

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Registered Charity No 802409

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21 Kingston Hse Gdns
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NEWSLETTER 2/93

MAY 1993

46th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 19 MARCH 1993

Sixty-six members attended the AGM. The papers as presented were accepted. The previous Committee were all willing to carry on for another year and were re-elected by the meeting. A list of their names and addresses is enclosed for your retention.

The Acting Curator of the Museum, Mrs Janet Goldsmith, was elected Curator by the meeting. We wish her well now that she is officially confirmed as Curator.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM 1994

At the AGM, the proposed increase in subscription to £8 single, £12 Husband & Wife, was approved and the increase will take effect with the subscriptions due on 1 January 1994. The decision to ask for an increase of a relatively large amount was not taken lightly by the Committee, and the reasons for it were fully explained in the February 1993 Newsletter.

After the increase was approved by the meeting, a member suggested that OAPs and the unemployed should pay a lesser subscription. The President asked the Committee to consider this. The Committee have considered this but regret that it is not a proposal they could recommend to the members, although they recognise there may be a very few cases where the new subscriptions cause hardship.

1993 SUBSCRIPTIONS

There are still quite a lot of 1993 subscriptions outstanding. A personal note to all the members concerned is enclosed with their Newsletter. We do hope they will all continue to support the Society.

May we also stress again, that there is NO Life Membership of the Society - only of the Friends of Leatherhead Museum.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome these new members who have joined us since the last Newsletter was issued:

John Bloxham - Leatherhead

Mrs G Callow - Ashted
Miss S Evans - Ashted

GIFT OF ANTIQUE BOOKS

We have have been extremely fortunate in receiving a most generous gift from Mary Gollin, who has presented the Society with about twenty of Geoffrey Gollin's superb collection of antique books on Surrey towns and villages. These books are, in every sense, a most valuable addition to our library and will enormously enhance our collection. We are planning to produce a new catalogue of our library shortly: these books will be included in it, each one being inscribed with the name of the donor. Our warmest thanks to Mrs Gollin for this handsome donation to the Society - there could be no more fitting memorial to Geoffrey Gollin than these books he loved so much.

OLD PROCEEDINGS

If you have any unwanted copies of the Society's Proceedings, we should be very pleased to have them: please don't throw them away, but return them to any member of the Committee or to the Museum. Linda Heath is particularly anxious to obtain a copy of 1970, Vol. 3 No. 4 and any volumes before 1966.

A REQUEST FROM THE LECTURE SECRETARY -

It is my responsibility to maintain the Society's collection of slides for the use of the Society's team of speakers. Surprisingly, we have only a relatively meagre selection of slides relating to the Bookhams. I should be very glad to see any slides (or prints and postcards) of whatever vintage, depicting Bookham buildings, views, or personalities, which members may have in their possession. I could then discuss with those concerned the possibility of retaining or copying some of the items. Although Bookham is my immediate concern, I should be grateful for slides or pictures of the other parishes, particularly Fetcham. If you can help, please telephone me: Norman West, Bookham 454979.

SURREY LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL

The following is an extract from the April 1993 Newsletter of the Surrey Local History Council:

"This year the Symposium will be held at the University on Saturday, 13 November, on the subject of 1000 YEARS OF ROYALTY IN SURREY, and full details will be given with the August Newsletter. Sadly the University have again raised their fees. We would have liked to have found a cheaper hall, but have been unsuccessful. Suggestions for a venue for 1994 are welcome. We will require seating for 300 people and space for exhibits."

Any suggestions on accommodation should be sent to the Secretary, Mrs G M Crocker, Surrey Local History Council, c/o The Guildford Institute of the University of Surrey, Ward Street, Guildford GU1 4LH.

PROGRAMME

Saturday, 12 June - Visit to Christ's Hospital, Horsham.
We arrive at 12.30pm to see the procession in to lunch at 12.45pm of all 850 students dressed in their uniform of bluecoats and yellow stockings, and accompanied by the school brass band. There will then be time to eat our own picnic lunch, either in the coach or in the school grounds (but not Main Quadrangle) before a guided tour of part of the school, followed by tea in the Sports Centre - a cream tea has been arranged. We leave about 4pm.

Pick up points and times for the coach (a 35-seater) are:

Bookham - By the Parish Church, Lower Road	11.15
Fetcham - Lower Road, by The Street	11.20
Leatherhead - Leret Way: Bus stop opposite Swan Centre Car Park	11.25
Ashtead - New Post Office (ex Sweet Things)	11.30

The cost is £9-50 and a booking form is enclosed.

FRIDAY

Saturday, 2 July - Visit to Tenterden, Kent

This visit has been arranged John Read, one of our members who, with his wife Mollie, now lives in Tenterden. Many thanks for all the trouble he has taken and the literature he has provided for us.

The coach will arrive at Tenterden Station at 11am, and facilities for coffee etc are available there before we leave by the Victorian train of the Kent and East Surrey Railway for a round trip to Northiam - the views in both directions are superb. This Branch line finally closed in 1961. It was purchased by the Tenterden Railway Company in 1973, who started restoration and in stages have re-opened the line, the last stretch being to Northiam in 1990. They plan to take the line still further.

Having returned to Tenterden, you will be left to explore and have lunch as you please. (If you want to save time, the Railway Company has no objection to picnics being eaten on the train.) Tenterden is basically one long street and everything is very easy to find with the aid of the guides you will be given. Friday is market day, so the town will be busy.

At 3.30pm, we are the guests of John Read for a tour of the Museum, which is by the station. Our guide will be the Curator, Dr Burgess.

There will be time for tea before the coach leaves from the Museum at 5.30pm.

Pick up times and places are:

Bookham - By the Parish Church, Lower Road	9.00
Fetcham - Lower Road, by The Street	9.05
Leatherhead - Leret Way: Bus stop opposite Swan Centre Car Park	9.10
Ashtead - New Post Office (ex Sweet Things)	9.15

and a coach for 35 has been arranged. The cost for the visit is £10-50 which covers the coach journey and the railway fare only - please make your own arrangements for food. A booking slip is enclosed.

Saturday, 17 July - Bookham Walk

Last year's Bookham walk was so popular that quite a few members were unable to take part. We have therefore persuaded Mr Fortescue to escort another one.

Meet at 2.15pm at the Yehudi Menuhin School of Music: Millfield, at the North End of Great Bookham Common. Park in the drive as indicated. At 3pm we are due at Sole Farm House, Church Road, Great Bookham (Dr & Mrs Harrison). Park on the downhill side of the Farm House. At 3.45pm we visit Foxglove Cottage, Little Bookham Street (Mr & Mrs Rapley), one of the oldest inhabited sites in Bookham. Park in Maddox Lane, Burnham Road or Little Bookham Street.

The cost is £1 and a booking slip is enclosed.

Saturday, 18 September - Visit to Winchester

This visit includes a guided tour of the Cathedral in the morning and of Winchester College in the afternoon. The programme will be:

Coach leaves:

Bookham: By the Parish Church, Lower Road	8.30am
Fetcham: Lower Road, by The Street	8.35
Leatherhead: Leret Way, Bus stop opposite Swan Centre Car Park	8.40
Ashtead: New Post Office (ex Sweet Things)	8.45

Arrive Winchester	approx 10.00
Tour of Cathedral (one hour)	10.30
Tour of Winchester College (one hour)	12.15
Coach leaves Winchester	4.30
Arrive home	approx 6.00pm

Please make your own arrangements for lunch and tea.

Charges are shown on the application form. The guided tours will be limited to 40 people, but a 53 seater coach is being hired and any members who would like to "come for the ride" and plan their own sightseeing in Winchester, are welcome to

do so. There are several Museums in the city, all within walking distance of our coach stop. Similarly you need not feel committed to both guided tours. Please indicate your options on the application form.

Closing date for applications will be 1 September, but places will be allotted in order of application.

The visit is being organised by David Ellis, telephone 372509, who will be pleased to answer any questions about it.

NEWS OF THE FRIENDS OF LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM

Friday, 4 June - Annual General Meeting

The Friends are holding their AGM on Friday, 4 June, in Room G6 at the Leatherhead Institute at 7.30 for 8pm. If you are already a Friend, papers for the meeting are enclosed with this Newsletter. If you are not, you will find a letter inviting you to become a Friend! The Museum needs much help and the more Friends we have - particularly if they can give some time to assisting with various projects - the better Museum we shall have. It would be magnificent if every Society member was also a Friend.

The Friends have arranged a programme of three fund-raising events this year:

Thursday, 17 June - "The Famous & Infamous of Leatherhead".

A talk by Edwina Vardey, who needs no introduction: she is the Editor of "A History of Leatherhead" published by the Society, and as we know from experience, a most interesting and amusing speaker. Tickets at the door only: £2-50. Come early to make sure of a seat. Coffee at 7.30pm for talk at 8pm.

Wednesday, 4 August - Coffee Morning

A coffee morning bring and buy sale and raffle will be held from 10.30am - 12.00 at Linda and David Heath's house - 5 St John's Avenue, Leatherhead (NOTE: St John's AVENUE, off Garlands Road, not St John's ROAD leading to the hospital). If the weather is fine, it will be held in the garden. Gifts for the raffle and bring-and-buy items may be taken there in advance (labelled accordingly) and will be much appreciated. Do please support this event and give it as much publicity as you can.

Friday, 8 October - A talk on Bookham by Stephen Fortescue, at the Old Barn Hall, Bookham. Title and details in the next Newsletter.

Friends' Visit - This year's visit will be in October to Whitehall, and the Lumley Chapel, Cheam. Details in next Newsletter.

THE SOCIETY'S RECORDS

Even a few minutes spent in looking through the Society's records can produce some gems of information. This one bears the reference LX.054:

SERICULTURE IN LEATHERHEAD

A summary from "So Spins the Silkworm" by Lady Hart-Dyke, published by Rockliff, Salisbury Square, London, 1940.

Lady Hart-Dyke started her silkworm factory in 1932 in two attics of "The Wilderness" near Leatherhead. She had lived there since her marriage in 1922, and she and Sir Oliver had enlarged the house to accommodate their family of two sons and a daughter.

"Our neighbours were all about the same age as ourselves, and as the majority of the husbands departed about nineish, Citywards, the wives ran their households, played golf and tennis, rode and swam, in a gay group."

Lady Hart-Dyke purchased 5000 silkworm eggs. "I think the whole of Leatherhead knew about those eggs - the bush telephone was not in it..... my leg was pulled unmercifully."

The eggs hatched. The silkworms came to maturity and spun their cocoons. The chrysalids were then stifled in the kitchen oven and the silk spun on a hand-reeler - and subsequently on a much larger machine installed by Sir Oliver Hart-Dyke in the large garage at The Wilderness. Eventually the rearing of larger quantities of silkworms needed more space, and was transferred to Sir Oliver's ancestral home at Lullingstone Castle. Before the transfer was complete Lady Hart-Dyke had difficulties in stifling her cocoons, for which her kitchen oven was now far too small. She persuaded a Leatherhead baker "to do the fell deed in the bread ovens the following Saturday night after baking the bread. I duly arrived at the back of the bakery just after midnight,....In went my cocoons. After half an hour I asked for one oven door to be opened so that I could test a cocoon. A well remembered odour arose and filled the bakery. I honestly thought the poor baker would die on the spot....it took us about six hours to stifle those cocoons....I left an exhausted man in a somewhat stuffy bakery as dawn broke...The secret was well kept... had the local inhabitants had the slightest suspicion of the curious baking that had taken place that night, I think my friend would have lost many of his customers."

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Registered Charity No 802409

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE FOR 1993/94

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