

*LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*

NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2009

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 802409

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CHAIRMAN

David Hartley

01372 377839

SECRETARY

Vivien Hollingsworth

01372 801357

TREASURER

(Vacancy)

The Society meets on the third Friday of the month at the Letherhead Institute between September and May.

For details - see programme in the Newsletter

2009 Membership Subscriptions

Ordinary.....£15.00 Associate.....£6.00 Junior (under 18).....£1.00

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Vacancy)

The Museum is open at the following times (from 2nd April)

Thursdays and Fridays .. 1.00pm to 4.00pm Saturdays ..10.00am to 4.00pm

CURATOR

(Vacancy)

01372 386348

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

CHAIRMAN

Fred Meynen

01372 372930

The Library at The Letherhead Institute is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10.00am to 12.30pm. It is no longer open on Saturdays. Exceptionally, arrangements may be made to use it at other times by applying to the Librarian.

LIBRARIAN

Peter Wells

01372 272367

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

PROGRAMME SECRETARY

Fred Meynen

01372 372930

Further details are given on the inside back cover

Editorial

By the time you read this summer will be coming to an end and autumn approaching. As Englishmen we will be able to delight in discussing the weather – how terrible this or that week was and how hot it was in that week around the beginning of July. For us in the History Society we have serious matters - we can look forward to the return in September of the Friday evening lectures at the Institute on the third Friday of each month.



Once again the pleas go out for help in filling the many vacancies for officers of the Society – five times the word ‘Vacancy’ occurs in the list. We really do want you to come forward to help the Society and you will surely find the duties rewarding. Currently some of the officers are having to take on a double role to enable the Society to continue to function.

In the same way the Newsletter itself looks to receiving more articles from a wider set of people. So many of our members have a particular interest with some historical connection in our area. We look to you to write it down and send it to us – it does not need to be a deep historic treatise – perhaps you know a lot about a particular building, a local person, an object or anything else of interest our members. The aim is to make the Newsletter good reading for all our members.

I hope you find this quarter’s Newsletter informative and full of interest to you.

Martin Warwick

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Chairman's Report

Hello and welcome to this our summer Newsletter - the weather has been excellent when compared to this time last year. Saturday 20th June marked the events of Bookham Village Day and Ashted Village Da. Unfortunately the two events clashed and it would have been appropriate to have supported both events in some way - as it was we were already committed and signed up to Bookham's 'Village Day' earlier in the year. Next year perhaps we can support both Village Day for Ashted and Bookham. The theme this year for Bookham was 'Beach Party', appropriate enough for all those children and their parents who attended on that very sunny Saturday.



The History Society provided a display in the Old Barn Hall at Bookham. We took as our theme 'Going to the Seaside' - those British Holidays and the many 'Day Trips' to the South Coast and elsewhere by coach, train and car in Britain from 1910 - 1980s. Do you remember those long coach trips or car journeys to the coast, those terrible traffic jams on those A and B roads, those long hot summer holidays and Bank Holiday Weekends - there are many memories wrapped up with that time.



Our display illustrated something of this theme using facsimiles of seaside holiday posters, produced by railway companies of the time, together with contemporary pictures of holidaymakers huddled or building sandcastles on the beach, a big subject with many facets. My thanks to Goff Powell for providing some of the early pictures of charabanc, bus and coaches with their day trippers and references to local coach companies.

Thanks also to Vivien Hollingsworth, Peter Tarplee, Goff Powell, Gordon Knowles and others in support, manning the display. There was a lot of interest shown and Goff achieved a very good level of book sales on the day of the History Society's books.

L&DLHS Archive - Update

Having reported to you in our May Newsletter the date of 21st May was set for a meeting of the History Society's archivists and other members to discuss the future of our archives. We held this meeting at the Letherhead Institute which was quite a lively affair, well attended by our parish archivists for Ashted, Fetcham & Leatherhead. Bookham unfortunately was not represented by its archivist due to the untimely death

of Brian Godfrey our former Records Secretary and Bookham Archivist. The Bookham archive is now currently lodged with Peter Tarplee pending finding a volunteer to take over the archive and a decision being reached on the future of the society's archives in general.

John Derry the archivist who usually deals with the Leatherhead documents has temporarily stepped in to act as our Records Secretary, the rest of the persons present at this meeting were invited senior members of the society who have a keen interest in the future of our archives.

It proved to be a very useful first meeting which gave all members present a chance to express openly their feelings over the future of the archive and how our record should be maintained for now and the future. A general consensus emerged from this meeting that the future of the society's archive would be better served if our original archives were to be deposited on loan at the Surrey History Centre at Woking enabling preservation and access to a wider audience for research.

A second meeting was arranged and held on 30th June at the Letherhead Institute when Mike Page our invited guest was introduced who is Team Manager of Heritage Stewardship and Preservation at the Surrey History Centre. He addressed us on the subject of depositing our archive at the history centre at Woking. Both archivists and members also had the opportunity to ask questions on points of concern over what was involved in this process.

Mike Page was thanked for his time in coming to speak to us on that Tuesday evening, it was agreed that we now have a better understanding of what is involved which would enable us to move forward with our proposed objectives.

It was agreed in principal that the Bookham archive is to be used as our first 'Test Case' for depositing at Woking, hopefully sorting out any problems that may arise with this process before moving forward with the other parish records.

Just by way of reassurance and clarification to all those members who were not present, we are not looking to dispense with the services provided by our local parish archivists - they will continue to be a valuable asset to our society and we still need a volunteer to fill the post of Bookham archivist.

There is also still much work to be done on sorting and collating, bringing the indexes up to date and entering the information into the database. There is also scanning and digital photographs and copies of digital recordings to be made.

Martin Kruger and David Wall of the Leatherhead U3A attended this meeting at our invitation, in anticipation that they would be able to participate, lending support for the work to be done.

If you feel you would like to help in this process please contact me or John Derry via the Leatherhead museum. Finally I would personally like to thank all those invited members and archivists who attended this meeting for their constructive and valuable support on behalf of the History Society.

Appeal for an Hon Treasurer and a Membership Secretary

On the 17th April we had our 62nd AGM but on that day we lost both our Hon Treasurer and our Membership Secretary. At the time of reading this appeal we will have been without both Hon Treasurer and Membership Secretary for 16 weeks. This is now a very unsatisfactory situation for our History Society and it does not bode well for our long term future. I must therefore appeal to you all to play your part and rally round to find someone who would be prepared to fill either of these positions as soon as possible. Neither of these posts need to be particularly onerous on your time or other commitments, but there would have to be a minimum requirement which we would hope to expect from anyone taking up these positions in support of our History Society.

If you would like to help and would like to talk it over with me or the Hon Secretary please contact us as soon as possible - our telephone numbers are at the front of this Newsletter. Also if you think you know of someone who may be able to help out, someone who we can approach please let us know.

Finally it is with regret that I have learnt of the death of Mr Bill Culley on 21st June 2009. Peter Tarplee has written a 'Remembrance of Bill Culley' elsewhere in this Newsletter.

David Hartley

Ernest William Culley

Members will be sorry to hear that Bill Culley died on 21st June after a long and painful illness. Bill had been a very active member of our Society and is perhaps, best known as the author of 'Bookham in the Twentieth Century'. During the late 1990s David Bruce had suggested that Bill should investigate the history of Great and Little Bookham since 1900 and he did this largely by interviewing a number of the older residents of the villages. From the information he obtained he gave a number of talks in the Old Barn Hall in aid of our Society. This information was then produced in book form by the Society and 'Bookham in the Twentieth Century' is our most successful publication to date. Despite many efforts we have found nobody to produce similar books for the other parts of our area of interest. Books about the recent past are the ones that sell in large numbers.

Aside from local history, Bill had many other interests; some of you will have seen his paintings, particularly of Bookham. He was a keen gardener and very interested in music, particularly jazz. He was a pianist who until a few years ago regularly played with a group of friends.

By profession he was an analytical chemist and after service in World War II as a flight mechanic he worked in the scientific branch at County Hall, London until he retired in 1986.

Our thoughts at this time are with Ena and their son and daughter.

Peter Tarplee

Born in Leatherhead - found fame in America

Harry E Cooper - 'Lighthorse Harry'

Harry E Cooper born in Leatherhead on the 6th August, 1904 was a prominent PGA golfer of the 1920s and 1930s in America. His father Sidney was a professional golfer who had served as an apprentice to old Tom Morris at St Andrews.

His family moved to Texas when Cooper was young and his father took a job as a club professional in Dallas. Cooper turned professional in 1923. A perennial US Open contender (with seven top-10 finishes and second place in 1927 and 1936), 'Lighthorse Harry', as he was nicknamed, was also placed second in the 1936 and 1938 Masters as well as reaching the semi-finals of the 1925 PGA Championship. In all he finished 20 times in the top-10 at major championships.



In the 1936 US Open at Baltusrol Golf Club in Springfield, New Jersey, Cooper was involved in a highly controversial match with Tony Manero, who was suspected of cheating. Manero defeated Cooper by two shots to win the tournament. In later years Cooper would say that he had a mental hangup during major tournaments and couldn't picture himself in the winner's circle. His greatest successes were across the border, as he won the Canadian Open in 1932 and 1937. He won 31 PGA Tour titles in all and the inaugural Vardon Trophy in 1937; his 31 titles were a record for PGA Tour players born outside the US until surpassed by Vijay Singh in 2008. He was active as a senior golfer, placed sixth in the 1955 Senior PGA Championship. He was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1992.

Cooper was the golf professional at Glen Oak Country Club in Glen Ellyn, Illinois from 1930-1937 and at Northmoor Country Club in Highland Park, Illinois from 1941-1942. He piled up many other titles, including wins in the first three tournaments held on Medinah Country Club's No. 3 Course. He dropped an 18-hole playoff to Tommy Armour in the 1927 US Open and advanced to the semifinals of the 1925 PGA Championship, falling to eventual champion Walter Hagen. Statistically, Cooper's best year was 1937 when he won eight times on tour, and was both the leading money winner and the first winner of the Vardon Trophy.

After his PGA tour career ended he became the head professional at the Metropolis Country Club in Greenburgh, New York. He held that position for many years. Following his retirement from Metropolis he took a teaching position at Westchester

Country Club in Rye, New York, where he remained until his death. He was remarkable for his ability to work in the golf industry into his nineties.

In the 1960s and 1970s, he was the Director of Golf on the Oceanic Cruise Liner, which sailed between New York City and the Caribbean during the Christmas season.

Cooper is often classified as the greatest golfer who never won a major tournament. Some claim this classification is erroneous because Cooper won the 1934 Western Open, which many considered one of golf's major championships at that time. Although in its early decades the Western Open was widely regarded as a major championship, this designation was unofficial and it is generally not included in tallies of golfers' major championship wins.

Cooper had no children. He died in a hospital in White Plains, New York on the 17th October, 2000 aged 96. He is interred beside his wife Emma in Lot 15, Graves 1 and 2, in the Kensico Gardens Section of the Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla, New York. His grave is now marked with a headstone, but his grave marker erroneously shows 1906 instead of 1904 as his birth year.



The grave of Harry Cooper in Kensico Cemetery

There were several Cooper families living in Leatherhead around the turn of the twentieth century and I can only assume some descendants may still live in the district. Any other information appertaining to Harry Cooper would be appreciated.

Goff Powell

Alan A Jackson

Alan Jackson, who died in February this year aged 86, was a member of our society for many years and whilst he lived in Ashted he edited the society's first history of the village, 'Ashted, a village transformed'.

He moved to Dorking when he retired and became editor of the Dorking Local History Group and the Dorking and District Preservation Society as well as helping in the library of Dorking Museum. He edited or contributed to many books on the area, notably 'Dorking, a Surrey Market Town through twenty centuries', 'Dorking's Railways' and 'The Railway in Surrey'.

He was the author of many books on the social and transport history of the south-east of England and a past-president of the Railway and Canal Historical Society.

Claremont and Charles Edward Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha

Today you can only visit the National Trust Claremont Gardens - the impressive house is privately owned as Claremont Fan Court School. It was in 1774 that Clive of India bought the estate and commissioned Capability Brown to build a new house, the house that now stands, and to landscape the gardens. In 1816 it was bought for the nation as a wedding present for George IV's daughter Charlotte to Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. It should be remembered that all



the royal households throughout the continent were closely connected and inter-married as is our own Queen and Prince Phillip - in previous times Queen Victoria was of the House of Hanover while her husband Albert was of the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, two large German Duchies. Queen Victoria was a frequent visitor to Claremont both as a child (Leopold was her uncle) and as an adult and the house was owned by royalty for many years.



Queen Victoria's son had a grandson Charles Edward whose uncle was Edward VII and whose cousins were George V and Kaiser William, the Kaiser or Emperor of World War I. Charles Edward was born at Claremont House and was in line to inherit the estate.

Under direct orders from his grandmother Queen Victoria in 1900 Charles inherited the ducal throne of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and later that year became a German citizen. In 1902 Edward VII made him a Knight of the Garter. Upon coming of age in 1905 he married a German princess, a niece of Kaiser Wilhelm's wife to become a member of the German aristocracy and assume full constitutional powers as Duke Carl Eduard of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

When the 1914 -1918 World War I broke out it was a dilemma for Charles Edward as he was so closely related to both the British royalty and the German Emperor. He decided to support Germany and became a general in the German army. Here was a close member of the British royalty and Knight of the Garter fighting for the Germans. In 1917 an act of Parliament took away his titles and honours. Our own royal house at that time was the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and it was only then that the name of the royal house was changed to the House of Windsor as we know it today. Charles Edward was branded a traitor and exiled from England.

1917 had seen the Russian Revolution and the rise of Marxism and the post first world war years witnessed the power struggles between the left and right wing parties in Germany. Charles Edward in fear of the Communist threat now surrendered his rights in Saxe-Coburg and Gotha to the soldier's council and cast about for a new hero and found Adolf Hitler. He became associated with various right-wing paramilitary and political organizations and in 1932 took part in the movement whereby the German National Party became associated with the Nazi Party. He joined the Nazi Party and was a leading member of the SA 'Brownshirts'. He also served as a member of the Reichstag from 1937 to 1945 and as president of the German Red Cross from 1933 to 1945.



In 1936 Adolf Hitler sent Charles Edward to Britain as president of the Anglo-German Friendship Society. His mission was to improve Anglo-German relations and to explore the possibility of a pact between the two countries. At that time Charles Edward dressed in his SA uniform attended the funeral of King George V and later had meetings with the future king Edward VIII on the possibility of a pact between Germany and Britain. Although nothing came of the talks he continued to send Hitler encouraging reports about the strength of pro-German sentiment among the British aristocracy. It was certainly true that there was considerable support and sympathy for Hitler amongst the aristocracy and upper classes of Britain. These reports clearly tended to exaggerate the strength of pro-German



opinion back in Britain and they may well have played a small but important role in persuading Hitler that some kind of deal with Britain was possible and thus undermined the prosecution of the war in its early stages. After the abdication crisis of 1936, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor had stayed with Charles Edward during their official tour of

Germany in 1937.

From 1933 to 1945 Charles Edward was appointed president of the German Red Cross from 1933 to 1945 and in this role must have become embroiled in Hitler's policies for cleansing his adopted homeland of what he considered to be undesirables. It is difficult to think that he did not know of the euthanasia programme that killed 100,000 disabled people in Germany and that he was ignorant of the existence of the 'Final Solution', the complete eradication of all European Jewry.

When World War II ended Charles Edward was placed by the Americans under house arrest in Germany because of his Nazi sympathies. In 1946, he was sentenced to a 'de-nazification' court and heavily fined. Many of his former properties in Saxony, and Coburg were seized by the Soviet army. The former Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha spent the last years of his life in seclusion. In 1953, he even had to travel to a local cinema to watch the coronation of his close relation Queen Elizabeth II. He died a penniless convicted criminal in 1954 as the older one of only two surviving male grandchildren of Queen Victoria.

So as you pass Claremont or enjoy its Landscape Gardens think of its royal connections, of Queen Victoria, of Charles Edward born and growing up in the house and his totally estranged life in Germany as a principal member of the Nazi party. Remember why now we have a House of Windsor.

Martin Warwick

Friends of Leatherhead Museum

School Link Programme

On 3rd of June a reception was held at the Exxon Mobile headquarters in Ermyn Way for organisations involved with the School Link Programme, our involvement being through the Learning Through Landscapes as mentioned in the May Newsletter. The Chairman of Mole Valley and representatives from education, schools, charitable organisations, police and the emergency services were invited and after fruit cocktails (non alcoholic!) we had the formal presentation of the programme. The afternoon finished with a magnificent tea with cucumber sandwiches in the rather awesome setting of the atrium of the building which is visible for miles around. It was a splendid occasion, one of the perks of the job but also a useful PR exercise in promoting the museum.

Craft Days at the Museum

The three craft days in May attracted 191 visitors of whom 69 were children and again it was rewarding to see the interest and enthusiasm with which the children tackled the various crafts of making model willow hurdles, peg dolls, paper model airplanes and spinning items. The two new innovations were the making of peg dolls using wooden pegs and pieces of material which the children



could take home and the construction of model paper airplanes under the expert tuition of Richard Trim who followed it up with flying instructions. Grateful thanks go to Margaret, Sylvia, Robin, Julia and Richard for their time and patience in providing things for children to do during the half term holiday and in teaching them new skills.

Coffee Morning at the Museum

This is an annual event raising money for the museum as well as being an enjoyable social occasion. The day started with drizzle which meant we had to have the stalls under cover involving skilful last minute change to the plan. The garden looked beautiful, thanks to Ruth with Lindsay providing fresh flowers for the museum. Our thanks go to members of the History Society and the Friends who gave items for the plant, cake, raffle and bric-a-brac stalls with a special thanks to the Leatherhead Horticultural Society for providing most of the plants for the plant stall. The plants for sale are always of high quality and provide an attractive display outside the museum. All in all it was a successful day raising over £200 which will go towards buying items for the museum



School Visits to the Museum

We have had visits to the museum from the new Trinity School in Leatherhead and St Peters School in Ashted. The children walk from the schools, crocodile fashion and carbon neutral , the class of twenty eight being divided in two with one half doing the self guided River Mole trail whilst the other half are given an introduction to Hampton Cottage and the origin of the market town. They are asked why we have a museum and then are split into two groups, one going upstairs to the WW2 exhibit with graphic descriptions of the bombing and rationing with the other group learning about Victorian cooking and washing downstairs. After 15 minutes the school bell is rung and the two groups swap over and the whole process repeated when the trail group returns. The museum guides then deserve a cup of tea! Thank you, Julia, Goff, Roz and Brian.

Future Events of the Friends

Thursday 27th August

The Friends are holding a display barrow in the Swan Centre advertising the museum and the History Society.

Saturday 5th September

The Friends of the Museum was formed 25 years ago in 1984 and to celebrate the event we are holding a BBQ in the museum garden starting at 6.00pm. There will be a short musical interlude and the invitation is extended to all members of the Friends, their spouses or partners and children. The invitation is in the flyer included in this newsletter - please let me know by 29th August. Reply to Dr Fred Meynen ,19 The Mount, Fetcham KT22 9EB, tel 01372 372930, email fredmeynen@live.co.uk. Hope to see you there !

Fred Meynen Chairman of the Friends

Heritage Open Days 2009

This year, as for the past few years, Mole Valley is mounting a varied programme for Heritage Open Days between 10th and 14th September. There will be around 90 events throughout the District and by the time this Newsletter is published the brochure will be readily available in libraries, museums, shops and other outlets. Once again I would encourage you all to take advantage of this opportunity to visit properties, view displays, hear talks and enjoy guided walks. Opportunities will be available this year which may not be in the future.

The opening lecture will be held on the Friday evening at the Old Barn Hall, Bookham and will be given by Dame Gillian Beer who is a specialist on George Meredith the renowned author who lived for much of his life in Flint Cottage on Box Hill. A glass of wine will be served after the talk and seats need to be prebooked for this event.



Flint Cottage

The Leatherhead and District Local History Society is associated with many of the activities and include the following at Leatherhead Institute:-

- a continuous slide projection by Goff Powell, 'Bygone Leatherhead'
- 'Leatherhead in the Twentieth Century', two presentations each weekend day by Edwina Vardey
- a display on the Swan Hotel by Sheila Warner
- a display on wall plaster painting from the Ashted Roman Villa by David Hartley

There will also be guided tours of Sweech House and a town walk starting at Leatherhead Institute at 2.00 pm on the Saturday.

The theme for Mole Valley this year is 'Memories and Mysteries' and at the museum there will be a book for visitors to record their memories, either there and then or by completing their page at home and returning it to us. We hope that this will increase our information about the history of the locality.

There are, as I say, the usual choice of activities throughout the district and do spend some time with the brochure planning how you fill the weekend.

Surrey History Centre Open Day

I would like to bring to your attention one of the many events outside Mole Valley. The Surrey History Centre is having an open day on Saturday 12th September when there will be a local history book sale throughout the day. They are also having behind the scenes tours of the History Centre when you will be able to see the archive rescue, cleaning and sorting areas, the conservation laboratory, packaging room, strongroom and Surrey Archaeological Unit. These tours are free (as are all Heritage Open Days events) but booking is essential on 01483 518737. Many of our members will have been on a tour of the history centre arranged either by our society or by another organization, but for anyone who has not been this is a good opportunity.

Peter Tarplee

Visit to Slyfield House

Saturday, 27th June

Many of our members have visited Slyfield on earlier Society outings. However it remains ever popular as a destination such that a further visit seemed appropriate. Once again the owners, Mr & Mrs Richards made us welcome and gave us a guided tour of this magnificent Jacobean house with its adjoining garden. The estate dates back to the Middle Ages, the first record of a Slyfield family being from the 13th century. We were told how the house subsequently passed through the hands of various families and how its present appearance was the result of a radical rebuild during the 17th century. The former great hall has disappeared but the Jacobean interior is largely intact, although it also has some features which are clearly of Elizabethan origin. It was a privilege to see the rooms in which the period characteristics - oak panelling, carved woodwork and superb decorative plasterwork ceilings - are so carefully preserved.

We enjoyed not only the description of what we saw with a detailed historical commentary, but the hospitality of our hosts and a chance to bring a picnic which we enjoyed beneath the massive cedar tree. This added a social dimension - the participants found many interests in common to discuss. The presence among our members of U3A representatives was particularly welcome.

John Wettren

Slyfield House Article

What follows is an article that appeared in the Bookhams Bulletin in its May 2007 edition and may be of interest to readers. It can also be found on the Bookhams Bulletin website (bookhamsbulletin.co.uk) under 'Local History and Interest.'

Slyfield House

The northern-most region of Great Bookham is bounded by the River Mole and just inside this boundary is the Manor House of Slyfield. It is one of the most historic houses of Bookham going back to the early days of the fourteenth century and is one of the three great manor houses of Bookham. It would be easy to think of it as part of Stoke d'Abernon whose post code it now shares but its position is very much in the parish of Great Bookham.



The present house was rebuilt in the Jacobean period in 1615 in the reign of James I and just after the reign of Elizabeth I. The history of Slyfield goes back even further, probably fourteenth century. Edmund Slyfield of the sixteenth century was Sheriff of Surrey in charge of maintaining the law in the region. It was in 1614 that the Manor was sold by the Slyfield family and came into the possession of George Shiers, the apothecary to James I, dispensing the medicines of the day. It was under his ownership that the Manor house was rebuilt and exists to this day, some 400 years later. The memory of the Slyfields is preserved in the fifteenth century Slyfield Chapel of St Nicolas Church where members of the family lie buried.



What remains is the house itself together with farmhouse and barns. In its original form there was a large Great Hall attached to the side of the house which linked to what is now known as the farmhouse. It is likely that much of this large farmhouse provided the living quarters for the many servants of the house. Nothing remains of the Great Hall.

When entering the house there is no sense of grandeur and size. It is relatively narrow as houses of that date did not have corridors leading to rooms - rooms took up the width of the house and a door from each leads into the next room. The ceilings, though magnificent, are not particularly high.

The overall impression is of being surrounded by oak panelling and magnificent wood beams, all produced with extraordinary skill and carving. There are deep plastered ceilings executed with great craftsmanship and the downstairs main room sports a

marvellous ceiling with symbols of 'plenty'. The arms of the Shiers' family appear in the ceilings and on the walls.

At the base of the staircase are two magnificent carved gates standing some five foot high. Much of the carving gives the appearance of brickwork. The gates were there to contain the fierce guard dogs allowed to roam downstairs to mind the house. The staircase is beautifully carved in oak.

The bedrooms upstairs are in the same panelled style with plastered ceilings. The ceiling of the main bedroom is arched or vaulted but plastered similarly to the downstairs room. Another bedroom ceiling has a plaster figure symbolising 'peace'.



Some of the original windows remain with their oak surrounds and sills including the large windows in the hallway and stairs and a small window still in place with wide oak frame and small glass panes. Some have been replaced with larger eighteenth century windows and in some cases original glasswork can still be seen. Most of the original windows would have been relatively small. In places some of the old windows have been bricked up on account of the window tax, a tax introduced at the end of the seventeenth century according to the number of windows in a house. Six windows represented one level, nine another and so on, an early form of council tax.

And of course a house of this age must have its ghosts. A picture of a donkey surrounded by a blue haze hangs downstairs next to the staircase. On November 14th at midnight the blue donkey is supposedly seen leaping over the gateway barring the stairs and vanishing at the top. Sleepless nights could well have been spent awaiting the event but certainly, recently, it has not been seen. It is suggested that a sighting may require a good previous visit to the local alehouse! An even longer visit may produce donkeys of even more extraordinary colours!

And then there is the haunted bedroom. Lying silently in bed the sound of hooves can be heard outside the window. Guests have remarked on hearing the sound of horses in the courtyard only to be told that no such thing occurred. It was in this room in the 1690's that Sir John Fenwick is said to have taken refuge. He had taken part in a plot against King William III and had hoped to remain hidden in Slyfield as a safe house. He was pursued by the king's men and found at the house and it is believed that the sound of their horses arriving in the yard still echoes through the house. He was tried for treason at the Tower and beheaded.

The southern aspect overlooks fields and to the side is a formal garden. The peace,



tranquillity and grandeur is now unfortunately broken by the sound of the nearby motorway - how unsympathetic to history can planners be? It is sometimes suggested that Queen Elizabeth I visited the manor but this seems unlikely as she is far more likely to have chosen a far larger and grandiose palace such as Hampton Court and of course, it would have not been the house as it is today.

Great Bookham is privileged to have such a piece of history in its bounds.

Martin Warwick

The Great Sock Raffle

‘If you’ve got a good cause, you can raffle a old pair of socks’ wrote John Steinbeck in his novel ‘Sweet Thursday’ and as John Morris had the Museum as his cause, he organised a raffle. He begged clean historic and archaeological hosiery from Dr David Starkey, John Julius Norwich, Adam Hart-Davis, Phil Harding, and Tony Robinson with three further donations from Michael Aspel, John Bird and Michael Palin, Then he packaged the prizes, each autographed and authenticated.

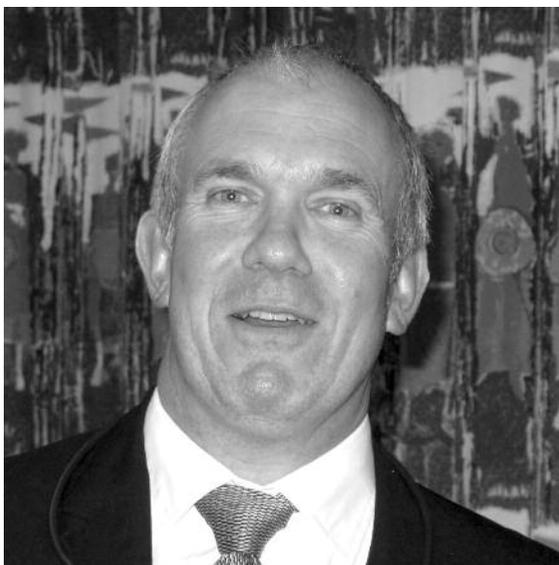


The draw followed the Society’s lecture by Penny Rainbow. Mrs Molly Lewis won first prize and since she has a great interest in Venice she chose John Julius Norwich’s socks. Second prize was won by Eric Leat who donated David Starkey’s red socks to Edwina Vardey who had once been David Starkey’s student. Mrs Margaret Jones won third prize and planned to display Tony Robinsons socks as a talking point in her house. Michael Aspel’s socks were fourth prize and the rest were returned for resale. After all John Morris’s hard work, £353 was raised for our Museum and Heritage Trust.

Edwina Vardey

A Butcher's Tale of Woe

On Friday 15th May we had a very informative and entertaining talk called 'A Butcher's Tale of Woe' by Keith Weston of Rawlings & Kensett butcher's shop in Bookham. Last year Keith cycled on his butcher's bike from Smithfield to Bookham and raised £7,000 in aid of the rebuilding of Little Bookham Parish Hall.



Keith has spent some 33 years in the butchery business, from sweeping the floors as a schoolboy in the local butcher's shop in Chard, Devon, to his present job as manager of the shop in Bookham. He left school at 14 and got a job at a butcher's shop at Ilminster in Devon. By the time he came to Bookham in 1988 he had a good deal of experience in the business. Things were going pretty well until a new Sainsbury store opened in Cobham. What with the convenience of a supermarket and lower prices of meat, trade dropped off considerably for independent butchers.

The next blow was when for a time it became against the law to sell meat on the bone. This again hit butchers very hard. Metrication was another drawback. Customers could still ask for their meat in imperial measure, - pounds, ounces etc but the butcher had to convert this into decimalised quantities. Then there was the 'e-coli' scare which deterred many people from buying meat at all, especially beef.

After that foot and mouth disease prohibited all transport of animals and a tremendous cull of cattle which, in many case, was unnecessary. Later the petrol shortage also had a very restrictive effect on movement of both livestock and meat. One purely local misadventure in Bookham was when a car was driven through the front window of Keith's shop severely damaging the window and newly furbished interior. Fortunately nobody was injured. This happened on a Friday morning and yet the shop was open for business again on the next Monday.

These are obviously but a few of the hazards which butchers have to contend with, but it is good to report that Rawlings & Kensett butchery is thriving in spite of it all.

Linda Heath

Library Changes

Recent Withdrawals from the Library

The following books have been withdrawn from the Library:

SURREY – ARCHAEOLOGY

MACKINDER, Anthony - A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: excavations at 165 Great Dover Street, Southwark, London. Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2000

MACKINDER, Anthony and BLATHERWICK, Simon - Bankside: excavations at Benbow House, Southwark, London SE1. Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2000

MILLER, Pat & STEPHENSON, Roy - A 14th century pottery site in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey: excavations at 70—76 Eden Street. MOLAS, 1999

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY - 199 Borough High Street, Southwark; excavations in 1962, by D.J.Turner & C.R.Orton . Excavations at Guy's Hospital, 1967, by G.J.Dawson. Surrey Arch Soc Research vol no 7, 1979

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY/LONDON & MIDDLESEX ARCH SOC -Excavations in Southwark, 1973-76 and Lambeth 1973—79. SAS/LMAS, 1984, Joint Publication no 3

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY/LONDON & MIDDLESEX ARCH SOC -Excavations in Staines 1975-76: Friends' burial ground site. SAS/LMAS, 1984, Joint Publication no 2

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY/LONDON & MIDDLESEX ARCH SOC -Southwark excavations,

1972—74. 2 vols. SAS/LMAS, 1978. Joint Publication no 1

As in the May 2009 Newsletter, the aforementioned books are again in Gwen Hoad's house at 66 Craddocks Avenue, Ashted KT21 1PG. As before, could you please express your interest in any of the books by ringing Gwen on 01372 273934. A donation would be most acceptable!

Peter Wells

From the Editor of the Proceedings

Though I have received some articles for the next issue of the Proceedings, I still have room for more. It would be nice to have some new authors and subjects, and I have not yet had to reject any articles offered to me. So, it's up to you — and don't grumble if you still find the next issue dominated by the old guard!

Barry Cox

News From The Museum Committee

The museum open season is now in full swing with a craft weekend, the Friends' coffee morning and visits by school parties. The new disabled access has been used on a number of occasions and many of you will be pleased to learn that Joe Parry was able to leave his care home and pay a visit to the museum where he did so much work in his younger days.

We are still receiving new artefacts, but at a slower rate than sometimes. One particularly interesting accession was a Goblin Purifyre 'air conditioner'. This is a fan heater with two speed settings and two heat settings fitted with a filter system which, from the label on the box, had been dispatched from the Leatherhead factory to Seaboard, Eden Street, Kingston-upon-Thames. It is good to get another example of a locally-produced item, particularly one which some of us didn't realize Goblin made. Does anyone have a Goblin hair dryer or electric iron? The air conditioner is at present on display in the front upstairs gallery.

Another acquisition was some memorabilia from the 21st Surrey Boys' Brigade company. Does anyone else remember them in Bookham?

At present Mr and Mrs Exwood are checking the contents of the boxes in the museum store and noting any which need urgent conservation treatment. Our only problem is that we do not have a curator or any conservators. If any Society member feels like helping to look after the Society's collection please get in touch with Alan Pooley who manages the museum.

Peter Tarplee

Interested in History?- Questionnaire

Our Society and its membership share a common interest with many other people in local history. Some of us take part in support of our history Society's lectures and talks at the Letherhead Institute while others may support the museum in various ways. Others will also pursue or follow their own inclinations, perhaps their interest in family history or a course of study on a particular historical subject elsewhere. They may also be members of other local history groups which is all very healthy and hopefully can be mutually beneficial.

My wish is that our History Society can also continue to engage your attention, in support of your interests and at the same time encourage and welcome new members to join and make their own contribution to our Society.

Your committee would like to hear from you with comments and helpful suggestions.

To enable this to happen in a constructive and efficient way we would like to invite you to spare a few minutes and complete the attached questionnaire 'Interested in History' enclosed with this Newsletter. If for any reason you do not have a copy of the questionnaire, copies can be picked up at our museum and can also be completed and

left there, but please remember the museum opening times.

We would ask you to complete the questionnaire as soon as possible or by the end of September so that we may respond to you in our November Newsletter.

Please return your completed form by post or why not drop it into your museum in person and take a quick look around while you are visiting. Please address your envelope to; 'Interested in History' L&DLHS 64, Church Street Leatherhead Surrey KT22 8DP.

We will treat all your personal details with the strictest confidence and we look forward to hearing from you all. I would like to acknowledge and thank John Wettern for conceiving and suggesting the idea to me.

David Hartley, Chairman

Leatherhead Aviation Services

In the last issue of the Newsletter I wrote a piece giving further information about the aeroplane propeller in our museum which had originally come from Leatherhead Aviation Services.

Recently the Society received a further enquiry concerning Leatherhead Aviation Services from someone who was seeking information about his father-in-law who had been a pilot in the Royal Flying Corps and as a civilian after World War I. We were able to tell him that the person concerned was, in fact, the pilot of the Leatherhead Aviation Services Avro 504 which crashed near Slough injuring all three persons on board including W G Chapman, the owner of Leatherhead Aviation Services.



Avro 504

In turn we learned from our enquirer that the pilot, Arnold Graham, did recover from his injuries and in 1922 left England for Africa and India to work as a civil engineer on railways, the profession he had trained for before joining the RFC. He had been born in Calcutta in 1891.

These instances are two of many where we learn more about our local history following someone looking on the Society web site and seeing reference to a subject in which they are interested. The reference to something in a lecture or Proceedings article is all that is required.

Peter Tarplee

Autumn Lecture Programme

The lectures of the Society are held in the Abraham Dixon Hall of the Letherhead Institute on the third Friday of the month. Coffee and biscuits are served at 7.30pm - lectures start at 8.00pm. Everyone is welcome - admission £1 for members and £2 for visitors.

18th September ‘ The Story of Betchworth Castle ‘ by Martin Higgins.

Martin is the Heritage Buildings Officer , Surrey County Council Heritage Conservation Team and is raising grants for the restoration of the castle from its present ruins.

17th October ‘Iron Age and Roman Settlements around Leatherhead‘ by Frank Pemberton

Frank is a well known archaeologist having previously talked to our Society about his finds in the Ewell area. This lecture will cover more local situations including Hawks Hill and Roman sites near Stane Street

20th November ‘ Sir George Edwards : From Bouncing Bombs to Concorde ‘ by Robert Gardner MBE

Sir George Edwards was the aviation pioneer and designer, leader of the British post war aircraft industry. Previously Vice President of British Aerospace Robert Gardner has recently published a biography of Sir George Edwards.

18th December Christmas Social

Details of this event will be in the November Newsletter

Dr Fred Meynen programme secretary

Archaeology & Forthcoming Events

26th August – 13th September - Ashtead Roman Villa & Tileworks

Members of the Surrey Archaeological Society’s Roman Studies Group will be conducting a fourth Season of excavations at the site of the Ashtead Roman Villa and Tile works on Ashtead Common, directed by Dr David Bird and his dedicated team co-ordinating the excavation site.

13th September - Open Day on Ashtead Common to mark Heritage Open Day organised by Lizzie Bruce Senior Ranger of Ashtead Common NNR.

If you would like to know more about this event will you please contact Lizzie Bruce by telephone 01372 279083, or email her at: lizzie.bruce@cityoflondon.gov.uk or visit their website: www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

10th - 13th September - Heritage Open Days

The History Society and our Museum at Hampton Cottage will both be providing a display in celebration of Mole Valley’s Heritage Open Days, at the Museum and at the ‘Letherhead Institute’ over the heritage weekend of Saturday 12th & Sunday 13th September.

David Hartley

Archaeology

ARCHAEOLOGY SECRETARY David Hartley 01372 377839

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Records

RECORDS SECRETARY (Vacancy)

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

Ashted	Jack Willis
Bookham	tba
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, Ashted, Bookham and Fetcham submitted via the Museum

CO-ORDINATOR (Vacancy)

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