest unsupported stone spans of any building in Europe. It is said that the Archbishops of Canterbury regularly visited Mayfield between 1274 and 1530, but in 1537 upon the

Turning west towards Eastbourne and about 200 yards from Aylwins is the Colkins Mill Evangelical Church, in front of which stands the poignant little Memorial **TO THE MAYFIELD MARTYRS** ⑱

It commemorates four people who were burnt at the stake in Mayfield on 23rd September 1556 during the Protestant persecutions in the reign of Mary I. Three other Mayfield residents were burnt the following year in Lewes.

Retracing our steps along the High Street we come to the **ROYAL OAK** ⑳ Only the shell now remains of this old Coaching Inn, perhaps one of the oldest buildings in the village, now converted into a number of residences.

Finally we arrive back at our starting point and the path towards **ST. DUNSTAN'S CHURCH** ㉑ St. Dunstan was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 959 AD until his death in 988. In 960 AD he built a wooden church in Mayfield, which was

replaced by a stone building on the present site in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1389 the village was swept by fire which destroyed the Church except for the tower and part of the North aisle. By 1420 the church had been rebuilt.

The present tower is the original one (the broach spire was added later) and houses a peal of eight bells; the oldest is dated 1602 and the last two 1913 and 1923.

Inside the church, see the font 1666, tomb slabs of iron in the floor of the nave, the chandeliers 1737 and 1773, and memorials to the Baker family.

On the left hand side the tall building now known as **CHARITY COTTAGES** (12) was traditionally known as Smugglers Cottage and was believed to have had two cellars, one beneath the other. Sussex was widely notorious for smuggling in the 18th Century.

Continue down Fletching Street hill, on past the **Carpenters Arms**, now converted to houses. Notice on the right hand side of the road **COURTNEY** and the adjoining **POUND END COTTAGES** (13) originally a single open hall dating from the 14th Century. It still has its original ancient roof structure including crown post and remains of a smoke bay. A little further on there is another fine old house called **WHEELWRIGHTS** (14) (circa 1600). On the left hand side there follows **TOLL COTTAGE**, (15) which dates from the late 18th Century and, as the name implies, collected road tolls. Just round the corner we come to the **Rose and Crown Inn** part of which reputedly dates

back to the 15th Century. On the opposite side of the road may be seen **YEW TREE FARMHOUSE** (16) The present house dates from the mid 18th Century, but is believed to be on the site of an earlier farmhouse building. The adjoining **BARN** (17) just off the map, has now been converted into a dwelling and dates from the 15th Century.

The route now returns towards the former Carpenters Arms where it forks left via the Avenue and past the Car Park and Toilets (excellent south views from here across the Rother Valley to the Burwash Ridge). At the end of South Street turn right to reach the main road A267. Just off the map on the North side of the road stands **AYLWINS** (18) behind its stone wall. It dates from the 15th Century and like the Middle House it was owned by the Baker family. It was recently occupied as a hall of residence for pupils of St Leonards-Mayfield School.

Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Old Palace became the property of the Crown. Subsequently, Sir Thomas Gresham, financial adviser to Queen Elizabeth, bought it in 1574. The Baker family lived there in the 17th and 18th Centuries. In 1740 the Great Hall was dismantled and fell into ruin and stone from the Palace was used in building walls and houses around the village. In 1868 the Duchess of Leeds bought the property and presented it to the foundress of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Cornelia Connelly. She engaged Augustus Pugin to restore the Great Hall, but much of this Victorian work has now been altered and the appearance of the Chapel is today close to its original medieval style. It is now the Chapel of St Leonards-Mayfield School. (Please Note: Visitors wishing to see the Great Hall should telephone the School Reception on 01435 874600 to make an appointment).

On the corner of Fletching Street diagonally opposite the

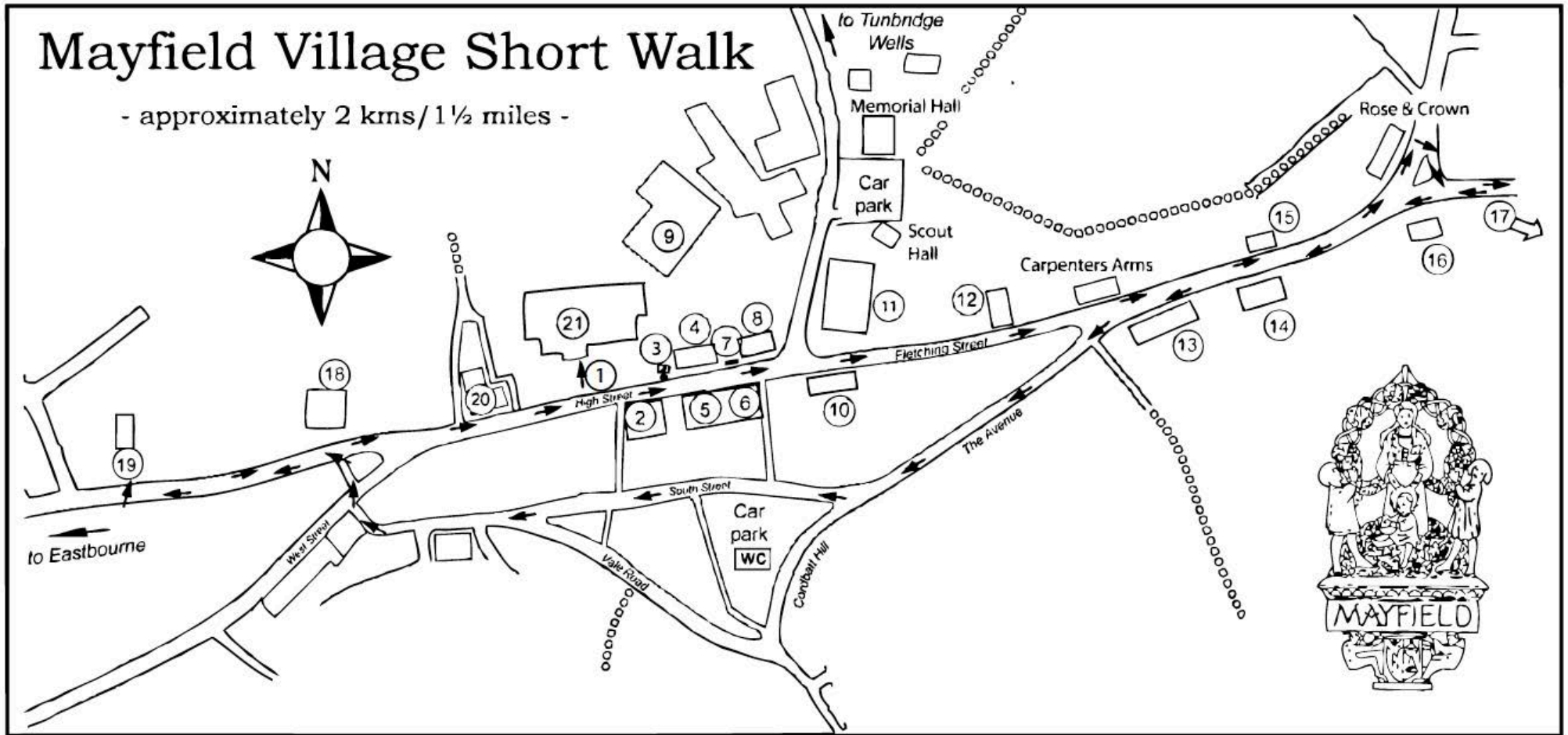
Gatehouse stands the Elizabethan style house called **YEOMANS** (10) originally a hall-house (early 15th Century), with additions in the 16th Century making it about 60ft. long overall. It was later restored and reconditioned early in the last century.

Opposite Yeomans on the left hand side of Fletching Street is the **VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL** (11) A charity school for 24 poor children was established in 1750 following voluntary contributions by villagers. In 1814 a new building was erected on the present site for 39 children. The present building, to which many improvements have been made over the years, dates from 1913. Since 1950 it has functioned as a Primary School.

Fletching Street (which could have been so named to denote an area where arrows were made in the 14th Century) was originally the continuation of the highway through the village to Mark Cross and Tunbridge Wells.

# Mayfield Village Short Walk

- approximately 2 kms/1½ miles -



- |                       |                     |                                |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ① WAR MEMORIAL        | ⑥ WALNUT TREE HOUSE | ⑪ VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL       | ⑯ YEW TREE FARMHOUSE      |
| ② STONE COURT         | ⑦ MAYFIELD CANNON   | ⑫ CHARITY COTTAGES             | ⑰ BARN                    |
| ③ VILLAGE PUMP & SIGN | ⑧ GATEHOUSE         | ⑬ COURTNEY & POUND END COTTAGE | ⑱ SUSSEX MARTYRS MEMORIAL |
| ④ ST. JOSEPH'S        | ⑨ THE OLD PALACE    | ⑭ WHEELWRIGHTS                 | ⑳ ROYAL OAK               |
| ⑤ MIDDLE HOUSE        | ⑩ YEOMANS           | ⑮ TOLL COTTAGE                 |                           |
|                       |                     | ⑳ ST DUNSTAN'S CHURCH          |                           |

Public footpath ooooo

Route → → →  
← ← ←

Scale

250 metres