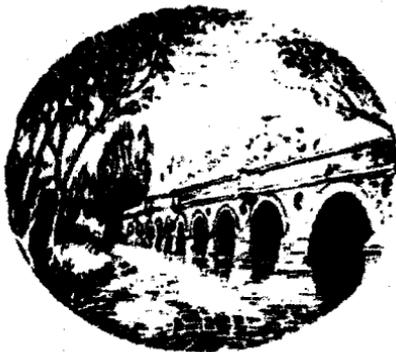


LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER



August 1998



**FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

You will see from the contents of this Newsletter details of the various activities of the Society. I wish to refer to two - the publication of a new book and the operation of the Museum.

The profits from our sales provide the Society with one of its main sources of income. We keep repeating that members' subscriptions are insufficient to cover the running costs of the Society and the provision of Newsletters and Proceedings and so a healthy sales operation is essential for our financial well-being.

You will be aware that Howard Davies ceased to be our sales secretary from the AGM and we are finding it very difficult to achieve our previous level of sales. Is there not someone amongst our membership who could help with the Society's sales?

We need someone to man the sales table at the Friday meetings and also help with the distribution of the books published by the Society. If you feel that you could help with any of this please have a word with me and I will explain what is involved. With a new book coming on the market it is particularly important that we sell as many copies as quickly as possible in order to recoup our costs and, hopefully, make a profit.

Those of us who frequently go to the Museum working parties on Mondays often find that we get more visitors, and make more sales, than on some regular opening days. This indicates that there is a demand for the Museum and for the services which the Society provides there. However, we are still in need of more stewards in order to maintain the present four half-day open sessions per week. So if anyone can spare three hours on a Thursday afternoon, Friday morning or Saturday please see Thelma Lucas, Alan Pooley or me and I'm sure that we will be able to find you a slot in the rota.

I am extremely pleased that Alan Pooley has undertaken the chairmanship of the Museum Sub-Committee which was set up after the AGM. With the new sub-committee the management of our Museum operation is becoming apparent. We now have a housekeeper and gardeners which will leave a curator free to purely look after the collection.

The new computer referred to in Newsletter 2/98 has been obtained so we can now proceed with the cataloguing of our collection of books, documents and artefacts. Again this gives opportunities for many people to help; this is work which can be carried out at times to suit you, why not ask any of us where your talents may best be used.

*Peter Tarplee*

### **HAMPTON COTTAGE**

Although perhaps initially thought of only as the Society's Museum, Hampton Cottage has become more than that. It is now firmly established as the Headquarters and Office as well. All the correspondence is now directed there and the telephone, with an extension in the sales room, also has an answering machine in the office.

The ad hoc committee formed to prepare the building for re-opening to the public in April this year, has now been replaced by the Society's Museum Sub-Committee which meets on a monthly basis. It is an opportune time for the Committee to review the workings and develop a strategy for the future particularly as the need to have the collection of artifacts and other items, documents, maps and photographs etc., catalogued in accordance with recognised standards is becoming acute. Until this is done the Museum cannot be fully registered. A new computer and software have been purchased to hold the database but there is much preparatory work to reconcile our records and holdings before many entries can be made.

During the creation of the Museum and for some time after its first opening to the public, there was quite a large band of enthusiasts apart from those who acted as Stewards, who helped to keep the maintenance and administration under control. Since then there has been some transfer of responsibilities between the Trustees, essentially responsible for the Structure and external aspects and the Society which is responsible for internal matters, displays etc.. Unfortunately more of the work had become concentrated with fewer people. We have an urgent need for a new permanent Curator - but the duties can now be more closely allied to the actual task of being responsible for the maintenance and proper recording of the Society's collection.

As a direct result of the "Friends" Coffee Morning in June, Eileen Pearce volunteered to take on the duties of Housekeeper, keeping the cottage

clean and Pam Knowles to organise work on the garden. We now have clean windows and a much tidier garden as two of the results. There can be no doubt that good liaison between the Society and the "Friends" is vital to the success of the Museum and as plans are developed there will be even more scope for both parties to work together as has happened in the past.

The routine administration is handled by the Secretary, Thelma Lucas and Anthony Gordon is acting as Curator for certain external matters. An increasing amount of preparatory work towards the cataloguing is being undertaken by Stewards on days when visitors are few and far between. A pressure pad installed beneath the door mat with a bleeper helps by signalling the entrance of a visitor. However we have really only scratched the surface of this task.

Most Mondays you will find Hampton Cottage occupied by several people undertaking perhaps renovation, recording, maintenance or other tasks whilst in the Priory basement or outside in a delightful spot (weather permitting), sorting and cataloguing of archaeological artifacts is underway. If we are there, the door is unlocked and the shutters open - so why not drop in and see what is happening? We often admit members of the public if it is safe and not inconvenient.

In the latter part of July, a full inventory of the contents of the cottage and storeroom will be made. The Museum Sub-Committee has delegated responsibility for the operation of, and the contents in, Hampton Cottage and in the absence of a permanent curator, any request to remove or add anything be it artifact or records etc., must be channelled through myself, the Secretary, Thelma Lucas, or the Society Chairman, Peter Tarplee and any subsequent action entered in the day book. Loans or gifts handed in at the Museum to the Stewards are covered in this way by entry in the book and the copy of the receipt which is considered by the Committee in due course.

All of the above may suggest to you that the Museum is functioning quite satisfactorily without a permanent Curator - but that would be an erroneous conclusion. We are struggling to cover the position and if anybody is interested in knowing more about this very worthwhile position then please contact the undersigned or any official of the Society.

Lastly it must be recorded that the credit for rescuing the situation at the beginning of this year after the Curator's resignation and organising the re-opening of the Museum rests firmly on the shoulders of the Chairman, Peter Tarplee.

*Alan V Pooley*

Chairman Museum Sub-Committee

### **BACK NUMBERS OF L&DLHS PROCEEDINGS**

The Society has a large number of back issues of its Proceedings of which it wishes to dispose. Members wishing to complete their sets of Proceedings, or to have copies of some issues are invited to visit the Museum where they will find the back numbers available for 50p each. We also have some binders for Proceedings which members may collect.

Our Museum is open on Thursday afternoons, Friday mornings and all day Saturdays.

### **THE FRIENDS OF LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM**

The Friends are still recovering from the shock of Janet's resignation as Curator, but will give their whole-hearted support to efforts being made to keep the Museum open. We sent Janet our condolences on the recent death of her father, and we wish her Godspeed on her coming removal to Yorkshire to be near her mother.

### **Fourteenth Annual General Meeting**

This meeting was held at Letherhead Institute on Tuesday 28th April, but was not very well attended. Joan Kirby served us with coffee, for which many thanks Joan. The accounts for 1997 were approved at the meeting, and members were informed that the Fuller/McNulty Memorial Fund stands at £1290.

The meeting re-elected the previous committee who were all willing to continue but with the welcome addition of three new members.

Chairman - John Rosser

Secretary - Thelma Lucas

Treasurer - Gwen Hoad

John Clark

After the business part of the meeting, Peter Tarplee gave a most interesting talk illustrated with slides, about the industrial history of rural Surrey.

## **Fund Raising Events**

**Bookham Talk:** On October 2nd 1997, Bill Culley gave his third and last talk on the "Recent History of Bookham", which made us a profit of £214. We are extremely grateful to Bill for giving these talks for the Friends which were not only very successful events in themselves but raised a total of £660 over the three talks. Thank you Bill!

**Coffee Morning:** This event on June 16th, saw many Friends and visitors calling into the Museum. There was no entrance fee but contributions towards the coffee were invited. The raffle, plant and bric-a-brac stalls and some donations, produced a result of just under £100. The Coffee Morning was followed by a wine and nibbles party for any Friend who could come, and a convivial atmosphere was helped by the rare appearance of the sun which shone on the Museum garden. Both occasions were memorable for the offers of help which came forth for cleaning the cottage, tidying the garden and stewarding. Thank you to everyone who supported these events in any way whatsoever.

## **Future Events**

There are no plans at the moment for either an outing or a fund-raising event this year. It was felt that all energies should be concentrated on supporting the Museum in practical ways.

## **Expenditure**

Until the new Museum Committee have got into their stride, there are no immediate projects for the Friends to pay for, but in the long term of course there will be. A new Ashtead Pottery postcard has been published, and a carousel to display the postcards in, has been bought. Sales in the Museum, particularly of postcards, continue steadily, and the local public libraries do sterling work in selling our postcards.

*Gwen Hoad*

## **THE ASHTEAD ARCHIVE**

The title sounds impressive giving the picture of a large library and store room with neatly arranged documents all clearly labelled, categorised and ready to hand but in fact most of the material is scattered over the archivist's spare bedrooms and eaves cupboards.

However, things could be worse. As the result of a few months of work most of the material is in some sort of order. The written matter is stored in a pack of interlocking trays, each tray containing documents of an

associated nature; the photographs are stored according to size in cardboard boxes; the large maps have been slipped into protective sleeves and laid flat under a bed and the smaller ones are in cardboard boxes of a suitable size. An attempt has been made to ensure that everything is kept out of direct sunlight, in well ventilated surroundings and at a moderate temperature.

### **Photographs**

We have over 300 photographs of Ashtead, some going back well over 100 years. Very few are unique and copies can often be seen in people's houses. Many of the smaller ones are picture postcards.

### **Maps**

We have copies of large scale maps from private surveys of 1638 and 1802 as well as those of the Ordnance Survey from 1866. There are also many maps to a smaller scale.

### **Written Documents**

Perhaps the most useful documents are:

**The Court Barons** and similar papers dating from the 12th century although the older ones are in Latin.

**Census returns** from 1841.

**Parish registers** (Births, Marriages and Deaths) between the years 1662 to 1914, but with gaps.

**Catalogues** of land sales etc.

**The Proceedings** of the L&DLHS.

**Histories** of Ashtead contributed by individual members.

**Working papers** on various historical researches such as buildings, estates and families.

**News cuttings.**

**Booklets and pamphlets.**

Possibly our most valuable possession is the collection of documents and photographs bequeathed to us by the late A.W.G. Lowther, the first chairman of the Society and a noted historian and archaeologist.

Finding house room for the material is a problem and in general we prefer that local residents who own interesting documents should retain them but let us know what they have in this respect so that they may be

consulted or borrowed if required. Already we have an inventory of some private collections and are always on the look out for more.

*J.P. Willis*

Ashtead Archivist

54 Links Road, Ashtead, Surrey, KT21 2HW. Tel 01372 275199

### **FROM THE LECTURE SECRETARY**

I want to produce an up to date list of potential speakers and subjects. Would members who are prepared to have their name on the list please write to me giving -

- Name, address and telephone number.
- Subject(s) they are willing to speak on, related (broadly) to the districts covered by the Society and whether illustrated with slides and/or OHPs or not.
- Availability day and/or evening. Any days in the week when not regularly available.
- Any preferences, or inhibitions, in speaking to adults or children.
- If a fee or expenses is required, at what rate. (Normally I would expect, as a minimum, reasonable expenses to be reimbursed and a donation made to the Society).

*Gordon Knowles*

Lecture Secretary

7 Squirrels Green, Great Bookham, Leatherhead KT23 3LE

### **SURREY LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL**

Members may wish to know that as the Society is affiliated to the Surrey Local History Council they are entitled to reduced admission prices to events organised by the Council if booked in advance, and to buy "Surrey History" (the Council's yearly publication) at a discount at the annual Symposium. This year's Symposium on **WATER** will be held at **Chertsey Hall** on **7th November**, and the Spring meeting provisionally booked for **17th April** at Virginia Water will have **SURREY MANORS** as its subject. The Council welcomes contributions to "Surrey History" whether short or long. Consult the Editor, Tim Everson, c/o Kingston Museum & Heritage Service, North Kingston Centre, Richmond Road.

*Ernest Crossland*

## **NEW L&DLHS PUBLICATION**

The one part of the area covered by the Society for which, up to now, there has not been a comprehensive history written is Fetcham. We have tried to fill this gap by producing 'HISTORY OF FETCHAM' edited by Jack Stuttard. Jack has been helped by other members who have contributed to the book, namely: Ernest Crossland, Alan Gillies, Geoff Hayward, the late John Mettam, Alan Pooley and Ed Tims.

'History of Fetcham' will be in a similar format to our book on the history of Ashted published in 1995 and will contain around 160 pages.

The book will be available from the end of October and the cost will be £8.95. We hope that all members, and all their friends, will come to our launch at **Fetcham Village Hall on Friday 30 October** when there will be a short presentation about the book at 8.00 pm.

We will be there from 7.30 pm to meet you, supply you with complimentary wine and to sell you copies of the book. Admission will be free.

Please put this date in your diaries now and publicise the meeting and the book as much as you can.

For any member who is unable to come to this function at Fetcham the books will be on sale locally, but we would ask you, if possible, to buy your copies from the Society, either from the sales table at our meetings or from Leatherhead Museum.

We hope to see as many people as possible at Fetcham Village Hall to publicise the book as well as the local history society and to meet the authors and other members of the Society. Please try to come, and bring any friends who may be interested.

*Peter Tarplee.*

## **THE STORY OF TWO VILLAGES - GREAT & LITTLE BOOKHAM BY S E D FORTESCUE**

Stephen Fortescue has recently published a third edition, revised, of this well-known book on the history of Great and Little Bookham. As it has been out of print for a number of years there are many people who have been waiting for this to be available again.

This book is an excellent introduction to the history of the two villages which will be in demand by everyone with an interest in the local history of the area.

The book retails at £5.00 and copies may be obtained from the Society at our meetings or from the Museum.

### NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN

A booklet entitled "Picturesque Country Drives in Leatherhead & Neighbourhood" published by the Swan Hotel at the turn of the century, recommends...

*" a visit to the quaint old-world town of Leatherhead. No place exists within the same easy distance of London which possesses such facilities for rural excursions, for whether one travels from Waterloo by the London & South-Western Railway, or from Victoria & London bridge by the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, a journey of only three-quarters of an hour's duration enables the visitor to be at Leatherhead, in the heart of some of the most picturesque scenery to be found within many miles of the Metropolis...*

*Drives can be had at moderate cost from the Swan Hotel, Leatherhead, an ancient and famous hostelry, today, as of yore, a favourite coaching house, and one which has always maintained a high reputation for its comfortable apartments and excellent catering... The "Swan" is a high-class family hotel, possessing every requisite accommodation, with handsome assembly rooms, pleasant sitting-rooms, and every convenience for private individuals, parties, or for public dinners.*

*The coach "Perseverance", leaving the Hotel Metropole, Northumberland Avenue, for Dorking, at 10.40, stops at the "Swan Hotel" every day about 1.30, and the "Rocket", which runs from the Hotel Victoria, to Burford Bridge, Boxhill, also calls at the "Swan"."*

The tariff included in the booklet shows a double bedroom cost 5/- per night; a sitting-room 5/- per day; a fire in either, between 6d & 1/6; a cold hip bath, 6d or a hot one, 1/-; breakfast was 2/6 and a cold luncheon 2/6.

Recent additions to the Library include the following:-

**NATIONAL & GENERAL TOPICS - DICTIONARIES**

MOORWOOD, James, ed - The pocket Oxford latin dictionary. OUP, 1994 (Replaces Foulsham's Latin dictionary)

**NATIONAL & GENERAL TOPICS - RECORDS etc**

HOUSE OF LORDS RECORD OFFICE - Witnesses before Parliament: a guide to the database of witnesses in Committees on Opposed Private Bills, 1771-1917. HLRO, 1997

**SURREY - RECORDS**

West Surrey Family History Soc. - Record Series nos 1, 3, 9, 10, 20, 21 & 22. Research Aid no. 7

**SURREY - TOPOGRAPHICAL**

PARKER, Eric - Surrey naturalist. Hale, 1952 [Contains section on River Mole swallows]

**SURREY - INDIVIDUAL TOWNS & VILLAGES**

**ESHER**

TARPLEE, Peter - A guide to the industrial history of the Borough of Elmbridge. Surrey Ind. Hist. Soc., 1998

**FETCHAM**

PIPER, John, ed - The Fetcham directory. Fetcham Residents' Association, 1997

These and all books in the Society's Library are housed within the Institute Library room. Many books are on the open shelves but some have to be kept in locked cupboards and may not normally be borrowed. In case of difficulty in finding what you want please contact the Society's Librarian (details on the front inside cover of this Newsletter). Don't forget your L&DLHS Membership Card when you visit the Library.

*Gwen Hoad*

**SOCIETY VISITS DURING THE SUMMER**

On Thursday 4th June we visited the Privy Garden of William III at Hampton Court palace, following our talk about this by Anthony Boulding in January. It was not a sunny day, which was a pity, but at least it didn't rain and we were able to enjoy walking around the Privy Garden, recently re-created after the fire at the Palace exactly as it was in

the time of William III with its superb view of the river in one direction and the Palace in the other. We then watched a short video about how it was re-created and went round a small exhibition there.

We also walked through the rose gardens which were in full bloom, and several of us stayed and had lunch in the Cafeteria, or a picnic, and went round the inside of the Palace afterwards. It has all been splendidly restored since the fire and there is so much to see that it is almost impossible to see all of it at once, so most of us went round the parts we most wanted to see, resolved to go back another time.

On Saturday 11th July we went by coach to the Tower of London where our guide, Lesley Broster, joined us. Lesley had given us an excellent talk on Docklands in March and we realised that she knew every inch of London's Docklands, having grown up there, and her family had been involved with the docks for generations.

The original docks stretched from London Bridge to where the Thames Barrier is now - about ten miles, but much of this has now been filled in since the land was sold off piecemeal in the 1980s. Lesley gave us a fascinating description of the whole history of the area - our first stop was at Wapping, near "The Town of Ramsgate" pub which, by extraordinary coincidence, was where Judge Jeffreys was arrested when trying to flee the country after leaving Leatherhead when he came to visit his daughter when she was dying at The Mansion.

After telling us some grisly tales about what happened to the pirates there we went on by coach, hoping to visit the Isle of Dogs, but a "suspicious package" had been found there and the whole area was sealed off by police. However, we drove on to the edge of the river where we had a splendid view of the Millennium Dome and also of Greenwich Palace across the water. We then tried another approach to Canary Wharf and were allowed to drive round the tower block provided the coach didn't stop. After that we went on to St. Katharine's docks where we looked around and had a stop for tea. It had been overcast all day and the forecast was terrible, but it didn't rain until our tea stop, so we were reasonably lucky with the weather. All in all it was a most interesting tour and we all learned a great deal. Our thanks to Pat Thursby who organised the visit.

*Linda Heath*

## **PROGRAMME**

### **Autumn Lectures**

All meetings are held in the Dixon Hall at the Letherhead Institute at 7.30 p.m. for 8 p.m. Entrance 50p for members and £1 for guests, except for the Dallaway Lecture on 16 October when it will be 50p for members and £2 for guests. Coffee is available from 7.30 p.m. (in the interval in December) and is included in the price.

### **Friday 18 September - "The Houses of Nonsuch"**

by Gerald Smith

Everyone has heard of Nonsuch Palace, built by Henry VIII and demolished in the 1680s, but the later houses in the park are also important. Gerald Smith is chairman of the Friends of Nonsuch.

### **Friday 16 October - The Dallaway Lecture:**

#### **"The Archaeology of the Thames"**

by Mike Webber

More of London's history is being exposed daily on the foreshore at low tide: ancient submerged forests, medieval fishtraps, Tudor wharves and jetties, quays and boats of all periods. Mike Webber is the Thames Archaeology Officer for London's largest archaeological site.

### **Friday 20 November - "Damnable Inventions - paper and gunpowder making in the Tillingbourne Valley"**

by Professor Alan Crocker

Cobbett in 1822, when on one of his rural rides, referred to the industries of the Tillingbourne Valley as 'Damnable Inventions'. Alan Crocker is President of the Surrey Industrial History Group, a part of the Surrey Archaeological Society. He will be leading a visit to the Chilworth site for us in February next year as a follow up to his lecture.

### **Friday 18 December - Christmas Miscellany**

arranged by Gordon Knowles

This year will again have a theme, 'Buildings in the district, past present or proposed; now or in the past'. Telephone Gordon on 01372 458396 with your offer of a 10 minute contribution on this theme. The earlier you do the better, more chance of it being included.

