

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**NEWSLETTER**



November, 2002

# LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 802409

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## CHAIRMAN

Peter A. Tarplee  
01372 452301

## SECRETARY

Judith Mills  
01372 372146

## TREASURER

Norma Robertson  
01372 453795

The Society meets on the third Friday of the month at the Letherhead Institute from September to May. For details see programme in this issue.

### 2002 Membership Subscriptions (2003 No change)

Ordinary.....£12.00

Associate.....£5.00

Junior (under 18)..... £1.00

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Jack Barker

01372 458469

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**The Museum** will be open until Saturday, 14th December at the following times: -

Thursdays and Fridays . . . . 1.0 p.m. to 4.0 p.m.

Saturdays . . . . . 10.0 a.m. to 4.0 p.m.

It will then close until Thursday, 3rd April, 2003.

## CURATOR

Graham Evans

01372 386348

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**The Library** at The Letherhead Institute is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10.0 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. **It is no longer open on Saturdays.**

Exceptionally, arrangements may be made to use it at other times by applying to the Librarian.

## LIBRARIAN

Gwen Hoad

01372 273934

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**The Records** are available for study by arrangement.

## RECORDS SECRETARY

Brian Godfrey

01372 454654

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**Lectures** . Co-ordination of the Society's lecture and visits programme and L & D L H S speakers for local societies.

## PROGRAMME & LECTURE SECRETARY

Gordon Knowles

01372 458396

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**The Newsletter** is published quarterly in February, May, August and November.

*Copy for the February 2003 issue should reach the Society's Office by 17th January, 2003.*

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

John Wettren

01372 459277

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**The Friends of Leatherhead Museum** support the Society's work on behalf of the Museum.

## SECRETARY

Thelma Lucas

01372 844345

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

As we approach the end of another season of museum opening I feel that this is an appropriate time to mention recent and forthcoming improvements which have been made and the help received from various bodies and people.

Of course, the provision of stewards is paramount and this is, in general, carried out by members of either the Society or the Museum Friends. We are also grateful for the Friends who have taken on the organisation of the stewards' rota. Other members are involved in many activities and I would especially make mention of Messrs Mellors and Grieves who are assiduously carrying out the documentation of the acquisition records.

The museum must, of necessity, be a drain on the Society's resources and although visitors often put money in the donation box this, although welcome, does not go far towards the cost of the service. I would like, therefore, to remind everyone of the help which we have had over the last year or so from a number of organisations.

The Surrey Museums Consultative Committee (SMCC), which is a joint service funded by the county and district councils, has been of assistance in a number of ways, with help and advice as well as with finance.

The drawers under one of our cabinets have been modified so that they may be used for displaying small items. The SMCC paid for the materials for this. The store is at present being lined with plastic sheeting in order to improve the environment in the room. The materials for this were paid for by an SMCC grant.

Two years ago we installed two new display cabinets and for a large part of the cost of these we are grateful for grants from SMCC and the Friends of Leatherhead Museum.

As you may have seen recently in the local press we have acquired two edge runners assumed to have come from the tannery at the town mill. These edge runners are heavy wheels of concrete which are mounted vertically on an

arm which revolves round a central post. The wheels have a broad rim and run in a circular path inside a circular trough where the bark is crushed before being used in the tanning process. These have been in the river just below the Town Bridge for years and although they were causing no problems there, the Environment Agency whilst carrying out some dredging works, with help of the Mole Valley District Council staff, rescued them from the river and delivered them to the museum garden. The museum working party will arrange for them to be displayed properly once the work in the Priory basement has been completed. The Society is grateful to the Environment Agency and the MVDC for their efforts in getting these very heavy stones from the river bed to the museum garden. The display about the River Mole which is upstairs in the museum illustrates the use of the stones.

Mole Valley District Council has also helped this year by giving us a grant of money which has covered the cost of completing the brick wall around the well which has made it both safer and more attractive. They have also paid for a new thermohygrograph, enabling us to have one in the museum and one in the store, and for some other items. The Saxon sword in our collection was in a bad state of deterioration and this is currently being conserved by arrangement with SMCC. The security system at the museum came into use during the summer and half the cost of this was borne by SMCC.

Over the past couple of years we have been fortunate in receiving a sizeable bequest from the late Sheila Burrough and plans are in hand to install further custom-built display cabinets during the shut-down period as well as to purchase some display dummies, and to have the time clock repaired. We have already bought new display boards which means that the Society's present panels can be permanently employed in the museum. There will also be funds available from this money for some structural work or external decoration to the building if the Trustees need financial assistance for this.

It will be seen that we have received a large amount of help from a number of sources towards improvements to Leatherhead Museum and I would like to take this opportunity of acknowledging this as well as thanking all the volunteers who, in so many ways, keep the operation going.

My only other message this issue is to remind you of the notice in the last *Newsletter* concerning the two vacancies which will shortly be occurring in the Committee - Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor. If you can help in any way please speak to Judith Mills or to any committee member.

*Peter Tarplee*

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARIAN

The most recent new publication to reach the library is "*The Story of St Giles' School Ashtead, 1852-2002*" published by the school to celebrate its 150th anniversary this year. It is a fascinating account of life in the school but also reflects on life in the village as this extract from the section headed '1878-1901' shows.

"Life would have been hard for these children, who also had to help their large families at home and in the fields. Ashtead was still very rural and agricultural. Farm workers often earned less than £1 a week and to send a child to school cost threepence a week, with a reduction to twopence for three children or more. All schools had long summer holidays to allow the pupils to help with the harvests. To help make ends meet, the village formed clubs to which people could pay a regular small amount and so afford coal to keep them warm and buy boots and shoes for the children's feet. The school also set up a penny bank system "*to teach our scholars to be thrifty and put by for a rainy Day*". Children from throughout the parish would walk miles to and from school each day. Others came from as far away as the Leatherhead borders, Ashtead Common and Langley Vale through the extremes of weather which seemed so prevalent in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A wagon would bring the infants from Langley Vale but this frequently became bogged down.

The attendance registers show different figures for morning and afternoon, and so many must have gone home for lunch. Some brought their lunch with them as "*Three times this week dinners have been missing from the cloakroom. This morning I found a rat with his nose in the basket*".

Other additions are :—

## **SURREY - Individual Towns & Villages**

### **ASHTEAD**

Ashtead Church of England School — “*History of Ashtead Church of England School, 1852-1952.*” Ashtead C. of E School, 1952

GOLDSMITH, Janet — “*Ashtead Horticultural Society: the first 125 Years, 1875 to 2000.*” A.H.S., 2001

All these books and others in the Society's Library are housed within the Letherhead Institute library room. It is accessible to our members only when the L.C.A .library is open to its members, but not on Saturdays (see details on the inside cover of this Newsletter).

It is most important that you show your current L&DLHS membership card to the librarian on duty when you use the library. *Gwen Hoad*

### **WALK AROUND DEFENCE SITES ON BOX HILL**

On 10<sup>th</sup> August, despite a forecast of showers, the morning stayed dry. Nine members and a dog met our guide, Trevor Marchington, in the car park by Ryka's Cafe and walked a circuit that started on the long slope north above the car park. A fallen tree on the slope served to display the OS map while Trevor outlined the background to the Victorian fort and World War 2 ‘GHQ Anti-tank Line’.

Further up the hill binoculars allowed a glimpse of a rarely-noticed pillbox near the A24 north of Burford Bridge. Looking westwards across Denbies we saw the line of a 1940 anti-tank ditch, mistakenly believed in the 1960's to be the line of Stane Street. Beyond Denbies the GHQ Line continued across the North Downs scarp face as far as Newlands Corner, fortified with pillboxes or ditches. However, the Denbies anti-tank ditch did not extend to the foot of Box Hill, leaving a puzzling gap.

Denbies itself became a leading Home Guard training school, visited by General Lord Alanbrooke in October 1941. He had replaced Ironside, the originator of the GHQ Line, in July 1940 and within a few weeks of his appointment had declared the line already obsolete, stating : “*This static rear-*

*line did not fall in with my conception".* Joining the rough flint-surfaced track, we followed it to Box Hill Fort. Built in 1899 it was one of thirteen intended to protect the capital. Primarily a tool and weapon store and mobilisation centre, it was also constructed as an infantry redoubt with steel shutters on the windows. It was noted that the loopholes in the concrete walls lacked the more sophisticated '*stepping*' of WW2 pillboxes.

The walk continued after a pause for coffee at the National Trust servery. At the foot of Box Hill the GHQ Line abandoned the North Downs and followed the River Mole upstream for several miles before turning eastwards towards the River Medway. From the hillside below the viewpoint we were able to look down to a dozen sites of former defence structures. The most obvious survivor is the group of twelve anti-tank concrete cylinders on the river bank. These guarded a ramp by which cattle could reach the river, the north bank of which had been steepened to prevent the passage of tanks.

Further on down the hill we looked down on to Dorking, which had been an '*Anti-tank island*', the detailed defences of which are shown on the '*secret*' Home Guard map in Dorking Museum.

Shere and Betchworth were also '*islands*' intended to delay an enemy breakthrough until a mobile defence force arrived. On the hillside behind Dorking, Deepdene House became the wartime HQ for the Southern Railway, with a nerve centre located in underground chambers. These were forgotten until rediscovered by firemen in 1997 when called to a fire lit by children in one of the entrances.

A steep descent of the North Downs Way led us to the Stepping Stones where we turned upstream and after 200 yards of nettle bashing reached the massive rectangular anti-tank pillbox that faces westwards. The four foot, six inches thick concrete walls contain a mount for a six-pounder gun which was never fitted. Just upstream, triple concrete pillars had barred passage of the river by tanks; our view of the few which survive was prevented by the dense summer vegetation.

Finally we followed the river downstream back to Burford Bridge, completing a circuit that had given us a comprehensive overview of the

former defences around Box Hill. Our thanks to Trevor for guiding us without mishap over some rugged ground and for so eloquently informing us on an aspect of our more recent history which he had obviously thoroughly researched.

*Trevor Marchington and Gordon Knowles*

## SURREY CASTLES IN THE LANDSCAPE

The first meeting of the Society's 2002/2003 session was held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September in the Letherhead Institute when our immediate past President, Dr. Derek Renn, gave a lecture on '*Surrey Castles in the Landscape*'. His theme was the castle in its community and local surroundings.

Derek gave his definition of a castle as '*a fortified residence*' and first presented a brief overview of the castles along the south coast from Pevensey to Dover, Deal and Rayleigh, illustrating the early Saxon forts, the Roman castles and the Gun Forts of Henry VIII.

Surrey was along the Pilgrim's Way with few roads in Roman and mediaeval times. The landscape was largely forest until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Surrey castles were more numerous than many thought : Guildford, (a royal castle), and Farnham (a bishop's), being the best known. There were a number of early forts, mainly of timber and earthworks, and barons' castles which were smaller and not so lasting in the landscape as Guildford and Farnham.

There was a 9<sup>th</sup> century fort at Eashing, and the large castle at Guildford, built on a mound of chalk created from digging the surrounding ditch, was of the same period. The king stayed here overnight on a few occasions during his frequent journeys around his kingdom. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, after the death of King John, Edward III set about building palaces, and Guildford was developed as part of the scheme. The mound was given over to the Sheriff and a wooden building was erected for the king in the grounds. Other castles and palaces built by the Crown in the county were at Richmond, Hampton Court, Nonsuch — of which no trace remains, Bagshot and Mortlake.

The bishopric of Winchester extended into Surrey, and a castle was built over a pre-historic fort at Farnham. The bishops built their own castles partly as a sign of their power and wealth and partly as a fortification against the barons and any insurrection by the populace. Farnham was constructed by Bishop Wainfleet, who also built a tower at Esher which survives as a residence. Farnham was later developed into a palace and embellished with Tudor lodgings.

Among the privately built castles and fortified houses was the one at Bletchingley, built in 1379. This stood outside the village in a large park, itself extended in 1448. Parts of the mound survive in the grounds of a private house. Reigate castle was also away from the town and had chalk tunnels underneath, some of which survive. There was a small fortified house at Abinger, to counter the Crown-owned Shere. It was a manor house built alongside a mound and fort, a timber palisade with reinforcement and a central timber watch tower. Walton-on-the-Hill had a 14<sup>th</sup> century fortified manor house with 12<sup>th</sup> century earthworks. Further south into the Weald, Thunderfield near Horley had wet moats surrounding a fortified house. Later buildings were built of stone, such as that at Betchworth, the date of which is not known, and which is currently in the news with debate over restoration.

Dr. Renn gave us much detail of Guildford and Farnham castles, sites that many were familiar with, and information on others that were new to most.

*Gordon Knowles*

## OUR OCTOBER LECTURE—‘THE ANGLO-SAXONS IN SURREY

James Dallaway was the vicar of Leatherhead for thirty years, and published the first history of the town in 1821. The annual lecture in his honour was given this year by Dr Martin Welch of University College, London, a leading authority on the Anglo-Saxons. He began by describing the finds from the cemetery at Park Lane, Croydon, partly found and looted in the 1890's. Its importance lay in the discovery there of ceremonial belts and quoit-shaped brooches, evidence of links with Saxony and Normandy in the fifth century

A. D. Further finds were made in 1992, since when there had been trial archaeological excavations on sites damaged by old foundations, which showed that the cemetery was extended southwards until A.D.700 or even later. There had been extensive — and expensive — arguments on various planning applications for possible development of the sites as office blocks and car parks. The main debate was still whether the site should be entirely excavated first, or preserved (and how this might be done).

The speaker then moved to more local seventh-century cemeteries, such as that found when the Goblin Works (and later Esso House) were built on the Leatherhead/Ashted border and at Headley Drive, Tadworth. At Ashted, at the Gally Hills barrow at Banstead and on Guildown near Guildford, there were later burials of people who had been either hanged or beheaded. Dr Welch said that limb amputations seemed to be mainly punishment rather than medical treatment. At Banstead there was an earlier burial of a tall young man with his weapons and also a metal bowl full of crab apples covered with a cloth tied with string. At Lakenheath in Suffolk, one Saxon skeleton was accompanied by a leg of lamb and a bucket of ale!

Horses — or at least ponies — about six years old, complete with their harness were found in East Anglia, sometimes buried in the same grave as humans. A new cemetery had been found at Sutton Hoo, some distance from the great ship-burial mounds probably of middle-class Saxons. Dr Welch showed us pictures of the various great helmets from Sutton Hoo and elsewhere, the most striking being that from Coppergate, York.

In answering questions, the speaker pointed out that scarce resources were often buried and so lost to the community. Jewellery was sometimes hidden behind the head, and coins replaced valuable weapons. He said that, as well as DNA, the structure and shape of heel-bones differed between racial groups. A national database of Anglo-Saxon burials was planned, with an appeal for local unpublished information to make it comprehensive.

*Derek Renn*

## **HERITAGE OPEN DAY — FETCHAM PARK HOUSE**

The proprietors of Fetcham Park House for the second year running provided space for the Society to stage an exhibition under the title of "*Bygone Bookham*"

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& Fetcham" during the Saturday when the house was open to the public. Using the Society's newly acquired display boards for the first time and a continuous slide show, Ed Tims, Goff Powell and Alan Pooley provided visitors with a taste of what both villages were like in days gone by and in particular, shopping in Fetcham with clips of advertisements collected by Geoff.

Overall the number of visitors to the house was lower than in previous years but there was little let-up in interest in the exhibition and it proved to be, as before, a useful two-way event with information flowing both ways.

*Alan Pooley*

## **MORE ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS WW2 WEAPON**

*Veteran member Ernest Crossland now living in Dorset contributes a valuable postscript to the article which appeared in our August number.*

The account on pages 8 and 9 of the August Newsletter brought back memories of nights spent on the platform of a "Z" gun in 1943 and 1944. There were dozens of these gun sites in and around London and other vulnerable areas including ones at Anerley, Dulwich, Tooting Common and Hyde Park. The sites had each a nucleus crew of regular Royal Artillery personnel commanded by a major and parallel ranks from the Home Guard. The main force who manned the "Z" guns was from the Home Guard. Each site had 64 projectors with two gunners to each. The Home Guards were required to attend for one night a week so that a site required many hundreds of men to keep it supplied.

After receiving basic training in an infantry battalion many Home Guards were transferred to a "Z" battery of the Light Anti-aircraft regiment of the Royal Artillery. Initial training was given by sergeants of the Royal Artillery. On its completion each new intake was sent by train on a Sunday to a training camp at Walton-on-the-Naze to fire live ammunition out to sea. The weekly duty was from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. Provided there was no "red" alert the Home Guards could sleep (fully clothed) in two-tiered bunks until summoned to man the guns. An evening meal and a breakfast

were provided cooked by ATS girls. These ranks also worked the equipment which plotted the enemy aircraft.

After the main blitz on London eased towards the middle of 1943 the attacks were primarily carried out by FW 180 fighter-bombers which came up the Thames at a height of about 20,000 feet which was about the maximum the shells of the "Z" guns could reach. With 128 shells all exploding at the same time the effect was rather like the twinkling lights on a Christmas tree which is what the Luftwaffe pilots called them.

The ammunition came in two steel boxes. One had the 4' 7" 'drain-pipe' filled with the cordite propellant plus the four fins (which had to be fitted); the other had the 18" shrapnel shell. These separate elements had to be assembled and stored in 'Anderson' type shelters at the rear of each of the 64 projectors. On the nights when there had been firing the stocks in these shelters had to be restored, and the Home Guard men assembled the required number before being released to go to their civilian jobs — and often to do fire-watching on other nights of the week.

The stencilling on the rocket brought into the museum is probably a record of the times when a particular battery was in action. Most Home Guards from the Leatherhead area were attached to the site at the former workhouse at Anerley (south of Crystal Palace). This site suffered a number of casualties, some resulting from rockets which did not fire when triggered and went off subsequently, and others from direct hits by aircraft or 'doodle-bugs'. The worst of the latter was in July 1944 when a party of Home Guards coming on duty were showing their identity cards to the sentries on the gates to the site. The gate lodge was demolished resulting in 16 casualties including some refugees from Gibraltar who had been housed in the building. This put the site out of action, and shortly afterwards the Home Guard were stood down as the "Z" guns were not effective against the doodle-bugs, and in any case most of the attacks were being met by the batteries in Kent.

There are very few references to the part played by the Home Guard in countering these attacks on the preparations being made for D-day even though many thousands of men were involved as well as men and women of the regular army.

The Imperial War Museum does not seem to know how the shrapnel shell was fired : the shell had two nostrils in the nose and the air passing through them turned a propeller which drove a striking pin on to a detonator. The number of revolutions was governed by the setting of a ring against numbers on the fixed part of the shell. This ring had to be twisted by one of the crew according to the instructions received by the other member of the crew over the telephone from the command post where the ATS plotters worked out the height, speed and direction of the target. He was also told the elevation and direction for the projector to be turned to. All this had to be done by the light of a 3 amp bulb !

[P.S. Our late member and often my partner as a steward Peter Calnan was in charge of the "Z" gun site in Bristol. ]

*Ernest Crossland*

### **A PLEA FOR HELP !**

One of our members, Dr Barry Cox, lives in *Forge Cottage* in Blacksmith Close, off Rectory Lane, in Ashtead. Together with its neighbour, *Wistaria Cottage*, it originally formed part of a single house that was built in Elizabethan days as a farmhouse, but later became tenanted (and eventually owned) by the village blacksmith, George Wyatt. The L & D L H S possesses a fascinating account of life in the forge, written by a young local man, Victor Schafer, who was born in Ashtead in 1909. He lived here until 1925, used to haunt the forge and eventually became an ornamental blacksmith in his own right. Barry is going to use this as part of an account of the history of the architecture and use of the Elizabethan house, and would like to hear from anyone who has any memories, documents or photographs of the house or forge buildings, which only ceased use as a forge in the 1950's.

So please write to Barry at Forge Cottage, Blacksmith Close, Ashtead, KT21 2BD, or phone him on 01372 273167.

## 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY POSTBOX CENSUS

### an Appeal from Dr Derek Renn

You may remember my writing on this subject in the May edition of the Newsletter. Brian Godfrey and John Wettren have completed Fetcham and I have covered the Bookhams, but I am still looking for helpers, particularly in Leatherhead itself.

This is what needs to be recorded : —

*Box number* (on the 'Collection Times' plate)

*Type* (free-standing cylinder, in wall, on own post, on telegraph pole or lamp-post)

*Royal cypher* (*None*, VR, ER GR, E VIII R, G VI R, E II R)

*Maker* (usually low down, on the back)

*Embossed Royal Mail?* (not *Post Office*, i.e. after 1990)

*Attached stamp dispensing machine or 'Pouch Box'?* (locked box for postmen's use)

*Direction Plate* (pointing to Post Office) on top ? (often only part of the bracket remains)

*Position* (two roads, the one in which you stand to post a letter and the nearest junction

—or the building to which it is attached)

It would be nice to have your report, even if it's just the box you post your letters in !

All records will be passed on to the Records Secretary.

*Derek Renn (01372 454880)*

## NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

*Most of our members will know that The Friends of Leatherhead Museum have the important task of recruiting and rostering the volunteers who act as museum stewards. Thelma Lucas plays a leading role in carrying out this task and her reflections here are of particular interest.*

*She is , by the way, looking for someone to take over the rostering. Any volunteers ? ED.*

The main reward that our Stewards have is the opportunity to meet and talk with the visitors to the Museum. It always amazes me how varied they are. Some have lived in the Leatherhead area all their lives and are a mine of information about how life used to be, and it is a real education to talk to them and to discover that, in spite of our grumbles, life was much harder 100 years ago, at any rate for the women. Imagine trying to run a home without electricity for example!

When the school parties come round they are amazed at the weight of the saucepans their great-grandparents used, and as for the clothes mangle they haven't a clue what its use was.

Other visitors used to live in this area but have moved away and can talk about the different ways things are done in other parts of England. And then of course there are the foreign visitors. They come from all over the world and often spend money on books. The time passes very quickly while talking with them.

So the fact that our visitor numbers are considerably down over the last few weeks has had a noticeable effect on our Stewards feelings. How we can remedy this I do not know but perhaps the History Society has some ideas.

In dull moments there are plenty of books to read and the exhibits are a constant source of delight but we would like some more visitors.

*Thelma Lucas*

## LECTURE PROGRAMME

Lecture meetings are held in the Dixon Hall of the Letherhead Institute, High Street, normally at 8.0 p.m., with coffee beforehand at 7.30, but **please note the change for the December meeting.**

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December.** *'The Christmas Miscellany,'* arranged by  
Gordon Knowles.

Contributions on any subject, serious or light-hearted are welcome, but a suggested theme this year is *'Jubilee Memories'*. So far I have only received one offer, so *no contributions - no Miscellany*. Please contact me before the beginning of December on 01372 458396 with your offer.

**NOTE :** We are starting this year's December meeting at 7.30 p.m. with a 30 minute break for coffee, mince pies and seasonal chat at 8.15, finishing the meeting as usual around 9.30.

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2003.** *'Archaeology Revealed through Aerial  
Photography,'* by John Hampton.

John was the head of the Air Photographs Unit, Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, from 1965 to 1985. The Commission is now subsumed in English Heritage.

The objective of the APU was to build up a record of man-made features in the landscape, ranging from the earliest times to the recent past, using air photography. The air photograph requires translation and specialist interpretation as the physical scene changes with season and time. The potential of the technique can only be realised with constant observation and photographs over many years. John will illustrate his lecture with examples of the unit's work, particularly that on Bodmin Moor and the Yorkshire Wolds. Surrey unfortunately does not have this intensity of *'surviving'* antiquities.

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February.** '*Reigate and other Building Stones*'. by Paul Sowan, President of Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society, and a member of L&DLHS.

Since the early 1960s he had been researching the underground and mineral-based industries of Surrey. He is also familiar with the underground building-stone quarries elsewhere in Britain and Europe, and is currently researching the history of Iceland's former coal and spar mines, and the gasworks at Reykjavik !

Bridges, castles, cathedrals, palaces and great houses are important parts of England's heritage. Those built of stone often survive. London Bridge, Windsor Castle, the Tower of London, Canterbury Cathedral and Hampton Court are all world-famous. This paper looks at major buildings in London and the south-east of England, and at what is known of their constructional materials, especially the building stones.

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March.** '*Merton Priory*', by Lionel Green, Chairman of the Merton Historical Society, which he helped found fifty-two years ago. He has studied every aspect of the Priory's history.

Situated close to London, Merton Priory was convenient for kings to enjoy the peace of the countryside, but it also provided a place of sanctuary, of learning, for meetings of Parliament, for convocations and ordinations. Lionel will tell of the Priory's foundation, the layout of the precincts, and the daughter houses of Merton. We hope to learn something of its possessions which included the manors of Little Ashted, Pashesham, Polesden and a mill at Fetcham.

**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April.** The **Annual General Meeting of the Society**, followed by a talk — '*The Story behind the Story of the Old & New Atlas*

*Works at Bookham*' by Peter Tarplee.

Peter has researched the history of the two works and the involvement of the Burney Brothers and Gillett Stephen in the Blackburne engine business. His paper will be printed in the forthcoming issue of the *Proceedings of the Society* and he will tell us of some of his investigations and interviews that lie behind his published work.

Details of the lecture on **16<sup>th</sup> May**, and of the summer programme of walks and visits will be given in the February Newsletter.

*Gordon Knowles*

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS 2003**

Subscriptions for the calendar year 2003 become due on 1<sup>st</sup> January next, and enclosed with this Newsletter you will find a subscription renewal form.

Please complete the form and send it with your cheque to me at the address shown on the form, at any time from now.

Please note the subscription rates :

- Ordinary member . . . . . £12**
- Associate Member (resident with an Ordinary Member) . £5**
- Junior Member (under 18 years) . . . . . £1**

You will note that you can pay a subscription to the Friends of Leatherhead Museum at the same time :

- Individual . . . . . £3**
- Two family members at the same address . . . £5**

If you are a taxpayer and wish the Society to benefit from tax refund under the Gift Aid Scheme please complete the form at the bottom of the renewal form. Previous declarations will still be effective but, if in doubt, complete the form.

Please pay as soon as possible. Failure to pay by the end of January will lead to time and money being spent on sending out reminders.

*Jack Barker, Membership Secretary*

## INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Gordon Knowles will be giving the latest in his series of lectures on a range of Industrial Archaeology topics for the Fetcham & Bookham branch of the WEA in Room G6 at the Letherhead Institute on Thursdays for 11 weeks starting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January.

There will be, subject to sufficient numbers enrolling, two classes, from 10.0 a.m. to 12.0 noon, repeated from 2.0 to 4.0 p.m.

This year several industries will be considered; their personalities and achievements: Iron & steel at Blaenavon and in the Ruhr, Explosives at Chilworth and Waltham Abbey, the "*First car on the road*", Cornish clay and copper mining, Guildford '*Blue*', "*Electric light comes to Godalming*", and the Royal Military Canal. An appropriate visit will be arranged.

Pre-booking is essential. Prospective members have been turned away due to over booking on this autumn's course. Enrolment forms are available in libraries, at the Institute or from the WEA Course Co-ordinator, Joy Tapping on 01372 374563.

