

*LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*

NEWSLETTER



MAY 2010

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

2010 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

There was a good response this quarter to the plea for more articles and it has resulted in this Newsletter having some 28 pages. We hope this can be maintained in the future to ensure that the magazine provides not only a source of information for the activities of the Society but also articles of general interest to everybody. All members of the Society are invited to submit more of these for subsequent editions – there must be so much more information of local interest known to individual readers which would be of interest to us all. Perhaps it relates to the history of a building, a person who lived in the area or how people lived in a previous era.



May is tinged with sadness as it sees the last of the monthly lectures in the Letherhead Institute. Looking back over the last months we have had some very good talks indeed and it provides a good opportunity to meet with other members of the Society. Records of several of the talks are to be found in this edition. We can look forward to meeting again in September.

By the time this Newsletter is received the new book will be available by Peter Tarplee entitled 'Past Industries of Ashted, Leatherhead and Bookham'. I am sure most members will be highly interested looking back on times when there was so much manufacturing industry in our area. It is good and easy reading and has over 120 pictures valuable in their own right. Members are well advised to buy a copy.

The Editor

Index to Articles

AGM	8	Mickleham Church	11
Aircrash	15	Milner House	4
Archaeology Report	6	Museum	23
Ashted Roman Villa	7	Past Industries	25
Chairman	2	Public Meeting Places.	13
Clara Dow	21	Sheds	17
Francis Frith	20	Socks for sale.	27
Friends of the Museum	27	Surrey Arch Soc - letter	12
Leatherhead Museum Store	23	Surrey Archaeological Soc	10
Library Additions	26	Victorian Afternoon.	16
Lightbox & Woking Mosque	5	Visits 2010	28

Chairman's Report

AGM

I am pleased to report that there was good turn out at our AGM held on 16th April chaired by our President Gordon Knowles. The resolution for the merger of the two charities into one single charity with the name of the Leatherhead & District Local History Society was carried unanimously.



The President stated that the title to the property known at Hampton Cottage 64 Church Street Leatherhead known to us as Leatherhead Museum is to be held on behalf of our History Society by the Charities Commission's Official Custodian. Your Executive Committee together with the Trustees of the Museum and History Centre Trust will continue the process of the merger to a successful conclusion.

Following this year's AGM Peter Tarplee our Vice President and former Chairman of the History Society concluded the evening with an interesting lecture on the History of Milner House, formally known as the Long House and re-named after Sir Fredrick Milner the founder of the Ex-Services Welfare Society.

There will be a book launch of the forthcoming publication 'Past Industries of Ashted, Leatherhead & Bookham' by Peter Tarplee at the Leatherhead Museum on Friday 28th May 2010 at 7.30pm - look out for the notices and please come along in support.

I wonder how many of you have visited the museum recently and seen the number of very new displays, others that have also been re-organised it is well worth a visit.

I have also noticed a new free leaflet available when I was on duty as a Steward, one that I had not seen before called Leatherhead Town Tree Trail produced by Mole Valley District Council and the support of the Mole Valley Conservation group. The leaflet contains a very useful tree trail map with an ample key to the descriptions. This nicely designed folding leaflet complements a number of other leaflets from the same source with the titles of Leatherhead Heritage Trails and Bookham Heritage Trail as well as the older Ashted Village Heritage Trail. Unfortunately, there appears to be a clear omission from this collection of trail maps - where is the Fetcham Heritage Trails? Fetcham has much of interest as any of the previous examples and deserves to be put on the map.

Membership Subscription 2011

Your executive committee have agreed that there will be a £3.00 increase in the subscription for a Full Member from 1st January 2011 from £15.00 to £18.00. Associate membership subscriptions will remain unchanged.

Hon Secretary -Vivien Hollingsworth

Recently I received a letter from Vivien Hollingsworth our Honorary Secretary expressing a wish to retire from this post as soon as a suitable candidate and successor can be found.

Vivien has served you and our executive Committee for the last six years, always diligent and cheerful, efficiently carrying out her many duties in the post and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her personally for her work on committee and on behalf of the History Society wishing her well in pursuing her other interests.

The Museums New Email address

Our Hon Treasurer David Lokkerbol together with Alan Pooley our Museum Manager have rationalised the museums email account. Please make a note of the new e-mail address for the Leatherhead Museum **staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com**. The original email address will still accept messages but it will be closed down in due course. It would be a good opportunity to take advantage of this new email address by sending us and the museum some feedback and comments pertinent to the changes that have taken place at your museum or what has been reported and published in this Newsletter.

The existing web address of www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk remains unchanged.

Positions to be filled

We urgently need to fill the outstanding positions on your Executive Committee. In the order of priority

Honorary Secretary - we urgently need to fill the post of Hon Secretary as quickly as possible for the sake of continuity. Anyone interested in taking on this role would they please contact Vivien Hollingsworth who will be very supportive and will be able to induct you into this post.

Publicity Officer - a talented, dynamic networker who has the vision and the energy to promote and publicise the work of the History Society, the Museum and the Friends of the Museum.

Records Secretary - a passion for historical documents, and photographs, someone with a logical mind who has the ability process and enter data using Microsoft Access, Excel and Word, who can work team building with parish archivists and local U3A groups.

Part-Time Curator - one can complement the work and objectives of the Museum's Manager Alan Pooley and his team in meeting and developing the museums accessions policy. The presentation and display of artefacts and an outreach programme promoting the Museum to a wider audience.

Milner House

Immediately following the AGM, Peter Tarplee talked about Milner House in Ermyn Way, Ashted starting by demolishing the myth that it was connected with the local carpet shop! Then called the Long House it had been built for Daniel Pidgeon in 1892: Pigeon's initials were displayed on the stonework and leadwork outside as well as on internal fittings.



The Right Hon Sir Frederick Milner (1849-1931) had been a Member

of Parliament and Privy Councillor, but was forced to retire in 1906 by increasing deafness. He fought tirelessly to improve the treatment of injured troops returning from the wars. One result was the creation of the Ministry of Pensions, with whom Milner conducted an incessant paper war. He founded a hostel in Beckenham, set up a number of village settlements and started the Ex-Services Welfare Society His particular interest was in 'shell-shocked.' servicemen, who often faced execution by firing squad for failing to obey orders; at best they would be confined in pauper lunatic asylums for life.

In 1926 the Ex-Services Welfare Society bought the Long House as its second rest and treatment centre, renaming it The Sir Frederick Milner Home and turning it round ,so that the front door became the back Cottages were built nearby for married couples. No special medical care was given, but the sheltered environment included a market garden and workshops, operated on commercial lines and paying a living wage The Society bought the patent for making electrically heated blankets and pads (initially invented for tubercular patients) and continued to make them under the trade name Thermega until 1981, when the workshops were also making and packing flare parachutes for Schermuly. The factory was then modernised by Remploy (a nation-wide organisation set up by the Government) to produce electrical and electronic equipment and assemble and pack other goods, but was closed in 2008. Milner House is now a private nursing home, and the derelict factory site may be developed for private houses However, Tyrwhitt House (named after Milner's successor, Admiral Sir Reginald Yorke Tyrwhitt) in Oaklawn Road nearby, still provides treatment for what is now called Combat Stress.

Mr Tarplee showed us a photograph of a visit paid to Milner House by the late King George VI and the Queen Mother when they also visited the ex-servicemens' Ashted Pottery,. He read from some of the letters of Sir Frederick to Whitehall and to the relatives of those he tried tirelessly to help. Finally Peter quoted from a pre-war directory: "Thermega are the pioneers of two things in Great Britain, namely Industrial Rehabilitation and the Electric Blanket."

Derek Renn

Visit to The Lightbox and Woking Mosque

12 members of the L&DLHS visited the Lightbox Museum and Gallery and also the Woking Mosque on 17th March. After a welcome coffee from the very excellent cafeteria we were shown around by one of the volunteers who works at the Lightbox. The name Lightbox came from the fact that the inside of the triangular shaped three storey building is full of light, due to its design with large glazed areas on all elevations.

As well as being a museum of Woking's history there are a number of galleries representing the work of local artists, work areas for school parties and a large conference facility on the top floor. All floors are accessible by a large lift and also by the elegant staircase.

The Woking Story exhibition on the first floor gives an insight into the past times of the area by means of 'hands on' push button displays and a number of recordings of local people giving their recollections of the life when they were young. These varied from working in the local laundry to school days. The displays were well laid out with plenty of room to circulate and view, although I think some of them could have benefited with more internal illumination in the cabinets.

The Open Art Competition on the first floor gave all members of the public the chance to vote on their choice of the best exhibit. There were some very intriguing and thought provoking pieces of art and sculpture to view and examine.

After lunch we went at the oldest mosque in England. It was built in 1889 by Professor Leitner largely funded by Her Highness the Begum Shah Jahan, Ruler of the Bhopal State after whom the mosque is named. The original mosque, complete with





dome, will only accommodate about 50/60 members. Behind this original mosque there are two large buildings which have been acquired, refurbished and now serve to meet the growing demand for prayer space and the social needs of the Muslim community.

We were shown around by the new imam and his wife. They were recently married and he has only been in the post for a week. They were a charming couple, very knowledgeable and very happy to answer all our questions of which there were many.

On behalf of all the members who went on the trip I would like to thank Fred Meynen for organizing a most enjoyable day.

David Wall (Photos by Richard Trim)

Archaeology Report

Festival of British Archaeology 17th July – 1st August

This year's national event will celebrate 20 years of Archaeology for everyone. Look out for posters and click onto the website www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk or the Council of British Archaeology website www.britarch.ac.uk

The fifth season of excavations at Ashted Roman Villa & Tile works

Excavations on Ashted Common take place from 25th August to 14th September. Working days are grouped as the Wednesday to the Sunday of each week. To participate you must be a member of the Surrey Archaeological Society. Those who are not members of the Roman Studies Group are asked to pay £5 to cover all of the three weeks. Other volunteers will be asked to pay £25. Anyone interested in taking part who has not already been in touch please contact me, Stella Fagg on sf38@tutor.open.ac.uk or 07850 285 245.

Other Forthcoming events

Surrey Archaeological Society presents England's Lost Renaissance; Italian Influences on Court Architecture c1500-1530

An illustrated lecture and reception at the Menuhin Hall, Stoke D'Abernon Surrey on

Friday 4th June 2010. The lecture will be given by Dr Jonathan Foyle the Chief Executive World Monuments Fund Britain and former Curator of Historic Royal Palaces. The doors open at 6.30pm and the lecture will commence at 7.45pm. Tickets are £12.00 (including a glass of wine). Box Office Telephone 08700 842020 email boxoffice@yehudimenuhinschool.co.uk

Bookham Village Day Saturday 19th June

The theme will be the ‘The Circus Comes to Town’ and we will be contributing to the occasion by presenting by displaying boards of the subject of Bread & Circuses with very much a Roman Gladiatorial theme. Come along to support us and participate in the day.

Heritage Open Days 9th – 12th September

Leatherhead’s contribution to Heritage Open Days in Mole Valley this year will have the title ‘By George’ and will be reflect the theme of Georgian Leatherhead with displays being mounted both at the Letherhead Institute and the Leatherhead Museum.

Linda Heath will be co-coordinating the event locally and further details will be posted at the museum. Linda will be pleased and grateful to receive offers of help and support from members of the Society and Friends of the Museum.

David Hartley

Ashtead Roman Villa And Tileworks - Part II

Part I dealt with trenches 5, 8 and 9 and is recorded in the February Newsletter. This deals with the remaining trenches of the fourth main season of excavation on Ashtead Common undertaken by the Society’s Roman Studies Group last year.

Other Trenches

Further trenches were devoted to clarification of the extent and structure of the enclosure wall, based on the results of fieldwork carried out in the spring of this year. Trench 10 explored the area ‘outside’ the corner but found only the natural subsoil and a few pieces of scattered tile, while Trench 11 nearby examined a stretch of the wall towards the west and Trenches 12 and 14 pursued it up to the rear of the attached bath-house behind the villa. Amazingly, single sherds of Roman pottery were found at the base of the wall in both Trenches 11 and 12, in small sections that showed that the wall, of flint, had very shallow foundations. In several places it was found to be two or three courses topped by pieces of tegulae. with the flanges set on top and along the outer edge of the wall. Nowhere were these tegulae seen to have been capped by further flints and there was no sign of mortar or other bonding material, and little rubble.

In both Trenches 14 and 11 parts of the wall line were much disturbed and it is likely that in other places it has largely disappeared as a unit simply as a result of tree growth and other disturbances through the centuries. Although no wall was found in Trench 13, however, a potentially important discovery was a spread of broken tile forming the

corner of a rectangle and it seems likely that this was the base of some sort of structure.

Finds Work

As before, finds work on site is carried out by AARG, led by Margaret Broomfield; this year they had to cope with a large amount of tile debris ranging from rock-hard lumps to material that could almost be washed away. It may be mentioned here that scientific research on the tiles under the direction of Dr Ian Betts has so far established that Ashtead products were certainly reaching some London sites. There was relatively little pottery but three notable unstratified pieces were part of a Cologne colour-coat vessel with a fine dog, a small part of the very distinctive rim of a straight-sided samian bowl form Hermet 4 and part of a Verulamium-region mortarium with a potter's stamp, probably that of Lallaius (identifications by Joanna Bird). The Hermet 4 is particularly noteworthy as it is a very unusual form in Roman Britain and is to be dated to the Claudio-Neronian period. It was probably therefore a prized possession, but does raise the possibility that some of the coarse wares could be placed in the early part of their date range and therefore further back into the 1st century than we are currently allowing for the site.

The Project is continuing to produce good results and it is becoming easier to determine a plan for the rest of the work up to the intended end date of 2013. It should be possible to examine areas along the front of and across the villa sited to provide more evidence about the earliest phases and about the earliest floor levels (if any) in some of the potentially later rooms. Our growing knowledge of the layout of the overall site also makes it easier to consider the location of missing elements like the water supply and the cemetery. Finally, there is now good reason to suppose that excavation of a section across the rampart(s) and ditch of the triangular earthwork to the west of the villa would be worthwhile. Test coring of the ditch by Professor Martyn Waller has produced buried pollen and charcoal that should provide good evidence for the earlier environment and radiocarbon dating even if no more conventional dating material is found.

David Bird

Annual General Meeting

At our AGM on April 16th chaired by our President, Gordon Knowles, the Executive Committee was re-elected, and a new Treasurer (David Lokkerbol), and Membership Secretary (David Wall). Presenting the Committee's report, the Chairman and Archaeology Secretary (David Hartley) again appealed for members to fill the vacant posts of Museum Curator, Publicity Officer, Records Secretary and Bookham Archivist. The backlog was worsening, and continuity of service was only possible by essential tasks undertaken by Alan Pooley, Peter Tarplee and John Wettren, who would help any new volunteers by 'showing them the ropes' Mr Hartley had been delayed in his own efforts to arrange for the analysis, conservation and storage problems of the Society's records: some might be transferred to the Surrey History Centre at Woking.

Very substantial donations from the Friends of the Museum and a grant from the Surrey County Council's Local Partnerships Scheme had paid for new carpets and for a new entrance giving easy access to the Museum for the disabled from the garden. This wheelchair access had been officially opened by Councillor Tim Hall, who had been instrumental in obtaining the SCC grant. The Surrey Museums Consultative Committee had paid half the



At one of the lectures

cost of new display panels which could be used almost any where Doug Hollingsworth reported briefly on the repairs to the Museum walls, gutters and gate.

A resolution (by the respective trustees of the two charities) to merge the Leatherhead Museum and History Centre with the Society was accepted unanimously for submission to the Charities Commission. The Museum would be run by as sub-committee, keeping separate accounts.

Mr Hartley thanked the Lectures and Visits Committee for their efforts (nearly 500 people had attended the events) and those supplying and serving the refreshments. A laptop and digital projector had been purchased for Powerpoint presentations. A list of members willing to give talks had been published and sent to other organisations and the local press. Frank Haslam (Website Manager) reported that www.leatherhead.local.history.org.uk was getting 250 'hits' a month, one-quarter coming from overseas.

Brian Hennigan's book 'Over the Bridge: Memories of a Leatherhead Lad from both sides of The Bridge' was selling well. Peter Tarplee's new 'Early Industries of the Leatherhead District' would be launched at the Leatherhead Museum at 7.30pm on 25 May, which would also be an extra opportunity to see the new display of local industrial history objects upstairs

Presenting the accounts, David Lokkerbol thanked David Wall for acting temporarily as Treasurer before he took over. He drew attention to the fall in income from investments compared with past years due to the continuing worldwide financial crisis. Recovery was not yet in sight, and an increase in subscription was overdue. He was setting budgets, so that the subscription met the cost of the basic benefits available to members all over the world. After some discussion, a £3 increase was accepted by the members.

Derek Renn

Work of the Surrey Archaeological Society

At our March meeting, David Calow described the work of the Surrey Archaeological Society, of which he is the Honorary Secretary. The county society is one of several founded in the 1850's, when many Victorians used their increased leisure and literacy to engage in new scientific pursuits. He pointed out the similarities to our own Society, founded nearly a century later: we were both charities, with a museum, a website, we published books, newsletters and research journals, and held regular meetings and visits all the year round.

Covering a much wider area than ourselves, the Surrey Archaeological Society has about five times as many members. A turnover of about £65,000 a year means that it can publish more extensively than us (their annual journal ran to 400 illustrated pages and included 22 articles, as well as a separate 64-page Surrey History). It has 22 committees including 135 people, all volunteers. It is serviced by just two part-time paid staff in the office and library on the upper floor of Castle Arch in Guildford; the museum below is run by the Borough Council. The Society owns about 10,000 documents, 6,000 books and 1,000 large boxes of artefacts, including the finds from the Society's first excavation at Chertsey Abbey. It collaborates with some twenty heritage and countryside groups, particularly the National Trust and the County Council's History Centre at Woking. The Centre there houses the Sites and Monuments Record, has digitized all the tithe maps and is currently transcribing the details of land ownership.

Mr Calow demonstrated how much history could be encompassed in one view by showing a photograph of the landscape south-east of Guildford. This included everything from a site where mesolithic flints had been found and an Iron Age hillfort, to the routes of an early canal and railway and that of a WW1 Zeppelin, one of whose bombs blew off a lavatory door, to the embarrassment of the occupant!

The Society's members had included many nationally important figures (local examples being Tony Lowther and John Harvey) and it had made equally important discoveries in excavations (eg Ashted Roman villa, Ewell Roman town, Iron Age farm and Saxon burials at Hawks' Hill, Fetcham). Another member, Tony Clark, had developed the science of resistivity to 'see beneath the soil'. Mr Calow demonstrated the loping trot required to operate a modern portable magnetometer.

The Surrey Archaeological Society had been instrumental in having the law on Treasure Trove modernized and for the introduction of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. After extensive consultation, the Society published a Research Framework summarizing what was known and what questions needed to be answered. For example, how did heathlands develop? What caused the similarities and differences between Surrey and Sussex? What was the effect of the proximity of London?

As examples of work still in progress sponsored by the Surrey Archaeological Society, Mr Calow described and showed images of

- the identification of many prehistoric field systems and enclosures overlain by Roman occupation
- the revision of dates for the occupation of Iron Age hillforts.
- a field at Flexford, north of the Hog's Back, which showed nothing from the air or on the surface until molehills all over it produced Roman pottery.
- tree-ring dating of timber houses had produced some remarkable results and helped with the analysis of styles of carpentry across the county.
- the little-known royal palace at Woking was being excavated, and 'test-pitting' was in progress to identify the origins of Old Woking.
- analysis of the debris around the site of Alexander Raby's iron mill at Downside near Cobham had revealed very early experiments with steel alloying there.
- at Sayers Croft near Ewhurst, some thirty huts and air raid shelters built for WW2 evacuees were still used for education purposes. The effect of evacuation on later generations was being studied.

Derek Renn

Mickleham Church Archaeological Work

Previous magazines have reported and illustrated the not-unexpected discovery of burials during the vestry extension work. The resultant Archaeological Assessment had the following significant findings:



- a total of 17 inhumations were identified, two of which constituted a double burial (adult/juvenile). Seven were present as one complex group. All of the burials were oriented east/west. Most had been damaged by more recent intrusions. The depth of burials was shallow (0.4 - 0.8m) reflecting previous levelling for the former Victorian vestry footprint. Some of the burials had associated iron coffin grips/nails, and iron and copper shroud /upholstery pins.
- the burials must predate the construction of the previous vestry in 1823. The ironwork is consistent with the late 18th/early 19th century
- there was evidence of Roman pottery and ceramic, all of similar date. The pottery

was Alice Holt/Farnham ware (AD 250-400) with tiles similar to finds in Ewell for which there was a production area on Ashted Common (AD 140-250). There were also box flue tile remains. The report states: the presence of box flue tiles suggests a heated building, raising the possibility of a villa or bath-house at or close to the site. Given the early (Saxon) origins of the church, it is possible that it was built on a previous high-status Roman site'. Now fully recorded, it is intended to re-inter the remains with an appropriate ceremony, at an appropriate location within the churchyard. There will be a grave marker, possibly a wooden one commensurate with the original burial date, and explanatory text.

One of the issues for the re-burial process is the avoidance of encountering further remains. The Surrey County archaeologists will require a watching brief on further excavations. A staged approach is planned. Stage 1, a ground radar survey, was completed on 26th February. This was a non-intrusive survey of a type which will be familiar to watchers of Time Team. The radar, which looks like a lawnmower with a computer and screen passes over the defined areas and records underlying structures (eg vaults, coffins, disturbed ground etc). The method is depth specific and reaches about 4m. It does not give 100% assurance over negatives, but will identify clear 'high-risk' areas.

The report is awaited but the field evidence indicated a high density of burials over much of the area to the front of the church extending up to the boundary with Old London Road, as expected. It is known that many stones were removed in about 1948 and used to build the churchyard wall to the east of the gate to the old Rectory. Dates and other inscriptions can be seen in places. Burial depths ranged to 2m plus. Current guidance on burial depths is for at least 0.75m (2ft 6in). It may therefore be possible to re-bury at shallow depth above suspected but unidentified former burials, without disturbance. For example, the radar showed what appears to be a large vault just SW of the Bennett grave, but at a depth of 2.3m.

There was only one apparently clear area: in the extreme SW of the churchyard close to the Lych Gate. This may be appropriate. More to follow.

Mark Day

Surrey Archaeological Society (Sy.A.S)

Members who attended the lecture in March will have been much impressed by the presentation given by David Calow and it may well have surprised many of those present in that it ranged over so many aspects of Surreys history - not just about archaeology.

It would seem reasonable to suppose that an 'archaeological society' was intended to cater for archaeologists. Thus if one were not particularly interested in that subject, there would be little point in joining. I fear that this may be a reason why perhaps few of our members are inclined to consider joining the Sy.A.S. But that lecture which was so enjoyable showed us a totally different viewpoint. It was about history, with only

a passing reference to ‘digs’, ‘artefacts’ and fieldwork. We were given a wealth of information about Surrey’s history from many diverse aspects. We were in fact being told about The Surrey History Society’, so why not call it that ?

I confess to being a member of the society in question, having joined only recently – perhaps because I had lately realised that history was its objective. I find it stimulating and it brings me knowledge of so much to do with the history of our county. Prehistoric, Roman, mediaeval, industrial or documentary – there is something for everyone.

I urge our members to join it. And perhaps one day they will change its name.

John Wettern

Public Meeting-Places in the Leatherhead Area

The earliest gatherings of people for worship, trade or justice took place in the open air. Later, protection from the weather was provided by churches, market houses and court halls, but it was not until the nineteenth century that we find evidence in our area for large buildings for more general use. Each and every one has an interesting story to tell. The traditional story is not always the true one: just because it’s in print does not mean it’s historically accurate. I invite members of the Society to build up an archive of the history of all our public meeting-places. Perhaps some of you have already started? Here is my first attempt, for your amplification and correction:

Public meeting-places may be categorized as having been provided by

- individuals or communities and run by independent trusts
- commercial bodies [hotels, theatres]
- local or national government [libraries, youth/leisure centres]
- local branches of national organizations either religious ([usually adjoining churches) or secular (British Legion, Freemasons, Friendly Societies, Guides, Red Cross, Scouts) primarily for their own use.

A large barn in the centre of Leatherhead was used by ‘strolling players’ before being leased as a Congregational place of worship from 1816 until 1844 (this change of hall category is common). The building was probably but not certainly the later Victoria Hall in the Swan Pit, later the first Thorndike Theatre. A building is marked on this site on both



the 1867 Ordnance Survey map and also that of George Gwilt (1782-3). Similarly, the iron-framed Victoria Hall in East Street, Great Bookham which is now demolished seems to be shown on the 1867 Ordnance Survey map, presumably having been built in that Queen's reign.

Following on, the first category, in chronological order:

Reading Room, Cobham Road, Fetcham Built on site of almshouses removed in 1885 and rebuilt elsewhere

Letherhead [sic] Institute, High Street, Leatherhead Founded 1892 by Abraham Dixon of Cherkley Court

Village Hall, Dell Close, Mickleham Built in 1901 in memory of DH Evans, founder of the West End store, by his widow.

Village Institute (later Hall) Church Lane, Headley Largely funded by Walter Cunliffe of Headley Court; foundation stone 1903

Old Barn Hall, Church Road, Great Bookham Part of Sole Farm, converted and given to the village by Mr Arthur Bird, lord of the manor. Opened 1906..

Little Bookham Village Hall, Little Bookham Street

Former Fox Ale House club room, land and other premises put in trust 1905 by Mrs Chrystie, rebuilt about 1925.

Chrystie Memorial Hall, Lower Road, Great Bookham Built 1911, hired in 1925 (and then bought) as a Baptist church

Peace Memorial Hall, Woodfield Lane, Ashted Land given by Mr Marshall, the subscription list headed by Pantia Ralli, lord of the manor. Opened 1924

Site now Manor Gardens, Effingham In 1928, Effingham Women's Institute leased a Manor House cowstall and converted it for parish activities (demolished when lease expired)

Fetcham Village Hall, The Street, Fetcham Initiated by Fetcham Women's Institute, with much volunteer help, the former Home Farm barn was converted and opened in 1933

King George V Hall, Browns Lane, Effingham Land bought in 1938 to be used for outdoor sports and games with a village hall.

The dates and names of the founders of the two Victoria Halls are unknown to me. The next five 'Category 1' halls (1885-1906) were due to local worthies, three (1911, 1924, 1938) as memorials respectively to a local benefactress, to WWI and to King George V and, two to local Women's Institutes (1928, 1933).

As well as the original donors and builders, we should record those who saved these from later neglect, especially Frank and Joan Kirby MBE, without whom we should not still be meeting in the Letherhead Institute.

Derek Renn

Aeroplane Crash at Effingham

The first post-war civil aircraft designed by Vickers-Armstrongs at Brooklands was the Viking, and the prototype first flew at Wisley on 22nd June 1945. Testing took place from Wisley airfield, and on 23rd April the aircraft took off at five minutes past five in the afternoon for a test flight to check single engine performance for the Certificate of Airworthiness.

The aircraft was climbed to 1,000 feet and after five minutes the No.2 (starboard) engine was stopped and the propeller feathered.

A steady climb of 150 -200 feet/min. was started on the port engine, and after four minutes the No.1 (port) engine cut-out, came on again, then cut-out completely. This engine could not be restarted again in time before a forced belly landing was made in a field at Effingham.



The four crew members were unhurt, although I cannot find any record of their names. The probable cause was sudden failure of the port engine coupled with inability to start the starboard engine in the height available. Power plant failure was not definitely stated in the accident report, but almost certainly was due to cutting-off of the fuel supply.

The wings were removed, and the fuselage returned on a low-loader to Wisley airfield, and eventually used as a cabin mock-up for the Kings Flight aircraft interior design and

development. It was later reported to be at Brooklands probably for Valetta and Varsity design work, then taken to the gunnery ranges at Shoeburyness in Essex to test gunnery impact damages. But this cannot be confirmed as the records were lost in the floods of 1953.

Doug Hollingsworth

Type & Mark		Reg. No.	Type of Engine	Number
Viking		G-AGOK	Hispano 1014	2
At Wisley		Origin - Allotment	dated	Ex. contract No.
Date		Allotted to	Duties	Directions
To be completed by		Allotment		
24.4.46		Damaged at Wisley A. Edgebridge cat. 2.		Signal
22.12.46		Damaged at Wisley.		Pratt/Reed
21.9.47	Vickers Arm (a)	Development work.		R/S 527
1.9.52		Authority given for airframe to be struck off charge and used for Mscant + Valetta.		Rica/20

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A Victorian Afternoon inside a Victorian Building

The little annex to St Martin's school in Dorking is buzzing with ideas and information about home and school long ago. Inside this tiny 19th Century school building in Pixham Lane housing 30, four to six year old children they have made their own Victorian drawing room with fireplace, old masters in gold frames and beautiful drapes. In there they dress up, pretend to play and sing hymns round the piano and take tea sitting in plush chairs. There is such enthusiasm for history engendered by their teacher Mrs Erasmus that she asked our museum if we could provide some extra artefacts for the children to look at discuss and handle. So on a Friday afternoon in February I went into the school dressed as the hard working housewife of Hampton Cottage to explain the rigours of washday and to show some simple toys and objects that children in Victorian times would have been familiar with.



There was such a buzz of excited voices as I arrived that I felt like celebrity, 'she's here, she's here!' echoed through the cloakroom and little faces windswept from the cold playground dared to peep round the corner at me.

The children sat on a colourful carpet looking eagerly at all the artefacts that I had brought from the museum to show them. We started by comparing the way I was dressed (cap, apron, long skirt and cotton blouse) with their teacher (modern clothes) and then went on to act out 'Polly put the Kettle on' with two children dressed up in Victorian clothes putting our huge Iron kettle on and off the stove (a chair). 'It's heavy, it's black, it's cold, and it's got a big bit where the water comes out (spout)'. They guessed what the washing dolly did and acted it out, likewise the washboard. Each item was looked at and talked about and children came up to give their ideas and show their peers how they thought they worked. I was amazed at how much they already knew and what thoughtful ideas they came up with. A small boy whacking a rug with the carpet beater caused a few giggles.



After about 35 minutes of sitting still and concentrating amazingly well the children went out

for a runabout whilst Mrs Erasmus and I set up 4 workstations. Luckily we had four adults to support this. At one the children were writing on slates and pretend using a pen, nib and inkwell. At another they used the washtub and dolly, grating soap to make bubbles and picking out the wet washing with tongs. Lovely messy corner! The next group were looking at the butter churner and patting butter (yellow playdough) with the butter pats. The last group had clothes to dress up in, and the kitchen artefacts and Margaret Meynen and Sylvia's beautiful peg dolls (made to support our craft days in May) to look at. This provided lots of hands on experience for all the children whilst the adults were there to listen and draw out their ideas and impressions, as they moved around the workstations, as well as supervising the precious artefacts.



The time flew by and the children were eager and interested. I hope the afternoon left them with new ideas about our homes long ago. Certainly I heard a child going home clutching a leaflet about the museum saying very emphatically 'We must go to this museum mummy and there is a map to tell us where to go'. These are historians in the making thanks to their proactive teacher and our splendid artefacts. Anyone reading this who is interested in our outreach work and school's visits to the museum is welcome to contact me for further information

Julia lack, Education Secretary, Friends of Leatherhead Museum upper.mole@ntlworld.com

All About Sheds

I have always had a fascination for sheds, those little havens away from the hurly-burly of modern living and places where you can be yourself watching the world go by. Over the years my shed has become a repository for old garden tools, complementing some of the artefacts in our museum and as people wanted to get rid of items they would end up in my shed.

Last year Luke Bishop, a reporter with the Leatherhead Advertiser ran a series of articles on the strange and wonderful things people in Mole Valley do in their sheds, that sheds were not just for storing tools but were home-from-home places, workshops and even kitchens. He discovered a lady living in Ashted with an allotment and a shed in which she cooks breakfast and lunch for her husband. I can just smell the scent of bacon and eggs wafting on the morning air. She has got a chest of drawers containing essentials for a woman such as a hair brush and a mirror, a real extension of her home. Then there is a Dorking resident who has painted his shed like a beach hut with blue and white stripes reminding him of holidays taken in Cornwall. He is also a keen railway



enthusiast and the shed is full of train tickets of journeys taken. Another shed in the garden of a Bookham resident has been converted into a playhouse for his children complete with an internal staircase and platform while another shed in Dorking has been

converted into a workshop for making walking sticks. Luke came to my garden because he had heard that I had a collection of old garden tools and took a number of photos of the shed.

The Oxford dictionary defines the shed as ‘a building used for storage or shelter or as a workshop’. I think the shed has a much wider usage and there are a number of books which support this notion. ‘Men and Sheds’ by Gordon Thurburn is a bit of a sexist title as sheds are not exclusive to men but features a whole range of activities including hobbies such as making pots, woodworking and metalworking and painting. Making and playing musical instruments and inventions are mentioned including Trevor Bayliss who invented the clockwork radio in his shed in Thames Ditton. I suppose a common use is the shed used as a workshop for tools and there is a picture of a proud husband surrounded by his beloved tools neatly hung on the wall so he can lay his hands on them immediately. What bliss ! His wife collects spare parts from washing machines and appliances from scrap yards as he can repair anything and she says “ it keeps him busy“.

Henry Ford built his first car in 1880 in a little shed behind his house in Michigan. The first car had a two cylinder four horsepower engine over the rear axle, a single seat in a box like body, an electric bell for a horn and a steering lever instead of a wheel. Bernard Shaw did all his writing in a shed and I came across an article in the Sunday Times about the author Louis de Bernieries who writes ‘I do all my administration in the morning which is boring but I do all my writing in the shed in my garden which is lovely. The shed has electricity from a solar panel, a gas canister for heat and a stove where I brew weak Assam tea. It’s an all-the-year-round shed and I listen to Greek, Turkish or classical music’. I once knew a GP in Wimbledon who had eight children, adopting one child for each of his own four children. His wife was a writer and the only way she could get peace and quiet was to escape to the shed, a converted privy at the bottom of her garden. Another story I heard about was about a man who lived in a cramped bedsit in a block of flats but who had an allotment with a

shed. He longed to be outdoors and bit by bit moved a camp bed and other bits and pieces into the shed. All went well until a burning candle fell over and the shed burned down.

All these are examples of the importance of sheds in our lives. They are little havens and oases out of earshot and with no telephones. Leave your mobile at home, switching it off is not good enough as you might be tempted to use it. People are told that I am 'pottering' in my shed and at first I felt rather hurt by the suggestion until I looked up the definition of the word 'potter' which is 'to be busy but in an aimless way', which sums up the ethos of the shed. Most people use their sheds for a purpose but there is something to be said for being 'busy doing nothing'. My daughter noticed my affinity for small spaces because apart from my shed I've got a small cabin cruiser moored on the Thames where I can brew a pot of tea and watch the swans and ducks go by and a small 12ft caravan again with a cooker and that tea pot ! I've also got this thing about beach huts and I can just imagine sitting in the doorway with a glass of something in my hand, listening to the waves and watching the sun go down - magic!

So we come to my shed. It's a battered old hut over 50 years old and needing to be propped up. My children used it as a den putting curtains up at the windows to keep out prying eyes. They practiced jumping off the roof which I only got to hear about recently. It contains or has around it a heavy garden roller which gave the lawns that manicured finish, a push Suffolk mower with a roller of 1960 vintage (remember that nostalgic sound of lawns being mowed on warm summer evenings, quite different from the noise of rotary mowers, strimmers and chain saws of today). Edwin Budding invented the lawn mower in 1830. There is a 1930s deck chair with a canopy, hay rake and pitch fork, various T and D handle spades and forks, a turf cutter, old hand trowels and forks , and old brass garden spray and a sprinkler and various other tools and old kitchen equipment.

Once a year the shed and its contents are opened to the public. It's on the occasion of the coffee morning and plant sale of the Leatherhead Horticultural Society which is held at our house 19 The Mount, Fetcham , this year on Saturday 22nd May 10.00am till 12.00 noon. The plants are of high quality grown by members of the Society and the profits from the event go to local charities. In addition to a cake stall and a raffle Bill Hookey from the National organisation SongBird Survival will be present to answer any of your questions about nesting boxes, feeding birds and the current state of our garden birds. Last year we had blue tits nesting in a nesting box outside my hut and they chose to leave the box right in the middle of the coffee morning, much to the delight of the visitors. Perfect timing but not guaranteed to happen this year. We are also launching The Fred Shed Award which is given to the shed which most reflects the personality and hobbies of its owner.

Please have another look at your shed through new eyes, recognising its potential. Come to our coffee morning and plant sale on 22nd May and most of all enjoy your shed.

Fred Meynen

Francis Frith the Photographer

Francis Frith the photographer was the subject of the Societies illustrated lecture on the 19th February and our speaker was David Edney. David explained just how he became an accredited lecturer for the Francis Frith Archives over five years ago and has never regretted it since.

Frith was a Victorian pioneer photographer of the Middle East and many towns in the United Kingdom. He was born in Chesterfield, Derbyshire in 1822. He attended Quaker schools at Ackworth and Quaker Camp Hill in Birmingham before he started in the cutlery business. Leaving in 1850 to start a photographic studio known as Frith &



Hayward in Liverpool. A successful grocer, and later, printer. Frith fostered an interest in photography, becoming a founding member of the Liverpool Photographic Society in 1853. Frith sold his companies in 1855 in order to dedicate himself entirely to photography. He journeyed to the Middle East on three occasions, the first of which was a trip to Egypt in 1856 with very large cameras (16" x 20"). He used the collodion process, a major technical achievement in hot and dusty conditions. During his visits he often adopted the local costume, thus enabling him to take pictures of the inhabitants more easily. On his return he published his photographs in a book called 'Egypt and Palistine in Pictures'. We were shown many samples of these high quality glass plate photographs.

When he had finished his travels in the Middle East in 1859, he opened the firm of

Francis Frith & Co. in Reigate, Surrey, as the world's first specialist photographic publisher. In 1860, he married Mary Ann Rosling and embarked upon a colossal project — to photograph every town and village in the United Kingdom; in particular, notable historical or interesting sights. Initially he took the photographs himself, but as success



came, he hired people to help him and set about establishing his postcard company, a firm that became one of the largest photographic studios in the world. Within a few years, over two thousand shops throughout the United Kingdom were selling his postcards. Frith died in 1898 at his villa in Canne, France.



His family continued the firm, which was finally sold in 1968 and closed in 1970. Following closure of the business, Bill Jay, one of Britain's first photography historians, identified the archive as being nationally important, and 'at risk'. Jay managed to persuade Rothmans, the tobacco company, to purchase the archive to ensure its safety.

Frith was re-launched in 1976 as the 'Francis Frith Collection' with the intention of making the Frith photographs available to as wide an audience as possible. A year later John Buck a Rothmans executive bought the archive and has continued to run it as an independent business ever since from premises at Teffont, near Salisbury.

Goff Powell

Former Ashtead Resident Clara Dow

Last leading lady personally trained by W S Gilbert

Clara Dow was born in King's Lynn, Norfolk on the 29th December 1883. She studied at the Royal College of Music and did extensive oratorio and concert work. She joined the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company for the First London Repertory Season at the Savoy, beginning December 8th, 1906. The season started with *The Yeomen of the Guard*, with Miss Dow in the chorus. When *The Gondoliers* was revived on January 22nd, 1907, she was given the small part of Giulia, and also in the same month took over as Kate in *Yeomen*.

Her star was clearly on the ascent, and when the Company revived *Patience* on April 4th, 1907, she was given the title role. *Iolanthe* was added on June 11th, and Clara Dow took the part of Phyllis. She had also been giving occasional performances as Elsie Maynard in *Yeomen* and Gianetta in *Gondoliers* since January,





and when Lillian Coomber left the Savoy in June 1907, Miss Dow added Elsie to her regular duties. She played Elsie, Patience, and Phyllis until the London season ended on August 24th, 1907, then took a break before joining Carte's Repertory Opera Company on tour in November.

From November 1907 to April 1908, she toured as Josephine in H.M.S. Pinafore, Mabel in The Pirates of Penzance, Patience, Phyllis, Princess Ida in Princess Ida, Yum-

Yum in The Mikado, Elsie, and Gianetta. In April 1908, she was back at the Savoy for the start of the Second London Repertory Season, appearing as Yum-Yum and (starting in October 1908) as Phyllis. By the end of October, however, she left the Savoy and returned to the touring Repertory Company the following month to resume the roles she had been playing on the road.

She toured with Carte's Principal Repertory Opera Company as Josephine, Mabel, Patience, Phyllis, Princess Ida, Yum-Yum, Elsie, and Gianetta from November 1908 until November 1909. In 1909 The Times wrote 'She is in our opinion the finest leading lady the company ever had. She has a splendid singing voice, great powers as an actress, infinite grace, and delicacy of movement'.

She then left the D'Oyly Carte organization for a year and a half, returning to the same parts for two months (July-September) in 1911. She was engaged for her final stretch with the Repertory Company in July 1913, and toured in the same eight parts until December 1914. Between D'Oyly Carte engagements, she had appeared at the Coliseum in The Dancing Viennese in July 1912. She was the last leading lady personally trained by W.S. Gilbert.



Clara Dow retained her love of Gilbert & Sullivan throughout her life, producing operas for amateur societies after she left the stage. Between 1928 and 1938 and between 1949 and 1954 she produced an operetta every year, including The Beggar's Opera, The Vagabond King and The Desert Song as well as most of the Gilbert and Sullivan repertoire. The 1954 production of Ruddigore was her last: she had then turned seventy.

Clara Dow lived in Ashted from 1934 and died at Epsom, in a nursing home on the 26th March 1969, aged 85

Goff Powell

Leatherhead Museum Store

Our Museum is no exception to the rule that applies to most other museums in that what is on display at any one time is only a small proportion of the total collection. We do make changes to the displays which involves bringing out items from store and of course returning items back and we are still adding to the collection as new artefacts are accepted.

Quite a few members of the Society and/or the 'Friends' have expressed an interest in seeing the store so we have arranged to have the store open to visitors on the evening of Friday 18th June 2010.



We will have to limit the number of people who can be in the store at any one time and avoid upsetting the neighbours. Intending visitors must congregate at the Museum between 7-15pm and 8pm and depending on the number be conducted in groups to the store. As an Accredited Museum we work to national standards and in Hampton Cottage we will be showing, for that evening only, the way that artefacts are formally 'accessioned', recorded, numbered and how we (hopefully) know what we have got and where it located.

The store is only a short distance from Hampton Cottage and cars can be left in the Mansion or the Church Street car parks free of charge but please note that the store is in a basement accessed solely by a flight of steps. Within the store some artefacts are on open shelves but quite a lot are in boxes so it will only be possible to show a few sample ones of these which will be left open.

We look forward to welcoming visitors.

Alan Pooley 01372 374093

News from the Museum Committee

The museum has now re-opened after the winter shutdown. As usual the committee has been as busy as, if not busier than, during the open season whilst the public have not been able to come in. As soon as we closed we cleared out everything in the office so that we could decorate the walls and ceiling and then have carpet tiles laid.

This immediately filled up the rest of the building with our books, files and records making it difficult to do anything else in the museum. Once the contents were back in

the office the builders were in endeavouring to prevent water getting into the downstairs back room over the window. It is hoped that this problem has now been solved.

The next task was to empty two display cabinets, one upstairs and one downstairs, so that these could be exchanged. Owing to the age and infirmity of most of the members of the Museum Committee a special young(er) working party came in on 15th February and the two cabinets were carried up and down the stairs in no time.

We always hope to renew most of the displays at this time but, as usual we ran out of time. However, we did renew the display in the front room where we display new acquisitions which have been received during the past year. Among the items shown is a group of Ashtead pottery of which two of the pieces were just a bag of broken china when they were handed in. We have also received some more Ronson lighters including a very interesting collection from a retired tobacconist as well as a pen lighter which is of a type which we did not have. We have a selection of memorabilia from Girl Guides as well as artefacts from the Bookham Boys' Brigade company. Some cameras have been added to our collection, even a 'Superdrug' disposable camera is historical now.

The window has been changed. We like to do this as for every person who enters the museum there are many more who look in the window. This time we are featuring scales in our very restricted space. We show the laboratory balance from ERA Technology, a spring balance, a standard GPO parcel scale (with a connection with Fetcham) and a set of tobacco or snuff scales.

The cabinet which was taken upstairs had a display of pharmacy and this has been changed so that it can be shown in the cabinet which came down. The shorter cabinet was taken upstairs to make it easier to circulate in the middle room. We have taken this opportunity to augment our display of local industries. We have fairly constant displays about Goblins, Ronsons and Ashtead Potters but we felt that some of the other works and factories could be given a turn. This is particularly relevant this year as the Society has published a book giving the history of some of these workplaces (see next page). We feature some of the local brick and tile works, one of which dates to the first century, Ashe Laboratories who were famous for Bandbox shampoo and Sherley's pet care products, the manufacture of both real and artificial silk, steam cars, photographic materials, valveholders and model railway equipment, electric blankets and more.

The interior lighting has been improved on the ground floor and we hope the layout of the galleries has been improved. Now that the museum is open again please pay us a visit you should find some new things to see. For example, we knew that Goblins made vacuum cleaning plant in Ashtead but did you know that the central system is still in-situ in the Leatherhead Theatre, even though it is not used at present?

We mentioned in the last Newsletter our gratitude to the Friends of the museum for the provision of the new carpet tiles, now they have generously paid for two new chairs for use by stewards during the times that the museum is open.

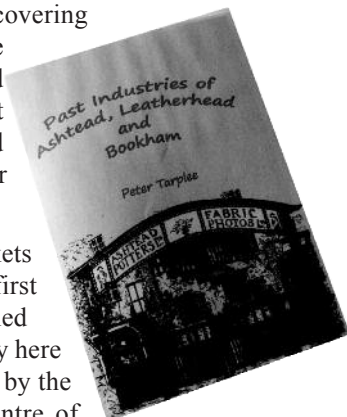
Peter Tarplee

A NEW BOOK YOU MUST BUY!

Past Industries of Ashtead, Leatherhead and Bookham

This is the latest book to be published by our society covering many of the industrial activities in our area over the years. There are books and documents giving detailed information of our churches and larger houses but there is a need to record how ordinary people lived and worked and earned their living before all trace of their workplaces is lost for ever.

For example, do you know that the first electric blankets were made in Ashtead and that this was one of the first examples of industrial rehabilitation of mentally disabled ex-servicemen? We once had an artificial silk industry here before the works was taken over by the company run by the inventor of the vacuum cleaner. Ashtead was a centre of photographic manufacture until the firms became swallowed up in the Kodak empire and these factories were then used for making leathercloth, the Stanley Steam Cars and then pottery.



Ronsons were, of course, famous for the development of cigarette lighters and Goblin for vacuum cleaners but both firms also produced many other products. Bookham had a small engineering works in the early part of the twentieth century but once the Great War got under way this was enlarged from 2,000 square feet to 56,000 square feet. After the war the factory made engines which were used in around 80 makes of motor cycles, 30 makes of cars and 12 makes of aeroplanes. By the time of the second war hydraulic equipment for over 15 types of plane were being made and the size of the works had doubled.

Brick making was a local industry whose history goes back to Roman times and carried on until the 20th century. These and many other industries are described and the book fills in some of the gaps in our knowledge of the past times in Leatherhead and district.

The book costs just £8.99 and Peter Tarplee is the author. It is full of interesting reading and has well over 120 illustrations, a photo record valuable in its own right.

Copies will be available from local booksellers, our museum and, post-free, from our Sales Secretary (at 64, Church Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8DP); cheques should be payable to 'L&DLHS'. The book will be launched in Leatherhead Museum where there will be displays of many of the operations described. This will take place at 7.30 pm on Friday, 28th May 2010. All members and friends and anyone interested in the past history of the area are cordially invited to attend and have a glass of wine with us.

OVER THE BRIDGE

*Have you got your copy of
the new book by Brian Hennegan and
published by the
Leatherhead & District Local History
Society (just £6.50)*



Recent Additions To The Library

Surrey - Individual Towns & Villages : Ashtead

Worsfold, Meredith - Meredith's Memories: Recollections of Ashtead Village and other stories. The author, in association with The Ashtead & Leatherhead Local Magazine, 2009

The articles in this booklet have already appeared in The Ashtead & Leatherhead Local Magazine, distributed free of charge to local residents. Zen George, the publisher, writes:

“A few years’ ago I met Meredith Worsfold and asked whether he would consider putting together a collection of short stories about his life in Ashtead village...He said he’d love to send through articles for inclusion each month in The Ashtead & Leatherhead Local Magazine and ‘Meredith’s Memories’ was born. ...I receive many calls from local residents saying how much these stories brought to life the history of Ashtead and, for some, were a nostalgic reminder of days gone by.”

Short extract:

“So compliments to the memory of Lt. Commander Rupert Gould, R.N., Ashtead resident who lived at no. 41 Woodfield Lane. The house has gone and was sited where now stands the doctor’s surgery, library and clinic. ...As children we used to listen to him as ‘Stargazer’ and his interesting talks on astronomy in Children’s Hour on the radio.”

Postscript

Jennie Pilfold, Ashtead library manager, retired recently after more than 25 years in the post. She gave members of our Society invaluable assistance, and I am sure we all wish her a long and happy retirement.

Peter Wells

Leatherhead Museum & Heritage Centre Trust (Registered Charity 273798)

Some winners in the 'Great Sock Raffle' have returned their prizes and we are now offering these to members to raise further funds for maintenance of the museum. All monies raised are to help fund essential maintenance on the medieval listed building.



1. Signed paperback copy of Michael Palin's book 'Full Circle – a Pacific Journey'
2. Authenticated three pairs of socks by John Bird, Phil Harding, Sandi Toksvig
3. Signed & authenticated pair of socks (one red & one green) by Adam Hart-Davis

I am not running an auction, but will dispose of each item to the first realistic offer received. Buyers to arrange collection, either from the museum or my address in Fetcham. Please either 'phone me at 01372 458396 or email to knowles.g@btinternet.com

Gordon Knowles Chairman of the Trustees

News from the Friends of Leatherhead Museum

We held three briefing sessions in March for the museum stewards. These are to update them on recent alterations and developments in the museum with the new layouts and exhibits. Health and safety, risk assessment and child protection issues were discussed together with first aid and ways of greeting visitors. Come and see for yourselves the changes in the museum. We are always on the lookout for new stewards, a rewarding and interesting way of using your free time !

Julia Lack visited Pixham Lane pre school nursery as part of our outreach educational programme and you will find her report in this newsletter.

Together with members of The Society the Friends visited The Lightbox and Mosque in Woking on 17th March and David Wall has given an account of the visit in the newsletter.

Future Events of The Friends

Saturday 29th May Swan Centre Display Barrow advertising the museum Craft Days and The History Society

3rd, 4th and 5th June Craft Days at the museum. These are held every year during

half term and provide hands on experience for children and adults with free admission

Thursday 3rd 1 – 4pm Pots and Paper Planes - Justine Munson will be bringing her potter's wheel and help you create your own pot. Do you want to fly your own airplane ? Richard Trim will be on hand to help you create your own paper plane and give you flying instructions.

Friday 4th 1-4pm The Magic of Woodland - Robin Christian , woodland conservation officer, will help you create your own model willow hurdle and will demonstrate woodland crafts.Margaret and Sylvia will also be there to demonstrate the art of making peg dolls which you can take home.

Saturday 5th 10-4pm The Epsom Spinners - They are back again by popular demand with their spinning wheels and looms encouraging you to have a go. Lace making will also be demonstrated

Saturday 12th June 10-1230pm Coffee Morning at the museum - This is our annual social and fundraising event with plants on sale donated by The Leatherhead Horticultural Society, bric-a-brac stall,raffle and refreshments. Come and support your museum and meet your friends

Dr Fred Meynen Chairman of The Friends

VISITS

Wednesday 16th June, 10.30am- St Mary's Church, Stoke d'Abernon

A guided visit to this historic church dating from the early Middle Ages. Many unique features including brasses from the 14th century. Donations welcome.

Saturday, 10th July, 1030am - Day Visit to Historic Places in REIGATE.

This will start with a visit to the premises of the Holmesdale Natural History Club which has a small museum. Then a chance to see the famous caves and the castle site.

Following a lunch break , a visit to The Priory Museum.

Restricted parking spaces makes car-sharing vital.

Application forms are enclosed with this Newsletter. Please apply early.

Archaeology

ARCHAEOLOGY SECRETARY David Hartley 01372 377839
07947 471165

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

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February Edition – Articles to be sent in not later than Friday 9th July

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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)

Sales of L&DLHS Publications

SALES SECRETARY Goff Powell 01372 374923

