

*LEATHERHEAD & DISTRICT  
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*

*NEWSLETTER*



*February 2013*

# ***LEATHERHEAD AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY***

Registered Charity No. 802409

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Email: [staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com](mailto:staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com).

Monthly Meetings: Every third Friday of the month at the Letherhead Institute between September and May at 7.30pm for 8.00pm

MUSEUM (Hampton Cottage): open Thursdays and Fridays 1.00pm to 4.00pm and Saturdays 10.00am to 4.00pm

L&DLHS WEBSITE: [www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk](http://www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk)

## 2011 Membership Subscriptions

Ordinary.....£18.00      Associate.....£6.00      Junior (under 18).....£1.00

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*Editorial*

Another year has passed and we are now well into 2013. It does not seem so long ago that in the computing industry the '19' of the century was not stored as there was so little memory available - the year 2000 was far in the future. In those days a good size memory was 16 thousand bytes not the multi-gigabytes (thousands of millions) of today. Were they the good old days?



What was memorable about 1913, a hundred years ago? Epsom produced one of the major incidents. It was Derby Day in June 1913 - the usual exciting race with massive crowds. The horses rounded Tattenham Corner and suddenly after the leaders had passed a woman scrambled under the rails shouting 'Votes for Women' and tried to grab the reins of the King's horse, Amner. She was thrown into the air by the great impact, the horse fell and the jockey was thrown to the ground. The injuries to the woman, Emily Davidson were horrific and she died shortly after in a London hospital.

It was just one incident in the fight for women's rights that began in the 19th century campaigning for rights for such things as divorce, education, jobs such as being a doctor and the right to vote. The Suffragettes movement led by Emily Pankhurst was formed in 1903. It was not until 1928 that they gained the right to vote. Even today equality in the church is still being sought.

Now we look to see what 2013 will bring forth.

*Martin Warwick*

<b><i>Next Edition Deadline - 6th April</i></b>
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# *Chairman's Report*

Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2013. Like you perhaps I am hoping that this year will be more prosperous and successful than 2012, however like most things our lives are not so predictable. What matters most and is important to me at least is having reasonable good health and friendship.



My reason for touching on this sensitive subject is that in recent weeks I have learnt of a number of members who have had an accident or had a fall or who are waiting on the outcome of some diagnosis or important operation. I would like to take this opportunity to wish them better health and a successful outcome and for a good recovery to better health in 2013.

## **Notice of AGM**

The executive committee have agreed to bring the date of the AGM forward to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013 instead of the usual date in April. The reason is that we can then report the proceedings in our May Newsletter instead of the August. You should find the Notice and Agenda together with the minutes of the last AGM and the nomination papers of new members and those committee members standing for re-election enclosed with this Newsletter. If for any reason you do not have a copy of these papers please contact me ASAP by phone or email, my details are on the inside front cover.

On the question of nominations and election of new members and the re-election of the existing committee members, we have a number of our existing committee who will be standing down at this AGM, namely David Wall our Membership Secretary, previously referred to in our November Newsletter, more recently Goff Powell our Sales Secretary who has done such valued work over many years in the promotion and sales of the History Society's publications and his contribution books written by Brian Hennegan on North Leatherhead as well as the many articles on local history published in the newsletter and elsewhere.

I also have to report that for personal reasons both our Hon secretary and our Publicity Officer will not be standing for election to your executive committee.

It would be very good to see some new faces on our executive committee - So Why Not Volunteer Your Committee Needs You.

## **New President of the History Society**

Gordon Knowles our President has held this office for a number of years since his predecessor Linda Heath retired from this office. Gordon had indicated for some time his desire to stand down but agreed to stay on until the AGM in March. Gordon has been a committed member and an active office holder within our History Society and was also previously Chairman the Museum's Charity for the maintenance of the museums

building fabric. He was instrumental in facilitating the smooth merger of this charity with the History Society.

Alan Pooley our Museum Manager was nominated and unanimously approved by your executive committee as the new President and has graciously accepted to take up this office at the AGM in a short handover of the office and a presentation to the outgoing President.

*David Hartley*

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## ***Archaeology & Local History Report***

The Surrey Archaeological Society's Annual Symposium on Saturday 9th February will have come and gone by the time you receive this Newsletter in anticipation of everything going according to plan we hope to have produced an appropriate display for this symposium. Our display this year will be focused on the work of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) who have carried out a number of excavations in Fetcham and Leatherhead in the last few years. Pertinent to our display will be their excavation and report on the Anglo Saxon cemetery site on Hawks Hill excavated by them in 2009 for Shanley Homes who have recently completed a housing development on the site.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> January I am due to collect from the British Museum grave goods, artefacts recovered from this excavation and donated to the Leatherhead Museum by Linden Homes. We hope these artefacts will form the centrepiece of our display at the museum along with the display boards prepared in conjunction with and co-operation of (SCAU) and re- used from the symposium for the museum. The Leatherhead museum re-opens to the public on the 4<sup>th</sup> April.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Leatherhead & District Local History to thank the directors of Shanley Homes Ltd Leatherhead for their generous donation of the artefacts from Saxon cemetery at New Tree Furlong Hawks Hill.

I would also like to thank Rob Poulton of SCAU and the British Museum for facilitating and assisting us in acquiring the artefacts for our local Museum.

There is to be forthcoming Monograph on this site to be published by SPOILHEAP PUBLICATIONS, a joint venture of Archaeology South-East (part of University College, London) and Surrey County Archaeological Unit (part of Surrey County Council) as Occasional Paper 3 'A Saxon Cemetery at New Tree Furlong, Hawk's Hill, Fetcham, Surrey' by Tom Munnery with contributions by John Hines, Phil Jones, Nick Marples, Rob Poulton, Lucy Sibun and Jacqui Watson.

### **Forthcoming events:**

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2013. The Medieval Studies Forum of the Surrey Archaeological Society have organised a study day at the Surrey History Centre, Woking on the theme 'England: Before and after the Conquest'.

## **The Subjects and Speakers on the day;**

‘Landscapes of Governance: some moot points’: Dr Stuart Brookes, University College London.

‘Profiling the doomed elite of 1066’: Dr Chris Lewis, Kings College London and Institute of Historical Research

‘Finds from the foreshore: Anglo-Saxon and medieval evidence recorded during inter-tidal survey’: Nathalie Cohen, Institute of Archaeology

‘The Burghal defences of Southwark’: Graham Dawson

‘St Martha’s Church’: Rob Briggs

Review of the 2006 Surrey Research Framework for the Pre-Conquest periods led by Richard Savage

Tickets will not be issued for this event. You are however requested to register with the Meetings Secretary, Brian Creese - e-mail [bjc@briancreese.co.uk](mailto:bjc@briancreese.co.uk) or call 07860 104012. The charge for the day, which is £10 and includes tea and coffee, will be collected on the door.

**On Saturday 11 May 2013 from 9.30 – 16.00.** A conference has been organised by Medieval Studies Forum of Surrey Archaeological Society in conjunction with the regional body of the Medieval Pottery Research Group at the Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, GU21 6ND.

The theme of this conference ‘Medieval Pottery and the Transition to Post Medieval production. The charge for this Conference is £8.00 for an advance booking or £10.00 payable on the day at the door, to obtain your ticket please send the application form below together with a cheque payable to Surrey Archaeological Society together with a stamped self-addressed envelope to The Treasurer, Medieval Studies Forum at 22 Fairlawn Park, Woking, GU21 4HT.

### **Eighth season of excavation on Ashtead Common**

I have received an email for Alan Hall Hon Sec for the Roman Studies Group calling for volunteers for the eighth season of excavation on Ashtead Common villa and tile works site.

The working days will be grouped in three sets of 5 days from Wednesday to Sunday during the following weeks:

Wednesday to Sunday 21 to 25 August,

Wednesday to Sunday 28 August to 1 September and

Wednesday to Sunday 4 to 8 September

The 9th and 10<sup>th</sup> September is likely to be needed for tidying up, etc.

The site is 15-20 minutes’ walk from the nearest car park and railway station. The excavation areas will be cleared of undergrowth but the Common is a Lyme disease

risk area.

2012 developed our knowledge of the buildings west of the 'villa' and this work is to continue in 2013. More work is planned around the tile kiln and we are hoping that a narrow trench across parts of rooms 8 and 9 in the center of the 'villa' will link together our work along the south of the building.

No charge will be made for members of Surrey Archaeological Society. Non-Members of Surrey Archaeological Society will be asked to pay a non-returnable contribution towards the cost of organizing the dig of £25 per 5 day week, or part thereof, to be paid before 17<sup>th</sup> July 2013. When your application for the dig has been accepted, your cheque should be made payable to Surrey Archaeological Society, marked on the back only 'Ashted 2013' and sent to 29, Colcokes Road, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2EJ.

For inexperienced newcomers preference will be given to those who can attend for at least five days. If you are interested in taking part in the excavation and have not already been in touch, please contact Irene Goring on irene@greenhayes.plus.com or 01737 362025 giving contact details and availability. Newcomers need to give an indication of their excavation skills.

Additionally, in spring we will be surveying as large an area as possible: fieldwork, contour survey, geophysics and if appropriate some test pitting are likely to be carried out. Anyone interested in helping should contact Alan Hall on alanr.hall@sky.com or 07807 534701.

I am pleased to learn that a new Local History group has been formed to represent the parish of Mickleham & Westhumble to be known as 'Mickleham & Westhumble Local History Group'.

The following edited information was supplied to me by Sue Tatham, Hon Secretary.

We are always interested in encouraging and fostering good relations with new and existing local history groups - There were 34 people present at a recent meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November to launch the Mickleham and Westhumble Local History Group. The Archive Librarian, Judy Kinloch, explained that a considerable amount of historic material has already been collected, but there is an urgent need to organise it so that it is accessible to the public.

It was agreed that the group would hold quarterly meetings with speakers or events such as visits or walks. In addition, small groups will take on the various tasks associated with cataloguing the archive as well as collecting new material for it. Those present were invited to suggest projects and indicate what they would like to contribute. The annual subscription is £10 per household. If you would like to join the group or require further information please contact our Membership Secretary, Margaret Lloyd, on 01306 741949 or email mclloyd2000@hotmail.com

# *Painting on Sculpture in the Middle Ages*

The October lecture by Ann Brodrick formed part of the Mole Valley Arts Alive Festival. Ann was previously Senior Conservator for the Victoria and Albert and British Museums, having worked on sculpture collections for 35 years.

As an example she used the Great Screen at Winchester Cathedral created in 1476 and dismantled a few years later, parts of which can still be seen in the Triforium. The paints were applied in layers and confined to specific areas such as flesh, mantle or robe. Minute fragments of paint were examined under the microscope with magnifications to a maximum of 1000 times. Cross sections showed the paints used, the first layer being a sealant if the surface was porous. The paints consisted of a medium which included animal/fish glue and egg and the pigments added from animal, insect and plant extracts. Lapis Lazuli, a beautiful brilliant blue stone from Afghanistan, was ground into a paste, the colour suffusing into an alkaline solution and the impurities retained in a resin, gum Arabic and wax mixture, the process dating back to 1309. Gold and silver leaf were applied with great precision using water or oil gilding techniques.



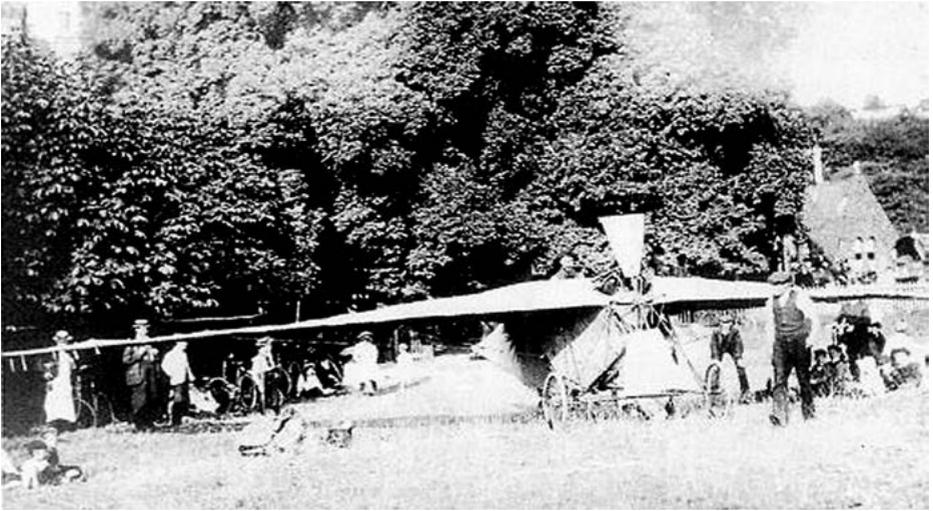
Ann showed examples of painting on wood sculptures with their exquisite detail . A life size oak carving of St. Paul in the Gausdal Stave Kirke in Norway dated c1250 and the Virgin and Child in the Heddal Stave Kirke were shown, together with a painted limestone canopy with similar decorative features in Ely Cathedral.

The alabaster effigy of Sir Richard Herbert of Ewyas in Abergavenny Church (d.1510) was used to represent the secular power of sculpture. Alabaster is a soft pale grey translucent stone of calcium sulphate. The use of lead leaf applied to the carved areas representing plate armour is a very rare survival of this technique. Other notable features are the gilded chain mail and the small figure of the Bedesman hidden beneath the feet of the effigy, praying for the souls of the departed. Subsidence and the ingress of water with the resultant structural damage sometimes necessitates the dismantling and rebuilding of monuments.

Rare and sumptuous silks and velvets were used to define social status and this is demonstrated in the painted limestone effigy of Joan Nevill (d. 1462) in the Fitzalan Chapel of Arundel Castle. The paints imitated the richness of the cloths imported from Italy using a gilded red glazed wax appliqué applied to the surface of the robe on the effigy.

*Dr Fred Meynen*

## *The Great White Bird at Brooklands – the first flight that never was!*



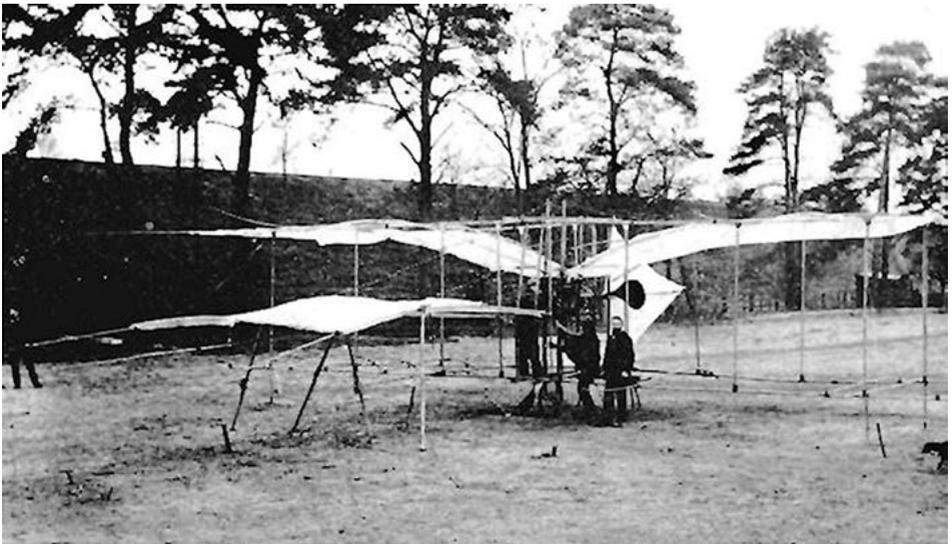
Brooklands can claim to be the cradle, if not the birthplace, of flying in Britain; the honour of making the first flight in this country goes to the American Samuel Franklin Cody at Laffans Plain, Farnborough on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1908. But an earlier attempt at Brooklands unfortunately never achieved anything. The first successful controlled flight had been made by Orville Wright at Kittyhawk in the United States in December 1903. This is the story of M. Bellamy, a French ‘aviator’, who appeared out of the blue at Weybridge in late 1906 or early 1907 (reports differ as to the date) with the pieces of a strange dismantled machine strapped to the roof of his hansom cab. The biplane, built chiefly from bamboo and fitted with a 35 hp Panhard pusher engine, was reassembled at Brooklands by Bellamy. He claimed that his machine, resembling a large bird, had already successfully flown 500 metres at Modane in France. The machine had been subsequently shown at an exhibition in Milan, Italy and was reported at the time in the *Auto* and some years later in *Flight*. But as described there it seemed to be a different machine to the one Bellamy brought to Brooklands.

Bellamy was a large man with black hair and thick black beard, and apparently wore a fur coat all year round. He was a forceful character and greeted acquaintances by embracing them in a bear hug. He wanted to be the first man to fly in Britain, taking up the challenge issued by the Brooklands Automobile Racing Club, with a prize of £2,500 for the first aviator to fly a complete circuit of the new motor racing track before the end of 1907. Cynics at the time said that the club knew that their money was safe as there was no way their offer, if taken up, could be achieved. But it was good publicity.

Bellamy pitched his tent at Brooklands and persuaded Hugh Fortescue Locke-King, the owner of the newly built race track on land adjoining his house, to lend him £100 for his expenses and to prepare a flat stretch of ground alongside the L&SWR line as a runway. Bellamy first fitted punts (floats) to his machine and taxied it on a lake in the grounds of Brooklands House. The machine was described by a correspondent to the *Daily Mail* thus: "The aero-catamaran consists of two attenuated punts on which are fixed the wheels and frame of a motor car. Above this, again, is a 50 hp motor driving a propeller about five feet in diameter. (*Other accounts quote the engine as producing 35 hp. GK*). It is a weird top-heavy structure, but M. Bellamy expressed his confidence yesterday that it would work. The steering apparatus was the crudest imaginable, practically two untrimmed branches of fir tree, with a short plank nailed across. There was a six-inch plank nailed across the two punts to stand on, and M. Bellamy managed the motor from a kind of wooden trellis-work immediately in front."

The catamaran moved slowly across the lake before the engine spluttered, the punts hit an underwater obstruction and the machine sank. Bellamy then rebuilt his machine, fitted with wheels, and made several attempts to guide his 'big white bird' into the air. An article in the *Daily Mail* in March 1907 described the machine thus:

"It resembles a great white bird, the engine, fixed in a light wooden frame, may be regarded as the body of the bird. On each side is a cage-like structure formed of bamboo rods, the top being covered with white calico. Attached to the engine at the back is a tail of bamboo and calico, ten yards long and four yards wide. The attachment is effected by the means of hinges which will permit the tail to rise and fall as the machine moves through the air. In front the head of the bird is represented by a contrivance of bamboo and canvas not unlike the feathers of an arrow, its size being proportionate to the other



parts of the machine. This is fixed to the engine frame by a swivel, and may be raised or lowered, or turned to the right or left at will, and is the means by which M. Bellamy hopes to guide the aeroplane in its flight.”

One source suggests that the catamaran experiment came after the attempt to fly the land machine, but I prefer the version in the official Brooklands Centenary History that the water-borne experiment preceded the attempt to fly from the land. But the ‘great white bird’ never took off from either water or land. Bellamy explained that the air at Brooklands was not like the air in France and did not suit his machine. It stayed firmly on the ground, disappointing the many spectators who had gathered to watch. These included a number who had lent him money and others with whom he had run up large bills at local hotels and inns. When pressed to pay his bills, Bellamy always replied, “no speak English”. He then disappeared as mysteriously as he had arrived, resurfacing again shortly afterwards at Richmond.

(It is interesting in 2012 to note that recorded details of how events of just over 100 year’s ago can vary: the hp of the engine, whether the land or water attempts came first, and did he fly or not in France beforehand, and if so was it the same machine that he brought to Brooklands.)

Bellamy then built a new aeroplane, a single-seat tailless tractor monoplane which was reported in February 1908 to be under construction at Old Oak Farm, Shepherds Bush, London. Trials were carried out on Petersham meadows, below the Star and Garter Hotel in Richmond. Apparently the machine taxied satisfactorily, but it failed to take off. The wing span was reported as being a mere 14 feet, which seems unlikely. (Looking at a picture of the machine it is more likely to have been 40 ft.) The 30 hp engine was of an unknown make and the machine weighed 700 lbs empty. In March 1909 Bellamy was reported to be once more experimenting with a catamaran on the Thames at Hammersmith. After this he seems to have disappeared from history.

I wonder if he ever flew in England or France, or anywhere. And if the good people of Weybridge, to whom Bellamy owed money, were ever paid, or indeed if Locke-King’s loan was ever redeemed.

#### References:

Brooklands, The Official Centenary History: David Venables: Haynes  
Wings over Brooklands: Howard Johnson: Whittet  
British Aircraft before the Great War: M.Goodall/A.Tagg: Schiffer  
British Aircraft 1809-1914: P.Lewis: Putnam  
The Daily Mail

*Gordon Knowles*

## *November Meeting - ‘Local Railways’*

Peter Tarplee, the Society’s former chairman and noted as an industrial archaeology expert, spoke to a full audience about the history of the railways in our district, with a stunning array of slides illustrating stations and trains from the past as well as the present.

Surrey’s earliest railway, built in 1803 ran from Wandsworth to Croydon and later to Merstham, with horse drawn traction. Part of the line was eventually taken over by the London and Brighton Railway. This story began in 1839 when Croydon was joined to London along the track of the former Croydon Canal, terminating at the site which is now West Croydon station.

The railway came to Dorking in 1849, with stations on the line built to link Redhill with Guildford and Reading. This was the only link with London in those days, as there was no north/south line. Later the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway began extending their line from London to Epsom, reaching Leatherhead in 1859. Epsom originally had two stations, the second built by the London and South Western Railway on the line which left the Waterloo main line at Raynes Park. These companies also had separate stations at Leatherhead. An influential landowner laid down strict conditions governing the extension of the line from Leatherhead to Dorking which was reached in 1867. The result of his stipulations can still be seen. These included the requirement for stations and structures to be of the highest quality, and the construction of a tunnel under Norbury Park. The impressive architecture of Leatherhead and West Humble (now Box Hill) stations were the result. In 1848 the line was extended to reach Horsham. Leatherhead continued to have two stations until the early 1920s when the two competing companies were merged to form the Southern Railway. Interesting pictures were shown to demonstrate the scene when both stations were in operation.

Lines to the west began to be built in the 1830s. Firstly the London and Southampton Railway (which later became the London and South Western Railway) with its terminal at Nine Elms, Vauxhall, which was a most inconvenient location. The extension to Waterloo followed in 1868. Guildford had been reached in 1845 by a branch leaving the main line at “*Woking Common*”. At that time the centre of population was at the village now called Old Woking, but the railway station became the cause of present-



day Woking's development. Waterloo was rebuilt in 1922 with twenty-one platforms. The company's underground extension to the City remained under their control until nationalisation when it was transferred to London Underground.

Some interesting facts about what the railways did for race goers now emerged. Since earliest days Derby Day had resulted in a mass-migration from London. From the nineteenth century thousands of Londoners could now travel to the Downs by train. Competition was severe and the volume of traffic on race days was huge. The station at Epsom Downs, on the branch from Sutton, completed in 1865, had no less than nine platforms. Peter showed us a picture with all the platforms in use, and the Royal Train ready to depart. He added that this station now has one platform.

As the years went by, the complex network of lines continued to multiply. We could follow the story thanks to the fine maps that were shown. The last line to be built was in the 1930s. This would have brought trains from Waterloo into Leatherhead by a new route. The line had reached Chessington by 1938 and plans for the final link were progressing well. Then came the 1939 war and work ceased. The project was cancelled in the post war era. It was interesting to recall the days of the Beeching era when so many lines were closed. In our area all the existing lines bar one survived. The one that disappeared was the cross-country link between Guildford and Horsham.

After a hearty thanks accorded to the speaker, one interesting query arose during question time. It concerned the date when these lines were electrified. The answer was that a progression of projects was undertaken during the 1920s and largely achieved by the time 1930 was reached. Thus ended an informative and enjoyable session.

**REMINDER TO MEMBERS** : Peter Tarplee's well-illustrated book, "*Railways around Leatherhead and Dorking*" offers full coverage of this subject . Priced £10, copies are available at the Museum or by writing to the Society's Sales Secretary at 64, Church Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8DP.

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## *Proceedings*

Our members have, once again, produced a very respectable set of papers for our *Proceedings*, which members will receive shortly. Alan Pooley has provided a thorough and very interesting paper on the history of Fetcham mill and its millpond, our Vice-President Peter Tarplee has shown how thousands of launches, used as torpedo-boats, gun boats, rescue launches and harbour defence work, had their origins in a company set up in Cobham, while Derek Renn has investigated a slightly mysterious milestone set in an Ashted wall, and Bill Whitman has found an interesting link with Jane Austen in St Nicholas Church, Great Bookham.

Your Newsletter Editor, Martin Warwick, was again extremely helpful in getting everything together and ready for the printer. Now we look forward to receiving contributions for next year's *Proceedings*. Don't be sure about coming forward!

*Barry Cox, Editor, the Proceedings*

# *A Mahogany Desk, a Windsor Chair and a Turtle Back Stove*

Following on from Peter Tarplees fine talk at our last meeting, where he told us about the history and development of our local railways, I thought that I might be able to provide an addendum of a personal nature. Those of you who have taken the opportunity to read my book 'Over the Bridge' might remember that my Grandfather, W.G Watts, was a Senior Permanent Way Inspector on the Southern Railway, having joined the London and South Western Railway, as a young Plate Layer.

He, along with some of his brothers and cousins, were of 'good Hampshire stock' and their initial employment was 'on the land'. However they soon realized that if they wished to improve their lot in life then the land would not be the way to better things, unless of course you owned land, and that was not on the cards.

So like many of their fellows they went up to 'the smoke' and joined the railway. They all decided to try their luck on the L&SWR and not to go with the London Brighton & South Coast Railway, after all the L&SWR was the railway that ran through their home county.

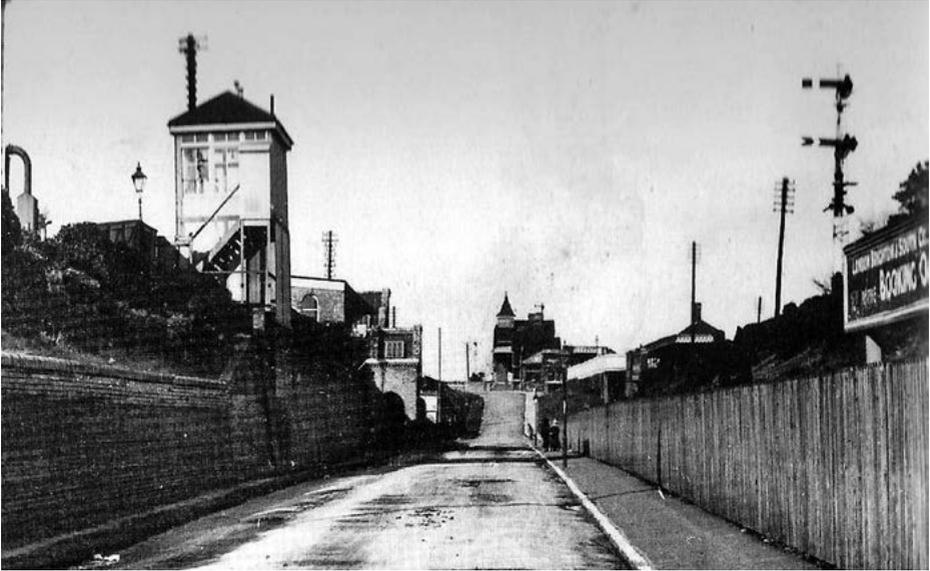
Incidentally some of the relatives had joined the London and Southampton Railway way back in the very early days of the railways, and we know that one of the early 'Watts' went on in 1838/9, just as the London to Southampton Railway was being finished. The line was taken over and run by the L&SWR almost as soon as it was completed.

All of the relatives completed their service in a variety of posts, Driver, Signalman, Guard, and a variety of Permanent Way positions. Whilst all these relatives were on my mother's side of the family, I will mention that one of my dad's brothers, my Uncle Bernard, having joined the London Underground, completed his service as the Station Master at Charing Cross and Trafalgar Square.

I can see, by the glazed look in your eyes, that all this family history is beginning to hang heavy, so I will get to the point.

Dad had joined The Royal Corps of Signals in 1940 so I spent most of my 'supervised time' with Grandad. If I am to make a guess I would say that for most of us lads the 'supervised time' and the 'non-supervised time', outside school hours, was approximately 50/50, Oh! happy days.

Grandad's office was located on the down side of the old L&SWR station in Leatherhead. The remaining brick stair-case, still visible by the Randall's Road traffic lights, would give access to the office in the days when the station was still in use, although to the best of my knowledge it was latterly never used. The building can be seen on the left hand side of the picture just behind the signal box. Although this view was taken in the 1920's it would still have been very similar in the 1940's/50's. but without the signal box.



I have fond memories of this office, as sometimes I would ‘go to work’ with Grandad. This was an adventure in itself. Please join us as we make the journey from Leatherhead Common to said office. We will walk along Kingston Road and over the ‘dear old bridge’. When we reach the south side of the bridge we do not follow the route of lesser mortals and go to the station by way of Kingston Road, we turn to our right and go into the goods yard, which is now an industrial estate. (Remember that the footpath now running along the north side of the railway was a long way off in the 1940’s).

The yard contained approximately five sidings, including one that was allocated to the Cable Works, and flat trucks, with their large wooded cable drums, would nearly always be there awaiting a steam loco to take them onwards to their destination, which could be ‘up north’ or down to the docks for export . The products of The Leatherhead Cable Company could be found, literally, in all four corners of the world. You might also see the specialized wagons that transported stage scenery that was produced by ‘The Leatherhead Stage Scenery Company’. They had their work shops on a site that was adjacent to the ‘old’ Church Hall, opposite the Parish Church.

Grandad and I would make our way through the yard which would contain goods wagons of all shapes and sizes. You had to be careful not to bump your head on a set of buffers or coupling chains. To get to Grandad’s office we would cross the railway lines in the present station. I was given careful instructions from Grandad to ensure that I paid careful notice to the location of the ‘live’ rails. I became ‘railway wise’ from an early age. Today, poor old Grandad would have been ‘clapped in irons’. Some of you will remember that the old station was used to accommodate electric units that were awaiting their next duty.

Having made our way to the down platform of the old station we would walk along to the office. Once inside you would be in an environment that would have been recognized by a time traveler from the late 19th / early 20th century. The office contained book cases and a series of wide flat drawers that contained track diagrams. The space was dominated by a substantial Mahogany Desk, a Windsor Back Chair, with arm rests which almost engulfed me and a Turtle Back Stove that stood in the corner. This was the main source of heat and I can assure you that it was more than adequate for the purpose, coke or coal being available in unlimited quantities. To boil the kettle you removed the round cover that was used for refuelling the monster, and put the kettle over the hole and 'Roberts your father's brother', boiling water almost instantly. Grandad would be poring over track plans, speaking on the 'phone, or talking to various visitors, such as Gangers and occasional Plate Layers. I got used to hearing the common rejoinder 'Got a new track man then George', to which grandad would reply 'not on your life he's not going to shovel ballast he's going to be a driver like his uncle Alf, (Grandad's brother). I would usually be seated at a small desk in the corner with a quantity of plain paper and a pencil. I could draw a reasonable loco and a series of track points at an early age!

The L&SWR station was taken out of service in July 1927 when a new junction was created. The bridges by the traffic lights at the Station Road/ Waterway Road junction are the result of this reordering. One of the old bridge abutments can still be seen to the left, as you enter the industrial estate close to Merrit Tyre Service.

I spent many hours in Grandad's company. On one occasion I went with him to Chalky Lane in Chessington, opposite to Chessington Zoo, now The World of Adventures. Contrary to popular belief, work on the Leatherhead to Motspur Park via Chessington line did continue for a short time after the war had finished. Chalky Lane was crossed by a railway bridge and strain tests were being carried out by running a steam locomotive across it whilst engineers obtained readings. As a youngster the finer points of this exercise were lost on me, but Grandad outlined the principals of the operation. Incidentally the completed line between Motspur Park and Leatherhead would have been included in Grandad's operational area.

Some of the trees in the Ashted Woods were also cleared by the use of explosives and I well remember this taking place, from a safe distance I hasten to add. If you care to take a walk through the woods following close to the road towards 'The Star' public house you will still be able to see the concrete fence posts marking the intended course of the Railway between Chessington South and Leatherhead. Not far from the pub you will see the large posts that would have held the gates controlling an 'accommodation crossing' for a track leading from the Kingston Road, through the woods, to Ashted Common.

I think I have mentioned somewhere else that the distance of the two routes between Motspur Park and Leatherhead would have been almost identical, there being only a few chains in it. Given the population growth in recent times the line, if completed, would have been desirable. Just a thought, although the M25 has been built, it would

not be beyond the realms of possibility to resurrect it, although it would require moving the course of the track further east from the Kingston Road and creating a tight radius curve to join the line with the existing Ashted/ Leatherhead stretch, to the North of the motorway bridge.

Did I travel by train in the 1940's/50's? Well yes I did. I have mentioned that Grandad was of 'Good Hampshire Stock' and he had relatives living in, what was then, a small village called Sherborne St John, on the outskirts of Basingstoke. Today the expansion of Basingstoke has nearly, but not quite, engulfed the village. I still have cousins living in the locality.

Grandad had a pass that entitled him to travel free. We would all go down to Basingstoke by train. Usually we would go via Waterloo. This entailed a trip up to London to pick up the train for Basingstoke. This would be hauled by a steam locomotive, remember there was no 'juice' West of Woking in those days. The electric lines did not reach Basingstoke and on to Bournemouth until 1967. For me these excursions were the stuff that dreams were made of. If we had 'time in hand' we would go up to the front of the train to see what type of loco would be speeding us on our way to Hampshire. It might be a 'King Arthur' class, a 'Remembrance', or it could be one of Mr. O.V.S. Bullied's masterpieces, a 'Merchant Navy Class' loco. Grandad being a 'Railway Man' knew 'the jargon' and he would chat to the crew, the fireman would have finished his firing for the time being and he would have the boiler pressure just at the point where the safety valves would be lifting, ie. about 250 pounds per square inch.

Back in the train we would take our seats, usually in a compartment beside the corridor, this would enable me to spend most of the journey standing in the corridor, and thus getting a 'panoramic view'. The train had a unique smell, consisting of cushion fabric,



tobacco smoke, all capped by that fantastic and magical smell of the mighty monster at the front of the train. Although it is still possible to travel by steam on the many heritage lines that now exist I still feel that they do not fully replicate the smell created by a system that used steam power in their every day working.

I also remember that the seats were very comfortable, yes I did sit down at times, usually to enable one of the adults to remove a smut from my eye. This was a 'badge of office' when travelling behind a steam loco. The journey would pass all too quickly and would depend on where we stopped en route. Usually, if Grandad had picked a 'fast', we would only stop at Surbiton and Woking. However we would sometimes get a 'slow' and would stop at more stations.

Occasionally Grandad would join me in the corridor and our conversation, usually about railway working, would be punctuated by him taking his 'hunter' from his waistcoat pocket accompanied by such words as 'he's running well boy', or 'he's two down'. Sometimes he would comment on the state of the track and would say such thing as 'those points could do with a bit of packing'. The dilapidated Basingstoke Canal would always be a land mark not to be missed. Today, due to the hard work of many volunteers, the waterway is once again operational.

Well, I think I have rambled on enough, but I hope that I have given you a brief insight into a period in time that has gone forever. Remember, 'Today is Tomorrows History'.

*Brian Hennegan*

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## ***Situation Vacant - Publicity Officer***

The Society is seeking to appoint a new Publicity Officer, and hopes that one of our members might like to consider applying for the post. We believe that it's of great importance to tell the public about our activities which we do by advertising our lectures, by maintaining a good website and, naturally, boosting our Museum which is an excellent '*shop window*'.

The work is interesting and it brings one into contact with local people. Prior knowledge of matters relating to publicity and public relations would be useful but is not essential. Guidance is freely available to whoever gets the job.

Anyone wanting to know more about what is involved should contact the undermentioned by phone or preferably by email.

*John Wettern 01372 459277 johnwettern@ntlworld.com*

# *The Seawell Family of Little Bookham and Blechingly*

Pursuing my inclination and interest in the detailed aspects of local history I am currently following my interest in the work of John Hassell 1767-1825, an artist mainly in watercolours who recorded for posterity, a number of large and small private houses and other buildings in the surrounding parishes of Ashted, Fetcham, Bookham, Leatherhead and Mickleham and elsewhere in Surrey.

My objective is to use his work as my starting point for further research and where possible build on the information already known and tease out details on the families and the history of ownership of these properties. This focus has settled on the parish of Little Bookham and a watercolour by John Hassell dated 1823 with the title of the 'Seat of Mr Seawell – Pens Hill Little Bookham' which is housed in the Robert Barclay Collection at the Surrey History Centre at Woking. It is a quite unique and historic collection and well worth your attention.



*The seat of Thomas Seawell of Little Bookham, a watercolour by John Hassell Circa 1822, the house incorrectly named as Pens Hill. The original house was in Rectory Lane on the site of the present Grange before the Seawell Estate was sold off to William Arthur Bird by Thomas Samuel Seawell and his son.*

## **Who was Thomas Seawell and where was Pens Hill, Little Bookham.**

The first small reference I found to the family name of Seawell was the 18<sup>th</sup> century 'Gentlemen's Magazine' which provided me with my first clue relating to a marriage of Thomas Seawell Esq of Bookham to Miss Newcome eldest daughter of Mr Newcome of Hackney School. From this single entry I have managed to establish the family histories of both the Seawell and Newcome families.

I also re-discovered some evidence for their property holding in Bookham and their

burial place through our own Proceedings and the work of the late John Harvey's research published in the Proceedings in 1961 & 1969 'A short History of Bookham' (Part VIII and Part IX) together with his 'A Cartographical Survey of the Area' (the map of Great Bookham in 1797-1798). The research of W J Blair who wrote a piece for the Proceedings in 1973 'A Survey of the Churchyard and the Monuments in the Leatherhead Area Part II' relating to a survey of Great and Little Bookham provided me with another vital piece of information namely the burial plot for Thomas Seawell, his wife Mary and his daughter Mary Jane Seawell.

### **Thomas Seawell 1762-1832 (of Bookham)**

Thomas was the eldest son of Samuel Seawell described in his will of 31st August 1775 as a merchant of Mark Lane in the City of London. Samuel Seawell (the younger) entered into an advantageous contract arranged between his parents and the bride's father on his marriage on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1761 at St Botolph Bishopsgate, London to Sarah Chitty, born 17th March 1734 the second daughter of Sir Thomas Chitty 1696-1762 and his wife Eleanor Hubbard the daughter of Capitan Nathaniel Hubbard RN.

Sir Thomas left substantial properties in the City of London and elsewhere on his death in 1762, the bulk of his estate being settled on his two surviving daughters, Eleanor born 14th October 1721 and Sarah (as above) and their respective families. As a point of interest Eleanor Chitty the eldest surviving daughter married on 30th March 1749 George Bond. They lived at Merton Place Surrey which was previously held by Sir Thomas from his brother Joseph. The Bonds later sold Merton Place to Lord Nelson, Viscount Merton of Trafalgar.

This Samuel Seawell (the younger) born 1729/30 was the second son of Samuel Seawell (senior) and Rebecca Seawell nee Mael of Spalding, Lincolnshire (married 1725/26 Surfleet, Lincolnshire). The younger Samuel became the sole surviving male heir of his father and mother who held estates in Lincolnshire and Norfolk. Samuel's Will of 1775 describes these entailed estates and properties in the City of London inherited variously through his wife and his father-in-law Sir Thomas Chitty.

Samuel (the younger) had five surviving children as far as I can determine, Thomas, Sarah, Henry, Samuel and Charles and the boys were well educated attending Cambridge with Thomas the eldest at Queen's College 8th June 1779.

The bulk of Samuels's property and entailed estate was settled on his eldest son Thomas Seawell of Bookham. Thomas Seawell married Mary Newcome on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1783 by licence at St John's Hackney London and the witnesses were Ann Newcome and George William Newcome, her sister and brother.

An interesting aside from my internet search was the discovery of a portrait of Mrs Mary Seawell of Great Bookham made in 1792 by John Downman 1750-1824. Downman was a successful portraitist who produced highly finished likenesses of his many sitters in chalks and watercolours and stumping and was a pupil of Benjamin West in 1763 and entered the Royal Academy where he exhibited 148 works in the Royal Academy

between 1769 and 1819.



Portrait of Mrs. Mary Seawell of Great Bookham, 1792 by John Downmam 1750-1824

### **Mary Seawell nee Newcome 1765 -1800**

Mary Seawell nee Newcome, born 1765 (baptized on the 11th June 1765 at St John's Hackney) was the eldest daughter of Henry Newcome and Mary Newcome nee Mawdsley who married on 2nd June 1759. Mary Mawdsley was born 1736 and her family could claim a family connection to William Cole the Antiquary 1714-1782, a bachelor son of William Cole (the father) of Cambridgeshire. It was his eldest daughter Mary Cole, born 1715 who married Hector Mawdsley the father of Mary Mawdsley.

The Newcome Family of the Hackney School came to be the owners of the largest and most fashionable 18<sup>th</sup> century private schools in London. The school originated from 16<sup>th</sup> May 1672 when Martin Morland was granted a license to be a teacher at his house in Hackney. Martin's father was Thomas Morland, rector of Sulhampstead Bannister Berkshire, Martin's eldest brother was Samuel Morland born 1625 who became Sir Samuel Morland, a notable academic, diplomat and spy, inventor and mathematician - a 17<sup>th</sup> cent polymath.

The Hackney School or 'Newcomes Academy' provided a good source of income for the family from its foundation by the nonconformist Benjamin Morland, born 1659, the eldest son of Martin Moreland.

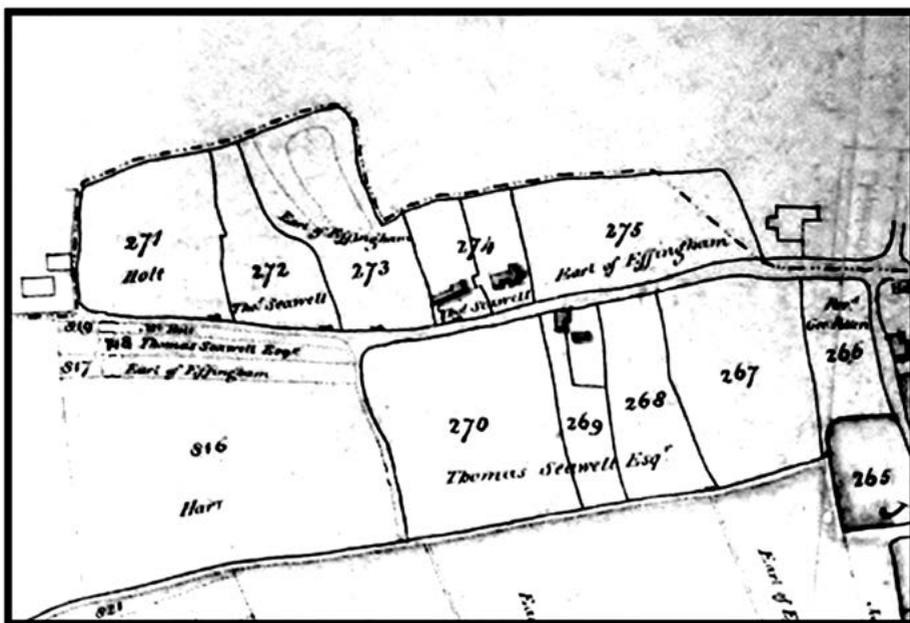
It was Benjamin's second daughter Lydia Moreland (born 1687) who married (at St John's Hackney by license on 23rd December 1714) the earlier Henry Newcome, the fourth son of Peter Newcome. On the death of Henry the school descended to his eldest son Peter Newcome 1715-1779 gave up control of the school before his death to his half-brother Henry Newcome 1734-1780. It was this Henry who married Mary Mawdsley the daughter of Hector Mawdsley, a wholesale cheese monger of London and Mary Cole his wife.

It was the reputation of the staff, fashion, the political patronage and party loyalties that contributed to the success of Newcom's (Hackney) school. The School was patronized by noble and Whig families. The Hardwicke's, Cavendish, Devonshire, Grafton, and Westerns Families all sent their sons there.

How Thomas Seawell came to live and settle in Bookham is not quite clear yet but it appears that he was in Bookham prior to his marriage to Mary Newcome 1783 as he is referred to as being from Bookham.

### Thomas Seawell's Estate in Bookham

The small extract of the map below is copy of a part map of Great & Little Bookham in 1797-1798 referred to by the late John Harvey in his article in the Proceedings in 1969, This section shows the road we now know as Rectory Lane Little Bookham and shows the properties and land owned by Thomas Seawell shown each side of the road, each plot is numbered and relates to a hand written schedule.



*Copy of a small portion of the map of Great Bookham in 1797-1798 showing a small part of his estate in Little Bookham.*

### Abstract from the schedule of land In Hand

- 267 Field opposite Mr Seawell own house
- 268 Small Field
- 269 House Garden and Orchard
- 270 Three Acre Close
- 272 Small Close

## 474 Cottage, Orchard and Garden

Including these properties and parcels of hand at this time he owned by lease or copyhold a total of 81 acres.

Who commissioned the original map of the parishes of Great and Little Bookham together with the schedule of properties and owners is not at all clear but John Harvey's research throws considerable light on this subject, Also John Harvey's research 'Proceedings part IX p.189 of A Short History of Bookham' virtually confirms that Thomas Seawell's House was on the site of the Grange. The hand written note referred to at the front of the schedule where the writer asserts that both the schedule and plan (map) belonged to the man from whom I (William Bird) bought the Grange, Mr Seawell (this being the grandson of Thomas Seawell) and was sold by him to me for five shillings, signed and dated 1916.

Thomas Seawell died 25 May 1832 aged 71 his Will proved 12 June 1832 settled his estate on his surviving children Thomas Samuel Seawell his eldest son and Henry Seawell.

### **The Seawell Family's burial place**

Thomas and Mary Seawell his wife and daughter are interred in the graveyard of St Nicholas, the Parish Church of Great Bookham. Their grave has unfortunately has become overgrown and neglected and is in need of some repair, this situation has not changed since John Blair's own observations recorded by him in the Proceedings in 1973.



### **The Penhill Estate in Blechingly**

I have found no reference to date in any archive for a Pens Hill in Bookham although I came across this other watercolour again by John Hassell dated c 1825 titled, the 'South Front, the seat of Seawell Esq at Blechingly' appears that this may be the cause for confusion with the naming of the property in Bookham known as Pens Hill.

On further research there appears to be both a property and an area of Blechingly known as Pendhill, this is evidenced by the Will of Henry Seawell of Pendhill near Bletchingley dated 16th December 1844. Henry was the younger brother of Thomas Seawell of Bookham. There is also other evidence for other transactions between Joseph Seymour Biscoe, Esq who purchased the estate in 1803 and Seawell, but this needs further examination at a future date.

The outcome of my research is presented here but due to the amount of documentary



evidence that has come to light perhaps it does deserves a more detailed article for submission to our Proceedings.

*David Hartley*

### **References Sources**

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Hackney: Education', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 10: Hackney* (1995), pp. 148-165. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22718> Date accessed: 23 April 2009

Copies of Hassell watercolors of Bookham and Blechingly and maps of little Bookham with the kind permission of Surrey History Centre at Woking

## *December Meeting*

Our meeting on 14th December was the third occasion recently on which members of the Society were asked to provide short talks for our December meeting. This year the theme was 'My Favourite Hobby'. Brian Hennegan was again our masterly MC.

Catering was generously provided by Ros Hennegan, Vivien Hollingsworth and Margaret Meynen, seasonally supported by donations of items such as mince pies. Those present were at least very well sustained as a result of the rather low attendance.

Given that this reporter contributed a brief talk on 'Laziness', the Society has sensibly prized brevity in asking him to provide a report. David Lokkerbol sought recruits to share his passion for bowls. Linda Heath spoke of gardening as housework, which for her has been life-threatening. Roy Mellick revealed a colourful family history (Mills & Boon please note). Fred Meynen concluded with revealing account of how a second hand purchase generated his passion for model railways (it's all in taking it out of the box ... ).

The Leatherhead Museum is now closed until 4th April 2013. Our 2013 programme of talks at the Letherhead Institute begins again on Friday 18th January when Frank Haslam talks about the Society's Local War Memorials project. Meetings open at 7.30pm and visitors are welcome. The society's website can be found via Google etc.

*Frank Haslam*

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### *Membership Secretary - Job Vacancy*

I shall be retiring as the membership secretary at the AGM in March 2013 so I thought it might be a good idea to give a brief outline of the job involved. This may help anyone who is thinking that they could take the job on.

Obviously you do need to have a certain amount of computer experience as the database is on an **excel** programme which can be copied for the future secretary. Perhaps the busiest time of the year is after the membership renewal forms are sent out in November. There are no membership cards to be issued. All cheques are passed to the treasurer for banking.

During the year there are the occasional new members who need to be added and retiring and deceased members deleted from the list. Every four months labels need to be printed for the sending out of the newsletter. These are passed to the newsletter distributor, Gordon Knowles.

As the membership secretary attendance at the Executive meetings of the Society is expected. There are five a year held in the Institute.

I would say that I spend, on average, no more than an hour a week, often less.

I would be more than willing to meet and talk through the job with any potential candidate. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

*David Wall Membership Secretary 01372 374773 dandswall@btinternet.com*

## *Music Makes the World Go Around*

The topic for the 2012 Society Christmas Social event was 'My favourite hobby'. Regrettably, I could not attend for health reasons at the last minute and having prepared my ten minute slot, I thought those who did attend might like to know what they missed – Whilst for others I hope it brings back memories of what I call the Golden Era of Music.

The immediate audience reaction was sure to be - Goff Powell again, I suppose it will be about collecting local postcards – how boring. However they were wrong –to quote the John Miles song – 'Music was first love'.

Like most of my generation we had no television when I was young – all we had was the wireless. There was 'Housewife's choice', 'Family Favourites', 'Forces Favourites' and 'Down Your Way' just to give some idea of the programme choices of music - music you could either listen to or sing along with and not forgetting Radio Luxembourg, long before the days of pirate radio.

My Dad being a Welshman had a good voice and his favourite song was 'If I was a blackbird'. He also liked opera and I can remember him playing Beniamino Gigli's 'Nessun Dorma' on his old 78 rpm record over and over again. I also, remember buying him an LP of Gilbert & Sullivan operas when we upgraded our old radiogram by fitting a deck that also played 45 and 33.3 rpm discs. I might still have it tucked away somewhere in my collection. My older brother was into big band music such as Glenn Miller and Joe Loss and was an avid Bing Crosby fan.

So you can where my interest in music stems from. I joined the Leatherhead Parish Church Choir in the early 1950s and I think it Brian Henegan was already a member and talked me into it. I stayed there until my voice broke but soon joined the All Saint's Church Choir and remained a member there until 1964 when I moved to Fetcham. Around 1956 I and a few others from the church choir formed a skiffle and pop group originally called 'The Saints' for obvious reasons but later the 'Treble Clefs' and we wore white shirts and a red tie with a treble clef on it. I only got rid of mine a few years ago.

I played the washboard but also sung a little, cover versions of Lonnie Donegan's 'Putting on the Style', Guy Mitchell's 'Singing the Blues', Tommy Steel's handful of Songs and my all time favourite, Harry Belafonte's 'Mary Boy Child' among others. Unfortunately no budding impresario spotted us.

In 'Over the Bridge the Southern Side' Brian Henegan and I mention Tower Electrics, Leatherhead's 'only record shop selling all the leading labels'. However, if you could not afford the original 'Hit Parade' versions, you could always pop into Woolworths and get a cover version on their 'Embassy' label.

It was around this that I had my first taste of writing when in 1957 I remember reviewing a record by Johnny Mathis called 'It's not for me to Say'. I said this young man with his



*Tower Electrics, in North Street - On the left is Mr. Lou Hawkins with Mr. Bert Swetman*



*Telstar by Bud Ashton Cover version of the No. 1 hit by the Tornados*

unique vocal talent will be around for many years and he is still entertaining audiences to this day.

So what's this got to do with being my favourite hobby 'Music makes the world go around' - so why not collect it.

I still have my first 78 record 'Don't Laugh at Me ('cause I'm a fool') by Norman Wisdom', first 45 'Battle of New Orleans' by Lonnie Donegan, my first EP 'Here in my heart' by Al Martino – my first LP 'Music, Music, Music' by Teresa Brewer.

However, my rarest 45 Elvis Presley singing Paralyzed on the mauve HMV Label – is very collectable – My son David has it, he is no fool. – It is worth about £50.

I mainly collect music from the 1950's and 1960's. Many years ago I decided to collect every recording that entered the British top 20 from November 1952 to December 1959, be it either on a 78 rpm – 45 rpm – 33.3 rpm – tape or even CD. I visited Record Fairs - Vintage Record shops and Car Boot Sales to reach my goal - I succeeded - 1,110 recordings in total.

I then decided to do the same for the top 30 entries from January 1960 until December 1969 – 2,030 recordings this time. For over two years I wanted just one recording to complete my task – a very scarce record called 'Tease Me' / Ooh La La by Keith Kelly (No 27 in the hit parade) - I finally found one on E-bay – I'm not telling you the price – My wife might find out.

Just when the Audience thought – great no postcards – oh yes there is!!!

I had intended to finish by revealing singers and musicians from that era, and ask the audience to name them if they could.

*Goff Powell*

## *The Frank Benger Trophy*

The Frank Benger Trophy is awarded to the individual who, in the opinion of the Leatherhead & District Countryside Protection Society has made outstanding contributions to the preservation and maintenance of buildings and our environment. It is a prestigious award and was created with funds given in tribute to Frank Berenger Benger FSA who died in 1985. Frank Benger was a prime mover in both the Leatherhead History Society and the LDCPS for whom he contributed much research and effort in the preservation of buildings (for example: Sweech House and Bull Hill Cottage) and the championing of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

The first recipient of the Trophy was Stephen Fortescue to acknowledge his efforts to fulfil the objects of the Society. Amongst others who received the Trophy was Professor Paul Krause, for his sterling efforts with the Mole Valley Volunteers and Mary Mackinnon, who served on both the Surrey County Council and Mole Valley Council and was outspoken on any matters affecting our district.

More recent holders are Colin Langley

- principally for his work on planning matters and the huge task he undertook with the Leatherhead Tomorrow report and Michael Easun who has put great effort in supporting youth facilities in Bookham, the renovation of Little Bookham Hall and Ashted Peace Memorial Hall. He is also our voice on the Council for the Preservation of Rural England and the Surrey Wildlife Consultative committee for Norbury Park



*Mary Mackinnon with the Trophy*

*Ed Tims*

***Make sure you visit the History Society Website  
[www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk](http://www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk)***

# *News from the Friends of Leatherhead Museum*

The exciting news is that an outing to Chertsey Museum has been arranged for all Friends and History Society members on Friday 22nd March. The Curator Emma Warren has kindly offered to meet us at 10.30am in their education room for coffee after which she will talk to us about the museum. We will then go out for some lunch at a nearby pub/cafe till 1.00pm. In the afternoon Emma has offered to guide us around the museum (those who prefer can look around at their leisure). Some of you may be also be interested in the ruins of Chertsey Abbey which are just over the road from the museum. I hope that lots of you will come along as it sounds really interesting. There is street parking or a town car park close by. For further information or to let me know you are coming (important) or want a lift or can offer a lift phone Julia Lack 01372 386050

Leatherhead Museum closed for the winter on Saturday 7th December and on Monday 17th December the Friends hosted a party in Room G6 at the Leatherhead Institute to thank all the stewards and helpers for their loyal support during the 2012 season. It was a very jolly occasion with tasty food, thanks to the committee, wine of course, and a quiz to keep everyone on their toes. Brian Hennegan gave a very lively speech of thanks, which, via this newsletter, we extend to every steward or helper who was not able to attend the party. Alan Pooley also emphasised how important the stewards are in facilitating public access to our museum.

During the autumn we had a lively visit to the museum from the 1<sup>st</sup> Leatherhead Cubs who were working for their Local Knowledge Badge. Some went out and about exploring the locality for indications of its history whilst the rest worked inside the museum. Thanks to all those helpers who enabled this visit to run smoothly

For the first time we had an outreach visit to Year 1 at St Michael's Infant School in Mickleham. They were exploring homes long ago, so they were fascinated by our artefacts such as the washing dolly and washboard, the iron saucepans, kettle, and smoothing irons. The children enjoyed dressing up, writing on slates and beating a small rug with a carpet beater. These 5/6 year olds responded very intelligently to being asked to make comparisons with the way things were done in their own homes.

The museum opens again on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013. During March there will be some Steward Briefing sessions. May we encourage all stewards to attend these as they are very important occasions through which we can inform every one of any changes, as well as refreshing everyone's memories about day to day procedures. It's also a great opportunity to meet fellow stewards.

The Friends' AGM is on Friday April 26<sup>th</sup> at the Institute and the agenda is enclosed with this newsletter.

*Julia Lack*

## *Meredith Worsfold 1922 – 2012*

‘Merry’ died in October last year at the age of 90 after a short illness. He was a much loved father, grandfather and latterly a great grandfather. He lived most of his life in Ashted and had an extensive knowledge of local history, resulting in two publications. As a long standing member of our Society he maintained his links with the museum and interests in its activities.



He was born in 1922 in Woodfield Lane, Ashted moving to the Street and then to Rectory Lane where his father had set up a building construction business. He joined the RAF in WW2 and served in a bomber base in East Anglia, later being transferred to India servicing Hurricanes and Dakotas. In 1979 he went back to Rectory Lane where he lived for the rest of his life. Merry Worsfold was a life long member of the Leatherhead Methodist Church holding the church archives and amongst all his other activities being a member of the church choir and the Leatherhead Choral Society. His monologues about the hobbies and inventions of his grandfather had us ‘helpless with laughter’ and were much in demand at social events.



He was a keen supporter of charities and celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday by doing a bungee jump, stopping short of doing a tandem sky dive! He also raised money for charities by demonstrating his skills at making jigsaws, selling his first jigsaw at a Leatherhead Carnival in 1982. He loved telling children about jigsaws and demonstrated his skills at our craft days for children at the museum, making sure little fingers were kept well away from the saws! He recently assembled the world’s most complex commercially produced jigsaw of 9000 pieces taking 13 months to complete it.

Merry’s first booklet ‘Ashted, The Street in the 1920s’ was published in 1998 and is ‘a nostalgic look back to the scenes, buildings and people in the days

of my childhood'. The second booklet 'Meredith's Memories' was published in 2009 in association with the Ashted and Leatherhead Local magazine and its publisher Zen George. It is a compilation of anecdotes, 'meanderings', reminiscences with descriptions of people which included singing under the baton of Ralph Vaughan Williams who banned applause during the singing of St Matthew's Passion.

Meredith Worsfold will be remembered for his many gifts and talents but perhaps most of all for being a 'perfect gentleman' with a twinkle in his eye.

*Dr Fred Meynen*

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## ***Get Involved with a Reinvigorated Historic Buildings Trust in Surrey***

**Surrey Historic Buildings Trust** is looking for passionate, committed and dedicated people to appoint to Trustee positions and to help in the general running of the Trust in developing its aims into the future.

The aim of Surrey Historic Buildings Trust is to help conserve the historic architectural heritage of Surrey for the benefit of future generations, by purchasing, repairing and selling buildings, raising awareness of historic building issues, offering grants and providing advice to owners or other trusts or like-minded organisations. Recently SHBT has been restructured to help achieve these aims.

SHBT was formed in 1980 and is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charitable trust managed by a board of Trustees. Our Trustees are responsible for the good governance of the charity. This is a voluntary role and we are very grateful for all



*Abbots Hospital, Guildford – Repairs funded in part with a  
Surrey Historic Buildings Trust grant*

the work our Trustees do to help the charity achieve its objectives.

The Trust aims to use its funds to identify and invest in projects to conserve and improve the historic environment in Surrey into the future. It is looking for people with the appropriate skills to govern the Trust and volunteers to help with the general organising of events and management of projects. Trustees are expected to take a lead role in the management and governance of the Trust. There are also opportunities for people to volunteer and sit on one or more panels within the Trust which will manage various projects relating to the historic environment of Surrey.

The SHBT is looking to appoint new Trustees by the beginning of March 2013. Deadlines for applications is 4 February 2013.

Please contact us if you have an interest in the historic environment of Surrey and feel you could contribute to our work in the one or more of the areas listed below.

- Administration
- Financial Management
- Buildings (Technical)
- Events
- Fund Raising
- Strategy
- Public Relations
- Projects
- Without Portfolio

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Trust, further information on volunteering, including Trustee profiles, are available from our temporary website <http://4culture.weebly.com/surrey-historic-buildings-trust.html>. If you wish to be involved with the work of the Trust but do not wish to be a Trustee, then please contact Angela Fraser, Chairman, SHBT at [angela.fraser@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:angela.fraser@surreycc.gov.uk) or c/o County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2DN.

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## *Symposium Ashted's Peace Memorial Hall*

L&DLHS Presentation at the Surrey Archaeological Society's Local History Symposium on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at Ashted's Peace Memorial Hall.

The object of our history society's display was to illustrate the considerable number of local watercolour paintings by John & Edward Hassell dated circa 1822 -23, both father and son painted in watercolour and other mediums, pictures of private houses and other local buildings, churches and church interiors, indirectly recording for posterity properties in several parishes of Ashted, Bookham, Fetcham Leatherhead



and Mickleham, as well as many other towns and villages in Surrey.

The majority of the original watercolours are held in the Barclay Collection at the Surrey History Centre at Woking.

I would like to acknowledge and thanks to the Surrey History Centre for permission to photograph and reproduce some of the many local works of John & Edward Hassell for our display.

*David Hartley*

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## Profile Publications

Some of you who frequent book fairs or eBay, or at any time have been interested in military aircraft, cars, warships or tanks may have come across the usually excellent booklets produced by **Profile Publications**. They may be of interest locally as listings of their publications in the mid 1960s give their address as PO Box 26, 1a North Street Leatherhead. Later, in the 1970s, they operated from Great Bookham and from Windsor, Berkshire. Their output is is now much available on eBay.

If you have information about **Profile Publications**, especially their time in Leatherhead (or was it just an accommodation address?), please let me know.

*Frank Haslam 01372 379341*

# *Friends of the Leatherhead Museum*

The Friends have organised a visit to **Chertsey Museum** on **Friday 22nd March** to which everyone is welcome.

Chertsey Museum publicises itself as a 'small museum with big ideas' and 'outstanding archeology', 'wonderful costume' and a host of other plaudits. Robin Christian who went to have a look on our behalf was very impressed with the whole museum.

We are expected for coffee at 10.30 after which Emma Warren, the curator, will talk to us about the museum. Following lunch at a nearby pub/cafe Emma will give us a guided tour (or people can do their own thing if they prefer). As an optional part of the visit the ruins of Chertsey Abbey are only just over the road.

I hope lots of you will join us on this expedition. Please phone Julia Lack on 01372 386050 to say you are coming or for more information. There is parking on the street and in the nearby town car park. Disabled access and a lift to all 3 floors.

*Julia Lack*

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## **Lecture Programme**

Lectures are held on the third Friday of the month in the Abraham Dixon Hall of the Letherhead Institute, top of the High Street

Coffee 7.30 lecture 8.00pm admission £1. All are welcome

### **15<sup>th</sup> February 2013 'The Bookhams in WW2' by Michael Anderson**

Michael will be describing the recent project of the Military History Group of the Bookham U3A which led to the publication of a book in September 2012.

### **15<sup>th</sup> March AGM followed by a lecture 'History on Record' by Roy Mellick**

Roy is the Records Secretary of our History Society and will be giving an illustrated talk about the Society's archive and about the proposed Members Archive Website.

### **19<sup>th</sup> April 2013 'Bygone Ashtead' by Goff Powell**

Goff is a local historian and author. He will dip into his extensive collection of old postcards from the 1900s to the 1960s, highlighting the many changes that have occurred in the once tranquil village of Ashtead.

### **17<sup>th</sup> May 2013 ' Finch, the local Haulage Contractor' by Richard Finch and his sister Ann**

*Dr Fred Meynen Programme Secretary 01372 372930 fredmeynen@live.co.uk*

Publicity Officer

Natasha Bligh                    07981 578145                    natashabligh@hotmail.co.uk

Friends of the Leatherhead Museum Chairman

Julia Lack                        01372 386050                    upper.mole@ntlworld.com

Librarian (Letherhead Institute):                    Vacant

The Library is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 10.00am to 12.30pm. Exceptionally, arrangements may be made to use it at other times by applying to the Librarian.

Membership Secretary:

David Wall                        01372 374773                    dandswall@btinternet.com

Records Secretary:

Roy Mellick                        01372 457839                    roy.mellick@btinternet.com

Sales Secretary:

Goff Powell                        01372 374923                    goff@goffpowell.plus.com

Programmes & Lectures Secretary:

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Newsletter Editor:

Martin Warwick                    01372 453717                    martin\_warwick@hotmail.com

Website Editor:

Frank Haslam                        01372 379341                    frank.haslam@gmail.com

Committee Members:

Doug Hollingsworth, Linda Heath

Archival Material

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

Ashtead	Jack Willis
Bookham	Roy Mellick
Fetcham Documents	Alan Pooley
Fetcham Photographs and Maps	Ed Tims
Leatherhead Documents	Vacant
Leatherhead Photographs	Linda Heath
Leatherhead Maps	Alan Pooley

Historical Enquiry Service

Coordinator                    Vacant

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

