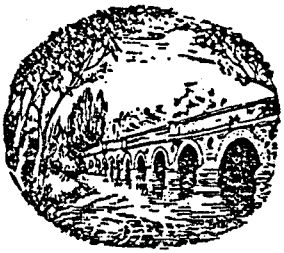
NOVEMBER 1996

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Registered Charity No 802409

CHAIRMAN	SECRETARY	TREASURER
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THE SOCIETY'S 50TH BIRTHDAY

The Dallaway Lecture this year was given by our President, Stephen Fortescue. He called his talk "Under the Cedar Tree" and told of the Society's achievements in its 50 years of life. Some special guests helped us to celebrate, including the Chairman of Mole Valley Council, Mrs Janet Marsh, and her husband. The wine and birthday cake in the interval gave the audience a chance to toast the Society and wish it even greater success in its next 50 years. A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

MEMBERSHIP

Sadly we have received news of the death of two of our members: Joyce Alexander, who had done her regular Museum Stewarding on Friday, 16 August, and died the folowing morning; and "Tubby" Rowland, who in spite of his many duties in Ashtead, had just volunteered to be a Steward.

On a happier note, we welcome to the Society Mr & Mrs Chapman of Pyrford, and their son Joseph, a Junior Member; Mrs G A Jackson, Mrs J A Lewis and John Wettern of Fetcham; Mr & Mrs M D Lewis and David Roake of Leatherhead; and Meredith Worsfold of Ashtead.

THE TREASURER

At the AGM in April, Chris Latham said he would carry on for a while but that he was shortly leaving the district. Alas the time has come. Our thanks for the work both he and Beryl have done, and good wishes for happiness in their new home in Leicestershire.

Treasurers are a rare breed and we have been lucky enough to persuade Peter Starling, whose address is at the top of this Newsletter, to take the job on.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This is the last Newsletter in 1996, so a reminder that subscriptions are due on 1 January 1997. No change in the rate - £8 single, £12 Husband & Wife, £1 Junior 18 years and under. The Rules state that if subscriptions are not paid by 31 March, membership ceases. so please help by paying them as early as possible. A payment form is enclosed for return to the Secretary. PLEASE don't send it to the Treasurer, or your payment will not be registered on the Membership List.

Subscriptions of £1 minimum or £20 Life Membership of the Friends of Leatherhead Museum, are also due on 1 January. These can be added to your Society Subscription: one cheque only is needed, payable to this Society - the money will be forwarded to their Treasurer. The Friends have done a great deal for the Museum this year - have you seen the new brick paving by the front door, for instance? - and they have plans for further improvements in the future. So the more Friends the better!

1996 PROCEEDINGS

As this year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Society, the Proceedings will reflect this. It will be ready for collection at the February monthly meeting - but only if subscriptions have been paid!

THE SOCIETY'S COMPUTER

You may have noticed a slight difference in the appearance of this Newsletter, the reason being that the Society has recently obtained a more up-to-date computer. We have to thank one of our members, Anthony Gordon, for help and advice in getting the right one, and for spending many hours trying to teach the Secretary how to use it. Thanks also to his long-suffering wife, Jennie.

RECORDS

Dr John Blair has kindly handed over to the Society a number of his own research files, particularly relating to his articles in the Proceedings, and his pieces for the History of Leatherhead. A list is held in our Records under reference LX1057.

PROGRAMME

All meetings are held in the Dixon Hall of the Leatherhead Institute at 7.30pm for 8pm. Coffee available before the meeting, except for December. Entrance 50p members, £1 non-members.

Friday, 20 December - Christmas Miscellany - presented by Gordon Knowles.

Our annual evening of short talks by members will have a variation this year. There will also be a photographic quiz and some artefacts for you to identify during an extended coffee and mince pie break, with prizes for the winners.. Volunteers to give talks (5-10 minutes, serious or not-so-serious) please contact Gordon Knowles on 01372-458396 by the end of November at the latest.

Friday, 17 January 1997 - "Fetcham in Old Picture Post-cards" by Goff Powell

Goff Powell owns a large collection of postcards, mostly of local parishes. On this evening, he will show some of those illustrating Fetcham.

Friday, 21 February - "Historic Stones" by Richard Butler
Richard Butler is President of the Mole Valley Geological Society. An illustrated talk that ranges from Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, through Egypt, Greece and other countries including our own.

Friday, 21 March - "The Burning Question - Fire Fighting Through the Ages" by Ron Shettle
The story of fire-fighting in Surrey, with particular reference to our own area. Mr Shettle is closely involved with the Fire Brigades of Surrey Preservation Trust.

Friday, 18 April - The Annual General Meeting, followed by a talk by Ernest Crossland
This is a preliminary notice of the date. All papers for the meeting will be circulated with the February 1997 Newsletter.

W E A COURSE - SPRING TERM 1997
Industrial Archaeology - A University of Surrey course
The tutor for this course is Gordon Knowles. It will be considering a variety of industries and sites in the south east and further afield including the Continent of Europe. These will include mining, steel-making, chemicals, the aircraft industry, electricity and water supply, together with a look at some railways and canals. This course is complementary to the one given in 1993, and will NOT be repeating any of the material discussed during that course.

Thursdays 10-12: 10 meetings, January 9 - March 20, half-term February 20. Letherhead Institute, High Street, Leatherhead. Course fee £33, retired persons 60+ £26.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN (Gwen Hoad)
"The beer-house facing the (Ashtead) Common, bearing the sign of "The Woodman" was an isolated cottage until the construction of the railway was commenced in 1857-58. For the first few months that the works were in progress the large

number of navvies and other workmen employed thereon were supplied from a moveable store, similar to a gypsy's van, until the magistrates' licence was granted." Just one snippet from "Ashtead Past & Present", a series of notes contributed to the Ashtead Parish Magazine in 1902-3 by J E Smith, and collected together in one slim volume in the Society's reference library.

This brings me to five volumes of the Leatherhead Parish Magazine dating from the end of the nineteenth century which have recently been expertly and inexpensively re-bound or repaired by Mr Simon von Benckendorff of Woking. Four of these bound volumes were left at the Museum by a member of the public who was going to throw them away! They now form part of the Society's growing reference library.

Recent additions to the library include:

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - Collections, vol 83. S A S, 1996.

SURREY - Directories, Timetables Etc
LONDON TRANSPORT Green Line Coach guide, 1939, no 1, Jan 4 - April 5

SURREY - Literary & other associations
DOBSON, Austin - Fanny Burney (Madame d'Arblay), Macmillan, 1904. [English Men of Letters series]

D'ARBLAY, Madame - The diary of Fanny Burney, selected and edited by Christopher Lloyd. Roger Ingram, 1948

STOPES, Marie - Enduring passion....being the continuation of "Married Love". Putnam, 1928

SURREY - Records
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL, SURREY RECORD OFFICE - Parish records: a brief introduction. SCC, 198?

SURREY - Topographical & Maps
PALMER, W T - Odd corners in Surrey. Skeffington, 1951

PHILIP, George & Son Ltd, pub. Philips' ABC pocket atlas - guide to London with new postal areas. Philips, 1919. [Includes timetable for Brighton coaches "Venture" and "Old Times".]

SURREY - Individual towns & villages
BOOKHAM
FORTESCUE, S E D - People & Places: Great & Little Bookham. Privately printed, 1978.

LEATHERHEAD
BIRD, W L - Lovely Leatherhead: the official guide to Leatherhead, Ashtead, Bookham etc. Holmesdale Press, c1910.

If you have a copy of the Library Catalogue, please update it with these items, many of which have been given to the Society; such gifts are always welcome.

There are still many spare copies available of volumes of the Surrey Archaeological Society Collections; they will be on sale at meetings for £1 each.

"ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPH SERIES - LEATHERHEAD"
Rice £9-99, Compiled by Linda Heath
This book of Leatherhead in old phtographs will be on sale to members at our Christmas Miscellany, when Linda Heath will (if requested!) sign any copies bought that evening. The book contains over 200 photographs, mainly belonging to the Society, many of which have not been published before. They date from about 1870-1950 and form a fascinating picture of a Leatherhead now gone for ever.

Linda has spent several months selecting these photographs and writing the text for them. She has been assisted in various ways

by other members, so it is very much a Society production. We hope all members will buy a copy and encourage others to do so. It will be available at the Museum until it closes for the winter on 21 December, in local bookshops and the public library; but the Society does benefit financially if members can buy it at our meetings or at the Museum. An ideal Christmas present!

Copies can be ordered post free from the Sales Secretary, Howard Davies, 72 Culverhay, Ashtead KT21 IPS. Cheques payable to L D L H S, please.

"H M S SCOUT - TO THE PEOPLE OF LEATHERHEAD"

That is the wording on a small commemorative shield in our Museum which was sent to the people of Leatherhead by the crew of HMS Scout, a destroyer adopted by the people of the Leatherhead district during Warship Week 18 - 25 October 1941. The crews were sent letters, gifts and knitted clothing (gloves, socks, scarves, etc) by the people of the town or village who adopted their ship.

The local newspaper received a letter in 1944 from Able Seaman T W L Blunt, who had returned to England after serving aboard Scout. He said "I would like to offer you all my thanks in appreciation for what you are doing for the crew. Your gifts of books and records were very gratefully received, and at times were the only means of keeping in touch with reality."

Scout was built at John Brown's, Clydebank, Glasgow; a famous shipyard whose achievements included the ill-fated Lusitania, and later for Cunard, the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth. Scout was a modified Trenchant or "S" Class (1917-18 Programme) destroyer, launched on 27 April 1918.

At the outbreak of World War II, she was serving in the China Station on local defence duties between Hong Kong and Singapore. She spent most of the war in the Far East, being part of the Western Striking Force and later taking part in operations in the Indian Ocean. In February 1944 she was fitted out at Colombo as a torpedo target ship, and was finally classified as an accommodation ship. On 27 March 1945, she arrived at Trincomalee and remained there, under care and maintenance, until the end of the war. Scout was finally scrapped in 1946.

HMS Scout is commemorated in the entrance hall of Wesley House, Leatherhead, the former Local Council Offices.

Acknowledgments: Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth
Mole Valley District Council
Leatherhead Advertiser

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

To make the Newsletter more interesting, it would be a great help if short contributions from members could be included. There must be many bits of information of local history interest which would not be suitable material for the Proceedings, so please send them to the Secretary. The editorial deadline for the next Newsletter will appear at the end of each current one.

AND AS THIS IS THE LAST 1996 NEWSLETTER -

A very happy Christmas and the best of all things to all our members in the New Year.

Editor: Joyce Fuller, 15 Kingston House Gardens, Leatherhead KT22 7HL
Copy for February 1997 issue by mid-January 1997, please