

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 3/86

AUGUST 1986

NEW MEMBERS

We are very pleased to welcome the following two new members who have joined since the last Newsletter was issued:

Mrs S Warner and Samantha Inglethorpe (Junior)

They are both from Fetcham.

LIST OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE FOR 1986

Enclosed is a revised list of the Society's Officers and Committee for 1986. Some members unfortunately received an incomplete list with the last Newsletter.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERIES

Bookham & Effingham

To our regret, Mr & Mrs John Gilbert are shortly leaving the district. Between them they have done a very great deal for the Society, including the delivery of all the Newsletters for the Bookham and Effingham areas. Are there any volunteers to take over this delivery as from the November/December Newsletter? If we can find someone to take charge of the delivery, it should be possible to find assistants within the area. Would anyone who can help, in however small a way, please get in touch with Mr Gilbert on Bookham 54956. (He will be away on holiday from 27 August to 8 September.)

Ashtead

Volunteers are needed to deliver Newsletters in the Crampshaw Lane and Grays Lane areas. If you can help, please contact Miss Joan Holman, the main Ashtead deliverer. Her address is 20 Forest Way, Ashtead, telephone Ashtead 74593.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

All Day Visit to Lewes - Saturday, 6 September

All details and a booking form for this visit were enclosed with the last Newsletter. There are still a few places available if you have not yet made your booking.

The Dallaway Lecture - Friday, 17 October

This lecture will be given by Dr David Bird, the Surrey County Archaeological Officer, whose subject is "Ten Years of Rescue Archaeology in Surrey".

The venue is the Lecture Hall of the City of London Freeman's School in Ashtead Park, by kind permission of the Headmaster, Mr M Kemp. Coffee will be served at 7.45pm before the lecture, which will start at 8.15pm. Questions will follow immediately after the lecture.

The November and December meetings will be held at the Red Cross Hall, Oaks Close, Leatherhead. Coffee will be served at 7.45pm and the lecture start shortly after 8pm. During coffee any necessary items about the Society or its activities will be announced.

FRIDAY, 7 NOVEMBER - "Water Supplies in the Leatherhead Area"

This talk will be given by Mr W A Bryan of the East Surrey Water Company.

FRIDAY, 13 DECEMBER - "Christmas Miscellany"

Our annual evening of short talks given by members themselves. We need as wide a range of subjects as possible, and if you feel able to contribute please get in touch with Dr D F Renn on Bookham 54880.

(N B. At the Annual General Meeting we talked of having our Christmas Miscellany at the Letherhead Institute. It has not been possible to arrange this - so we shall, as in previous years, hold it at the Red Cross Hall.)

SATURDAY, 18 OCTOBER - "Bygone Oxshott & Leatherhead"

Enclosed is a notice of a talk on "Bygone Oxshott and Leatherhead" being arranged by the Friends of Leatherhead Museum. Tickets are £1-50 obtainable from Cradlers (Jewellers), High Street, Leatherhead, or by post from Mr Crossland whose address is on the booking form.

By now these talks are famous and tickets are bound to be in great demand. We suggest you get yours as soon as you possibly can.

"THE STORY OF HAMPTON COTTAGE"

The Society's above new publication should be on sale by late September, in the Museum. The history of the people who have lived there over the centuries has been written by Mary Rice-Oxley. The book also contains the story of its purchase and restoration, and descriptions of the building, the garden and the well. It is priced at £1 per copy.

LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM OPEN DAY - From David Bruce

In order that members of the Society, the volunteer Stewards, and "Friends of the Museum" may have an opportunity of meeting each other and the Curator and Officers of the Society, it has been suggested that it would be nice if we had an Open Day at the Museum.

Sunday, 21 September seems to be as good a day as any, and the Museum will be open from 10.30am until 5pm or thereabouts, for anyone to pop in and have a chat (and maybe a cup of coffee). All will be welcome to stay as long (or as short) as they like.

"SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY VISITS LEATHERHEAD" - From David Bruce

The following report appeared in the November 1890 issue of "The Antiquary":

"At the annual summer excursion the members of the Surrey Archaeological Society visited Bookham, Slyfield, Stoke D'Abernon and Leatherhead. Little Bookham Church was described by Mr A J Styles, ARIBA, and Great Bookham Church by Major Heales, FSA. In the latter church are two remarkably fine sculptured monuments, one of Robertus Shiers, of Slyfield, 1668, and the other of Sir Thomas More, of Polesden, 1735. The former residence of Madame D'Arblay (nee Fanny Burney) was visited, and a most interesting paper read by the owner, Mr Thomas Bensfield, giving a full account of the connection with Surrey of the talented authoress of "Evelina" and "Camilla". Slyfield Manor was very fully described by Mr Ralph Nevill, FSA, FRIBA; and the carved brickwork, fine oak staircase, and exquisite moulded ceilings, were the subject of much interest and admiration. In Stoke D'Abernon

Church, which is a thirteenth-century edifice, is the celebrated brass to Sir John D'Abernon, 1277, said to be the oldest in England. Mr Mill Stephenson, the secretary of the society, read a paper on the sacred building, drawing special attention to the groined roof - sixteenth century chantry of Sir John Norbury - Jacobean pulpit, and remarkable brasses. The Rev F P Phillips permitted the company to inspect his unrivalled collection of Morlands, and after dining together the company dispersed at Leatherhead."

One gets a vivid picture of a flock of earnest frock-coated gentlemen and their ladies being driven around the area in a fleet (or should it be a clatter?) of horse-drawn carriages, but one must admire their devotion to duty - it was quite a programme.

In contrast, about 30 of their modern counterparts visited Leatherhead on 30 April 1986, foregathering for coffee in the Leatherhead Museum before being led by Messrs Smith and Fortescue to the Parish Church, with at least one party managing to penetrate as far as Thorncroft Manor. Ah, they don't make 'em like they did in the old days! However, their very generous donation to the Museum of £25 is gratefully acknowledged. I wonder what type of vehicle they will use when they visit us again in 100 years time?

ASHTEAD POTTERY - From David Bruce

No doubt many members will have seen the coverage given in the Leatherhead Advertiser to my enquiry concerning an unusual piece of Ashtead Pottery brought into the Museum for identification. It takes the form of a medieval jug or mug of baluster shape, but made to resemble an archaeological specimen which had been found in fragments and roughly stuck together again. Mr LeMottee has kindly provided us with drawings of various London-type Ware medieval pots, several of which have one or more of the features of the pot brought in to us.

ROSARY LEATHER MILLS, ASHTEAD - From David Bruce

Following the item in the last Newsletter, and a small piece in the Leatherhead Advertiser, several contributions have been received. The Local Studies Library, at Guildford Library, sent us an extract from a map of 1915 showing The Rosary alongside the railway on a site now occupied by Woodfield Close. Mr Gollin provided much detail culled presumably from various directories which established the name of the firm as being Swabey & Saunders, which ties in with a brief mention on Page 99 of "Ashtead - A Village Transformed". It would appear that the project was started by two Ashtead men in 1911, and continued until the middle 1920's. One resident of Woodfield Close recalls a house there having the foundations dug for a garage, and the builders being somewhat nonplussed by coming across 6' deep concrete pits, probably the curing pits for the skins. She has photographs to prove it. Another local resident distinctly recalled the smell from the works. No doubt other local residents may have memories or knowledge of these works, which members might like to track down. For example, was there any connection between the Rosary Leather Mills and the Rosary tea-shop and sweet shop in The Street, Ashtead?

THE WOODLANDS PARK ESTATE AND LEATHERHEAD COURT - From David Ellis

(The writer recently compiled a brief history of Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for the Disabled, which operates the Training College at Leatherhead Court. The following information about the land and buildings is of interest.)

At the beginning of the present century the Woodlands Park Estate, nearly 500 acres in size, extended from the River Mole to Oxshott and included the land between Woodlands Road and the present Oaklawn Road (then called Pachesham Road). The house, now Woodlands Park Hotel, was built in 1885 for a Mr F C Bryant, one of the sons of the founders of Bryant & May; on his death in 1897 it was briefly occupied by Mr M D Rucker, who sold it in 1900 to Mr J W Benson.

It is not clear from the available records when Leatherhead Court was built, or for what purpose. The date 1897, which is inscribed on the clock tower, does not satisfactorily fit in with the dates mentioned above; the weather-vane over the tower, in the shape of a fox, seems to confirm oral tradition that a local pack of hounds was kennelled at Leatherhead Court, and by inference the allied tradition may be correct that the house was a kind of hunting lodge designed to accommodate houseparties who visited the owner for meets of foxhounds, hunt balls and other social occasions; the servants, grooms and horses would likewise have been accommodated within the premises, and this accounts for their scale. Whatever the exact date of the buildings and their purpose, it is clear that such a role was short-lived, for in 1904 they were leased, with 10 acres of land, by Mr Benson to Miss Martha Wood Tullis and from then until 1933 Leatherhead Court was a girls' school. A directory of Leatherhead dated 1911 describes it as a "ladies' school" and a directory of 1932 describes it as a "high class school for young ladies". When the school closed in 1933 the property was acquired by the Trustees of the London and District Training College for Cripples (renamed, in 1941, Queen Elizabeth's Training College for the Disabled).

Woodlands Park and the rest of the estate were acquired from Mr Benson by Mr E L Ralli, either just before or just after the 1914-18 war. The Ralli family lived there until 1929, and the estate was then broken up. During the 1930s the house was a high class private hotel, and on the outbreak of war in 1939 was acquired by Middlesex County Council as an old people's home. With the formation of the Greater London Council it was taken over by the London Borough of Haringey, who converted it into a residential education centre in 1975. This was closed in 1980 as a result of economies in local authority spending, and the house again became a hotel.

Some of the former Woodlands Park Estate was acquired by the Training College. About 10½ acres of land to the south-east of the College were bought from a private owner in 1944. Some accommodation was built on this land between 1950 and 1970. The southern part of this area is now crossed by the M25 motorway. A further 8.3 acres, comprising additional fields to the north-west of Leatherhead Court, were bought in 1948 from Oxshott Developments Limited. The College thus became the successor to a small part of the original Woodlands Park Estate.

INDEX OF SURREY PROBATE INVENTORIES

16th - 19th centuries.

Compiled by Joan Holman and Marion Herridge and published by the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) 1986.

6,000 references - 200 pages - strong binding and cover - cost £5.

Further information from Joan Holman on Ashted 74593.

JOYCE FULLER

Friends of the Leatherhead Museum

BY GONE OXSHOTT
and Leatherhead

The Friends of the Leatherhead Museum invite you to join them at 7.30pm in the Oxshott Village Centre, Holtwood Road, Oxshott on Saturday, 18 October 1986 for a nostalgic journey through Oxshott & Leatherhead, as they were in days gone by.

In addition to slides of the two places in the past, described by Stephen Fortescue & Ernest Crossland, Freda Crawford will show views of the recent changes in Leatherhead.

Coffee and biscuits will be served during the interval which will also give time to view a selection of the exhibits to be seen at the Museum, and photographs of the recent work done on the Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Ermyn Way, Ashted (the former Goblin factory).

Admission will be by ticket (price £1-50) only, which may be obtained by personal application to Cradlers House (Jewellers) Ltd, 41 High Street, Leatherhead, or from Ernest Crossland, Oldberrow, Clock House Mead, Steels Lane, Oxshott, or by post using the slip below.

All the profits will be used to improve the facilities of the Museum in Hampton Cottage, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead, which is open FREE on Fridays from 10am to 1pm and on Saturdays from 10am to 4pm between April and mid December.

To: E A Crossland, Oldberrow, Clock House Mead, Oxshott,
Leatherhead KT22 0RW.

Please send _____ tickets at £1-50 each to:

Name: (Block letters please) _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

I enclose cheque for £ _____ (made payable to Friends of Leatherhead Museum) and a stamped addressed envelope for the reply.

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE FOR 1986

<u>APPOINTMENT</u>	<u>NAME AND ADDRESS</u>	<u>TELEPHONE</u>
President	J G W Lewarne, 69 Cobham Road, Fetcham KT22 9HT	L 373736
Vice-President	S E D Fortescue, 56 The Mount, Fetcham KT22 9EA	L 372847
Vice-President & Editor	Dr D F Renn, FSA, 7 Burrows Close, Gt Bookham KT23 3HB	B 54880
Chairman	L A Smith, MBE, Hazeldene, Glebe Rd, Ashtead KT21 2NT	A 75466
Secretary & Mem- bership Secretary	Miss J Fuller, 6 Siddons House, Howard Close, Ashtead KT21 1DY	A 77876
Treasurer	H J Mears, Beverley, 43 The Glade, Fetcham KT22 9TB	B 53071
Museum Treasurer	J R Bull, 98 Woodfield Lane, Ashtead KT21 2DP	A 72800
Museum Curator	D Bruce, 7 Fox Lane, Little Bookham KT23 3AT	B 58722
Record Secretary	E Marsh, Chandelle, Orestan Lane, Effingham	B 53433
Sales Secretary	G Hayward, Ypriana, 173B Cobham Road, Fetcham KT22 9JE	L 372674
Library Secretary	J R Gilbert, 34 Green Acres, Great Bookham KT23 3NQ	B 54956
Archaeology Sec- retary	E A Crossland, ISO, Oldberrow, 13 Clockhouse Mead, Oxshott KT22 ORW	O 2589
Lecture Secretary	N H West, MBE, 2 Beech Close, Effingham	B 54979
Committee Members	Mrs L Heath 5 St John's Avenue, Leatherhead KT22 7HT	L 372603
	R A Lever, ED, BSc, FLS, 51 Links Road, Ashtead KT21 2HL	A 72895
	S R C Poulter, Malham, Guildford Road, Gt Bookham KT23 4LY	B 58844

A = Ashtead B = Bookham L = Leatherhead O = Oxshott