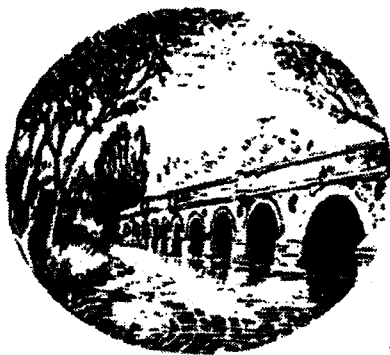


LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER



May 1999

**LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
Hampton Cottage, 64 Church Street, LEATHERHEAD Surrey KT22 8DP  
Tel: 01372 386348

Registered Charity No. 802409

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<b>CHAIRMAN</b> Peter A. Tarplee 01372 452301	<b>SECRETARY</b> Thelma Lucas 01372 844345	<b>TREASURER</b> Judith Mills 01372 372146
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**The Society** meets on the 3rd Friday of the month in at the Letherhead Institute from September to May. For details see programme in this issue.

**1999 Membership Subscriptions**

Ordinary .....	£9.00
Associate .....	£4.00
Junior (under 18) .....	£1.00

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<b>MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY</b>	<b>Jack Barker</b>	<b>01372 458469</b>
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**The Museum** is open from April until December at the following times :

Thursday	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Friday	10:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Saturday	10:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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<b>SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>Alan V. Pooley</b>	<b>01372 374093</b>
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**The Library** is open from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm on Tuesday, Thursday & Friday and from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm on the **first** Saturday in the month or by arrangement with the Librarian.

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<b>LIBRARIAN</b>	<b>Gwen Hoad</b>	<b>01372 273934</b>
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**The Records** are available for study by arrangement.

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<b>RECORDS SECRETARY</b>	<b>Brian Godfrey</b>	<b>01372 454654</b>
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**Lectures** on the local history of the area may sometimes be given to other local societies by our members.

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<b>LECTURE SECRETARY</b>	<b>Gordon Knowles</b>	<b>01372 458396</b>
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**The Newsletter** is published quarterly.

*Copy for the August 1999 issue should reach the Society's Office by 15 July 1999*

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<b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b>	<b>Anthony Gordon</b>	<b>01372 458180</b>
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**The Friends of Leatherhead Museum** support the Society's work in the Museum

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<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>Thelma Lucas</b>	<b>01372 844345</b>
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**FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

By the time that you read this the AGM will have taken place and also the Museum will have re-opened.

Regarding the Museum, some changes have taken place during the time it was closed, mainly in the front ground floor room. The room has been decorated and new display equipment has been purchased for the items on sale. This has made more space in the room and we hope that it will assist with our sales of books and other items as well as making the room more attractive to museum visitors.

The society collected over £300 when Joyce Fuller died and the committee decided to use the money in the Joyce Fuller Fund towards the improvements in this reception area of our museum. We invite all members who do not regularly visit the Society's museum to look in and to let us know what they think of the changes.

A new front door has also been fitted to Hampton Cottage, this is a long overdue improvement. Other minor changes have taken place during the period of closure but, as ever, the date for re-opening was upon us before we could do everything that we wanted to.

We are progressing with our application for Museum Registration but our progress with a lot of the necessary tasks is slow due to the fact that the Society is still without a Museum Curator. If anyone feels that they would like to consider taking on this post, or knows someone who might, please let the Secretary or the Chairman know.

What is entailed?

First of what is NOT entailed:-

The cleaning of the building.

The maintenance of the garden.

The arranging for stewards for the museum.

The upkeep of the building.

Any involvement with sales at the museum.

So what is left?

Basically it is the responsibility for the conservation of the Society's collection and the maintenance of the relevant records. The latter have deficiencies which have to be rectified prior to the planned transfer to a

computer database. Some volunteers are already in place to assist with the task of 'stocktaking' and preparing the necessary paper-work and we hope that there may be more available shortly. Occasional contact with other museum curators, the Surrey Museums Group and our professional Curatorial Advisor would be desirable.

Computer literacy would be a bonus but it is NOT essential, training opportunities will be available in curatorial activities.

So, please, let's see if we can fill this post. Our museum needs its collection sorting out and we need to become a Registered Museum. Is there someone who can help us to do this?

Talking of the Museum reminds me that I was recently very pleased to receive a letter from Janet Goldsmith, our previous Curator, who has now left the district and moved to Yorkshire. Janet sent me some photographs of a Theo-Samoa petrol pump at a garage near her new home which is very similar to the one in our museum. We are very pleased that Janet is remaining a member of the Society and we look forward to seeing her again whenever she re-visits Surrey.

In the last Newsletter I mentioned the Heritage Open Days organised by the Civic Trust which will take place over the weekend of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September. Already there is an interesting programme of activities planned in our area including walks within and around the town and villages as well as a number of interesting properties being open to the public. Do look out for local and national publicity.

*Peter Tarplee*

### **PRINTFAYRE DISCOUNT**

Brian Beacroft of Printfayre in North Street is willing to give our members a 10% discount on all photocopying and laser copying if they produce their membership cards. This is a very generous offer which many of us will be very glad to use.

### **SURREY HISTORY CENTRE**

The transfer of the Surrey Record Office from Kingston and its amalgamation with the Local Studies Library and Muniment Room, both in Guildford, was reported in Newsletter 4/98. Since then the Society has arranged a visit to their home in the new History Centre in Goldsworth Road, Woking. The guided tour provided an opportunity to see the excellent facilities for research which are now available.

Also housed in the same building are the County Museum Development Officer and the Surrey Archaeological Unit thus bringing together under one roof a comprehensive resource for those interested in study of the County's history.

Jack Stuttard was invited to the official opening of the Centre.

*"On 31st March I attended the formal opening by the Prince of Wales of the Surrey History Centre in Woking. Dr. David Robinson, Director of the Centre, received the Prince, and the welcoming party included the Lord Lieutenant of the County, the Chairman of Surrey County Council and well over 100 others from many different walks of life in Surrey. The Prince was shown round the History Centre, including the special research and conservation units, ending with a tour of exhibits in the spacious reading room. After this the Prince gave a short speech and unveiled a tablet to commemorate his visit. It was an impressive occasion, helped by a bright sunny morning."*

Surrey History Centre at 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking is open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.30am to 5.00pm, on Thursdays from 9.30am to 7.30pm and on Saturdays from 9.30am to 4.00pm. The telephone number is 01483 594594.

## **GUIDED WALKS AROUND LEATHERHEAD**

On the afternoons of Saturdays 5 June, 3 July and 7 August we are taking guided walks round the centre of Leatherhead to show people some features of historic interest in the town. Walks will start and finish at the Museum at 2.30 and will take about an hour. No charge, but donations for Museum funds welcomed.

We do need more people to lead guided walks, so if any of our members would like to come on one of these walks to "learn the ropes" now's your chance!

*Linda Heath*

## **VISIT TO CHILWORTH GUNPOWDER WORKS SITE**

On a rather cold February day, 13 members assembled in the car-park next to the Percy Arms at Chilworth. There we were met by Glenys and Alan Crocker who have made a detailed study of this site and have become experts on the gunpowder industry in Great Britain. Alan with the louder voice, acted as our vocal guide, though Glenys has written a guide to the site. After a short introduction Alan led us along the main road to

Blacksmiths Lane. There he pointed out the Old Manor House, formerly called Powder Mill House and at one time the Manager's House. Further along the lane in a turning amongst a housing estate, we saw what remains of the saltpetre house, refining house, office, laboratory, workshop and stores, forming the Lower Works.

Back on the other side of the lane we entered the Middle Works and what was once the danger zone, now owned and conserved by Guildford Borough Council. It is an interesting network of footpaths, mill races, mill streams and a mill pond set amongst trees, all open to the public who can wander through it and pick out the occasional remains of buildings such as the dusting house, corning house, mixing house and incorporating mills. Edge runners, which look like huge millstones, are clearly visible; a series of half a dozen or more having been set up in a row by the path.

We were shown the line of some of the early tramways and the later extension which crossed the stream on a swing bridge and connected with Chilworth Station. Following the line of the tramway we reached the substantial remains of six incorporating mills of 1885 built side by side with a built-in drenching system to control possible explosions; an ever present threat and often a reality in gunpowder factories.

Beyond the edge of the public conserved area and east of Lockner Road, are the Upper Works containing the later remains of the Smokeless Powder Factory and the Admiralty Cordite Works which were built in 1915. We were not able to go and see them through lack of time, and in any case most of them lie on private land, but it is possible to see some of them from a public footpath. We did however see the foundations of the men's and women's mess rooms of the Admiralty Cordite Works, in a field just to the left of Lockner Road.

This very large area spanning the 17<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and once a containing over 100 buildings of varying ages and now in varying states of preservation, has fascinated the Crockers who continue to make discoveries. Much of their enthusiasm was transmitted to us, and over a pub lunch, members were able to ask questions and fill in a few gaps.

A very enjoyable morning. If you did not come you missed something special and a pleasant social occasion as well!

*Gwen Hoad*

## **RECORDING INSCRIPTIONS IN LEATHERHEAD PARISH CHURCHYARD**

Did you know that Leatherhead Parish Churchyard is one of the largest in the south of England? Various people have recorded the inscriptions of the tombstones at different times, trying to complete this mammoth task. Over 1,700 inscriptions have now been recorded, but there are over 500 graves still unrecorded. Stan has now handed his material over to Linda and David Heath who are co-ordinating a group of teamworkers from the church to speed up the work.

Are any of our members interested in taking part in this scheme? There are two ways of helping – either in recording the inscriptions on the graves, or helping with transferring this to card index, alphabetical and numerical lists and onto computer.

The unrecorded part of the churchyard has been divided into areas of 50 graves and each volunteer is given ten graves to record in their own time, after they have been shown what to do.

If you would like to help with this please contact Linda or David Heath, tel. 01372 372603.

*Linda Heath*

## **NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM**

First of all we would like to thank the working party who have transformed the Stewards room during the winter. A coat of paint and all the books displayed up the walls instead of horizontally on a table has made the room seem twice as big. There is now a shelf behind the desk which holds all the information the Stewards could possibly need together with the inevitable forms which have to be filled in, and Alan Pooley's "training sessions" have been much appreciated. The Stewards were ready for the Museum to re-open on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April but there are still some gaps on the rota. If anyone could spare 3 hours a month to help it would be most encouraging.

The Friends are holding their annual coffee morning, bring and buy and plant stall on June 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10am to noon and we hope the weather will be kind to us. If you can help in any way you will be most welcome.

At noon, after the coffee morning all Friends of the Museum are invited to a wine and cheese get together when we can catch up on what has been happening during the winter.

Finally we are thinking of planning an outing in the autumn, possibly in September, to Chatham Dockyard. The Committee would appreciate any comments or suggestions.

*Thelma Lucas*

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN

The oldest book in the Society's Library is the section devoted to Surrey from the "Compleat History of England" Vol.V by Dr White Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough, and written about 1719. Our copy came from a complete copy of Vol.V but has been bound separately. Here follows an extract from it, under the heading "Bookeham or Bowkham, Great and Little".

*"Lord Howard of Effingham, who hath a seat in this Parish, is the present Lord of this Manor, and that of Fetcham. In this Parish is an House named Sliffield, the Seat of the Family of Shiers, many of whom lie bury'd in the Church; 'till of late, Madam Shiers, the Relict of Robert Shiers, Esq; the last Heir Male of the family, gave it to Hugh Shortrudge, D.D. Rector of Fetcham, in whose Posterity it still remains. The Improprate Tithes of this Parish do now, or lately did belong to Mr Rowse, to whom it was left by Mr Francis Rowse, a leading Man in the Long Parliament's Sitting, and under the Protector O.Cromwell, by whom he was made one of the House of Lords, and of his Privy Council. He died Jan.7, 1658-9, and by his Will left 40l. per Annum, charged on the great Tithes of this Parsonage for the Maintenance of two Scholars in Pembroke College, Oxon, where he was educated himself His Scholars were ordered to be all of the Name of Rowse, descended of his Brothers, or Nichols, and Upton his Sister's Children, and in default of such, to be elected out of the upper Classe of Eaton School, and not to have above ten Pounds per Annum a Freehold Estate. They were to study Divinity, and before they were created Bachelors of Arts give some Specimen of their Proficiency, and hold their Scholarship no more than seven Years before they be supply'd by a new Election."*

There have been no additions to the Library since the February Newsletter. Back numbers of the Proceedings are available in the Museum price 50p. All books in the Society's Library are housed within the Institute Library



room. 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*

## **PROGRAMME**

### **Visits**

#### **Friday 18 June 2 pm. – Guided Walk Round Guildford**

Led by Majorie Williams, member of the Friends of Guildford Museum. Meet at 2 p.m. at bridge at bottom of High Street. Cost £1.50 which will go to Friends of Guildford Museum.

#### **Sun. 18 July 2.30pm. – Carew Manor & St. Mary's Church, Beddington**

A visit by cars, led by John Phillips, following his talk in May on Sir Francis Carew's Garden. We shall see the Great hall, cellars, Dovecote and church. Meet at 2.30 p.m. at Carew Manor Dovecote, Church Road, Beddington. Cost £3.00.

#### **Saturday 18 September 2.00 pm – Visit to Reigate**

Visit to Reigate led by Gerry Moss to see the Cranston Library, churchyard, medieval undercroft and caves. Meet at 2.00 pm at Council Office car park, Castlefield Road. Cost £3.00 for donation to Library and entrance to caves.

Further visits will include a visit to St. John's School in October and also to the Cobham Bus Museum. Details and applications for these in the August Newsletter.

### **11/12 September - Heritage Weekend**

There will be guided walks round the town from the Institute, for Heritage Weekend. Details in August Newsletter and Heritage leaflets.

### **Autumn Lectures**

All meetings are held in the Dixon Hall of the Letherhead Institute at 7.30 for 8pm. Entrance 50p for members and £1 for non-members. Coffee is included, served from 7.30pm.

Fri. 17 Sep. – **The History of St. John's School** - by Richard Hughes

Fri. 15 Oct. – **The Cobham Bus Museum** – by Bill Cottrill

Fri 19 Nov. – **Guildford Castle & Royal Palace** – by Rob Poulton

Fri 17 Dec. – **Miscellany on "People and Places"** - by members

Full details of lectures in the August Newsletter.

