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NEWSLETTER 3/92

AUGUST 1992

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Derek Renn - Congratulations to Dr Derek Renn, one of the Society's Vice-Chairmen, on his appointment as CBE in the Birthday Honours List this year.

Peggy West - It was with great sadness that we heard of the death in May, of Peggy West, after a long illness. Our sympathy goes to Norman: we are glad that he is continuing his work for us as the Society's Lecture Secretary.

Eileen Smith - Many members will know that Eileen Smith was ill recently. Fortunately she has now recovered, and has told us that she intends to be back at her post as leader of the coffee party at our winter meetings. Incidentally, she needs more helpers: please ring any of the Committee to volunteer, or see Eileen at one of the meetings.

New members - The following new members are welcomed:

Armstrong, Mrs I	Leatherhead
Christensen, Mr & Mrs P C	Bookham
Greatbatch, Mr & Mrs H D	Effingham
Halford, Mr & Mrs M A C	Fetcham

**MUSEUM CURATOR**

Unfortunately we have lost our new Museum Curator. Trevor Edwards regretted leaving us so soon, but he and his wife Mary were offered a post in Sussex which included accommodation. Naturally they couldn't refuse.

We were lucky to have Trevor and Mary even for so short a time. David Bruce, who not only set up the Museum but ran it for many years, was a hard act to follow, but they achieved a great deal in the few months they were with us. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes which is not apparent to Museum visitors, and they tackled this as well as the "shop front". Mary's attractive window displays and flower arrangements will long be remembered.

But their story has a tragic end. They moved to their new home on Thursday, 16 July, and the next morning Trevor collapsed and died. All our sympathy and love goes to Mary and we assure her she has many friends here.

Until the affairs of our Museum are completely sorted, Ernest Crossland has kindly offered to be Acting Curator.

#### Stewards

As usual, the one big plea is for more Stewards for the Museum. If there were more Stewards the Museum could open more often. So please contact any Committee member if you would be interested in doing this - you don't need any specialised knowledge and you will meet many interesting people. Anyone who would like to try it out first can come and join "old hands" to find out what it is like.

#### "Friends of the Leatherhead Museum"

Janet Goldsmith, our new Committee Member, has taken over the Secretaryship of the Friends of the Leatherhead Museum, for which they and the Society are grateful. This will also give her a good insight into the "workings" of the Museum and she is in fact assisting Ernest Crossland.

#### LOCAL STUDIES MATERIAL

A group of Surrey archivists, led by Dr David Robinson, County Archivist, are examining the best ways of making local studies material as conveniently available as possible, while at the same time keeping rare and valuable books and documents safe. Dr Robinson has written to various local Societies asking if members researching into local history find the present arrangements satisfactory - at the County Record Office, local libraries etc. He would welcome any observations members may wish to make on the present facilities, so please write to Dr Robinson at the Surrey Record Office, County Hall, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN with any suggestions you have.

#### NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES

An organisation that appears to be less well known to Researchers than it merits, is the National Register of Archives. This was set up in 1945 to collect and disseminate information about manuscript sources for British history, outside the Public Records. It covers the papers of people of note, family and estates, businesses, church, local authorities, societies and organisations generally.

There are two main indices - Personal and Companies. Of the first they hold references to men and women of importance in every field of British history - arts, sciences, military, naval, governmental and religious. The companies index covers the fields of industry, mining, transport, commerce and finance.

In many cases the Register will hold copies of material available: otherwise they will be able to indicate precisely where the information is held, giving appropriate reference details.

The address of the Register is: Quality House, Quality Court, Chancery Lane, London WC2 1HP, telephone 071-242-1198. The Register is open to all - no reader's ticket is necessary. Hours 9.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

#### EXHIBITIONS

The Society and the Museum are joining in several local events, all part of the Mole Valley Festival of Arts. They are:

September 27 - Dorking Halls.

Surrey Antique Bottle Show, 10.30am - 4pm. Admission 50p, Senior Citizens free. One table booked.

October 15-17 - Leatherhead Leisure Centre

Displays by local organisations. Thursday and Friday 11am - 9pm, Saturday, 10am - 3pm. Admission free. Two tables booked.

October 24 - Leatherhead Institute

Leatherhead Community Association's Victorian Day. 10am - 4pm. Admission free. Two tables.

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Help is needed to man the tables at all the exhibitions. If you can spare some time, please get in touch with the Chairman, Mrs Heath, on Leatherhead 372603, or indeed with any member of the Committee.

If you can't spare time to help, hopefully you can come and enjoy the exhibitions.

#### PROCEEDINGS

The Society holds surplus stocks of Proceedings from 1953 to the present issue. Their sale would bring useful funds for the production of further publications.

At 50p each, these are good value, particularly for those members who have only recently joined. To encourage sales a description is given of the contents, starting with the earliest and showing how many are in stock. Future Newsletters will continue the descriptions.

1953 (5) F B Benger - History of the Mansion (Library),  
Leatherhead  
A J Ginger - Leatherhead in Victorian times

1954 (5) J G W Lewarne - Fetcham Parish Register 1559-1812  
F B Benger - History of Norbury Park House  
J Harvey - Short History of Bookham, Part I  
AWG Lowther - Ashted & Church of St Giles

- 1955 (14) J Harvey - Short History of Bookham, Part II  
F B Benger - History of Bookham Grove  
F R Benger - History of Polesden  
A T Ruby - Excavation of Effingham-La-Leigh Manor
- 1959 (4) AWG Lowther - Cartographical survey (Saxon Period)  
AWG Lowther - Dating of Roman buildings, Ashtead  
F Bastian - Leatherhead Families of 16th & 17th  
Centuries: Sands of Randalls  
Also more about Bookham and Ashtead.

Please ring the Sales Secretary, Howard Davies - Ashtead  
275542 - with your order or write to him at 72 Culverhay,  
Ashtead KT21 1PS.

#### PROGRAMME

##### Mole Valley Festival of Arts

Tickets for the Society's three Mole Valley Festival of Arts events (all on Fridays) will now be sold to the public only at the door on the evening of the event, for £2-50. Members of the Society can still apply to the Secretary for tickets at the reduced price of £2. A booking form is enclosed for the three events which are:

September 18 - Dixon Hall, Leatherhead Institute. 7.30 for 8pm  
"The Bells and the Bridge of Leatherhead".

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the installation of eight bells in the parish church of St Mary and St Nicholas. Alan Smith, Captain of the bellringers, will tell the history of the bells.

(Friday, 18 September is also the opening day of a Festival by the church to celebrate this bi-centenary. There will be guided tours of the bellringing chamber, which is not usually open to visitors, between 10am and 4pm. - an excellent opportunity for a preview of Alan Smith's talk.)

The second talk of the evening will be by Dr Derek Renn about Leatherhead's bridge over the Mole which had a major restoration 210 years ago. The bridge has an interesting history which Dr Renn will describe.

October ~~2~~ - Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall, 7.30 for 8pm  
2 "Ashtead Past and Present"

Members will remember the interesting (and amusing) evening that Michael Gale presented two years ago. This talk will give yet more information about the Ashtead of the past.

October 16  
25 Dixon Hall, Leatherhead Institute, 7.30 for 8pm  
"The Restoration of Hampton Court Palace"

A talk by Michael Fishlock, architect in charge of this prestigious and fascinating project.

Rest of the Programme

In the Dixon Hall, Leatherhead Institute at 7.30 for 8pm.  
all Fridays.

November 20 - "Joseph Payne", a talk by Richard Aldrich

Who was Joseph Payne? Leatherhead should feel proud of being his home for over twenty years from 1845-1866, but few people nowadays will even have heard of him. His local claim to fame is that he was founder and Headmaster of a boys' Grammar School which was at the Mansion (now the public library) in Leatherhead from 1845 until about 1875. But apart from that, he was probably the most eminent and celebrated educationalist of his day and was appointed as the first Professor of Education in 1872. He was a remarkable man with very advanced views of education, and Mr Aldrich, who is President of the UK History of Education Society, will be describing the life of this much-neglected former resident of Leatherhead.

December 18 - Christmas Miscellany.

An evening of short presentations by members themselves. The evening is being organised by Derek Renn, so if you have anything you would like to include, please get in touch with :

Dr D F Renn, 7 Burrows Close, Gt Bookham KT23 3HB  
telephone Bookham 454880.

In due course, Eileen Smith will no doubt be appealing for supplies of mince pies to add a Christmas flavour to the evening.

#### PAST EVENTS

Visit to Ripley

The afternoon walk round Ripley took place on 24 June, a beautiful summer's day. John Slatford, Chairman, and Audrey Sykes, Secretary of the Send and Ripley History Society, were our guides and showed us some of the local buildings of historical interest.

Few would realise the significance of Ripley in naval terms, although pub names such as "Anchor" and "Ship" should give a clue, for Ripley was a stop on the road used by naval men travelling to and from Portsmouth. (We were told to disregard the story that Nelson and Lady Hamilton stayed at the Talbot Hotel, which is just as well as our own myth had them staying at the Burford Bridge Hotel.)

It is not surprising that many buildings date from Georgian times, but some are much older, the earliest being Vintage Cottage, 1400. Some buildings have received listed status as a result of the initiative of the Society. They are all readily identifiable - it was good to have them pointed out.

Of particular Society interest was the gift to them by the National Westminster Bank of a small building no longer in use. This was moved by crane and transported to a site near the Village Hall where it will be developed as a museum. While enjoying tea at the hall we saw a photographic record of this interesting (and expensive) operation. We saw the building on its new foundations. Much work lies ahead for the Society.

We are most grateful to them for an informative and enjoyable tour which gave some idea of what remains to be seen another day.

#### Wey Navigation Project Visit

Word has probably spread that on the day the Society made its voyage down the Wey Navigation project, led by Chris Howkins, it poured and poured and poured some more!!! Until, that is, tea time, when the sun came out and Chris single-handedly served us, by rushing up and down the narrow-boat, a sumptuous cream tea. Later Chris wrote to the Secretary "...to ask you to pass on to your members my congratulations and thanks for enduring their boat trip with such good spirit." He needn't worry - we enjoyed it!

#### SURREY RECORD OFFICE

This office will be closed for major refurbishment and security improvements from 3 August 1992. It is expected to re-open on 3 November 1992. In the meantime, letters will be answered and urgent telephone enquiries can be made on 021-541-9065.