

*LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*

*NEWSLETTER*



AUGUST 2008



## *Chairman's Report*

As chairman of the History Society I am disappointed at the decline in attendance in support of the fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Museum and for other events such as National Archaeology Week. The turn out was truly disappointing at this year's event, only three representatives of the History Society were present when our invited guest, the Chairman of Mole Valley District Council arrived to launch the event.

The attendance in general last week at this event was no better with a distinct absence of any of the membership visiting the museum, exhibition or supporting the walks led by Gordon Knowles and Gwen Hoad on the two Sundays of 13th & 20th July..

Maybe archaeology is not your thing, or you were committed to other things? You and the Membership must decide what is wanted from the Society and the Museum. Without your support attending talks, lectures and events we will have no History Society. Make your voice heard, speak to your representatives on committee and let us try to move forward and build an interested, interesting and healthy Society.

We need to engage with you the membership and the general public at large and other local interest groups if we are to survive. We also need your help in running the day to day business of the History Society and we need new volunteers who are prepared to give up a small amount of time to sit on committee. We have a committee of dedicated members who have held responsible positions for a number of years, who have carried out their duties without complaint. A number of committee members have now indicated that they wish to retire from committee having done their stint and performed a very valuable service to the History Society to peruse other activities.

So what do we do? We need new members to step forward and take up some of the positions vacant - some we have advertised previously in the Newsletter and others are more recent and need to be filled one way or another before or at the next AGM. None of these posts are particularly onerous but they do require a commitment to attend a bi-monthly committee meeting on the third Monday every other month.

We are currently looking for a new Membership Secretary and a Records Secretary to co-ordinate the work of the archivists of the various parishes.

We need someone to act as an Independent Examiner of the History Society's Accounts. We also need new committee members to just serve on committee, bring in new ideas and make a contribution to the debate as to how the History Society should move forward and serve you better.

Other posts that currently remain vacant are Curator to work with the Museum Manager and a Publicity Officer.

*David Hartley*

## *News from the Museum Committee*

At last, on Thursday 29th May, we were able to re-open the Museum after the accident in January. A good number were present to see Lucy Hanson, our Town Centre Manager, perform the ceremony at which both the museum and the craft weekend were declared open.

We had to buy two new display cabinets for the front room downstairs to replace those smashed by the car coming through the window. With lots of co-operation by the suppliers they arrived just over a week before the opening date and it meant that the new displays were mounted in rather a hurry but at least something was there when we opened.

We had already decided to change some displays during the shutdown and we had begun to prepare a case of pharmaceutical items containing some

new items from Hewlin's pharmacy in Bridge Street. The pestle and mortar, which had spent some years in the museum garden since it was presented to the Society by the developers in 1984, had deteriorated and we had restored this ready for display. At the time of the accident it was in the front room but luckily the damage it received was fairly easily repaired. This is now in the window together with other appropriate items.

Soon after we re-opened Caesar's Restaurant opposite was being re-furbished and a large "Chemist's" sign was revealed over the door of 25, Church Street from when it was Brownes the Chemist. This was given to the Society and it now forms part of the window display.

Whilst we were closed the 'behind the scenes' work carried on and considerable progress has been made with recording the Society's collection. Also during the extended closure a number of interesting acquisitions were donated to us and we decided to feature some of this in the new displays.

We received a comprehensive set of joinery tools which were donated by the family of their original owner and some are being shown in the front downstairs gallery. We also acquired some laboratory test equipment from two of the research associations which used to form an important part of the town's work activity. These were from PIRA (Paper Industries' Research Association) and ERA (Electrical Research Association) and include an optical bench, a spectrometer, two pocket saccharimeters,



a pyrometer, two tumble pots, some specialised test equipment for paper research and a chemical balance. Another weighing device, also on display, is a set of GPO counter scales made around 1852 by de Grave, Short and Fanner which were found to have a connection with Fetcham.

Have you heard of P.A.M. radios? Well we hadn't, but one of the recent accessions is a portable made by them. It looks older than it is (late 1940s) and appears hand-made. Anyway we discovered that P.A.M. made radios in Merrow, by the railway sidings, and that they had a shop in Guildford. Another new item on display was given to us after it was recently removed from a local house. It is a length of PVC insulated cable made by the General Cable Manufacturing Company which had a large cable works in Kingston Road for many years and was one of the larger employers in the town.

As well as additional work caused by the accident routine work also continues; we had to empty one display cabinet in order to change the lighting transformer which was under the plinth. Our thanks to Mr and Mrs Exwood for replacing the artefacts on display again. The convector heater in the front room has failed and so that will probably mean another repair or replacement. At least, now that the public are coming again we are getting donations in the box which all helps the Society with running costs.

We hope to improve the displays which were hurriedly put together in the few days before the opening but we feel that we have made enough changes to prevent members saying "Oh, I've seen the Museum already". Please try to pay us a visit before we close in December, it gives a lot of encouragement to those who help the museum in any way.

*Peter Tarplee*

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## ***Wanted - a new Honorary Independent Examiner of Accounts***

After many years as Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts Brian Kirby has moved away from the area and has relinquished this position. The Society therefore needs someone, preferably a member of the Society, to replace him. The task is not very onerous being a once a year job taking not more than 2 or 3 hours.

The financial year runs from 1st January until 31st December. It is intended that the accounts will be available for auditing by the middle of January and the approved accounts should be available by the end of the month.

Anybody who is interested in undertaking this important job for the Society should contact me, Ron Clarke, telephone number 01372 375496. I will be happy to take people through the financial system in use so that they may have a good idea of what is involved.

*Ron Clarke*

# *Archaeology*

## **2008 season of excavation Ashtead Roman Villa**

A small number of our members are members of the SAS, Roman Studies Group, and they will be participating in this season's excavation of the villa at Ashtead. Work commences on 27th August and will be concluded on Sunday 14th September.

## **Ashtead Common Heritage Event**

This event is taking place on **Saturday 13th September at 10.00am to 4.00pm**. There is an opportunity for members of the History Society who are interested in the excavation of the Roman Villa to participate in a guided walk to the site of the villa to see the results of this season of excavation. The project is being carried out by Surrey Archaeological Society's Roman Studies Group with the co-operation and support of the City of London, English Heritage and English Nature.

Those members who are interested in joining this walk should contact Lizzie Bruce at the Ashtead Common Estate Office by telephoning 01372 279083 or email [city.common@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:city.common@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## **Friday 17th October at the Letherhead Institute 7-30 for 8.00pm**

Dr David Bird has been invited to give a talk to our History Society on Friday 17th October at the Letherhead Institute on the subject of last season's 2007 excavation of the Ashtead Villa and provide us with general update on this season's 2008 excavation, prior to publication of his report in the SAS Bulletin.

## **Heritage Weekend 13th & 14th September**

The Mole Valley's theme for this year's 'Heritage Weekend' is entitled 'Hidden Secrets'. Our museum at 64 Church Street Leatherhead will display the hidden little gems of Hampton Cottage and the artefacts tucked away within.

At the 'Letherhead Institute' there will be a display on the subject 'Tunnels & Bridges of Leatherhead & District' some of which we pass over, under and through without realising or recognising the engineering achievements of our Victorian forefathers.

Look out for Mole Valley's Heritage Weekend programme and listings together with the essential booking forms which will be published shortly, there should be something for everyone.

## **SAS Village Study Group - Workshop on Manorial Records**

For those members interested in Manorial Records, Surrey Archaeology Society is running a Villages Study Group Workshop on Manorial Record 20th September at the Surrey History Centre, Goldsworth Road Woking. The cost is £5.00 per person payable on the day.

Those members who may be interested in attending should contact Richard & Pamela Savage before 12th September by telephone: 01483 768875 or by email: [medforum@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:medforum@hotmail.co.uk)

# *National Archaeology Week*

The week of 12th – 20th July was National Archaeology Week and shown are some photos taken at the Launch.

During the week there were exhibitions of Air Travel, Painted Wall Plaster and Pottery from the Ashted Roman Villa, Exploring Surrey's past and many activities for children.

The principal names to the standing groups are Chairman of Mole Valley Council, Councillor Derrick Burt, Rod Shaw Mole Valley Chief Conservation Officer, Frank Pemberton, Archaeologist at Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeological Society. Members of the History Society represented in the pictures, John Wettern and John Morris.



## *Cherkley Court*

Members of the Society went on a tour of Cherkley House and Gardens on 18th June which have recently been extensively restored by the Beaverbrook Foundation and reflect the style and design of the 1930s. Anna, our tour guide, outlined the history when Abraham Dixon built the original house in 1873, rebuilding it in 1893 following a disastrous fire. He also founded the Letherhead Institute and being a keen botanist gave rare lily plants to Kew. Sir Max Aitken (later Lord Beaverbrook), bought the house in 1907 and furnished it with the help of Mrs Rudyard Kipling, the library books being provided by Bonar Law. Lord Beaverbrook lived there till his death in 1964, his second wife remaining in the house on her own for the next twenty years. During this time the house and gardens were neglected and suffered further damage in the storm of 1988 when a very large number of trees were destroyed and the cellars flooded.

Anna took us through the rooms on the ground floor which have been beautifully restored with attention to the exact colours, furnishings and fittings of the period. The



Photo by Richard Trim QBE

The cinema, where films were shown to the guests after dinner has been completely re-panelled in light maple wood and the library, unique to the memory of Lord Beaverbrook, restored in every detail with every book damaged by water and woodworm sent away for individual treatment by experts. The reception rooms with breathtaking views over the terraces towards Norbury Park were reminders of the days when Lord Beaverbrook held an important and powerful place as Chief of Aircraft Production in Winston Churchill's War Cabinet, Churchill himself being a frequent visitor to Cherkley.

We then took lunch in the Orangery and sampled the tasty food beautifully prepared by a local catering firm 'Too Many Cooks'. The weather had by then turned cold with a blustery south westerly wind and a small intrepid group of us went on a short tour of the terraced gardens, concluding a memorable visit to a unique house which played such an important part in our local and national history.

*Dr Fred Meynen*

## *Monks Green Farm*

The 61st Annual General Meeting of the Society held in April was followed by a lecture given by Derek Banham on the history of Monks Green Farm, a 17th century farmhouse in Fetcham which he and his wife have lived in for the last 36 years. The farmhouse is located on the edge of the village on the Cobham Road and first mention of it was in the last years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I when a triangular meadow was marked as Monks Green with a lane leading to a farmhouse. Local court rolls of 1631 refer to 28 acres of copyhold land called ‘Freakes, late of the estate of John Monk’. The Domestic Building Research Group suggest that around 1600 there could have been a two-story timber-framed house followed later by a brick extension with a large brick chimney which exists even to this day. The house was later rebuilt in brick and over the next hundred years substantial additions were made.

The first records of ownership are in manorial records of 1741 when the estate comprising house, barns, stable, gardens, orchard and 28 acres passed from Arthur Moore to Thomas Revell. Derek still has the original lead firemark dated 1774 which was nailed to the front wall to prove to the local fire brigade that they would get paid to put out the blaze if the house caught fire. Derek has been able to trace subsequent owners and tenants of the farm, the acres rising in 1879 to 130 of farmed land employing 3 men and two boys in addition to 2 living-in servants. In 1875 Charles Anderson, a Merchants Clerk, was the first person to live in the house who was not a farmer and two years ago Derek was able to meet Mrs Hunt now aged 100, a direct descendant from the Anderson family, a unique encounter! Arthur Smiles, another owner of the farm, developed a successful business breeding cattle, shire horses and Shetland ponies and in 1937 Virginia White was employed as herdsman. Using audio-tapes Derek has been able to discover from her what life was like on the farm and about her prize bull ‘Fieldplace Abdul’. In 1971 the Jersey herd was sold and Derek and Dilys became owners of the house. The farm buildings which are now not part of the house have sadly been left to deteriorate.

Derek and Dilys have made some alterations to the house, creating a family home reflecting their own artistic interests and their love for the house and its history. This has resulted in a 108 page fully illustrated document detailing the history, the alterations and development of the house and farm together with a full account of the owners and tenants.

*Dr Fred Meynen*

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## *A Rich Inheritance by Linda Heath*

Come and see history re-enacted! ‘A Rich Inheritance’ is a dramatisation of historical events in Leatherhead from 1395-1897. It was first performed in Leatherhead Parish Church in 1995 and again in 2000.

This production is part of the **Arts Festival** and will again be in Leatherhead parish church at 7.30pm on **23rd, 24th and 25th October**. Tickets £10 (£9 concessions) obtainable from Corbetts Bookshop, Swan Centre, Leatherhead, tel. 01372 362988.

# *HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2008*

Mole Valley is again participating in Heritage Open Days this year. They will take place on 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th September and, of course, our museum will be opening on all these days. This year the local theme is “Hidden Treasures” and many of the events will pick up on this.

The launch lecture will, as usual, be on the Friday evening and this year the speaker is Professor Richard Selley whose talk is titled: Mole Valley Hidden Treasures: its Caves, Tunnels and Subterranean River. The lecture starts at 1930 and will take place in the Old Barn Hall, Church Road, Bookham. Many of you will remember the talk given by Professor Selley to the L&DLHS on 17th March 2006 when his subject was “Surrey Vineyards, Ancient and Modern”. The talk should be of interest to many people and we look forward to a large attendance to get Heritage Open Days off to a good start.

As usual our District is expecting to have a wide range of talks, walks, exhibitions and open properties over the weekend and members are urged to get a copy of the Heritage Open Days brochure which will give full details of all of these. Copies are available from libraries, museums, council offices, visitor information centre and the help shop. This year is the 50th anniversary of the death of Ralph Vaughan Williams, the local composer, and there are a number of activities to commemorate this anniversary.

It is not possible for me to give a comprehensive list of the scores of events on offer but here are a few which might encourage you to get a copy of the brochure.

- \* Tours of Dorking caves on Saturday morning and afternoon.
- \* Photographic exhibition in Pippbrook on Saturday and Sunday.
- \* Walk around Bookham village centre led by Blue Badge Guide Bronwen Mills on Sunday morning.
- \* Display in the theatre “Leatherhead Theatre: A Proud History and a Bright Future” on Saturday.
- \* Tour of Sweech House, Leatherhead on Saturday morning.
- \* Guided walk to see hidden treasures of Leatherhead town centre from the Institute on Saturday afternoon.
- \* Displays at Leatherhead Institute of Hidden Treasures - Bridges and Tunnels, Hampton Cottage and Leatherhead Institute – on Saturday and Sunday.
- \* Tour of Slyfield House on Saturday morning.
- \* Tour of Rowhurst on Friday and Saturday afternoons.
- \* Any member who has not been to a function there may be interested to visit the Yehudi Menuin Hall (opened 2006) on Saturday morning.
- \* Walk along the Mole from Leatherhead Town Bridge on Sunday afternoon.

\* Visit Milner House on Thursday afternoon.

\* Ashted Common will have a display about the Roman Villa as well as a guided walk to see an archaeological dig in progress.

\* On the afternoons of Saturday and Sunday there will be talks in St Nicolas' church, Great Bookham about the church in the 1800s at the time of Jane Austen and Fanny Burney to complement the recently published book. The church, like most in the District, will be open throughout the weekend.

The booking arrangements for these and all the other events are clearly shown in the brochure so if you feel that there may be something to interest you please get a copy and support the Heritage Open Days weekend.

*Peter Tarplee*

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## *Fetcham U3A Local History Group*

We are photographing the bound volume of the monumental inscriptions and layout of the churchyard given to St Mary's Church, Fetcham by Fetcham WI in the late 1980's. This will be transcribed onto our database of the census returns from 1841 to 1901 for Fetcham, along with the record linkage we have carried out with the births, marriages and deaths from the Parish records.



St Mary's Church, Fetcham

We are also looking to carry out a similar exercise for the more modern part of the graveyard (west of the boundary wall and graves circa 1950's onward) that does not appear to have been included in the previous survey.

We are also researching the names of the soldiers whose names are inscribed on the War Memorial for WW1 and later hope to continue onto the 2nd World War soldiers

*Lyn Rozier, Group Leader : [lyn-tony@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:lyn-tony@tiscali.co.uk)*

## *News from the Friends of Leatherhead*

The last few weeks have been busy ones, the high point being the re-opening of the museum on Thursday 29th May. The Friends were pleased to help with this important event, organising working parties to dust, clean and polish the museum and tidy and restock the garden. Everything sparkled including the workers and our thanks go to Margaret

Longstreeth, John Millard, Goff Powell, Lindsay Trim, Ruth Aldridge and Margaret Pettit for their enthusiasm and hard work.



The opening ceremony attracted over 40 people with two reporters and two photographers recording the event - look at Richard Trim's photos which are on display in the museum.

The opening coincided with the first of three Craft Days 'the magic of Woodland' organised by Julia Lack and Robin Christian in which adults and children were instructed in the art of hurdle and besom made from hazel wood, a replica of which they could take home. On the Friday Justine Munson came with her potter's wheel and with great skill and patience encouraged people to make their own clay pot which could be taken away. The Mole Valley Quilters also demonstrated the art of patchwork and invited people to create their own patchwork flower mounted on a frame. Saturday saw the return of the popular Epsom Spinners with their spinning wheels, carding and braiding. The origin of silk and how it is spun was demonstrated and we were told of the joy of keeping alpacas, something for which you might need a handy field! The three craft days attracted 179 visitors, including 74 children.

### **Coffee Morning 21st June**

The day began wet and drizzly but things brightened up later and we had a record 80 plus people come to the museum. A great display of plants for sale outside encouraged

people to come in, have a cup of coffee, guess the name of the teddy bear, win a raffle prize, buy a cake or take away a choice item from the bric-a-brac stall. We were pleased to see members of the Society and Friends although some were involved with Bookham village day. Grateful thanks to members of the Friends Committee for their help and to Roly and Pam Edwards, Michael Perks and Carole Neeser of the Leatherhead Horticultural Society for their generous donation of the plants making the day an enjoyable and happy occasion.

## **Education**

The Friends are involved with the programme 'Learning through Landscapes' which is a Heritage Lottery funded project aimed at encouraging children to look at the surroundings, buildings, flora and fauna around their school. Fourteen pupils from St Andrews school in Ashted were taken on the museum's Mole trail, down Church Street, past Thorncroft Manor and the Shell bridge and the beautiful riverside walk. They were challenged to think where the Mole started ( Boxhill was one thought!) and to look at the plant life, fish and birds. The mating habits of the dragonfly produced a spark of interest and they then went off to sketch an aspect which took their fancy. Rewarding but hard going! Future ventures will be the Victorian classroom and looking at maps and the location of schools in the area.

*Dr Fred Meynen*

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## ***Personal News of Members***

Many members will remember Judith Mills who moved away a few years ago to study at Nottingham University. She had served as both Treasurer and Secretary to the Society as well as being a museum steward for many years.

I recently heard from Judith when she sent me a copy of an article which she had recently published in the Transactions of the Thoroton Society which is the principal local history and archaeological society for Nottinghamshire.

Those who knew Judith will be pleased to hear that she obtained her MA degree last year and hopes to obtain her PhD in 2009. She sent her best wishes to the Society as well as a generous donation to our museum after our traumas.

We have also recently had a letter from Graham and Maggie Evans thanking everyone for their good wishes on the occasion of their wedding. They are now back to normal in the café and look forward to seeing some of us calling in for a cream tea.

*Peter Tarplee*

## *Patrick Gwynne and the Homewood*

The National Trust's latest house - in more ways than one! - in Surrey is 'The Homewood', first opened to the public this April. At our May meeting, David Scott, its new tenant, told us the fascinating story of the designer and previous occupant of this Modernist house and garden near Esher, built just before the Second World War broke out.



Patrick Gwynne's family lived in a large Victorian house here set in ten acres of land, adjoining Esher Common. His father was a senior naval officer, and the place was convenient for his duties at Portsmouth as well as at the Admiralty. Patrick was born in 1913; he always wanted to be an architect, reading the *Architectural Review* while still a Harrow schoolboy and absorbing the latest internationalist ideas of design for new ways of living, exemplified by Le Corbusier's Villa Savoie near Paris, and the Bauhaus principles of the German emigres Walter Gropius and Mendelson. Patrick studied at the RIBA and was articled to Coleridge & Sons, but moved to the practice of Wells Coates, who built the Modernist flats in Lawn Road, Hampstead in 1934.

In 1937, Patrick (aged only 24) persuaded his parents to sell everything, demolish their 1860's house and allow him to design and build a new home and garden for them. The house was built within a year, costing £10,500 at a time when 'new estate' family houses were being built and sold for under £400. Patrick Gwynne later designed a number of restaurants, including those at the Festival of Britain and the Serpentine, featuring his 'signature' uplighting and hexagonal spaces. He lived at 'The Homewood', first with his grandmother, parents (both died in 1942) and sister, but later on his own until his death in 2003 at the age of ninety. His ashes are scattered in the garden he had designed. Patrick Gwynne had offered the house including its designed contents, and the grounds to the National Trust in 1992, and thereafter worked with them to restore it as a family home once more.

Our speaker went on to describe the house, surrounded by six acres of planting of acers, azaleas and rhododendron, together with birch, gorse and heather native to the adjoining common, with a water garden fed by a cascading stream. Quirkily, the swimming pool is green, not the usual blue. The house was built of concrete and rendered brick, most of the rooms being supported on columns - piloti - below a flat roof. There were four garages underneath, and a circular staircase rose from the front door to the family's 7-bedroom block with 4 bathrooms. Beyond this was a study and

office(containing souvenirs of Gwynne's commissions), then a large living area and finally the servants' wing, including a batman's room and compartmentalised kitchen with high windows so that staff were not distracted from their duties. Gwynne's designed furnishings included varied drawers, shelving and inbuilt cupboards, either avoiding or hiding clutter by sloping window ledges and roller shutters. Among the features are a Venetian chandelier bought on his parents' honeymoon, a large enamel panel by Stefan Knapp, a circular pool and fountain from Denys Lasdun, and a mosaic puzzle incorporating the name of the house and of its architect.

David Scott described some of the problems of living in 'The Homewood' today. The sun terrace had been covered in. Without scaffolding, the flat roof can only be reached with climbing gear and the rainwater drains into internal pipes. Two people were needed to move the reinforced glass covering any light bulb needing replacement. The sash windows (12 feet long and 6 feet high) were single-glazed and, even with the curtains replaced by blinds, the gas-fired high radiators meant very large heating bills. On the 'plus' side, it was a wonderful place for their 2 year old daughter to explore, and a gift of a Bechstein grand piano had been miraculously installed by three men without other aids.

'The Homewood' is open [in 2008] on Fridays (and the last Saturday of each month) until the end of October. Access is restricted to pre-booked guided tours, starting from Claremont Landscape Garden (telephone 01372 476424).

*Derek Renn*

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## *Visit to Horsham*

Warm summer weather enhanced the enjoyment of this visit during which twelve of our members arrived for a morning's introduction to the Horsham Museum, and after a break for lunch, a guided walk around the Town.

The party was greeted by the museum's administrator who highlighted its hundred-years history and gave some interesting insights into how the quality of the displays was ensured by the skills of the management and the dedication of the volunteers. It would be impossible in a brief account to describe the variety and excellence of the exhibits. One participant said "It's the best we've seen".

Our guide for the afternoon was Robin Christian a member of our Society and former resident of Fetcham, now living close to Horsham. A gentle stroll through the town centre revealed so much that could be admired, above all a feeling of orderliness and evident civic pride. A modicum of history, fine architecture, quaint precincts, abundant floral displays blended with more mundane features – enticing shops and abundant eating places – combined to make the tour a memorable one. For most there was the resolve to return and see more. In closing, a recommendation – to go and see Horsham, a wonderful place.

*John Wettren*

## *Polesden Lacey - How it has changed....*

It is not always realised that the house at Polesden Lacey is only just over a hundred years old. At the turn of the 19th century a very different house stood there owned by Sir Walter Farquhar. He died in 1900 and in 1902 the estate was sold by his son to Sir Clinton Dawkins who described his new house as 'ugly and inconvenient' and appointed Ambrose Poynter to redesign and rebuild it.



The building that stood there at that time had been designed by Thomas Cubitt and built some 80 years previously. The illustration shows the house with its colonnade of 10 pillars and on either side of the colonnade just two recessed windows. The ordinance survey maps of that era show the ground plan of the house as a 'square' building with an extension at the back. There was no courtyard in the middle, just a conventional square shape.

The redesign, demolition and rebuilding of the new house took place between 1903 to 1905 but Sir Clinton Dawkins was fated never to enjoy it with his death in the year of its completion. In 1906 the estate was bought by Mr and Mrs Greville and between 1906 and 1908 the house was extensively prepared for their use. Mrs Greville was already established as a leading hostess of the day but had been using Reigate Priory as an out of town venue. The structural alterations were relatively minor, just adding the semicircular bays to the wings of the east front but the interior of what was a fairly plain house was transformed by wood panelling and ornamentation to the ceilings and the other extravagancies that make up the present house. Completing the house was again not good for the new owner – Ronald Greville himself died in 1908.



It is interesting to compare the overall architectural design of the current house with its predecessor and to do this a comparison needs to be made between the picture of the house as it was and one of the present

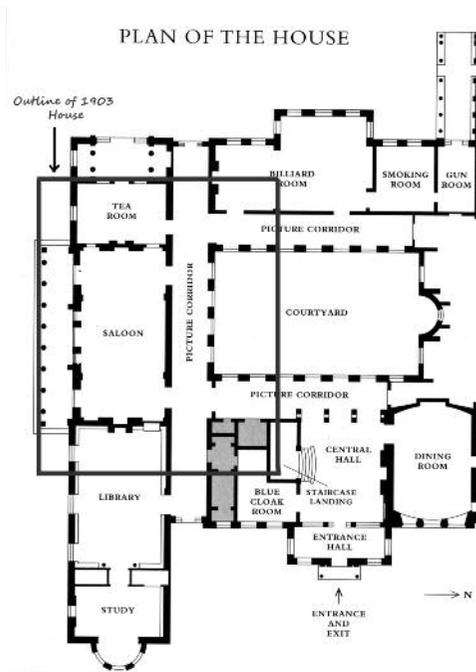
day. The same colonnade and two recessed windows either side of it remain but there are vast extensions either side. In addition above the colonnade at roof level there is a balustrade and pediment.

When we take a view from the east side the extent of the differences can be seen. In the old house there is a portico and above it just three windows form the upper floor.

On either side of the portico are two dummy windows. Servants' quarters can be seen at the rear of the house. The present day view is very considerably different with a long east side with entrance hall and two wings dominated by a clock tower. There is no similarity between the two views, the east side is a completely new structure. In fact the columns of the portico now stand at the end of the long terrace in the grounds.



What is the commonality between the old house and the present day house? Certainly the colonnade to the south remains and the two recessed windows either side. But the house was smaller by a major amount. The current house is built round a courtyard with a massive increase in depth.



The floor plan of the current house shows a superimposed outline of the original house demonstrating the extent of the demolition and reconstruction of the two houses. It would seem that the whole house apart from the south facing colonnade and its immediate wall is a total redesign and reconstruction. Presumably the colonnade and its immediate south wall were absorbed into the redesign. We therefore have a Cubitt colonnade but very much a Poynter designed house. Every room is different. The most likely room to survive from the old house is the saloon or 'gold room' but the surviving photo of that room shows a totally different arrangement of the windows. From the interior perhaps the only sign of the old house may be in the Billiards Room where there are

slightly jutting out supporting walls and a ceiling beam. Could this mark the original north wall of the old house?

The house of today is only just over a hundred years old but it does retain something of the charming 1822 Cubitt design with its fine colonnade overlooking Ranmore and the magnificent North Downs.

*Martin Warwick*

## ***Recent Additions To The Library***

Surrey – Individual Towns & Villages : Leatherhead [a book of photographs].  
Published by J. Wells, High Street, Leatherhead.

The 16 black and white photographs are of Leatherhead, from railway bridge; Parish Church: southside and interior; Post Office and clock tower; High Street; Bridge Street; Church Street; Fetcham Mill Pond; All Saints' Church; St. John's School; Blind School; Hawks Hill; Running Horse Inn; Merrylands Hotel, Great Bookham; Mickleham Church and Lychgate; Ashtead Church

*Peter Wells*

## ***FUTURE EVENTS***

### **August**

28th Thursday - barrow in Leatherhead Swann Centre

### **September**

13th Saturday 10am - 4pm Ashtead Common Heritage Event, Lizzie Bruce 01372 279083

13th/14th Saturday/Sunday Heritage Weekend – Hidden Secrets – Museum display and lecture 'Tunnels & Bridges of Leatherhead & District'

20th Saturday – Workshop on Manorial Records – Surrey History Centre - £5 contact Richard & Pamela Savage 01483 768875

### **October**

17th Friday – the 2007 Excavations of Ashtead Villa by Dr David Bird – Letherhead Institute 7.30pm

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## ***Volunteer Stewards Needed***

The work is rewarding as it involves dealing with the public, receiving artefacts, answering queries and learning about local history.

Training is given, so come along and meet us - we are a friendly crowd. Please tell your friends and if you need more information give me a call.

*Dr Fred Meynen 01372 372930*

Archaeology

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The Society has some archival material, documents, illustrations and maps which may be accessed through the following members:-

Ashtead	Jack Willis
Bookham	Brian Godfrey
Fetcham documents	Alan Pooley
Fetcham photographs and maps	Ed Tims
Leatherhead document	John Derry
Leatherhead photographs	Linda Heath
Leatherhead maps	Alan Pooley

The Historical Enquiry Service offers to seek answers to questions about the history of Leatherhead, Ashtead, Bookham and Fetcham submitted via the Museum

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