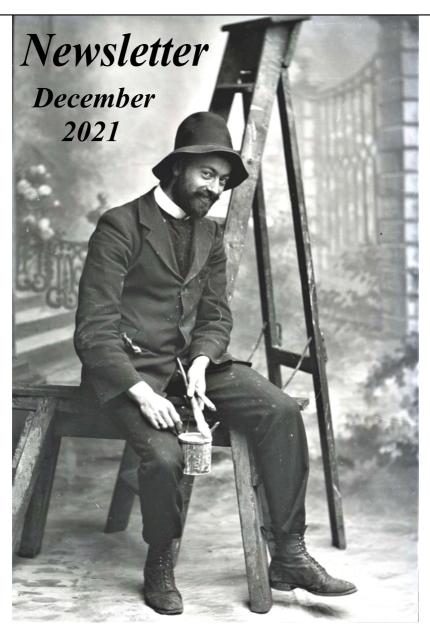


Leatherhead & District Local History Society covering Ashtead, the Bookhams, Fetcham, Headley, Mickleham and Leatherhead



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Front cover: David Knights-Whittome, 'Photographer to the King', whose brilliant work included portraits of local families in Ashtead, Leatherhead and the surrounding area in the early 20th century. See Page 14 for details. The Past on Glass project blog also includes other Sutton local history articles. Go to https://pastonglass.wordpress.com The Past on Glass photos: https://www.flickr.com/photos/pastonglass#

2022 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS Society: £20. Friends of Leatherhead Museum: £5.

A Renewal Form for the calendar year 2022 is enclosed with this *Newsletter*. It can be used for the Society and/or the Friends of Leatherhead Museum. The Society subscription supports the Museum and funds this quarterly *Newsletter*. The Committee of the Friends of Leatherhead Museum has agreed to increase the Friends' subscription to £5 after remaining unchanged at £3 for many years.

December 2021





EDITORIAL

Welcome to the last *L&DLHS Newsletter* of this second exceptional year. As you can read in the Chairman's Report on Page 4, the Museum returned to near normal operation on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, with visitors asked to wear masks etc for their own protection and that of volunteers. It closes for the usual winter break on 4 December but will be back next spring. More stewards are needed

so do contact the managers to volunteer if you can.

Monthly meetings have also resumed at the Letherhead Institute and now enhanced by an optional Zoom facility too. This follows a year of Zoom cooperation with Dorking Local History Group which increased the talks available. This *Newsletter* only has room to report two more of them but both were first class and showed the standard of speakers and research on offer.

One of these talks, in this case arranged by L&DLHS itself, is reported on Page 14 and will be continued in a second part in the March 2022 edition so keep an eye out for that next year. The other on Page 20 was a Dorking-organised talk during the summer. Equally fascinating, the speaker in this case was none other than a direct descendant of the subject so the talk exemplified both family and social history research in Surrey.

Heritage Open Days were back this year, assisted by the L&DLHS in different ways as reported on Page 7. Otherwise we have the usual mix of news and features, another oral history conducted 37 years ago by Edwina Vardey, and sadly obituaries for two real L&DLHS stalwarts, Gwen Hoad and John Wettern, both lost this summer and greatly missed.

Finally, Brian Hennegan writes: 'I'm possibly the 99th person to point out that the right hand photograph on Page 26 of the September 2021 *L&DLHS Newsletter* is in Ashtead and not at the New Bull Hotel, Leatherhead.' Mea culpa!

TONY MATTHEWS



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Continuing Covid-19 uncertainty has brought ongoing discussions in our Executive Committee on how to provide services in the short and medium term. However, in 2021 the Museum and its bookshop reopened on the normal schedule, and our enquiry services via search of the website, one to

one emails, or through the Museum have all been working normally.

We are once again providing monthly talks with a choice of attendance in the Abraham Dixon Hall or by Zoom in the comfort of your own home. You can also request an on-line recording. Background work on our digital archive continues too, as does new research where we have volunteers in place.

In 2022 we expect to provide all the above services and also to re-open field activities such as heritage area walks and archaeology. Hopefully, we will be the beneficiary of more volunteer help in the near future and to be able to broaden the scope of our on-line capabilities, particularly in the area of ordering and payments, although there is always a price to be paid.

In the intervening period between our last *Newsletter* and this edition, Surrey County Council has launched a project that should be of real interest to L&DLHS members. This is to create a non-statutory list of buildings and heritage features of many kinds that can be viewed on a single digital map - a prospect of obvious relevance to us. The project will be maintained by Mole Valley District Council for use in its planning services activities. We are assured that Mole Valley will both maintain and update the map.

Annoyingly perhaps, SCC set a deadline for contributions which has already passed but if you missed the opportunity to make your own suggestions, we will advise you how to continue the process.

The festive season provides the usual break in which families can get together once more. So on behalf of your Trustees and Executive Committee, a Happy Christmas and New Year to you all. How about the following New Year resolution: I must explore helping the Society more in 2022?

JOHN ROWLEY

PROGRAMME OF FUTURE ACTIVITIES

To keep up to date on our events please check the <u>Forthcoming</u> <u>Events</u> blog on our website <u>www.leatherheadhistory.org</u>
For other talks, including those from Dorking Local History Group, please visit the <u>Surrey History Meetup</u> website.

7.15pm, Friday, 3 December in Manor House School, Manor House Lane, Little Bookham, KT23 4EN.

Vivien White is giving a talk on *The Howard Family* in aid of the Friends of All Saints Little Bookham Church & St Lawrence Effingham Church. A 'winter warmer evening' with mulled wine, mince pies, coffee and a raffle. For tickets (£10) call 01372 454293 or 01372 456752.

7.30pm, Friday, 17 December via Zoom only A Christmas Miscellany

L&DLHS Chairman John Rowley will introduce *Captain Henry Reynolds VC*, *Superintendent of Milner House*, an early home of what became *Combat Stress*.

L&DLHS Archaeology Secretary Nigel Bond will discuss the local and natural history of *Ashtead Rye Meadows and Wetlands*.

L&DLHS talks in 2022, dates to be confirmed.

Richard Hughes will talk about the actress *Dame Sibyl Thorndike* who gave her name to what is now Leatherhead Theatre when it was opened in 1969.

John Hawks of the Merton Priory Trust will speak on *Merton Priory* which played a significant role in the history of Leatherhead and the surrounding district.

Anne Milton-Worssell will follow up her recent talk about the founders of the National Trust with the story of *How Wimbledon Common Was Saved* following the campaign that led to an Act of Parliament in 1871.

NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM





Dorothy Stapleton was a driving force in setting up the new 1960s display shown above in the former Hollis Room, aided by Robin Christian and Chris Stagg. This will be on show next year too.

David Hartley provided an exhibition of Georgian watercolour prints by the Hassells, father and son, whose work focused on Surrey in the early 1800s.

An Arts and Crafts display of paintings and ceramics was shown for the autumn season only. See Page 40 on the paintings of local artist Anthony Hill. The ceramics (shown below) are by a gifted amateur potter from Epsom, Ted Rex, who has been potting for over 50 years. The works are hand-thrown, generally stoneware for indoor use only. They included some Raku ceramics. Both the paintings and the ceramics were offered for sale.



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

CHIPS WITH EVERYTHING

In September, BILL WHITMAN talked about his many years in the food industry and as a consultant with the Leatherhead -based Food Research Association as one of the L&DLHS contributions to Heritage Open Days on the theme *Edible England*.

After World War 2, Leatherhead District Council saw the future of the town as concentrating on skilled upmarket office jobs rather than polluting blue collar industry. It bought the Randalls Farm site and then influenced research organisations to take advantage of a rural setting within comfortable commuting distance of London.

Ironically an early occupier of the site was the Coal Users Research Association. However this was soon followed by the Paper and Packaging Research Association and the Food Research Association.

It was recognised that British firms had lagged behind Germany in product and process development since World War 1. Founded in the 1920s, the Food RA came to Leatherhead in 1950 from Holloway, North London. Dr Alan Holmes took over when it was at a low ebb and persuaded the governing council to recruit overseas members. While the RA was not doing enough research to justify its existing membership fees, it did have three main assets.

First was a supply of knowledgeable scientists who could be called in, confidentially, when firms needed advice. Second was international appreciation of food research publications and legal requirements. Third was a meeting place where scientists could meet and talk freely at symposia and training courses. For some smaller members it provided a helping hand. However, many staff were tempted away by better paid jobs with the member firms themselves.

Overseas income brought growth with larger laboratories and more staff. Much activity involved collecting and recording information from newspapers and hundreds of scientific journals. It was challenging to sort between useful and useless material but a keyword thesaurus enabled access to securely stored data.

Scientists were trained to retrieve an average 90% of relevant material

from 10% of the papers. The service was excellent and operated round the clock for use worldwide. I worked there from 1971 until 1993.

One joint project that had a major impact was carried out with some large dairy firms. Our instrumentation and control group, physicists and microbiologists showed that the shelf-life of products such as cream, yoghurt and trifles could be extended significantly if storage temperature was controlled to a narrow range below 8° from factory to lorry and shop. This justified heavy expenditure on transport and display facilities by all the participating companies and the main supermarkets. Standards improved, customers got better value for money, and the market grew.

A few years later, using results from our research, I designed a special cooler for cooked chickens that made it possible for a client to sell cooked chicken pieces at safe temperatures, extending shelf-life from two days to three weeks.

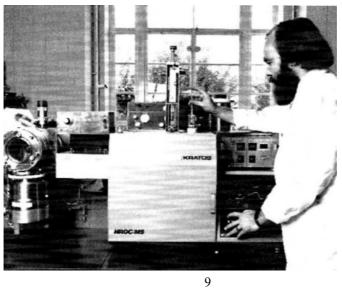
A government ministry tasked us to investigate energy use in the food industry and we organised visits to many manufacturers. Some visits were sub-contracted to independent consultants but we visited all our own members and many others. A Food RA representative spent five days in Shetland and Orkney visiting fish factories. The visits provided data for sector reports and eventually a summary estimate for the whole industry.

A particular subject arose for me even before I joined the RA from industry. We wanted to make prawn crackers on a large scale. This involved cooking dough, cutting it into discs, drying and then frying them in hot oil. We used a pressure mixer that cooked as it extruded a sausage of dough. When cool, this was sliced in a high speed meat slicer. The resulting discs would expand and crisp easily in hot oil. At the next firm I worked for we wanted to make flat dough strips for crispy noodles but the pressure mixer there produced noodles that fried unevenly.

We called in the Food RA but ended up solving the problem ourselves. Yet when I started work in Leatherhead, I found that the right man there could have solved the problem quickly and cheaply. While working there myself I was called by a supplier of prawn crackers to Chinese restaurants in Manchester. It was having production difficulties. I visited the factory and provided a solution.



Above: The Food RA was built on the former site of Randalls Farm. Below: A researcher at work.



1951	1973	1983	1987	2000
37,000	593,000	3,000,000	5,584,000	8,364,000
450	560	700	750	950
23,600	357,000	750,000	1,287,000	3,750,000
	37,000 450	37,000 593,000 450 560	37,000 593,000 3,000,000	37,000 593,000 3,000,000 5,584,000 450 560 700 750

Above: Statistics for the Leatherhead Food Research Association.

I was asked by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation to go to China and demonstrate how to make dehydrated foods, in particular soups. This led to a series of lectures in Beijing to about 20 biologists, microbiologists, food technologists and engineers. It was not easy but was clearly successful as I was given some remarkable presents by the Chinese after returning home.

Consultants asked for help for a firm that had gone bankrupt. They wanted to keep the factory running to improve sales potential. I was asked to write an operating manual for quality production. The factory manufactured potato chips for schools and canteens. The potatoes were peeled, sliced and part fried, then cooled and sold chilled, ready for crisping in hot oil.

I had earlier worked for Stork Margarine where the canteen manager made the finest chips I knew. I spent three days writing a quality control manual. The firm was bought out of bankruptcy by a Dutch company and the management remained in place.

Later they had a problem not of their own making. Another local firm spilled a wood preservative which contaminated eight hours worth of chips produced. As a result, chips were returned from schools throughout the country. A sample was flown down to us and chemist Bill Reed identified the contaminating chemical, enabling the chip company to make a successful insurance claim.

I retired soon after this but was later distressed to find the RA in trouble. It had recruited too many international food manufacturers and while it had a large laboratory and workforce, there was limited potential for expansion and a growing pension deficit. The research and information business was sold but the buildings kept. My own pension was saved by the Pension Protection Fund and eventual

sale of the Leatherhead site along with all the other research labs at Randalls Park, destined for replacement by a prestigious block of flats.

Alan Holmes and fellow worker Tony Hines later worked with me on a history of the Food RA. It appeared in the 2016 L&DLHS *Proceedings*. Alan also gave me the redundant Micro-Cairs computer information system. Unwanted by Leatherhead Museum, it is now in the computer museum at Bletchley Park.

It has been there since March 2020. Computer chips, not the edible sort, now recall the Food Research Association at Leatherhead.

GRACE & CABLE AT FETCHAM PARK HOUSE

An impressive 830 people dropped in at Fetcham Park House on Saturday, 11 September when it opened to the public for Heritage Open Days alongside the 11th century St Mary's Church.

Used today for offices and business events, the grounds of Fetcham Park House were hosting installations by students of Grace & Cable, the specialist organiser of craft classes for woollen knitting enthusiasts throughout mid-Surrey. These were strategically placed throughout the garden, featuring in particular a giant Union Jack flag beside the water-fountains, tea-tables bedecked with knitted food and other items, and a randomly decorated tree displaying the classes' fun spirit. Even the fountain statues were discreetly clothed in knitted clothing to avoid their normal embarrassment.

The exhibition had been formally launched by Chris Hunt, Chairman of Mole Valley Council, and Rev Pouya Heidari, Rector of St Mary's Church which also welcomed visitors on the day.

Jo Harrison, founder of Grace & Cable, explained that the classes had been set up some six years ago to serve knitters of all ages from small children to the very elderly. She had worked at the Craft Shop in Lower Shott, Great Bookham, but this had closed like so many other former shops selling wool so most of the necessary materials were now purchased online.

The giant Union Jack, specially created for Heritage Open Days, was actually made up of 140 weatherproof acrylic squares with each square having taken an hour to knit. After the event the flag would be dissembled and the materials re-used to create blankets for homeless people.

Also available for Heritage Open Days at both Fetcham Park House and the church were copies of *Alan Pooley's Walking Guide to the Heart of Historic Fetcham* which introduced Heritage Open Days participants to no less than 20 historic sites throughout the village. Alan Pooley, L&DLHS President and Fetcham archivist, was assisted by local historian Vivien White in producing the guide.

Other locations included the Salt Box, Well House, Ballands Hall, Dower Cottage, Old Rectory, Fetcham Village Infants School, Orchard Cottage, the Village Pond, St Clements, Yew Tree and Tea Tree Cottages, Garden Cottage, Fetcham Lodge, Home Farm House, Village Hall, Bell Inn, Fetcham Cottage, Oakfield Junior School and Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Church. Nearly half of these have Grade 2 listings, showing the richness of Fetcham's heritage.

Right: The 140-squares Union Jack displayed above the fountains.

Below right:
Chris Hunt
and Pouya
Heidari sit
down to a tea
of knitted
cakes on the
Fetcham Park
House patio.









Above: Admiring the exhibits were (front, from the left): Chris Hunt, Chairman of Mole Valley Council; Sandra Young, Director of Fetcham Park; Tony Matthews, L&DLHS Editor; Jo Harrison (blue dress), founder of Grace & Cable; Rev Pouya Heidari, Rector of St Mary's, Fetcham. L&DLHS President and Fetcham archivist Alan Pooley is top right.

Above left: Knitted St George with Dragon. Left: Knitted snack lunches.

LECTURE REPORT

THE PAST ON GLASS

In the June 2021 Zoom lecture, Banstead historian JAMES CROUCH presented the extraordinary stories of David Knights-Whittome, 'Photographer to the King', and some of his clients who were resident in Ashtead and Leatherhead in the very early 20th century. Read Part 1 here and Part 2 next March.

From 1904-18 at 18 High Street, Sutton, and 24 Station Road, Epsom, professional photographer David Knights-Whittome produced thousands of images of local people, places, events and institutions as well as the Royal Family. His main premises in Sutton was known as The Studio. In 1918 he left Surrey, taking up local politics in Hertfordshire and eventually became Mayor of St Albans.

His vast collection of over 10,000 glass plate negatives was left behind in the cellar of The Studio and remained there forgotten for 70 years. In 1988, the building was demolished but not before the photographic legacy of this remarkable man was discovered and removed to the Sutton Archive Service.

The collection remained undocumented and unseen by the public until 2014 when a Heritage Lottery Fund grant enabled restoration work to begin on half of the collection. A second award in 2016 enabled conservation, digitisation and cataloguing of the entire collection to be completed over two years.

This represents a lost generation of men, women and children resident in Surrey in Edwardian days and then World War 1. Although some photos were damaged over time, the quality of the photographs themselves is stunning. For his Zoom talk, James researched the stories of a selection of these who lived in what today is Mole Valley. Most were in Ashtead, others in Leatherhead or Dorking.

Richard Waddilove was Rector of Ashtead for some 20 years. His daughter Sylvia was shown aged three or four, then with her baby brother David, and then both again a year later. Sylvia would go on to become a social worker and David a civil servant. The family lived in Ashtead until the early 1920s.

There were many photos of children in fancy dress in the collection. He next showed Belle and Ian Hue-Williams in mystery costumes. Their grandfather, a stockbroker, lived at Uplands, a big house that once stood halfway between Ashtead and Leatherhead near Downsend School. His son, the children's father, made his fortune similarly and the family lived in Epsom.

The shadow of World War 1 hung over almost all of the families photographed but for these young children, their war was World War 2. Ian Hue-Williams would join the RAF in 1930, train as a pilot and be serving in 1939. He was acting leader of a Wellington bomber squadron and took part in early daylight raids on strictly military targets on the north German coast. On 18 December 1939 he set out in a party of 24 aircraft which were picked up by a new early warning system. The Germans scrambled up to 100 fighters to intercept them of which 44 made contact some 14 miles from the target. The bombers fought them off all the way to Wilhelmshaven where they failed to locate any German surface vessels and had to turn around for home. They were pursued by the fighters and Ian's plane was last seen with its starboard wing on fire. The crew of six were all lost. This was the Battle of Heligoland Bight and ended any further daylight raids.

Ian's sister Belle returned to Ashtead after the war working as a teacher and lived in Gravel Close for about 40 years until her death in the 1980s.

The next photo showed an apparently ragged barefooted urchin with a hoop and stick. In fact this was artifice. The girl, Lettice Marshall, was actually from a rich family. Her father was Matthew Wilberforce Marshall who lived at Lagham, one of the largest houses in Woodfield Lane. He was also a stockbroker as were many Ashtead residents at the time. Lettice was shown in a series of photos including one with an amateur gymnastics pose.

Matthew Marshall was president of the Ashtead Amateur Dramatics Society and gave the land on which the Peace Memorial Hall was built. A member of the building committee for the hall, he was also vice-president of the cricket club and may have held other local important posts too. Lettice and her sister Monica became enthusiastic amateur actresses and were later very involved in running the Girl Guides and Brownies. Her proudest moment may have been when Ashtead received the county Guides flag into their care for





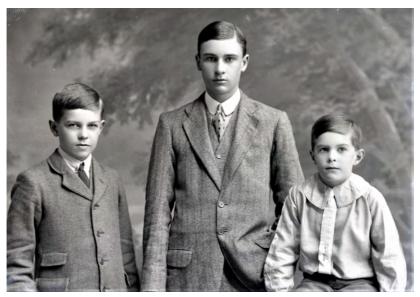
Left:
Belle and Ian HueWilliams in fancy dress.
Below left:
Lettice Marshall

the year when she was presented it by Lady Baden -Powell herself. Lettice would go on to marry and have children of her own.

Her brother Matthew became an electrical engineer, worked in a power station in Lancashire, went to India, and returned to serve in World War 1.

He survived, moved to Newquay and became a partner in a mechanical and electrical business. He became an expert on the application of electricity in medicine. When the General Strike took place in 1926 he volunteered as a stoker on the Newquay railway, the only service that kept running there. He died young at 39 and was returned to Ashtead for burial at St Giles.

The family's other son, Aubrey, was another stockbroker but his most important local position was captain of the Ashtead



Above: The Hicks brothers of Ashtead in 1913. Frank (centre) was in his final year of school before officer training at Sandhurst.

Fire Brigade who argued that the village needed a fire engine of its own. This was a staple topic of parish council meetings where other parishioners routinely said they could not afford one. They would have to take a loan and as funding for the fire brigade came from the lighting rates, they could not raise too much.

The brigade also complained about not having a fire station at the top of the hill. Whenever they were called out they had to slog up the hill with their carts, hose and buckets as they had no self-propelled steam fire engine. Opponents said Epsom and Sutton had no fire engine, so why should Ashtead? Aubrey said it was needed because the brigade depended on fire hydrants whose pressure dropped after a certain distance. You needed to knock a fire out, not wash it out and for that an engine was necessary. But ten years after his speech in 1913 Ashtead still had no fire engine. He eventually left to farm in South Africa. Aubrey's son, like Ian Hue-Williams, was killed flying a bomber over Germany in 1943.

Another influential Ashtead family photographed was that of Alan Hicks, a manufacturing chemist who lived with his wife Alice

and their three sons in Parkside Cottage on the corner of Park Lane and Epsom Road before later moving to Great Murrey's in Agates Lane. Their three boys were photographed at pivotal moments in their lives. One was in his final year of prep school, about to go up to big school. Frank, eldest of the three, was in his final year of school altogether, and the youngest son, in his final year of being at home, was still wearing childish clothes which would shortly be swapped for a suit like his older brothers.

The photograph was taken in 1913 and Frank was shortly to go into the Army, entering Sandhurst just before the fatal shot was fired in Sarajevo. He gained his commission in December 1914 and within weeks was back in Knights-Whittome's studio wearing his 2nd Lieutenant's uniform. He went to France in spring 1915 and fought at Bellewaarde Ridge, near Hooge, in the Ypres Salient. His battalion attacked German trenches but there was poor coordination between the British infantry and artillery. While the infantry rushed ahead no-one told the artillery so a barrage came down on them as they advanced, cutting them to ribbons. Frank was one of the few officers to survive, suffering only a minor arm wound.

He continued to fight in the area and in spring 1916, took part in some horrible fighting at the village of St Elois. The strain was so bad that he developed shellshock. Where this would often happen suddenly among men in the ranks, for officers it tended to be a gradual onset over time from incessant bombardments and having to make decisions that would get men killed. They would lose self-confidence and sleep, and only be kept going by fellow officers for as long as possible. Frank was sent home to England and a special hospital for officers with psychiatric problems.

Like many other officers he was well cared for, although neuroscience was then in its infancy. After a long recovery period, he became an instructor in an officer cadet unit and two years later rejoined his battalion, the 4th Royal Fusiliers. At this point the British were advancing again and Frank took part. On 21 August 1918 his battalion was advancing through very thick mist which gave some protection from the Germans but also meant miscommunications. They overtook another battalion by mistake and Frank ran to assist another officer who had been hit. Sadly, he was struck by a shell splinter

and killed instantly, aged just 22.

Of course, most men were not officers. Ernest Cross, an engineering student from Alverstone in Woodfield Lane, Ashtead, was a private, photographed having joined the Honourable Artillery Company, a London territorial regiment. But university graduates were the natural backbone of the officer corps and many who had enlisted in the ranks later got commissions anyway. Ernest went to France and was then commissioned as a Lieutenant with the 13th Cheshires.

Men unable to fight because they were too young, too old or had a physical impairment could not go to war. Another photo showed Ernest's brother William, an electrical engineer who, like him, lived with their parents in Woodfield Lane. He joined the Volunteer Training Corps (VTC), essentially a private army with its own non-khaki uniform. His photo showed him wearing a distinctive belt and armband with the initials GR (Georgius Rex) from they got their nickname, the 'Gorgeous Wrecks'.

They were used for home defence, providing a huge labour pool and used locally for digging trenches on Reigate Hill as part of the London defence lines. Most villages raised their own VTC platoon and Ashtead's and Leatherhead's together formed a half battalion of the 10th Volunteer Training Corps. In June 1915 the platoon paraded through Ashtead High Street preceded by Leatherhead Silver Band to a public recruitment meeting at the village school.

The first speaker was Matthew Wilberforce Marshall. Following him was a Mr E Hadfield of the VTC central organisation who warned any young and unmarried men who had not yet joined up that they faced terrible consequences when the men of the village who had been on the firing line returned home. They would have to quit the country or commit suicide. The crowd applauded him loudly.

Alternatively, they could join the VTC. With his son Frank already in uniform, Alan Hicks did just that, and was platoon commander for Ashtead, building the platoon from scratch with two friends. They had 43 members but wanted two or three times that many. Alan thanked Mr Hadfield and invited new recruits for annual camp training.

To be continued in March 2022 L&DLHS Newsletter.

LECTURE REPORT

THE FATE OF INSPECTOR WILLIAM DONALDSON

On 29 July 1855 Inspector William Donaldson became the first Surrey County policeman to be killed on duty. In the August Zoom lecture organised by Dorking Local History Group, his great great grandson, HENRY PELHAM, gave a fascinating talk on what happened and how his ancestor's memory has since been honoured.

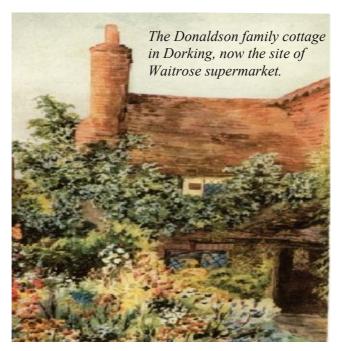
William Donaldson was born 8 November 1807 in the Scottish village of Tullibody, near Alloa. A talented portrait artist, he married there on 4 July 1835 but immediately moved south with Janet, his bride, to join London's recently created Metropolitan Police Force at Bermondsey. In November he moved again to help create the Dorking Town Police where his police career progressed. Dorking spent more money on policing than anywhere else in Surrey at the time.

With the eventual formation of Surrey Police, William transferred to the county service in February 1851 and would successively cover Chobham, Leatherhead, Horley and ultimately Haslemere over the next four years, reaching the rank of inspector.

On the 10 March 1851 he arrived in Leatherhead and his family moved from South Street, Dorking to Bridge Street. He is listed in the Leatherhead section of the 1851 Surrey Post Office Directory: 'Donaldson Wm, Inspector of County Constabulary'.

His time in Leatherhead seems to have been fairly uneventful until 12 January 1853 when Surrey Constabulary records reveal he was the subject of General Order 90: 'Inspector William Donaldson is dismissed from the Surrey Constabulary from this date for having demanded and received a certain sum of money from Mr Hankey at Fetcham Park and having given no account of the same. Such conduct being highly disgraceful and in direct violation of the rules and regulations of the Service. This order is to be read to every Officer and Constable in the force.'

As local squires, the Hankey family then owned the Fetcham Park estate and provided most of the employment in the entire parish. John Barnard Hankey, head of the family, was also the local Justice



of the Peace. But it is not known to which Mr Hankey the general order refers. The 1851 census records show there were four middle-aged sons, one married and three unmarried, then living at Fetcham Park as well as John Barnard Hankey.

However just eight days later on 20 January, General Order 93 rescinded the earlier order. It said: 'The Chief Constable having received an explanation from the committing magistrate of the circumstances connected with the case which led to the dismissal of Inspector William Donaldson, exculpated that officer in a great degree. He is hereby reinstated and General Order No 90 is therefore cancelled.'

The incident reflected a shortcoming in Chief Constable Captain Hastings who had a tendency towards knee-jerk decisions. His failure to take advice from more experienced senior officers frustrated many and brought some resignations. On 21 January 1853 William, now exonerated, was transferred to Horley.

By 1855 he was serving the community in Haslemere where a

new railway line was being laid. Some navvies, an unruly bunch, were creating a nuisance at a local pub, the Kings Arms, on Saturday, 29 July, when the police arrived at midnight to restore order. One man was arrested but the others objected and followed the officers to the local gaol, intending to free him. In the ensuing battle, William Donaldson was killed with an iron bar, a colleague was injured and so too a man who tried to intervene.

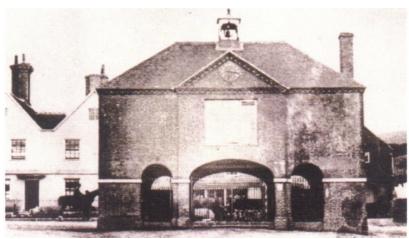
Several navvies were subsequently convicted of the crimes and transported with hard labour, one to Australia for life, three to Bermuda for seven years.

William was 47 years old although his age was registered as 44. It had been lowered in order to join the Metropolitan Police. Although Surrey Constabulary had an official age limit, it much preferred experience as the force was being set up from scratch. After his death, Janet and the family moved back from Haslemere to Dorking. She died some years later.

William's story was then largely forgotten, relegated to police archives for well over a century. His great great grandson Henry knew nothing of it until after his own retirement as an aviation engineer. However, one day in 2010, chatting with an elderly cousin who had lived with their mutual grandparents, Henry heard of an ancestor who had been a policeman. Henry's wife Jean was a keen family historian and the investigations began.

The 1841 and 1851 censuses and an entry in the register of St Bartholomew's Church, Haslemere, produced useful information. Even more notable was the fact that Haslemere Town Hall had been holding an annual memorial service at the end of July since 1984 marking the local riot back in 1855. Then Henry and Jean came across a book called *Hero of Haslemere* by local historian Jeff Harwood telling William's story. They met him and attended the memorial service in 2011 where Surrey Police were represented.

Matters grew from there. The gaol where William was killed had been based at Haslemere Town Hall and following Jeff Harwood's own death in 2012 an annual civic event called Donaldson Day was established in the town. The entrance door to the building had once been painted red and a myth grew up that this masked original bloodstains. On 12 March 2016 a blue plaque was unveiled there,



Above: Haslemere Town Hall in 1867 with the two cells either side of the arches.

Right: The uniform Inspector Donaldson would have worn in the 1850s.

Below: Blue plaque unveiled 12 March 2016 commemorating the Haslemere Riot in which Inspector Donaldson met his death.







Above: Henry Pelham, William Donaldson's great, great grandson; his daughter Lesley-Anne Boniface and son Stephen Pelham, with Duncan Greenhalgh of Surrey Police HQ.



commemorating the Haslemere Riot.

Henry's growing involvement brought more surprises. He was descended from William on his mother's side yet discovered that while policing Dorking, William had arrested another ancestor on his father's side!

William turned out to have been the first of 15 Surrey Police officers killed while on duty since 1855. Henry and Jean visited the Surrey Police headquarters at Mount Browne, Guildford, and

discovered that William's police occurrence books had been copied with one copy being held at Dorking Museum.

Pressure was growing for national memorials to fallen police to match those for armed forces personnel. This eventually resulted in the National Police Memorial in The Mall, London, and also the National Arboretum in Staffordshire, dedicated in July 2021. At both of these and also in Guildford Cathedral, William Donaldson's name is commemorated, now among 5000 police officers nationwide killed while on duty.

Since the start of his family history project, Henry has taken part in various ceremonies in honour of his police ancestor. Drawing on Jean's genealogical expertise, he has now also written his own book, *Inspector William Donaldson (1807-1855)* (above left) which is available for purchase. Contact henry.pelham@sky.com.

FEATURE

THE QUEEN'S LEATHERHEAD ANCESTORS

BRIAN BOUCHARD reveals that forebears of Queen Elizabeth II who lived in Leatherhead, Ashtead and Epsom were descended from Huguenot migrants from France.

In 1767, Thomas Grimstead, a London jeweller and dealer in trinkets, and his wife Eleanor purchased freehold of both the Manor House in Leatherhead and Yewood Place Farm, Yewood, at Newdigate. They wanted to take up residence in Surrey.

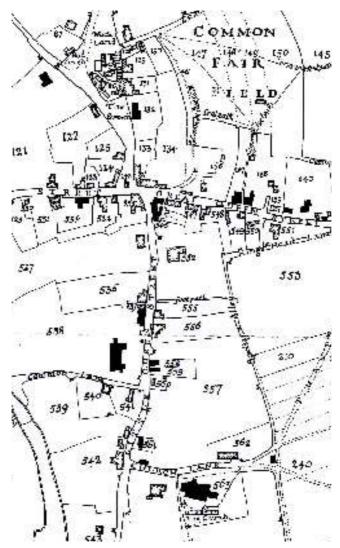
Thomas was buried at Leatherhead on 7 September 1780. His only son and heir, Joseph Valentine Grimstead (born on 5 July 1757) then inherited the Manor House and a half share of the Newdigate property.

Joseph Valentine married Charlotte Jane Sarah Walsh of Redbourn, Hertfordshire, on 31 August 1788 at Esher and they had several children. The Manor House, Leatherhead is said to have been sold in 1803 to J. T. Bell Esq.



Above: The only known portrait of Joseph Valentine Grimstead (1757-1835). Its private owner, Peter Chapman, sent a copy to the Queen and the keeper of her pictures said she was most interested to see it. It is in pastels and measures 30x25cms, excluding the frame.

The Grimsteads then established themselves in Epsom. They insured premises by 1808, renting copyhold estates on the south side of Clay Hill and on Church Street. Their eldest son Valentine, an ensign with the 3rd Foot (Scots) Guards, died in 1811 at Windsor 'on his way from Bristol Hot Wells to Epsom' and was buried in Leatherhead



Above: The Grimsteads' plot was exactly in the middle of this map.

on 23 May 1811.

In the summer of 1820 the family apparently moved to Merry Hall in Lower Ashtead and on 21 December that year the second daughter, also called Charlotte, was married to Thomas George Lyon-Bowes, Lord Glamis. Born 6 February 1801, he was three years younger than her. Lord and Lady Glamis had several children including a son, Claude Lyon-Bowes, born in 1824 and who later changed his name to become Claude Bowes-Lyon, 13th Earl of Strathmore.

Misfortune now hit the family. On 27 January 1834, Lord Glamis died aged just 33. In the same year, his father-in-law, Joseph Valentine Grimstead, also died age 77 in the Fleet Prison and was taken for burial at St Bride's, Fleet Street, on 22 December. His Will was proved 3 February 1835.

The two Charlotte widows, mother and daughter, then lived together at Redbourn House, Hertfordshire, a Walsh family possession. The younger Charlotte's sister Frances remained in Surrey as lessee of Ebbisham House, Epsom, from 1839. Charlotte, their mother and Joseph's widow, lived to the age of 81 and died 23 November 1848.

On 28 September 1853 her grandson Claude married Frances Dora Smith of Blendon Hall, Kent, at Bexley. Their son, Claude George, also Earl of Strathmore, was born 14 March 1855, one of several children.

Lady Glamis, now herself a grandmother, moved in 1865 to the Red House, Redbourn High Street, where she died 19 January 1881 aged 83. Both her sister Frances and a brother, Thomas, had also been living in Redbourn since before 1851. Thomas died 24 January 1884 aged 80, followed by Frances in March 1893 aged 84. A Grimstead family tomb is in St Mary's parish churchyard, Redbourn.

Six months after Lady Glamis's death, her grandson Claude George, Earl of Strathmore, married Nina Cecilia, an heiress, at Petersham, Surrey, on 16 July 1881. Among their children was Elizabeth Angela Bowes-Lyon, born 4 August 1900 who married the future King George VI in 1923 and honeymooned at Polesden Lacey. She later became known to us of course as the Queen Mother.

So the present Queen Elizabeth II is the great, great, great, greatgranddaughter of Thomas and Eleanor Grimstead who bought the Leatherhead Manor House in 1767. But what about the Huguenot origins?

Eleanor, who died around 1799, was the third daughter of Elizabeth Creswick whose husband Joseph was a director of the East India Company and a magistrate for Surrey. Elizabeth's parents were Jeremiah Laujol, born in Montpellier, France, and his wife Magdelaine. Jeremiah, son of Antoine and Jeanne Laujol of Montpellier, was naturalised by Act of Parliament as a British citizen on 4 May 1699. He became a trooper in the Guards under Earl Rivers and later a London merchant. He died in 1717.

Jeremiah and Magdelaine Laujol, then, were the great, great, great, great, great grandparents of Queen Elizabeth II and ninth-great grandparents of the prince who may one day become King George VII.

FEATURE

THE TALE OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM WADE

NICKY BANNISTER wrote the following piece for a window display at the Museum this year.

William Wade (1734-1809) inherited The Mansion in Leatherhead in 1777 via his wife Catherine, daughter of Henry Gore, and became the sole owner when she died in 1787. Married in 1760, the couple had three daughters and a son.

In April 1769 William, at that time holding the rank of Captain, was elected Master of Ceremonies at Bath. His most notable predecessor in the role had been Beau Nash (1674-1761), although Nash's place there had been unofficial, simply encouraging visitors to subscribe to the Assembly Rooms and keeping the peace by enforcing the rules there.

Nash had made his money by sharing in the receipts from the subscriptions and benefit balls. By the time William Wade was appointed, the position was by election of subscribers of the Assembly Rooms and an official salary was paid from the proceeds of the benefit balls.

The artist Thomas Gainsborough was based in Bath from 1759 to 1774, painting portraits of wealthy spa visitors. In 1771 he painted the portrait of William Wade on Page 29 as a present to the new

Assembly Rooms. The picture was hung in the Octagon Room and remains there to-day. Wade appears with his badge of office, a gold medal, enamelled blue, worn on an indigo ribbon.

The season at Bath ran from October to May. Brighton, patronised by the Prince of Wales, also became fashionable in summertime. Since the social seasons of Bath and Brighton did not overlap, Wade was able to occupy positions in both places, holding the post of Master of Ceremonies at Brighton too from 1767.

In 1777 he was named in divorce proceedings between John Campbell Hooke Esq and Elizabeth Eustatia Campbell Hooke, neé Bassett. Wade was convicted of 'criminal conversation' with Mrs Campbell in the Court of Kings Bench. He lost the post of Master of Ceremonies at Bath because of the scandal but retained it at Brighton.

His father-in-law, Henry Gore, died in the same year,



1777, leaving his estates - including the Mansion at Leatherhead - to William and Catherine. Being 47 miles north of Brighton and close to one of the main routes from there to London, it would have been conveniently close for William to carry out his duties at the south

coast resort.

Following Catherine's death on 26 April 1787, William married the former Elizabeth Campbell Hooke, now a 'single woman' named Elizabeth Eustatia Bassett, on 30 June 1787. They already had a daughter, Georgina Dennison Bassett Wade, who had been born in 1783 and possibly as early as 1777.

William Wade's son, Henry Gore Wade, died at sea in 1814. William's three daughters by Catherine Gore shared in the estate. One of them, Emilia, married Phillip Champion Crespigny (1765-1851) and the couple lived in the Mansion after Henry Gore Wade's death. Emilia died in 1832.

Excavations during restoration work in Leatherhead Parish Church in 2018-19 revealed a surprising footnote. An 18th century brick-domed family vault was expected to contain the Gore family yet just one casket was found inside it, inscribed with the name William Wade. The identification of Catherine's casket nearby was witnessed by the L&DLHS Secretary and Archaeology Secretary.

ORAL HISTORY

ELSIE HAWKINS (1898-1990)

In 1984, EDWINA VARDEY interviewed Mrs Elsie Hawkins whose family ran Hawkins Funeral Directors in Church Street, Leatherhead. It had been established by her late husband and was then taken over by their sons. She had come to Leatherhead working as a servant at Randalls Park and had met her husband at a local dance.

Emma Elsie Malt was born 27 January 1898 in Norwich. She was brought up by her grandparents, Henry and Betsey Malt who had two teenage daughters, one probably Emma's mother. In 1909 she was admitted to the Hospital School in Lakenham and lived there until going into domestic service with a local doctor in 1914. Her grandparents both died shortly afterwards.

She married Leonard Hawkins on 3 June 1922 in Leatherhead. They had three sons: Robert (Dick) born 1924, Bernie born 1928,

and Tony born 1932. They lived at 2 Highlands Road, Leatherhead.

Leonard, who was registered disabled, was a stone-mason and undertaker. He didn't like the name Emma and always called her Elsie. He was one of 17 children. His parents had lived at 55 Kingston Road and the house was still there.

His father was Samuel Charles, a journeyman who walked to London every week and had also worked as a stone-mason. He had helped to build Empress Eugenie's place at Farnborough Hill, the church in Dorking, the chapel at the School for the Blind in Leatherhead, and the Letherhead Institute. Leonard had become a stone-mason too, trained by Samuel in a little shed at the top of the yard at Kingston Road. He later trained their sons Dick and Bernie in the same craft. He had died 24 years earlier in 1959 aged 60.

The undertaking business started in 1934 with one or two funerals a year and without a chapel until 1951. The three boys later helped build that and the Rev Frank Page (Vicar 1944-59) dedicated it. At the time a firm called Granthams were the big local undertakers but they didn't have a chapel either. Hawkins had the first one.

Leonard worked hard because he wanted the boys to have a good living. It was awful as he would still be making the coffins at eight and nine o'clock at night.

Their three sons went to school at Poplar Road. Leatherhead had since changed out of all recognition. Elsie said: 'Used to be a lovely little place. I don't like it. There used to be the High Street. Shinners. Weatons. Then Wakefields bought it. Oh, it's awful now. I don't know why they want to change it.' It was a happy place when she married Leonard. [What would she have thought nearly 40 years later?]

The undertaking business had worked well for the boys but Tony had not liked it and had gone to an office in London. Bernie was unmarried but Dick had four children and she now had eight great grandchildren. Most were nearby in Fetcham and Bookham. One was in Taunton There were lovely twins in Bookham. 'Dick was always disappointed because he didn't have boys but now he's got some grandsons. Lovely kiddies.'

She had met Leonard at a dance in the old picture house, the Victoria Hall. 'We called it the Fleapit. We used to go to the pictures and sit at the back. I don't think they ought to have taken down that lovely

one [The Crescent cinema in Church Street, replaced by today's Leatherhead Theatre.] It was a lovely place. It broke our hearts when they took that down. Dad had arthritis and he used to sit in the front seat, got to the toilet so easy. Why did they want to do it?'

Elsie explained how she had come to be in Leatherhead when she met Leonard. 'I come in service. Cooking, all sorts. I used to be at Randalls Park [working for the Hendersons]. I was in the kitchen with the kitchen maid. My Granny brought me up and I lost her. I didn't want to go in a factory and I didn't want to go in an office so I had to go into service. Started at 14.' That was in a doctor's house.

Service was different, a safe life but she wasn't paid much. 'Bernie had a fit when he knew. Tell you what I have got from the Hendersons. In the music room when we used to go for our pay were all encrusted [carvings]. I've got a bit in the front room. It was pulled down and my husband brought it to me.'

She had not liked Mrs Henderson. 'Three daughters. Frances was the best. The young one. Didn't like Mrs Henderson, no. I suppose [they were good employers] but I had to work hard. I learnt a lot mind you. I don't care what anybody says, you learn a lot in service.

'All about the grouse...pheasants...I used to do them all. The hares and everything. We had quite a staff.....Mrs McClean, the cook, she was the best one but the others weren't much. One of them was a horrid dirty woman. Mrs Henderson heard about her and she pushed her, out you go!

'I don't remember a lot about the servants' hall....but I loved the kitchen maid, she was nice. She went up to London. I went to see her afterwards. She was up at Audley Street. When I think of it, it was fun. Went on the bus.

'I was 24 when I married. I was at Lady Petrie's in Station Road. Used to be a lovely big house. Flats now. She was very strict old lady. I was going out with a young man. We were coming over the Downs at ten o'clock and I should have been in at ten. We had to run like mad. Had to scold him out next day. The lady that used to work there, they give you such a talking to.'

'We lived in Kingston Road when we were first married. When Bernie was born. Dad taught him the trade and then when Granddad died, Len came up to look at this house and he bought it through the

Council.

'Dick lives across Church Road. Bernie has a lovely house next door. We had neighbours there and Wally the husband said one day: "How about buying this house, Bernie?" and he said all right and Bernie bought it and let it. But they were such horrid payers they wouldn't pay. So one day he said: "Mum, I'm going to pull this house to bits and I'm going to have this to myself." He sleeps here. He has made a lovely job of it, with help mind you.'

She went on to talk about Leonard's school days at the former Highlands Road School where one of his brothers, Cecil, had thrown an ink pot at the schoolmaster. Leonard had gone on to serve in the trenches during the First World War and been very cross about the lack of support given to those like him who came out of the Army afterwards. His younger brother Harold had been killed in the war.

Leonard died 24 March 1959, Elsie died 7 August 1990. Bernie died in 1996 in Merton.

OBITUARY GWEN HOAD (1931-2021)

We were all very sad to hear about the death of Gwen Hoad on 24 July. An honoured and very active member of the L&DLHS, she was treasurer of the Friends of Leatherhead Museum for many years and also used to enjoy Monday morning piano duet playing sessions with her great friend, the late L&DLHS President, Linda Heath.

Gwen Hoad was quiet, self-effacing, determined, hard-working, contained and loyal. She loved her garden, birds and nature, the coast, music, history, art, reading and photography. She was a great collector and a great researcher. Items she collected were often catalogued as she was the consummate librarian.

Gwen was born in Folkestone and brought up in various south coast towns, ending at Brighton. An only child, she learned to play the piano to a high standard. She went to Worthing High School for Girls where her real love turned out to be history. After school, she



Above: Gwen with her friend and fellow pianist, the late Linda Heath, L&DLHS President and Chairman, in 2011.

trained as a librarian at Winchester College, and having qualified, worked at Brighton library, then part of the Royal Pavilion complex.

Through her love of classical music she met and in 1953 married Victor Hoad. They had three children, Hillary, Christopher and Bridget. They inherited a house in Windsor from Gwen's grandmother, later moving successively to Tolworth, Worcester Park and eventually to Ashtead where she remained for the rest of her life.

When ready to return to work after the children grew up, she got a job with the Inland Revenue in the office of the Inspector of Foreign Dividends at Hinchley Wood, and remained there until retirement.

Victor was a church organist and choirmaster in his spare time and Gwen shared his interest in churches both in England and abroad, especially Germany. After Victor's death in 2000, she remained involved with the East Surrey Organists' Association as well as travelling extensively overseas and within England to visit Bridget and her daughters Emilia and Mandy, their partners, and later Mandy's children, Poppy and Harley.

Gwen studied Ordnance Survey maps, amassing a large historical collection. She was also a fine photographer, winning many competitions at her camera club in Cheam where she also became chairman and treasurer. Meticulous and conscientious, she was always highly valued by the many organisations she volunteered for. These included the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship, Civil Service Pensioners Alliance, Leatherhead Community Association, and of course the L&DLHS and Friends of Leatherhead Museum.

Her interest in local history is legendary. She spent long hours researching the area, including the former farm on which her own home was built. When told she would be going into Kingswood Court care home, she knew all about its history too.

Gwen was a trustee of the Leatherhead Community Association, particularly helping with library and music afternoons and displays for Heritage Open Days. She also regularly gave illustrated talks on classical music, researching and writing her script and selecting and assembling works on CDs to play for the audience.

She was a long-term member of the National Trust, frequently visiting Polesden Lacey, and supported many other charities including the Wildlife Trust and Animal Aid. She was a member of the Pier Society which reflected her interest in historic seaside towns.

Her health began to deteriorate in the last two years and she was eventually diagnosed with lung cancer although a non-smoker. The pandemic stopped her many activities but she was quietly courageous throughout during this period. Sadly her move to Kingswood Court came just two days before her death. She left the Society many books and a great deal of historical material.

OBITUARY JOHN WETTERN (1925-2021)

John Wettern, one of the Society's most dedicated former officers, died on 22 August at Hartfield House care home, Leatherhead. To the very end he remained committed to local history by donating to the Museum an extraordinary hand-written notebook recording minute details of his household and other expenditure between 1958 and 1984 when his family lived in Hillingdon



and then Epsom. His last private home was in The Green, Fetcham, where he had photographed the estate's original building development in what had been the last farmland separating Fetcham from Bookham.

John was first co-opted on to the L&DLHS Executive Committee in November 1999 as *Newsletter* Editor, holding the role until late 2002 and again from 2006-2007. But this was only a small part of his work for the Society and the Museum over many years. A natural communicator, he always used his best endeavours to promote and publicise both of them and he held other prominent posts too.

As chairman of the Friends of the Museum, he worked to improve the quality of publicity for the Museum and helped produce the first ever colour leaflet advertising its attractions for visitors. It was a major success. He also supported production of an information pack for local schools and warmly encouraged the Museum stewards, listening to their views and maximising their social interaction.

He participated too in the wider British Association of Friends of Museums and in 2003 was involved with others in transferring the census records on to computer, covering Leatherhead, Ashtead, Fetcham and Bookham. Together with St Mary's parish records, these helped build up a history of local families from 1841-1900.

In the years between and after editing the *Newsletter* himself he reported on Society trips, talks and Museum displays. He later also served as programme committee chairman until retiring in July 2018.







Above and left: Aspects of the life and interests of polymath John Wettern.

At the time he was still also campaigning for an increased role for corporate membership of the Society and had he been able, would undoubtedly have devoted every effort to recruiting local businesses to help fund the Society.

John was a true polymath, multilingual and with an interest in and knowledge of an amazing range of subjects. Brought up in Croydon, he was fascinated by aviation but served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 and later used his immense knowledge of railways to create his own models. He met his wife, a nurse, after the war. They had four children, all of whom were always devoted to him.

He was an astute entrepreneur. His firm Wettern Brothers developed from a builders merchants into a production company manufacturing concrete, pipes and street furniture. It went public but was eventually taken over and John retired to concentrate on his many hobbies which included music as well as history, archaeology and geology.

John's son-in-law, Rev Ken Chalmers, led the service at his funeral at Randalls Park on 16 September. Eulogies were read by John's son Tom and daughters Jane, Louise and Juliette. Even during his last three years in the nursing home he had continued his lifelong ability to make friends easily.

Of his work for the L&DLHS, Tom said: 'He relished that time and the fellowship of you all. It was one of the highlights of his life.' Said Juliette: 'He could talk to anyone about anything.'

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No 1175119

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Website: www.leatherheadhistory.org Online Archive: www.ldlhsarchive.co.uk

Museum (Hampton Cottage): Reopening April-December Thursdays and Fridays 1pm - 4pm and Saturdays 10am-4pm

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Archival Material

The Society's archival material including documents, illustrations and maps, may be accessed through the following members:

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Historical Enquiry Service

Submitted via the Museum or by members. Please use the relevant email address in the Archival Material list above.

Kirby Library (Letherhead Institute)

Please contact the Secretary for information before visiting.

ANTHONY HILL PAINTINGS FOR SALE

In 2019 the Museum held an exhibition of nearly 70 paintings by

the late local artist, Anthony Hill.

It attracted many visitors. The principal donor was Anthony's son Nick, who lent the Museum a wealth of material. He has recently donated another eight paintings which were put up for sale to raise funds jointly for the Museum and the parish church.

They included those shown here, none of local scenes but still conveying the peaceful ambience of our beautiful part of Surrey.





DORKING CONCERTGOERS AT THE DORKING HALLS

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Sunday 16 January 2022 Martineau Hall 3.00pm

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Sunday 6 February 2022 Martineau Hall 3.00pm **Haydn** String Quartet in D minor, Op.103

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