

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER 4/87

DECEMBER 1987

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined us over the past few months:

Mr & Mrs C Chater - Ashtead
Mr & Mrs H A Day - Fetcham
Mr M D Dunn - Claygate, Esher
Mrs J Hamilton-Sneath - Leatherhead
Mr & Mrs G W Wilson - Ashtead

MR H J MEARS - From L A Smith, Chairman

Members will be sad to hear that after eleven years in office, Mr Harry Mears has resigned as our Treasurer on leaving the district.

I am sure everyone will agree that Harry has done a first class job throughout his period of office, keeping a firm grip on our finances and maintaining detailed statistics on most of our activities. His book-keeping was meticulous and the time spent was consequently considerable. He was rarely without an answer to the many awkward questions asked by his colleagues.

We are very sorry to lose Harry as Treasurer, but I am glad to say that he will remain as a member of the Society and a friend to many of us who have worked with him over the years. We all wish him and his wife every happiness in their new abode at Ferring-on-Sea.

STEVE POULTER

We are also very sorry to lose from the Committee, Steve Poulter who served for many years. His interests are wide and his knowledge and energy made him a valuable Committee member. For some time recently he was also a member of the Programme Sub-Committee and was responsible for arranging many of our lectures and visits.

We hope that he and his wife will have many years of happiness in their new home in Dorchester - and we are glad that he too is remaining a member of the Society.

TREASURER

The Committee are pleased to announce that following Mr Mears' resignation, their invitation to Mr Edwin Marsh to become Treasurer was accepted by him with immediate effect.

Mr Marsh's address is: Chandelle, Orestan Lane, Effingham KT24 5SN, telephone Bookham 53433, and all matters relating to Society finances should now be directed to him.

RECORD SECRETARY

As a result of Mr Marsh becoming Treasurer, he will be giving up his job as Records Secretary. The Chairman would be pleased to hear from any member who would be interested in filling this office, which is a very important one, but not arduous. It mainly involves liaison between the Committee and the Record Keepers in the four parishes of Ashtead, the Bookhams, Fetcham and Leatherhead. If anyone would like to know more about the work involved, the Chairman would be very happy to explain.

1988 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 1988 are due on 2 January 1988 at the increased rates agreed at the AGM last year, ie: ordinary members £5, "Husband & Wife" £7-50, Juniors £1 (unchanged).

A remittance form is enclosed.

Would those members who pay by Banker's Order please ensure that their instructions to their Banks are changed so that we receive the correct amount.

"FRIENDS OF THE LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM"

Subscriptions of £1 for all "Friends of the Leatherhead Museum" are also due on 2 January 1988. If you are, or would like to be, a "Friend", your subscription can be paid with that for the Society. Only one cheque is needed payable to Leatherhead and District Local History Society - all subscriptions for the Friends will be transferred to them in bulk by the Society's Treasurer. There is a space on the remittance form for these subscriptions.

LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM - From David Bruce

The number of visitors to the Museum on any one day is very unpredictable; the same factor can be cited as a reason for a large or small attendance. For example, it is said that rain keeps people away, but it can also be said that more people come in seeking temporary shelter from the rain! However, it would appear that on the whole attendances this year have increased significantly, and this may well be due to the publicity we are now receiving in the "Surrey Museums" leaflet, and in a number of commercial county "What to see" or "Where to go" booklets or guides, in which we get a free entry. No opportunity for such publicity should be missed, so if any member knows of any publication or list in which our Museum should be featured, please let David Bruce know on Bookham 58722.

The current special exhibition on "The River Mole and its Swallow Holes" will stay in place until we close at Christmas. We shall reopen in April with a large wall exhibition dealing with the story of the schools of Leatherhead and Ashted. The Society has a number of objects which will also be displayed, such as school slates, inkpots, books etc, but more items will be required to make the presentation more real. If any member has anything which they think would be suitable, such as an old School Report, details of a local prize giving (or even one of the prizes) or, perish the thought, a cane, and which they would be prepared to lend to the Museum for exhibition, David Bruce would be pleased to hear about it.

Funds for the Museum.

Visitors to the Museum may have seen in the bottom front room a box containing second-hand books for sale. Many of these were rescued from another stall at the end of this year's Mole Valley Show, and have raised nearly £10 for Museum funds. If any member has any surplus books, paperback or hard back, which they feel would sell, please bring them along to the Museum. They will be gratefully received.

Tools

Someone has "borrowed" the pair of pincers from the tool box in the top back room. Will they please return them as soon as possible, since they are essential when it comes to changing the wall displays, and removing the

staples from the display boards. If anyone has a pair of pincers surplus to requirements" a spare pair would be most welcome, in case the original pair doesn't return or goes on a "walkabout" again.

Stewards

On one or two occasions lately, the Museum has had to remain closed because of lack of Stewards. This is most regrettable since it may be that a member of the public had travelled a considerable distance in order to visit the Museum, only to be disappointed. More Stewards for the regular rota are required, and just as important, volunteers who would be willing to join an "emergency" list, only to be approached by Joe Parry (Friday opening - Leatherhead 375359) or Ralph Hume (Saturday openings - Leatherhead 374520) if every other idea of swapping duties has been exhausted. Please, please seriously consider whether you could possibly give, at the very most, three hours of your time once a month, or, on the emergency list, probably only three hours a year! Surely that is not too much to ask of a member of a History Society. Give Joe or Ralph a ring.

THE LIBRARY - From Liam Sumpton

The Society receives Newsletters from a number of organisations in this area. They are now stored in the Library of the Leatherhead Institute in a conspicuous red box file. The file is on the third shelf down in the bay allotted to the Society nearest to the window.

The Newsletters of each organisation are contained in a folder or sub-file within the box file, as follows:

1. Surrey Archaeological Society (SAS)
2. Nonsuch Antiquarian Society (Epsom, Ewell, Cheam, Sutton and Banstead)
3. Esher District Local History Society
4. Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society
5. The British Association for Local History; and the Leatherhead Community Association.

It is intended to retain each item (unless a request is made to the contrary or unless it is obviously of special interest) for a period of twelve months only, when it will be replaced on a rotation basis.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

All meetings will be held on Fridays in the Dixon (Large) Hall at the Leatherhead Institute at 7.45pm for 8pm. There will be a charge of 20p each for members, and 50p for non-members, both inclusive of coffee. THIS IS A CHARGE FOR ATTENDING THE MEETING AND APPLIES TO EVERYONE PRESENT.

HELP! Would members please be kind enough to help put out and put away the chairs used at the meetings. It doesn't take long if we all do a bit.

15 JANUARY 1988 - "Travellers to Epsom Wells"

An illustrated talk to be given by Mr Maurice Exwood who is a member of this Society and of the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society.

19 FEBRUARY 1988 - "The Civil War in Leatherhead"

This talk will be given by Mr Jack Stuttard. He is a member of this Society and has been involved in writing the 17th century section of the forthcoming "History of Leatherhead".

18 MARCH 1988 - The Society's "Slides"

We now have a large collection of slides which are kept by our Lecture Secretary, Mr Norman West. Many of them have been produced by Mr Ralph Hume from original material, and they are available for the use of speakers, for exhibitions etc.

We thought members would be interested to see them, and for this evening the subject will be "Ashtead". Later on we hope to show slides dealing with the other Parishes in "our area".

15 APRIL 1988 - The Annual General Meeting

This note is to give early notice of the date of the AGM. All papers for the meeting will be included with the March 1988 Newsletter.

SATURDAY, 30 APRIL 1988 - Day Visit to Amberley Chalk Pits Industrial Museum, and to Church Farm, Coombes

We go first to the Museum, which is a 36-acre open air museum showing industrial, social and domestic displays of interest to all members of the family. There is a picnic area and light refreshments are available. We leave (after lunch) at 1.15pm.

We then go to something a little different from our usual visits. We arrive at 1.45pm at Church Farm, Coombes, which is a working farm, part arable, part sheep rearing. We shall have a guided tour, by trailer, of the land with explanations of crop rotation, conservation areas and so on. Also within the farm land is a small Saxon Church and a dewpond. We leave the farm around 4.30pm and arrive home about 5.30pm.

The cost is £7-45 ordinary rate, £6-80 OAP rate, which includes the cost of the coach, gratuities and entrance fees.

Pick-up points will be:

Ashtead	The Street, outside Nova Bookshop - 8.50am
Leatherhead	Leret Way, by the entrance to the Day Centre - 8.55am
Fetcham	Lower Road, end of The Street - 9am
Bookham	The Crown, opposite the Parish Church - 9.10am

A booking form is enclosed.

This visit has been arranged by Mrs Audrey Elmer, who will be pleased to give further details at any of our monthly meetings.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

We are arranging two more day visits next year:

Sunday, 20 August - Visit to Petersfield and Uppark - organised by Mrs Mary Rice-Oxley

Saturday, 1 October - Visit to Shoreham (mainly indoors) - organised by Mr Alan Gillies

All details in later Newsletters.

LEATHERHEAD PARISH MAGAZINES

The Leatherhead Parish Church has missing from their archives, the Leatherhead Parish Magazines for the years 1967, 1968, 1969 and 1970. They are most anxious to complete their set and have asked if any of the Society's members have copies they can donate. If so, please get in touch with Mrs Linda Heath on Leatherhead 372603.

"ARCHAEOLOGY OF SURREY TO 1540"

The Surrey Archaeological Society has asked for publicity to be given to a recently published overview of archaeology in the county. It is edited by Joanna Bird and David G Bird. The volume, approximately 300 pages with 140 illustrations, is priced at £12 plus £2 postage and packing. Copies may be obtained from Mrs M Roberts, SAS, Castle Arch, Guildford GU1 3SX.

NONSUCH CELEBRATIONS 1988

As part of the celebrations of the 450th anniversary of Nonsuch Palace, the Surrey Archaeological Society, in association with the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society, is arranging a one-day Symposium on Saturday, 11 June 1988 in Bourne Hall, Ewell. Professor Martin Biddle, FBA, who directed the excavation of the Palace in 1959-60, will take the chair.

Short lectures by eminent speakers will explore the excavation of the palace and banqueting house, the 'finds', the history, art and architecture, and the relationship to the sister palaces of Oatlands and Hampton Court. Proceedings will be published.

During the celebrations a major public exhibition is being staged, when, in co-operation with the Museum of London, some of the best finds from the excavation will be on view. This exhibition will be open in Bourne Hall from 9am on 11 June 1988.

After the lectures, Professor Biddle hopes to lead a guided tour of the nearby sites of the palace, banqueting house and the gardens.

A fee of about £5-£6 will be payable by all who attend any part of the lecture. There will be an additional fee for those who participate in the guided tour.

To receive details and registration form, expected to be available early in 1988, please send a stamped addressed envelope to: Maurice Exwood, Fairways Church Street, Ewell, Epsom KT17 2AQ, telephone 01-393-7957

MATHEMATICAL TILES AT NORBURY PARK, MICKLEHAM - From Dr D F Renn

Mr Maurice Exwood, writing in the British Brick Society's Bulletin INFORMATION, says:

"Here it was known that the front (southface) was at one time covered with mathematical tiles removed some years ago when the wall was rendered. Recent work on the house has disclosed that the rest was also so clad and that here the rendering was applied over the tiles. The tiling was carried out with skill in 1792, apparently by a bricklayer who had done similar work at Chevening six years earlier. Frank Kelsall has found correspondence between the third Earl of Stanhope, of Chevening fame, and William Locke, who built Norbury Hall in 1775 and soon got into trouble with the earlier cement rendering which fell off (as happened at Chevening and at Garrick's Villa, as Frank Kelsall discovered)."

Members will remember Mr Exwood's account of Cannon Court, Fetcham, and its mathematical tiles in Vol 4, No 9, of the Proceedings. The house has since been repaired and reorganised internally into several separate flats.

ASSTEAD POUND - From David Bruce

Browsing through an old copy (28 July 1977) of "Country Life", I came across a letter to the Editor concerning "Vanishing Wooden Pounds".

The writer, in the course of his letter, says "A little known Surrey pound is shown in my photograph. It stood in a quiet lane just off the busy main road at Ashtead. A certain amount of mystery surrounds its origin, but it is thought that a local lord of the manor of the last century had it constructed on account of the annoyance caused by straying horses, which were turned loose by gypsies whenever nearby Epsom races were being run. I checked to see if it was still there a short while ago. Alas, it had been recently sacrificed for modern building".

The writer was Royston Wells, 5 Norfolk Court, Norfolk Square, Bognor Regis, West Sussex. I wonder what his interest was in our pound. I believe the pound was situated in The Marld, but I certainly have never seen a photograph of it before. A copy of the letter and photograph has been put into the Ashtead Records.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE "ANNUAL REGISTER FOR THE YEAR 1773", PAGES 128/9

24th August

At 35 minutes past ten in the evening, was determined a match between Thomas Walker, Esq; of Mickleham, in Surry, and Capt. Adam Hay, for 400 guineas, which was won by the latter. Mr Walker rode his own hackney, and Capt. Mulcafter rode for Capt. Hay.

They fet out at fix on Monday morning from Portland-freet, London, and the winner arrived at Dufefridge, York, in 40 hours 35 minutes. Mr Walker's horfe tired within 6 miles of Tadcafter, and it is fupposed will die. They rode the firft 90 miles in 6 hours. The winning mare drank 12 bottles of wine during the journey, and on Thursday was fo well as to take her exercife on Knavefmire ----- There is no name difgraceful enough to characterize this fort of diverfion.

(Extracted by David Bruce from a book in his possession.)

THE TOWN OF ROCHESTER - From David Bruce

A recent visit to that most interesting town, Rochester, revealed two items which had a Leatherhead connection.

Firstly, in the Cathedral, in the North Choir Transept, is a very fine alabaster effigy of Walter de Merton, Chancellor of Henry III, founder of Merton College, Bishop of Rochester, drowned in the Medway in 1277. It was to Walter that Thorncroft Manor was given in November 1266 for the support of his new college at Oxford.

The other thing that caught my eye was a plaque on a house - No 2, Minor Canon Row, not far from the Cathedral. It bore the words: "Dame Sybil Thorndike, Actress, Freeman of the City of Rochester, and her brother Russell Thorndike, Author, lived in this house from 1884 until 1892 when their father The Rev A J W Thorndike, was a minor canon at the Cathedral."

A SPECIAL THANK YOU -

To our speakers on 16 October and 13 November. Mr John Bebbington's talk came the night after the recent terrible storm. He administers Box Hill, where the damage was horrendous. In spite of an appalling day assessing damage he struggled to Leatherhead to give us a fascinating and beautifully illustrated talk on Box Hill. Dr John Gower agreed to give his talk on Roman Villas and Religion in Surrey last year when he lived locally. In the interim he has moved to Frome in Somerset. He nevertheless drove up from Somerset to keep his promise to us.