

MAY 1997

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
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NEWSLETTER 2/97

MAY 1997

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

At this year's AGM on 18 April Stephen Fortescue stood down as our President. Stephen is a founder member of the Society and has been an active member and officer during its lifetime. In recognition of his work I was delighted to present him with a book (*Historical Britain* by Eric Wood) on behalf of the membership.

It was also a pleasure to announce that Derek Renn had accepted the Committee's invitation to become our President and that Linda Heath had accepted their invitation to become a Vice-President of the Society. Stephen Fortescue thus takes on the rôle of Past President.

Now to other things. Chris Latham had resigned during last year when he moved to Leicestershire, and we were pleased that Peter Starling, who had been co-opted in his place was elected to be Treasurer of the Society.

Roddy Clube, who has unfortunately been unwell, resigned from the Committee and Brian Godfrey has taken over as Records Secretary. At the time of the AGM Roddy was still in hospital and everyone sent him their best wishes and thanked him for all he had done whilst on the Committee.

We were pleased to welcome Anthony Gordon to the Committee. Anthony has already undertaken the editing of the Newsletter as well as many computer and publicity related tasks.

Jack Barker has agreed to keep the membership records of the Society. Thanks to Janet Goldsmith for temporarily carrying out this work when Joyce Fuller died, just at the busy time when subscriptions were coming in.

We are, however, still without a Secretary. Many of the tasks which Joyce carried out are now in other hands but we need someone to take our minutes, prepare papers for meetings and deal with a small amount of correspondence. Have we a member who would like to do this? If so please talk to me; you would probably enjoy the job!

One innovation this year is Membership Cards. These should be enclosed with this Newsletter. We have introduced them at the request of some members and also as a means of identification when using our library in the Letherhead Institute. The people on duty at the LCA library do not know all the LDLHS members and so, when you use the Society library, you should show your membership card in order to gain access to our books and archives.

Peter Tarplee

MEMBERSHIP

Sadly we have received news of the death of four members:

Hubert Meed, joined in 1947 and an Honorary Member since 1973, drew many maps for the Society's Proceedings throughout the 1950's and 1960's. He took great interest in the Society even after he moved to Sussex, and when he dies in January his family and friends sent donations totalling £95.

In February we lost Betty Jupp who had been a member since 1984, and, in April, Eileen Smith, widow of our late Chairman Lawrie Smith, and Roberta McNulty, both active Society members for many years and Stewards at the Museum.

ARCHAEOLOGY AT ST. GILES' CHURCH, ASHTEAD

Many members will know that while building works were being carried out at St. Giles' recently an archaeological investigation was undertaken by a small team led by Howard Davies.

At the Surrey Archaeological Society's Archaeological Committee Symposium at Dorking on 22 February our Society's display featured this investigation. Howard had produced an excellent display containing drawings, photographs and materials all illustrating the work which was carried out during the restoration in 1994.

Members who did not attend the symposium will be pleased to know that the display is currently mounted in Leatherhead Museum. This will remain in place for some time so all who are interested in this project will have the opportunity to study the material so far available.

INTERESTED IN NURSING HISTORY?

The Society has been presented with some documents relating to the **Ashtead District Nursing Association** from 1918 to 1975. Unfortunately the Ashtead Archive is having difficulty in finding house room for them and Jack Willis the Ashtead Archivist (01372 275199) would be glad to hear from anybody who would be interested in having them.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN

'Fetcham joins to Great Bookham and Letherhead, a little below the place where the River Mole is supposed to shew itself above ground after its subterraneous obscurity. In Domesdei 'tis written Feceham. Here were three Manors. [1] The King's Manor which he held in Demesne, and exempted it from all duties. It had belonged to Queen Eddeva, and then was rated for seven hides. Here were four mills, but valued at no more by the year than four shillings. The Woods were not considerable for they paid but six fat Hogs and six lean ones. Here were ten acres of Pasture. The whole was in the Confessor's time valued at sixty shillings, in the Conqueror's but at fifty. [2] The Bishop's Manor..... [3] Oswald's Manor.....'

In this Parish near Letherhead Bridge is an old Chapell now turned to an Ale-House, which may however supply in Excise more than ever it paid in Tenths. If desecration had been in vogue in the reign of Henry VII, as it was in the day of his son, we might believe the fine Poem, transcribed by Mr. Aubrey, made by Skelton Poet Laureat, upon an Ale-wife, who lived in a Siede beside Lederede, related to this Chapell. Nor are we to date so high the Practice of Laureats drolling, in a stupid performance upon Persons or Places sacred.'

The above extract comes from "Antiquities of Surrey" by N. Salmon and published in 1736. This is one of many books bequeathed to the Society and formerly belonging to Geoffrey Gollin. It forms part of the Society's Library and may be referred to on request.

New additions to the Library include the following:-

SURREY - Social History

DAVISON, Mark and CURRIE, Ian - *Surrey in the Seventies: photographs and memories of the 1970s*. Frosted Earth, 1995.

DAVISON, Mark and CURRIE, Ian - *Surrey in the Sixties: memories of a swinging decade*. Frosted Earth, 1994.

DAVISON, Mark and CURRIE, Ian - *The Surrey weather book: a century of storms, floods and freezes*. 4th edn. Frosted Earth, 1995.

OGLEY, Bob - *Surrey at war, 1939-1945*. Froglets Pubns, 1995.

ROWLINSON, John - *J.77 are you receiving?* The Book Guild Ltd., 1997
[Reminiscences of a Police Constable stationed at Leatherhead in the 1950s.]

SURREY - Individual Towns & Villages

EPSOM

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL, Borough Planning Dept. -
Epsom Wells: a new history of Epsom Wells and Epsom Salts. Epsom & Ewell
B.C.. 1989

LEATHERHEAD

FULLER, Joyce compiler - *Kingston House, Leatherhead.* Manuscript. 1996

EARLY, Jeremy P. - *Hidden Jewels: the wildlife of Leatherhead and
Fetcham.* Privately published. 1997

PIGOT, J & Co. publisher - *Leatherhead, Great Bookham, Ashstead and
neighbourhoods in 1839, compiled from Pigot's 1839 Directory of Surrey by
John W. Brown.* Local History Reprints. 1996

These and other books in the Society's Library are housed within the Institute Library room, and may be borrowed or referred to during the LCA Library's opening hours - Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and the first Saturday in the month, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or by special arrangement with Gwen Hoad (01372 273934). A library catalogue is available in the room which indicates the approximate location of each item, but reference books in the locked cupboards may not normally be taken away. Enquiries about the Society's very large collection of maps, photographs, documents and all other materials, apart from books or pamphlets, should be made to the Record Secretary - Brian Godfrey (01372 454654).

FETCHAM VICTORIANS - CAN YOU HELP?

Alan Pooley has been investigating the Victorian history of Fetcham and would be pleased to receive any information from members which can help with expanding knowledge of the following past inhabitants, families and businesses.

Luff James and John Luff, whitesmiths first noted in 1851, were significant employers who, in 1891, traded as '*Luff & Son, agricultural machine makers and general smithy, hot water and hydraulic engineers & manufacturers of all kinds of fencing*'. John Luff was also the Census enumerator for several decades. They occupied St. Clements (now Sky Newsagents). A.J. Ginger refers to a "Puffer" Luff, a double base who drowned in the mill race.

William Sturt was miller from before 1851 to after 1881 and was, in early days, a farmer as well.

Henry Fielder appears from 1861 as a whitesmith, blacksmith, grocer and sweep at various times and in 1891 lived with son in law **Alfred Connisbee** who traded in the 1890s as Connisbee & Smith, Veterinery Surgeons. Did he or his wife or son, also **Henry**, have a shop in Fetcham in 1871 and onwards?

Other possible notables:

Robert Fry 1871/1891 Brewer at Rising Sun.

Thomas Clayell 1841/1861 Produce Broker) both of

Ernest Secreten 1871/1881 Wine Merchant) Fetcham Grove

William Fleet 1861/1891 Blacksmith of Cock Green.

William Thompson 1881/1891 an East India Merchant of Elmer.

Edward Degrave 1851/1861 a retired scalemaker of Fetcham Cottage.

John Burgess 1841/1851 a fruiterer living in River Lane or Cobham Road.

If you have any information that could help please contact Alan Pooley directly at 53, Hilley Field Lane, Fetcham KT22 9UP or by telephone on 01372 374093.

MEMORIES OF ASHTEAD IN THE FORTIES

Early in the war when I was about eleven my parents, my sister and I went to live in Ashtead. We could hear the guns from France in our garden. Not having an air raid shelter we used to seek cover under our oak dining table during air raids.

After Dunkirk I remember my mother remarking that our milkman had survived and was back on his round, less one arm. One day I arrived at my school, Downsend, to find all the windows blown out due to two landmines falling close by, one in Ermyrn Way and the other near St. Andrew's Convent. Our closest shave was when a high explosive bomb all but destroyed two bungalows nearby in West Farm Avenue. I recall being given a lift by a man some months later who said that his wife was still in hospital from her injuries in that incident, but to my knowledge, no one was killed. At the height of the blitz a direct hit ignited the oil tanks by the waterworks at Leatherhead. During the following days buses from the nearby garage were dispersed around the town as a precaution.

We lived on the 418 (now 479) bus route which was served initially by a fleet of modern ex Green Line coaches. These were soon withdrawn for conversion into ambulances and were replaced by a batch of fairly new blue and cream buses on loan from Bristol. They stayed until it was that city's turn to be blitzed. In their place came a motley collection of elderly country buses, many of which were due for disposal and were taken out of store. On Saturdays the Leatherhead fleet was supplemented by vehicles drafted in from Reigate and such faraway places as Northwood and East Grinstead. By 1946 the elderly single deckers had given way to old double deckers, which were to remain until 1948 when, home on leave, I saw the first of twelve new RT type buses all allocated to the 418 route. These were the first new country buses to arrive south of the Thames and were the subject of much favourable comment. They were quite luxurious to travel on after the bone shakers of the 1930s. Alas! They are now just a memory.

Frank Rice-Oxley

PROGRAM

Members may have noticed that there has not been a Programme Secretary for over a year now. So who arranges our programmes of lectures and visits? A small group of us meet at intervals and try to think of subjects for talks and places of interest to visit. At present the group consists of Jack Barker, Linda Heath, Gordon Knowles, Derek Renn, Pat Thursby and Dick Whittington. If anyone would like to join us, please let us know. Best of all, please give us some ideas of what YOU THE MEMBERS would like. It's your Society - tell us what you would like to hear about and places you'd like to visit and we'll try to arrange it.

Visits

Visit to Fishbourne and Singleton - Saturday 21 June

Following a most interesting talk by Ernest Crossland after our AGM in April, we have arranged an all day coach visit to the Roman Palace at Fishbourne and the Weald and Downsland Open Air Museum at Singleton. Many members will have already visited both of these places, but they are both well worth revisiting, even more than once. We shall visit Fishbourne in the morning and can either obtain lunch there or have a picnic, then go on to Singleton in the afternoon. The cost of £15 includes guided tours in both places. Pick up times: Bookham X-roads 09:00, Fetcham The Street 09:05, Leatherhead Linden Court 09:10, Ashted The Street 09:15.

Visit to Whiteley Village - Sunday 6 July

Afternoon visit by cars to Whiteley Village, near Hersham, led by Ernest Crossland. Whiteley Village was built between 1917 and 1922 on some 250 acres in the angle between Seven Hills Road (the B365) and Burwood Road leading to Hersham. The Village itself occupies about one third of the area and is completely self-sufficient having a church, non-conformist chapel, Roman Catholic chapel, village store with a Post Office, a Village hall and clubroom, a hospital, a bowling green and a putting green. It has its own Works Department to carry out maintenance and the upkeep of the gardens. In addition to a public bus service running half-hourly to Hersham, Walton and the Elmbridge Leisure Centre, there is a frequent (free) bus run by the Trust to Hersham and Walton with occasional journeys to other shopping areas.

The Trust was set up in 1911 under the terms of the will of William Whiteley, the owner of the Bayswater department store who left £1,000,000 for the purpose.

Two employees run a bird sanctuary which receives injured birds and tries to return them to the wild.

The part not occupied by the village itself is partly mixed woodland with a great deal of wildlife, including deer and foxes. The rest is made up of local playing fields let out to local rugby, hockey and football clubs. Cost £2 which will go to the Whiteley Village Trust. Meet at 2:30pm in the car park between the Village Hall and Club Room. Entrance by North Gate in Burwood Road, between B365 Seven Hills Road and Hersham.

Visit to Farnborough - Saturday 9 August

This visit has been arranged for us by members of the Farnborough District Historical Society in return for a visit which they made to Leatherhead last September. As this is something quite special and they have arranged for us to have tours of some places not normally open to the public, we hope that this visit will be really well supported. It will include a tour of Farnborough Abbey (which belongs to the Benedictine monks) where Napoleon III, the Empress Eugenie and their son Prince Louis Napoleon are all buried. In the afternoon we are being given a guided tour round Farnborough Hill (now a girls' school) where the Empress Eugenie lived until her death in 1920. We shall also have a visit to the parish church. If time permits we may visit the parish church.

The Old Court House has been recommended to us both for price and quality for lunch and places can be reserved, so please say on the booking form if you wish to lunch there or have a picnic. We must stay together so that the coach can transport us from place to place. If you would like coffee before the visit, bring your own to have on the coach, as there is nowhere nearby for this. The cost of this visit will be £10 per head, assuming that we can fill a 35 seater coach, so please apply early. Departure times: Ashted The Street 09:15, Leatherhead Leret Way 09:20, Fetcham bus stop Baddingham Drive/Ridgeway 09:25, Bookham Crown 09:30.

Afternoon Visit to Claremont House and Garden - Sunday 7 September

The talk about the lost places of Claremont by Stephen Webbe in May introduces this visit. We have arranged to visit Claremont house at 2pm. The house is open to the public that day, but we are hoping to arrange a special tour for our members led by members of Esher District Local History Society. Cost £2. Members can then walk in the grounds (NT) if they wish, but this will not be part of the tour.

Lectures

Friday 19 September - "How much do you know?" by Derek Renn

This is a talk about local history for both newcomers and long-standing members. It will be a very suitable occasion to bring along non-members to introduce them to the Society.

Friday 17 October - *The Dallaway Lecture:*

"The Royal Pavilion at Brighton" by Cynthia Campbell

This lecture, named after the Revd. James Dallaway, is our big open public lecture for which we try to find a speaker who is an authority on a subject of general interest. Cynthia Campbell was formerly Head of Public Services at the Royal Pavilion so this should be an extremely interesting talk. Again, bring plenty of visitors.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM

Two events organised by the Friends:

Saturday 19 June - Coffee Morning and Bring and Buy in the Museum from 10am to 12 noon. Admission of 50p includes coffee! If you have any unconsidered trifles for sale please bring them to the Museum beforehand or on the day.

Sunday 28 September 1997 - The Friends Annual Outing this year goes to Carshalton for a busy afternoon. Visits to Little Holland House, a unique example of the English Arts & Crafts Movement, Carshalton House Water Tower and, finally, Sutton's Heritage Centre at Honeywood, by Carshalton Ponds. Visitors will be able to get Sunday lunch at the Heritage Centre Tea Rooms or across the road at the Greyhound Hotel. Full details and booking form in the August Newsletter.

METAL DETECTOR FINDS

In the May 1997 Bulletin of the Surrey Archaeological Society, David Williams reports the finding by metal detectorists in the Leatherhead area of a discarded blank for an Aylesford-type Iron Age brooch, a Roman bow brooch and a medieval shield-shaped harness mount, with a cockerel enamelled upon it.

Visit to FISHBOURNE & SINGLETON - Saturday 21 June

To: Mr. P. Thursby c/o Leatherhead Museum, 64 Church Street
Tel: 01372 378068 LEATHERHEAD KT22 8DP

I enclose £ _____ for _____ places at £15 each.
Cheques payable to L.D.L.H.S Please enclose S.A.E. for receipt

I/We will get on at: *please tick one*
Bookham crossroads 09:00
Fetcham, The Street 09:05
Leatherhead, Linden Court 09:10
Ashtead, The Street 09:15

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Visit to WHITELEY VILLAGE BY CAR - Sunday 6 July

Meet at 2:30 pm Car Park between Village Hall and Club Room
Entrance from North Gate, Burwood Road between B365 and Hersham

To: Mr. E.A. Crossland, 13 Clockhouse Mead, OXSHOTT KT22 0RW
Tel: 01372 842589

I enclose £ _____ for _____ places at £2 each.
Cheques payable to L.D.L.H.S Please enclose S.A.E. for receipt

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

I would like a lift / I can give a lift to _____ people

Visit to FARNBOROUGH - Saturday 9 August

To: Mrs. L. Heath, 5 St. John's Avenue, LEATHERHEAD KT22 8DP

Tel: 01372 372603

I enclose £ _____ for _____ places at £10 each.

Cheques payable to L.D.L.H.S

Please enclose S.A.E. for receipt

I/We will get on at:

please tick one

Ashted, The Street

09:15

Leatherhead, Leret Way bus stop beyond Swan Centre

09:20

Fetcham, Lower Rd. bus stop Baddingham Drive/Ridgeway

09:25

Bookham, Lower Rd. The Crown

09:30

I/We would like to book a lunch

Please tick one

I/We will have a picnic

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Visit to CLAREMONT HOUSE - Sunday 7 September

Meet at the House for tour at 2pm

To: Mr. E.J. Barker, 7 Fernlea, GREAT BOOKHAM KT23 3NJ

Tel: 01372 458469

I enclose £ _____ for _____ places at £2 each.

Cheques payable to L.D.L.H.S

Please enclose S.A.E. for receipt

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

I would like a lift / I can give a lift to _____ people

