

*LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*

NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2009

LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 802409

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PRESIDENT : Gordon Knowles 01372 458396

CHAIRMAN

David Hartley

01372 377839

SECRETARY

Vivien Hollingsworth

01372 801357

TREASURER

David Lokkerbol

01372 375756

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 David Wall

01372 374773

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

It is good to see the support the Newsletter has received this edition with its twenty four pages compared with previous editions which had only twelve. Hopefully we can continue in this vein to reflect the health of the Society and the degree of interest in the publication. Members are encouraged to send in even more articles – write up a topic in your own area of interest and if possible include photographs.



The Newsletter should be seen as a booklet that everybody can look forward eagerly to receive with not just a formal record of meetings, lectures and list of future events but also containing illustrated informative articles of interest to be read. We already have the ‘Proceedings of the Society’ as the medium to record articles on historical topics which have been researched in depth.

The large attendances reflect the success of the monthly lectures - the Letherhead Institute hall has very few empty seats. The latest technological breakthrough, our acquisition of a digital projector, seems to be successful although some of the lecturers are having to go through a learning curve to conquer its intricacies.

We are pleased to see that we have a new publication ‘Over the Bridge’ by Brian Hennegan. It tells a tale of growing up in Leatherhead some fifty years and more ago and surely will bring back many memories to our older members and also an insight into life at that time to those not so old. You are well advised to buy a copy (just £6.50).

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Chairman's Report

Dear Members

I am pleased to report that following our August Newsletter we received two responses to our appeal for the vacant posts of Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

I would therefore like to welcome both David Lokkerbol as our new Hon Treasurer (01372 375756 or davidlokkerbol@googlemail.com) and David Wall as our new Membership Secretary (01372 374773 or dandswall@btinternet.com) and offer them the full support of the executive committee and our membership at large.



Whilst we have been fortunate to be able to fill these two very important posts which have been vacant since our AGM in April, we also have an urgent need to find other members to fill the following positions, all these are part time, voluntary positions open to both male and female members of the History Society.

Records Secretary

The first is that of Records Secretary to co-ordinate, manage and develop a long term strategy for the History Society's Archives, a keen interest in local history and research in general would be a basic requirement.

Bookham Archivist

The next post is of Bookham Archivist, would ideally suit a member who lives locally and has keen interest in the Parish of Great & Little Bookham who would be able to accommodate and look after the Bookham archive currently in temporary store in Peter Tarplee's garage.

The late Brian Godfrey held both these positions, but perhaps it would now be advantageous to split these two areas of responsibility.

Museum Curator

The next post is of Curator to our museum at Hampton Cottage at 64 Church Street, working together with our Museum Manager Alan Pooley carrying out the agreed museum policies and procedures, curatorial role, actively promoting the museum to a wider public audience.

Publicity Officer

Finally we have the post of Publicity Officer which in my mind requires an active, dynamic and creative individual who likes to meet and deal with the press, business and the public at large, reaching out to promote the History society, its lectures and activities as well as our local museum.

Heritage Open Days 2009

Heritage open Days 10th -13th September proved to be another well supported and successful weekend of events at which the History Society provided one of several a displays in the Dixon Hall at the Letherhead Institute and the Museum at Hampton Cottage. I would like to thank all those members and stewards on duty who gave up their time to support of this years event.

I would like also to take this opportunity to personally thank Peter Tarplee my predecessor as chairman who has actively represented the History Society on the organising committee for Heritage Open days in Mole Valley since 1996, he has now indicated his retirement from the organising committee in Mole Valley at the end of this years' event. We owe him a debt of gratitude for his active support, promoting the History Society on this committee as part of a national event supported by English Heritage.

We are currently looking for a new member to take on this role and represent the History society at next years organising committee for Heritage Open Days in Mole Valley. Is there is a member of the society out there who has the energy and interest to volunteer to fill this role, someone who will be able to allocate some time to attend the required meetings on our behalf? I would be interested to hear from you - the role could perhaps be linked with role of publicity officer referred to above.

Members' Interests Questionnaire

I would like to have concluded this piece on a more positive and optimistic note but I must express something of a disappointment at the general lack of interest shown to our members interests questionnaire launched in our August Newsletter entitled 'Interested in History' - to date I have received only 21 replies out of a possible 200 strong membership which is more than a little depressing.

I propose to defer my report on member's interests to the February 2010 Newsletter in the hope and anticipation that there are members out there who have forgotten or mislaid their member's interest forms and who wil, given the time, respond to this important source of feedback for your history society.

Between now and going to press in January for our February Newsletter I am hoping you will all respond to this poll. In the event that you have mislaid this form there will be copies available at the Museum. Failing that, you can if you so wish just put your name address and telephone number on a piece of paper together with a short list of the subjects you are interested in and put your response in an envelope and post it for my attention or just drop it into our Museum - you have my attention I hope I will have your support, thank you.

Archaeology & History Report

British History On Line Digital Library 'www.british-history.ac.uk' has just added the Parliament Roll of Medieval England to their site. The series has been transcribed and translated and covers every parliament held between 1275 and 1504 and where the roll survives ten monarchs are represented from Edward I to Henry VII. It is a subscription site. You can also access at no charge a number of local history pages on the site including the Victoria County Histories at www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk

The National Archive web site (October 09) is currently promoting some recent additions to their collection. Marking the 100th anniversary of the Security Services the UK's National Security Intelligence Agency have released over 4,000 of these files to the National Archive (nationalarchives@ionmx.com) since 1997.

Ashtead Roman Villa & Tile Works

The Roman Studies Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society completed a fourth successful season of excavation under the direction of Dr David Bird with the support of Alan Hall the site manager, trench supervisors David Calow, Nikki Cowlard, Frank Pemberton and Margaret Broomfield the Finds Supervisor.

This season dig was well supported by members of the Roman Studies Group and volunteers. It is hoped to be able to publish David Bird's interim report in our February 2010 Newsletter.

Lecture at the Surrey History Centre - 28th November

There will be a lecture at the Surrey History Centre on the 28th November 2.00 pm - 4.30pm on '**Woking Palace and its place in history**'. Tickets are £5.00 including tea and coffee - contact the Surrey History Centre 01483 518737

Afternoon Programme

2.00pm 'Woking Palace revealed: excavation in 2009' a review of the recent excavation given by Rob Poulton, Archaeologist of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit.

3.00 Tea and Coffee

3.30 pm The Surrey Heritage Lecture - 'Lady Margaret Beaufort & Woking Palace, Power, Politics and the Foundation of the Tudor Dynasty' by Dr Michael K Jones.



At the Woking Palace Excavation 2009

Ashtead Mineral Well

Mineral springs have always benefited mankind. St John's Gospel chapter five describes the curing well at Bethesda in Jerusalem, while the Romans developed the waters available at Bath and Buxton. Over the centuries many more have been found and commercialised throughout the UK, - and in other countries. Discussion continues on whether it is the mineral content of the water, or faith, which may cure the sick, but the modern version, bottled mineral water, continues the popularity.

The halcyon days of British spas were the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, during which the larger sources such as Harrogate and Tunbridge Wells developed as spa towns, and many other smaller springs became renowned in their own locality.

Epsom Wells are a story in themselves, the main constituent of the water traditionally thought to be magnesium sulphate (or Epsom Salts) or maybe calcium sulphate, both of which are best known for their purgative affects. Epsom Salts were appreciated by the wealthy of that time, as they helped the digestion of a diet rich in meat and alcohol but low in fibre.



The Ashtead Mineral Well today

Other Surrey wells had different mineral contents suitable for other afflictions, such as eye infections, skin problems, and lassitude - the neighbourhood was well served.

The success of Epsom encouraged other local entrepreneurs with similar springs. The purgative water from Jessop's Well in Oxshott was bottled and sold in Fleet Street. (The 18th century pump house at the Well still stands.)

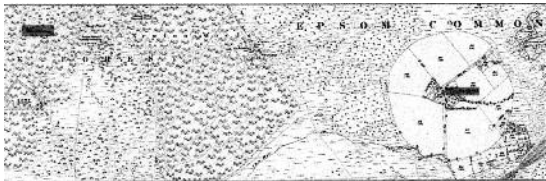
Ashtead's well has similar water, and is on the north side of the Common, near to the site of the Roman villa. It was sometimes called the 'Roman Well' but it is unlikely to have served the villa, as the water is unsuitable for drinking. We do not know if it existed in Roman times (wells sometimes emerge and may later die, with changes in the water table.) but we first hear of it in the 17th century.

In 1676 the lord of the manor agreed to improvements to an existing well and to enclosing two acres around it, 'for the benefit of the poor of the parish'. A sixty year lease was assigned to a contractor, supervised by local dignitaries. 330 years later we wonder at the purpose of the venture - the well was nearly a mile from the nearest poor community and the water was not suitable for domestic purposes. Instead, was it intended to create a spa to rival the Epsom Spa, the height of which is considered to be one year earlier - 1675?

If that was the intention, it failed, probably because of the poor access. However, the poor did continue to use it for medicinal reasons, and there was apparently plenty of water there as late as 1925. In 1882 it was described as a 'scouring well', while an archaeological survey of 1999 describes it as a 'medicinal well' - the OS map recorded it in 1866 as 'mineral spring', but in 1994 just as 'spring'.

Today, the fence of the two acre enclosure has long disappeared, but the well is still there, and consists of a metre-square brick frame, with signs of once carrying a pump, while below is a brick-lined well. Nearby is a low (and partially collapsed) chamber into the south bank which may have been a reservoir for water extracted. The well is in a depression of about 20 square metres, which is surrounded by a modern post-and-rail fence. Inside and outside the fence there are metre-high ferns and brambles, so little can be seen of the detail of the site. The City of London Open Spaces Department who own Ashtead Common are planning to improve the interpretation of the well in due course.

It is located at NGR TQ 17636025, but it is difficult to describe its precise location as



Extract from the 1866 OS Map showing the relative positions of the two wells

there are no local datum points. It lies a short distance north-west of the Roman site and about 200 metres south of the northern boundary of the Common. Follow the way marked Public Footpath 32 north of the earthworks and picnic tree, and where it veers off to the left, take a narrow path

which drops away to the north-east and leads to the well..

It is interesting to consider what might have happened if the 1676 venture had succeeded - would our ancestors have erected spa buildings with access roads and gift shops? Perhaps it is as well for those of us who love the current Ashtead Common that Epsom Spa won the race.

John Henderson

Acknowledgements to

'Ashtead's Mineral Spring' by Brian Bouchard (a member of the Society) from The Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, and for kindly granting access to his records concerning the well,

'Ashtead - a village transformed' Editor Alan A. Jackson published by the Society, Pages 18, 27, 55

'A History of Ashtead' Editor J.C.Stuttard published by the Society, Page 3 Ashtead and Epsom Commons Archaeological Survey 1999 by C.Currie, pages 74,75 'Greater London ' 1882 by Edward Walford Page 249 City of London Open Spaces Department for their help.

Heritage Open Days 2009

As usual Mole Valley had a wide range of events during the four days 10th, 11th, 12th and 13th September, and as far as one can tell before the returns come in from the various organizers the numbers attending maintained the usual level.

The opening talk was held as usual on the Friday. This year it was given by Dame Gillian Beer on 'George Meredith: Box Hill's Man of Letters'. Dame Gillian, a former Professor of English at Cambridge University who was born in Bookham, gave the talk on this local author who died 100 years ago. Meredith lived in Flint Cottage on Box Hill for many years and was buried in Dorking Cemetery. Some of us in the audience were admitting



that we had not read much, if any, of his work and I am sure that following this very informative lecture there was a run on his 33 books in Surrey Libraries.

The day before there had been a talk by James Dixon, the Great, Great, Great Nephew of Abraham Dixon on the Life of Abraham Dixon. The venue for this was the Old Stables at Cherkley Court and all seats were taken for this event.

On the Sunday Brian Hennigan entertained an audience in Park House with his 'Memories of North Leatherhead'. There is no better person to describe the recent history of a locality than someone who lived there during the period he is describing and I am sure that we all learned much more about this often forgotten part of our town from Brian's reminiscences. For those who missed the talk, note that the Society is hoping soon to publish a book by Brian on the history of Leatherhead 'Over the Bridge'.



The local theme this year was 'Memories and Mysteries' and our museum produced a Book of Memories in which we invited visitors to write their memories of the area. Pages for the book were also with our displays in Letherhead Institute and these will be incorporated in the book. The response to this was disappointing but some folk took pages home and will return them to

us. If anyone wishes to add to this book please do call at the museum and ask the steward for blank pages which can then be incorporated in the book.

The Society's displays in the Abraham Dixon Hall were appreciated by many visitors. On the stage Goff Powell gave a continuous slide show of early views of Leatherhead in the 20th century which generated plenty of questions. Twice each day this was stopped to allow Edwina Vardey to present her CD, compiled for the BBC in 1989/90, of recollections by older residents of Leatherhead. There were displays of painted wall plaster from Ashted Roman Villa, bygone seaside holidays and the Swan hotel and brewery. This last particularly attracted visitors and enabled us to sell some of the Society's publications.

Society members were also involved in many aspects of the event including guiding visitors round Sweech House, leading walks around the town, giving talks to visitors to Milner House and, of course, acting as stewards in our museum.

There were, of course, many other events throughout Mole Valley with varied talks and walks and properties open throughout the District. These included churches, commercial buildings, exhibitions, museums, private houses and schools and the Heritage Open Days organizing committee is grateful to everyone who helped in any way to make the weekend the success it was. Much assistance in this was from Mole Valley District Council and we hope that they continue with this in future years.

Peter Tarplee

September Meeting - Betchworth Castle

To buy a castle in Surrey for £1 as Martin Higgins is doing, sounds too good to be true. At our September meeting, he pointed out that Betchworth Castle is not in Betchworth, where he lives, but in Buckland. Further, it was never a 'proper' castle, but a large defensible medieval house which has had more than one make-over and is now a tottering ruin. As a private owner, Martin has been promised some funding for repairs by the Mole Valley District Council and is attempting to secure money from English Heritage and other sources.

At our September meeting, Mr Higgins described the steep bluff above a crossing point of the river Mole as attractive to early peoples; recent geophysical and magnetometric survey suggested that an Early Iron Age hillfort here was preceded by Bronze Age settlement. Betchworth was granted a market charter before Dorking was given one, and the manor was visited by the king in 1294. The manor of West Betchworth was granted to Richard, earl of Arundel in 1373. Six years later, his son obtained a licence to fortify his house and enclose a 360-acre park here. The park boundary can be traced as a continuous bank with old chestnut trees to the south and west of the castle; footpaths do not cross it, but run alongside. 'Deerleap Cottage' marks a place where deer might jump into the park but not out again.

The estate passed by marriage to the rising Browne family in 1431. Thomas Browne had a similar licence to crenellate and impark in 1448 and it was probably then that the oldest remaining part of the castle was built: some surviving window-heads are of fifteenth century style. Although the Brownes were on the wrong side during the Civil War; the castle escaped demolition as not being defensible. In 1664 it



was taxed for 31 hearths. A drawing by John Aubrey the antiquarian and an anonymous watercolour show what it looked like then. As well as a tower-like chamber block, there was a great hall with large bay windows, and a tall gatehouse like that built at Cowdray House in Sussex (also Browne/Montagu property) or more locally at Abbot's Hospital in Guildford High Street and Waynelete's Tower at Farnham castle. Mr Fenwick, who had married the Browne heiress in 1691, demolished the southern half of the hall and added a new wing on the other side.

An engraving by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck of 1737 dedicated to Abraham Tucker (the then owner) shows a large ornamental lake, with a fountain jet, below the house next to the river. In 1796, Henry Peters, a director of the Bank of England bought the castle, diverted the old coach road further to the north and employed Sir John Soane to remodel the house. Soane converted the old stables into a kitchen range, building new stables downhill, which are now regarded as some of his best work. The icehouse (the precursor of today's kitchen freezer) had a conical roof down to the ground, thatched with shredded oak. There was also what was probably the earliest conservatory in Surrey, and a 'crow-stepped' gable, much more common in East Anglia than in Surrey.

The Hope family, the richest in Europe, then owners of Deepdene House in Dorking, bought Chart Park for its land in 1812 and sold the house and its contents piecemeal. They bought the Betchworth estate in 1835 for the equivalent of £69M today, leaving the house as a romantic ruin at the end of a double avenue of lime trees. Most of the brickwork of the castle was removed leaving a stone skin. Soane's stables were converted into houses in 1836, and a private golf course laid out on the site of the ornamental gardens towards Dorking early in the twentieth century..

Bought by Dorking Urban District Council (as it then was), the lime avenue on the estate was felled in 1962 but a proposal to demolish the ruins was met by a public outcry. High winds in the 1990s uprooted many trees, which caused damage to the walls and foundations. Clearance and survey for Mole Valley District Council in 1999

revealed some thirteen narrow east-west tunnels under the foundations. No evidence for bats was detected, although the Small Teazle plants found here are their favourite food. In 2004 the golf course was sold off, but an access strip to the castle was kept. A stone wall between the buildings and the river slope had fallen, and the narrow terrace was now only supported by a dense mass of yew tree-roots, which has delayed plans to erect scaffolding to prevent further collapse. There is a Community Archaeology project for an excavation to search for the foundations of the original gatehouse on the side away from the river.

At present the best view is looking west from the Big Field in Buckland. Mr Higgins concluded his talk with a dramatic photograph from that viewpoint, then overlaying it with the watercolour picture of Betchworth Castle as it looked 350 years ago

Derek Renn

Madge Titheradge

Famous Actress Born in Australia who Lived and Died in Fetcham



Margaret 'Madge' Titheradge (1887 – 1961) was born into a theatrical family in Melbourne, Australia. She became a popular actress, starring in silent films from 1915 to 1920, and continuing in stage productions until 1938. Her father was the English-born actor George Sutton Titheradge, and the eleven-year-old Madge had already done stage work with Australia's Brough-Boucicault and Bland Holt companies when the family returned to Britain in 1898. She was educated privately in Hampstead, England from the age of 11.

She made her London stage debut at fifteen, and soon became a popular actress and beauty, her photograph adorning many a postcard and cigarette card. In 1914 she was the first Australian to play the title role in the legendary annual 'Peter Pan'.

In this same production, one of the Lost Boys was played by Noel Coward. Thus began a life-long association between Titheradge and Coward - one of his early plays, 'Home chat', was expressly written for her and he also directed her in several productions.

After touring Canada and the United States in stage productions she made her screen debut in the 1916's British film A Fair Impostor, and later the same year went to Hollywood to star in Brigadier Gerard. Her subsequent Hollywood films were 1920s Her Story and the early co-production David and Jonathan, a British funded film shot in a Hollywood studio.

A Fair Impostor (1916)

Brigadier Gerard (1916)

The Woman Who Was Nothing (1917)

God Bless Our Red, White and Blue (1918)

Gamblers All (1919)

A Temporary Gentleman (1920)

Love in the Wilderness (1920)

The Husband Hunter (1920)

Her Story (1920)

David and Jonathan (1920)



During World War I she appeared in two pantomime productions at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane - 1916 'Puss in New Boots' and in 1917 'Aladdin'. During her stage career she played the leading lady in several principal London Theatres. She developed a reputation as a dramatic, emotional actress. Her first marriage to actor Charles Quartermaine, was dissolved in 1928. (He later married actress Fay Compton, who by the way was educated at the Leatherhead Court School for Young Ladies)

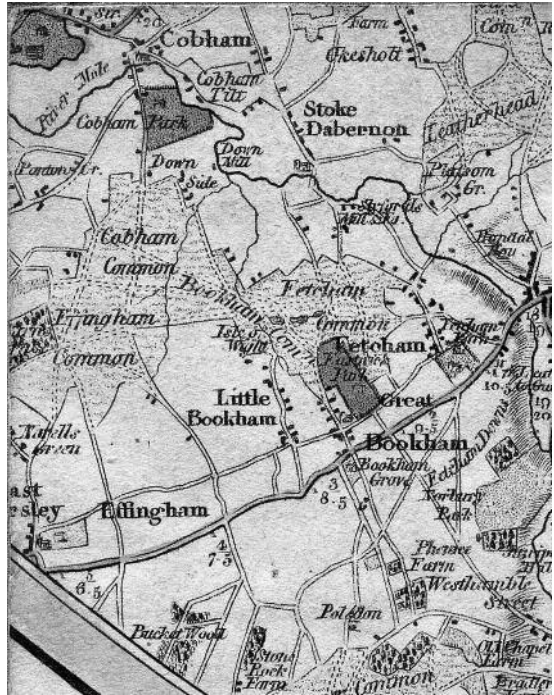
She then married American business man Edgar Park who died in 1938. That same year, she retired from the stage, due to health reasons. Just when she came to live in Fetcham, I'm not sure, but she is listed under her married name, Mrs MT Park in the 1950s street directory. She lived in Orchard Walls, The Street, Fetcham, and she died there on the 14th November 1961 aged 74.

Goff Powell

William Faden's 1788 Map

This map is centred on London, but extends out to a radius of 25 miles. Though it was published in 1788 it is an amalgam of existing maps that were already 20-30 years old, so showing us the situation much earlier than the publication date. The original has been digitally redrawn at a scale of two miles to the inch by Dr Andrew Macnair (who has already done a similar version of Faden's 1797 map of Norfolk – www.fadensmapofnorfolk.com).

The whole map is being published as six sheets each 85x104 cm., but we may be more interested in the local, custom-produced sheets centred on individual villages. Dr Macnair has kindly sent me a specimen of such a map centred on Leatherhead. This is 27x20 cm,



the corners being Stoke D'Aberton, Epsom Downs, Hedley and Great Bookham. Maps up to A3 (30x42 cm) cost £7, plus £2 p&p, but versions 50x40 cm extending out further, are also available, at a cost of £16-18, plus £4 p&p.

The maps are coloured, commons and downland being shown in yellow, private parks in red, woodland in green, and ponds and rivers in blue. They also show areas where there were houses, with little black blocks for the houses themselves, but these are indicative of general location rather than being accurate. Finally, they show milestones, giving distances from London on what is now the A24, and also on the Leatherhead-Guildford road.

Further details are available on www.fadensmapoflondon.co.uk, or you can phone Dr Macnair on 01362 683372

Barry Cox

Editor's Comments:

There are some interesting things to note on the Faden's Map. If you look at the place where the word 'Bookham' appears of the 'Great Bookham', clearly shown is the Leatherhead to Guildford Road – but notice that it is completely straight. It shows the

road going past Bookham Grove straight along what is now Lower Shott – not bending round as it did later round the old Saracen Inn. So the ancient Leatherhead to Guildford road used to go along the road we now know as Lower Shott. It was far later that it was diverted to form the ‘S’ bend past the old inn and turning at the old Victoria Hotel.

Also notice that parallel with what is now the Dorking Road is another parallel road or track just the other side of Bookham Grove going right up to the North Downs – this is Whiteway or White Way. It runs up to connect nowadays to what is known as Connicut Lane past Polesden Lacey.

Also look at what is now Bookham Commons and note that it is sectioned into Effingham, Cobham, Bookham and Fetcham Commons. This is perhaps what one would expect that the Common was divided between the parishes and under their control for usage by their parishioners .

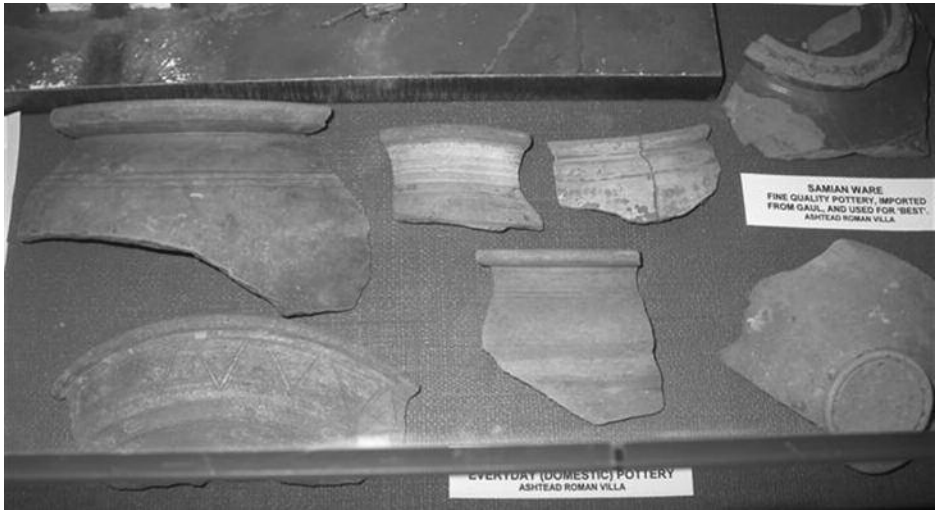
Iron Age and Roman Settlements around Leatherhead

Speaking to a well attended meeting for the October lecture and accompanied by an excellent selection of pictures Frank Pemberton gave us an insight into how things were in our area during the period before the Roman occupation, that is between 800 BC and 100 BC. In the second half of his talk we were given a glimpse of life in our locality during Roman times.

With a lifelong experience of archaeology and great knowledge of local history Frank listed numerous locations where excavations had revealed signs of Iron Age activity . He described the so called ‘hill forts’ – more likely places of refuge or perhaps centres of tribal administration. Local digs have revealed little sign of houses but unmistakable ramparts and ditches. Cultivation patterns can be deduced from traces of field systems. A survey at Mickleham Downs and at Fetcham revealed these and also finds of Iron Age pottery. One of the slides illustrated a variety of farming implements. Archaeology at other locations were mentioned, in particular, Ottways Lane, Ashted and Hawks Hill, Fetcham. Several digs in the latter area (the latest as recently as 2005) revealed post holes, storage pits and rubbish deposits yielding abundant finds including pottery and food remains.

The transition from Iron Age to Roman period was not sudden but only gradual. Before the invasion Roman influence was spreading across from France and many ‘Roman’ ways such as coinage were already being adopted by tribes here. History records intense rivalry between powerful groups in Southern Britain. Pottery was also beginning to show Roman influence.

There is strong conflict of opinion about the invasion of AD 43. Was the landing at Richborough in Kent., or was it at Fishbourne near Chichester ? Neither can be proved conclusively but the story of Stane Street is used to support the latter. This was a



major artery built with a strategic aim. Some archaeologists believe that construction began near Chichester and progressed towards Londinium. The line traverses our area through Dorking, across Mickleham Downs towards Ewell and eventually via Merton to London. Many excavations have been undertaken to verify the line and to investigate its construction. One notable site is on Pebble Lane in the Epsom/Headley area.

A map of Mole Valley and surroundings in Roman times pinpointed the several locations where habitation was known to exist. There were extensive settlements at Ewell and Dorking and villa sites at Ashtead, Fetcham, Headley and Cobham. Villas at Walton-on-the-Hill and Walton Heath have been excavated, the latter revealing an exquisite floor mosaic. The finds from these sites have facilitated their dating, particularly in the case of pottery. Metal objects too have appeared including broches, needles and even tweezers. Some of those on display in Leatherhead museum were featured on slides.

Concluding his lecture the speaker mentioned that despite the work done over many years, there was still a great deal of research needed in order to uncover further knowledge of this period. He hoped that local societies would take up the challenge.

John Wettern



LEATHERHEAD MUSEUM HELPS THE WATERCRESS LINE

A recent visitor to our museum was Jim Pitt who is a joint editor of ‘Mid-Hants News’ and Chairman of the SW London Group of the Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society. Following his visit we had a letter from him congratulating us on the high standard of the museum and for the welcome and help given by the stewards on duty that day. He explained that his attention had been particularly caught by the vitreous enamel sign on our wall advertising Hall’s distemper.

The Watercress Line have been installing appropriate replica period signs for ‘Strong’s of Romsey’ ales and they have erected one at Alton exclaiming “You are approaching the Strong Country” and another at Alresford stating “This is the Strong Country”. Their ambition is to reproduce the famous ‘two men and a plank’ Hall’s distemper advertisements which were well-known pre-war lineside features. It even appeared in one of Philip Larkin’s poems in which he says of photography “and will not censor blemishes like washing lines and Hall’s Distemper boards”.

Jim asked for a photograph of our advert from which they could reproduce suitable replica signs. We were of course pleased to help and we took the sign down and photographed it in the garden. The photos were sent to the Watercress Line and so look out for some new ‘old’ signs beside the line in the future.

This had the advantage for us, as well as Jim Pitt coming one Monday to pay us a visit and thank us personally of encouraging us to clean all our enamel signs and preserve them by the application of a suitable wax.



Hall’s Distemper was made by Sissons & Co Ltd who operated in Hull from around 1800. In the 1880s the local sanitary authority was unhappy with the common practice of applying wallpaper layer upon layer and one of Sisson’s employees, Alan Twisleton Hall, developed this new hygienic wall covering which became known as Hall’s Distemper. Soon afterwards the company adopted the trademark of ‘two men and a plank’. In 1956 Sissons became part of the Reckitt & Colman Group but by 1969 Sissons was sold and their factory in Hull was closed.

Alan Pooley & Peter Tarplee

Samuel Wilberforce



If you go for a walk through the woods at Abinger Roughts along one of the many bridleways you will find a monument. It is a memorial to Samuel Wilberforce who at that place was thrown from his horse and killed -you may wonder what caused his horse to rear and to throw him to the ground.

Wilberforce is a famous name with William famous for his work against slavery, as an MP and for social reform. Samuel, his son, was born in 1805, educated at Oxford and later entered the priesthood to become eventually the Bishop of Oxford and later Lord Bishop of Oxford. He was known as an exceptional speaker in lectures and public debate and a prolific letter writer. He published

collections of hymns, sermons and short stories – always with a moral message. In public debate, mainly over conflicts in religious issues he maintained a diplomatic middle approach that earned him the nickname ‘Soapy Sam’.

A famous incident followed the publication by Charles Darwin of ‘The Origin of Species’ and the challenge the church believed the book made to the biblical account of creation in the book of Genesis.

At an Oxford conference in 1860 Wilberforce was spoke in a debate with Thomas Huxley, the eminent biologist. It was



a crowded meeting and Wilberforce opened the debate and presented his case – ‘The principle of natural selection is absolutely incompatible with the Word of God’. In a scoffing tone Samuel assured the audience that there was nothing in the idea of evolution; rock-pigeons were what rock-pigeons had always been.

He then went on to ask a question that became famous – ‘Was Huxley descended from an ape on his grandfather’s or grandmother’s side of the family?’

Huxley rose to deliver his speech and replied that he was not ashamed of his ancestry, but that he would be ashamed to be connected with a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth. Huxley’s suggestion that ‘he would rather have an ape for an ancestor than a bishop’ caused an uproar.



People in the audience even fainted and others waved Bibles at the speaker. It was an historic encounter and had the effect of allowing others to challenge accepted religious doctrine.

Samuel Wilberforce was killed by his fall in 1873 and it was reported that Thomas Huxley very unkindly commented that Wilberforce's brains had at last come into contact with reality, and the result had been fatal.

Martin Warwick

News from the Friends of Leatherhead

Museum Display Barrow

We provided a display barrow in the Swan Centre on Thursday 27th August advertising the museum, the History Society and Heritage Weekend. We handed out leaflets and told people that the museum was open and where to find it. The Society publications were on display together with various artefacts which could be identified and handled to stimulate interest and provoke discussion.

The Silver Jubilee

We celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the Friends on Saturday 5th September at the museum. Going back in history Hampton Cottage was acquired by the Trustees in 1975 and opened as a museum in 1980. In the following years there were around 100 Friends who formed themselves into a committee, holding their



first meeting on 27th April 1984 in the Red Cross Hall, Oaks Close. The committee then consisted of David Bruce (curator and chairman), Julia Warren (secretary), and Frank Rice Oxley (treasurer). They needed a publicity officer which sounds familiar!

The BBQ celebration was to mark the 25 years existence of the Friends but also to acknowledge the support given by the members, stewards and volunteers to the museum. Through its membership the Friends have been able to support the museum financially and practically, working closely with the History Society, the Museum Committee and the Trustees.

We wanted to hold the BBQ at the museum recognising the restricted space and the vagaries of the English weather. In any event apart from a few spots of rain 45 Friends



and guests enjoyed the evening with room to spare. The new step free (disabled) access with the alterations to the garden proved a great asset, even providing a stage for the musician with the Swan looking on. After drinks the Friends tucked into the food, expertly cooked by the master chef David Hartley who worked from two BBQs simultaneously. The meat

was of high quality supplied by Keith Weston of the Bookham butchers Rawlings and Kensett. The salads and quiches were provided by Julia, Margaret and Vivien (did you try that delicious beetroot salad?) and while we were eating we were entertained by Luke Usher Somers, a gifted musician who lives a few door away from the museum. He played pieces spanning the centuries in the life of Hampton Cottage from Bach, Beethoven, Shostakovich through Scott Joplin to modern composers.

After the music came the cutting of the Jubilee cake, the candles shining brightly in the gathering dusk. The members were thanked together with the Chef David, the helpers and Goff for his lighting effects. Fruit salad followed and coffee was provided and served by Gwen - a fitting end to an enjoyable evening. We look forward to the next 25 years !



Future Events of the Friends

12th December - museum closes for three months

14th December - Christmas Party for stewards and volunteer helpers

March 2010 - steward briefing sessions (dates tba)

March 2010 - visit for Friends, stewards and History Society to a local museum (date tba)

1st April 2010 museum reopens

Fred Meynen, Chairman

News from the Museum Committee

By the time you read this we will be getting close to the date of our annual shut-down. This is the busiest time of the year for those of us who work 'behind the scenes' and the length of the period during which we are closed is never long enough. Because of the size of Hampton Cottage it is not possible for us to carry out until we are closed many tasks which a normal museum would do whilst it is operating.



Last year we managed to re-carpet the two upstairs galleries but we didn't have time to complete the job by having new carpet in the Society's office. We are determined this year to get this done if only for reasons of hygiene. The carpet fitters will remove the old carpet and fit new in a couple of hours but guess who has to empty all the shelves and desk and replace everything afterwards?

Once the office has been restored and the worktop renovated we plan to move one display cabinet from upstairs to downstairs and take another one from the ground floor to the upper gallery. This is partly to make access easier in the middle room upstairs. We then have plans to change some of the displays which have remained unaltered for a number of years.

This work takes quite a while. All artifacts taken off-display have to be checked and recorded as going in their correct places in the museum store whilst others taken from the store need to be booked out of their storage boxes before the display cabinets can be dressed.

I mentioned in the last Newsletter that we were short of not only a curator but also people to help with labelling and packaging. Bob Grieves, our Collections Manager, has recently been on a course to learn to do these things properly and he is willing to pass on his knowledge to other Society members who are willing to give us a hand.

I mentioned at the beginning that the closed period is always too short and our busiest time but I've realized that all our 30 or so stewards are prevented from serving in the museum at this time. In order that they do not have withdrawal symptoms from the museum between December and April perhaps one or two would be willing to help those of us who work every week even when the museum is closed. Please have a word with Alan Pooley and see how you can help.

Peter Tarplee

Membership of the Society

I have recently taken over as the membership secretary for the Society and wish to express my thanks to Jenny Morris for the work as membership secretary for the past five years and Frank Haslam for his work as stand in during the summer. Although the membership statistics are in good shape it will take me a little while to get to grips fully with the 'in and outs' of the system. I will try and make the transition as smooth as possible.

There are however a couple of points I should bring to your attention.

As from the renewal of all membership in January 2010 no membership cards will be issued. This decision was taken at a recent executive meeting. Proof of membership will be the welcome letter for new members and the receipt of the Newsletter every quarter by new and existing members. All members are currently on the membership register which I keep.

Because it appears that a number of you have not signed the Gift Aid form on your application form. This will enable me to have a current list of all Gift Aid members. I am sure you realize that, as a charity, we are entitled to recover 28p for every £1.00 spent on member's fees, provided the member pays income tax at the standard rate.

Should you have any queries on membership please feel free to email or phone me.

David Wall, Membership Secretary (10372 373773 - dandswall@btinternet.com)

Recent Additions To The Library

Surrey - Literary and other associations

Humfrey, Peter - Destination unknown: the diary of Gunner Bates R.H.A. 1914. Author-House, 2009.

The author was born and raised in Ashted. His grandfather Ted Bates joined the Royal Horse Artillery (RHA) in 1910 and moved to France with the British Expeditionary Force at the start of World War I in August 1914. He kept a diary from 9th July to 20th October, the day before he was shot and blinded. He was invalided out but became a successful physiotherapist, living much of the time between the wars in Leatherhead. He died in 1949 and is buried at St Mary's Church, Leatherhead, with his first wife Ethel.

The diary covers the battles of Mons, Le Cateau, the Marne, the Aisne, and the first battle of Ypres, and the author provides the context for the campaign. After visiting the towns, villages and battlefields mentioned in the diary, he went on to further research in the National Archives the Official History of the War and in the War Diaries, the most useful and interesting being by the Battery Commander, the Brigade

Commander and Headquarters. Further research at the Imperial War Museum uncovered more personal diaries and photographs of the RHA.

These and other sources can be found in the Bibliography and Notes. The author has wisely avoided complicated detail, and the explanatory text is helped by twelve maps, illustrations, and nine appendices. The book is nevertheless a considerable undertaking, comprising nine chapters plus prologue and epilogue. The main material is organised as a memoir, with each day's entry from Ted's diary supplemented from official reports, diaries and other reminiscences for context.

In contrast to the reports some great events in the diary are compressed into a few lines. Ted's daily picture was restricted to his experience, information passed on and inspired guesswork. The diary entries were often written under great pressure and stress, under fire or on the retreat. The contrast between context and diary poignantly illustrate how the causes and effects of military decisions flow through the daily events of a soldier's life in battle.

Ted was a regular soldier, however, and he reveals his skill and professionalism with humour and humanity. He shows great feeling not only towards his fellow soldiers and their fate, but also to the local population suffering under occupation and refugees fleeing from invasion. It was after evacuating reluctant nuns from a threatened convent near Ypres that Ted was shot by a sniper across the bridge of his nose and blinded. He fell from his horse but his foot was caught in a stirrup, and the horse bolted taking him with it. A search party brought him in later that day.

In his taxonomy of primary sources in *The New Nature of History* Arthur Marwick remarks that "all diaries will have to be treated as the products of rather untypical human beings", but when context and personality are taken into account, "how much information there often is for those skilled enough to perceive it!" This book highlights the trials of war, the sterling personal qualities of the British soldier and the spirit and humour of the age.

Copies can be obtained from Canon Peter Humfrey, 22 Wyeths Road, EPSOM, Surrey KT17 4EB (tel. no.: 01372 728747; mobile: 07850 500229; e-mail:). The normal price of £10-99 is reduced to £10.00 for members of the Society.

Peter Wells

Talks Given by Society Members

An aspect of the History Society which seldom gets mentioned is the activity of a number of our members who visit neighbouring organisations to give a talk. These talks cover a very wide range of topics. The organisations which they visit are very diverse and the range of talks has never been placed on record or promoted, except by the speakers themselves.

It seemed that more could be done to make this activity better known and so a list has

been compiled bringing together the speakers names and the subjects of their various talks. An abridged list has appeared on the local press and in some of the shoppers magazines.

As a result enquiries are now coming in and copies of the full list are being sent out to those who have expressed an interest. Each list includes the name and address of each presenter enabling direct contact to be made so that dates, times and fees can be agreed.

Enquirers are urged to contact the Society by post at the following address 'Talks on Offer', c/o L. & D.L.H.S., Leatherhead Museum, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8DP. Each enquiry is processed by the undermentioned. Members wishing to have the full list are welcome to contact me, John Wettren 15 The Green, Fetcham, KT22 9XE
Email: johnwettren@ntlworld.com

Title

Presenter

Bygone Leatherhead
Fanny Burney in Surrey
The Story of Hampton Cottage

Mrs Linda Heath
5, St John's Avenue
LEATHERHEAD KT227HT

A Mind Walk through Leatherhead in the
1940s-50s
The Sopwith Camel
Brooklands and the Hawker Hurricane

Mr Brian Hennegan
5 Copthorne Road
LEATHERHEAD KT22 7ED

A Walk Round Old Ashtead
Ashtead Farms
Woodfield Farm, Ashtead
Gilbert White of Selbourne

Mrs Gwen Hoad
66 Craddocks Avenue
ASHTEAD KT211PG

Early Years of Motoring in Surrey
The Story of Dennis of Guildford

Mr Gordon Knowles
17 Spring Grove
FETCHAM KT22 9NN

Cooking and Washing in Victorian Times,
World War 2 Artefacts, Archives and
Memories
Leatherhead Hospital Past, Present and
Future

Dr Fred Meynen
19 The Mount
FETCHAM KT22 9EB

Fetcham Parish Boundary
Fetcham Park House
The Millpond, The Mizens and the
Watercress Beds

Mr Alan Pooley
53 Hilley Field Lane
FETCHAM KT22 9UP

Bygone Leatherhead.
Shopping in Bygone Leatherhead
Leatherhead - Post Card Connections

Mr Goff Powell
4 Oswald Road
FETCHAM KT22 9TZ

The Inns & Public Houses of Leatherhead & District.

Bygone Fetcham
Bygone Great & Little Bookham
Leatherhead Clock Tower

Industries of Mole Valley
Industries of Elmbridge
Ice before Refrigerators
Drinking Fountains and Cattle Troughs
The Early Days of Public Utilities in Surrey
Leatherhead Aviation Services

Mr Peter Tarplee
'Donard'
East Street
GREAT BOOKHAM KT23 4QX

Local Roads that never got built
Air Travel in the 1930s

Mr John Wettem
15 The Green
FETCHAM KT22 9XE

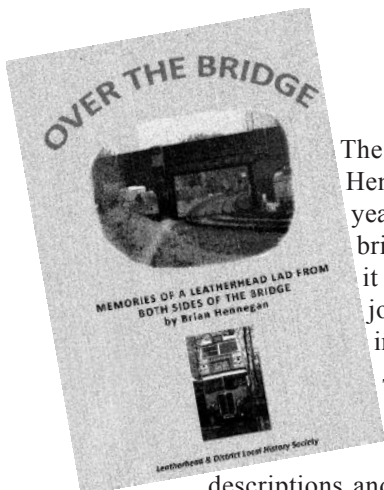
Surrey Archaeological Society All Day Meeting

'Early Buildings and Domestic Life in Surrey' was the theme of an all day meeting recently held under the auspices of the Surrey Archaeological Society. It was well attended with excellent speakers and well chosen slides.

The programme covered not only the structures in our towns and villages but also the way of life of Surrey people during this period. From various speakers we were told about what people possessed, how they lived and what they ate. Cooking vessels and tableware discovered through archaeology have been studied. These give clues about the eating and drinking habits of people at various levels of society. It was explained that written records and contemporary illustrations help to fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge.

The meeting was a coming together of people from across the county, many representing their local history society. In the hall was an abundance of stands mounted by these various bodies. On each stand there were pictures, books, maps and models illustrating the fruits of their studies. One could not help but be impressed by the wide range of interests and the expertise revealed by the exhibits. The name Surrey Archaeological Society seems to imply merely an interest in archaeology. Clearly this is not the case - it caters for anyone interested in local history in all its aspects. Perhaps this should be made clearer to those who enjoy delving into their local history.

John Wettern



Over The Bridge

The Society has just published this new book by Brian Hennegan. The author spent seventeen of his formative years, from the early war period up until 1956, ‘over the bridge’ on Leatherhead Common, or North Leatherhead as it is now known. In the book the reader is taken on a journey through the areas on both sides of the bridge, including a trip into the distant hinterland of Fetcham.

The period shows a very different world to that of today. The Author shares many vivid recollections of the period and the reader will be intrigued by the

descriptions and tales whether they have lived in Leatherhead or its surrounding area for only a short time, or if indeed they are of a certain age and can say “yes I remember it well”.

It is essential reading – just £6.50 a copy from the Society or local shops.

Autumn Lecture Programme

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 and lectures start at 8.00pm. Everyone is welcome admission £1 members £2 visitors

18th December Members Social Event - ‘Christmas Memories’ by Members of the Society. There will be short presentations by members of their recollections of past Christmases. If you would like to take part with your memories please contact me on 01372 372930 email fredmeynen@live.co.uk. Wine, canapés and mince pies will be served afterwards and the evening will end with a raffle.

15th January ‘The Famous and Infamous’ by Edwina Vardey

Edwina is a well known local historian, editor, researcher and compiler of a ‘History of Leatherhead, a town at the Crossroads’. She has recorded local personalities many of whom are featured in her lecture.

19th February ‘Francis Frith, The Photographer’ by David Edney

Francis Frith lived in the 19C, becoming the world’s first specialist photographic publisher, setting out to photograph towns and villages in the UK. David Edney is an accredited lecturer for the Francis Frith Archives.

19th March ‘The Work of the Surrey Archaeological Society’

16th April AGM followed by lecture ‘Milner House, Leatherhead’ by Peter Tarplee

21st May ‘Life in Saxon Surrey’ by Chris Howkins

Dr Fred Meynen, Programme Secretary

Archaeology

ARCHAEOLOGY SECRETARY David Hartley 01372 377839
07947 471165

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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

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