

The Newsletter



Leatherhead Museum

February 2015

*The Quarterly Magazine of the
Leatherhead & District Local History Society*

LEATHERHEAD AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 802409
Hampton Cottage, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8DP
Telephone 01372 386348
Email: 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

2015 Membership Subscriptions

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

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President:

Alan Pooley 01372 374093 Alan-maryon@tecren.net

Vice President:

Peter Tarplee 01372 452301 ptarplee@ymail.com

Chairman:

David Hartley 0208 393 3922 Hartley1949@msn.com
07947 471165

Secretary: Vacant (David Hartley - Acting)

Jane Summerfield (ECMinutes) derrick.summerfield@btinternet.com

Treasurer:

David Lokkerbol 01372 375756 david.lokkerbol@gmail.com

Archaeology Secretary:

David Hartley (as above)

Proceedings Editor:

Vacant

Museum Manager

Alan Pooley 01372 374093 Alan-maryon@tecren.net

Museum Curator

Lorraine Spindler 01737 813963 lorrainespindler@hotmail.co.uk

Publicity Officer

John Wettren 01372 459277 johnwettren@ntlworld.com

Editorial

We are now well into another year, 2015 - time ever passes and age creeps on. Every new year means that another year becomes history. We can relate in detail memories, memorable occasions and significant events which helped to shape our lives. But as the years pass many events are less interesting and relevant as their effect lessens - new generations with an iPad in one hand and an iPod in the other see a new world with new discoveries and advances.



A twenty-year-old might say. "I remember my grandfather talking about the terrible Second World War. I suppose it must have been awful to live in those times seventy years ago." Last year was the centenary of the First World War and now nobody is left who fought in it. Is the First World War really more significant than the Napoleonic wars – just part of history, two hundred rather than one hundred years ago? A visit to St Paul’s Cathedral gives a small insight into the significance of battles such as Waterloo and Trafalgar with the incredibly elaborate monuments to Wellington, Nelson and so many other war heroes the names of which few would have heard of today. How long will it be before the two World Wars are equally remote?

It does well to remember that last year is already history and as the years pass it will have less and less significance. The only things that will be remembered in the long term will be those that are recorded and preserved. In a thousand years’ time historians will be searching out such records - they will also be unearthing our current everyday possessions as relics of a past generation. The people of that time will view our artefacts as primitive. We cannot conceive what advances will have been made by then. Perhaps our whole culture and civilisation will have changed – what will it be – we’ve had the Saxons and the Romans – as what will we be known and how will we be remembered?

Martin Warwick

***Make sure you visit the History Society Website
www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk***

Next Edition Deadline - 4th April 2015

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Chairman's Report

Welcome to 2015 and this first Newsletter of the year and we hope you will continue to support our Editor and this quarterly Newsletter. We would like to see more contributions from the membership and also from outside our Society from our general readership further afield, providing more comment, news items, forthcoming events, articles and letters on all aspects of local history. In particular contributions from U3A Groups and local Family History Groups in Ashted, Bookham, Fetcham and Leatherhead would be welcome. It is your Newsletter, advance copy dates for the next three issues for May, August and November can be obtained from Martin Warwick the Newsletter Editor.



A Christmas Quiz was held on Friday 5th December 2014 and congratulations and a vote of thanks to Frank Haslam and his wife Jane and all those members of our committee and others including our patrons who supported the Christmas Quiz. This was a new event conceived by Frank and the net proceeds after all deductions raised £334.20 for the History Society. It was a good job well done and positive feedback from all those present would be welcome to ensure that a similar event can be held again in December this year.

The AGM 2015

The year turns very quickly these days and another year has passed and the 68th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in the Dixon Hall of the Letherhead Institute at 8.00pm on Friday 20th March 2015. The Honorary President, Alan Pooley will chair the meeting

Agenda

- Apologies for absence.
- President's Address
- Minutes of the 67th Annual General Meeting
- Matters arising from the Minutes of 67th AGM
- Presentation of the Executive Committee report for 2014
- Election of Officers and Executive Committee members 2015/16
- Presentation of the Society's accounts 2014
- Review of Subscriptions for the year 2016
- Appointment of the Independent Examiner for the accounts
- Any other business (to be notified to the Chairman before 10th March)

The Minutes, EC Reports and a copy of the Society's Accounts for 2014 together with nomination papers for the election of office holders for 2015/16 are inserted separately in this Newsletter. If for any reason you do not receive this information please contact me by phone as soon as possible on 0208 393 3922.

Touching on the Election of office holders for 2015/16, year on year I have tried to make a case to our membership to get involved with the running of the History Society and the

Museum both as volunteers and as possible committee members.

Hon Treasurer David Lokkerbol will be standing down at this year's AGM after six plus years in office having ably provided us with financial stability and has steered us through some difficult times. We would all like to thank David and wish him well with his new interests and enterprise. Fortunately David's successor has been found to take on his role in the person of Carl Leyshon. Carl comes from a background in finance in the public sector and is well placed to ensure the continued smooth running of the Society's accounts and has already been co-opted on the committee to shadow David Lokkerbol ensuring a smooth transition up to the AGM.

We hope you will endorse the committee's recommendation at this AGM that Carl Leyshon will become the new Honorary Treasurer.

I wish I could also say to you all that we had found someone to fulfil the other important roles vacant on our committee, that of Hon Secretary, Membership Secretary, Sales and Publications Secretary, Publicity Officer, Leatherhead Archivist and Proceedings Editor together with members to join and assist the Lectures Committee but I am sorry that I am unable to report any change on that front.

The work of the Society and its Museum must continue and as a consequence like sticking plaster some of us have been obliged to bridge gaps and plug holes by taking on more than one or two roles or tasks but this is not a tenable option in the long term. Just try to imagine for a moment how effective our Society and Museum could be and what we could achieve collectively if we had a full complement of members supporting us in these tasks.

David Hartley

Dr Margaret Birtwistle (Meynen)

Sadly I have to record that Dr Margaret Birtwistle the wife of Dr Fred Meynen died suddenly just before Christmas on 20th December. A fine lady she will be remembered by many for her good works. She was very supportive of our Local History Society and Museum in many ways particularly at the lecture meetings at the Letherhead Institute and at the Leatherhead Museum with Craft Days and other social events such as barbecues. She was a great organiser and motivator and I had the pleasure of working with her on a number of occasions.

Our sincere condolences have been conveyed to her husband Dr Fred Meynen and their family.

David Hartley

Archaeology - Forthcoming Events

**The Surrey Archaeological Society's Annual Symposium 2015 Saturday 28th February
9.30am to 5.00pm at the Peace Memorial Hall, Woodfield Lane, Ashted, KT21 2BE**

Advance tickets available from the address below @ £10.00 or available on the door @ £12. A student ticket is available @ £8 if booked in advance. Cheques are to be made payable to 'Surrey Archaeological Society' and sent with a SAE to Surrey Archaeological Society, Castle Arch, Guildford, Surrey GU1 3SX.

This year's Annual Symposium will present a full programme of speakers on Archaeology in Surrey. Professor Alan Crocker will be demonstrating the process of papermaking during the lunch break and there will also be the usual display presentations of local archaeological and history groups in Surrey which will be judged for this year Ivan Margary Award.

Programme for the Day

09.30 Registration

10.00 Chairman's address

10.05 Recent finds in Surrey: FLO: David Williams

10.35 Betchworth Castle: 2014 excavations - a report from Martin Higgins on its historic development.

11.10 Coffee/Tea

11.40 Recent excavations in the village of Thorpe by Phil Jones Surrey County Archaeological Group (SCAU)

12.10 Papermaking in Surrey by Alan Crocker of the Surrey Industrial History Group (SIHG)

12.45 Lunch

14.00 The 2015 Margary Award presentation.

14.10 Bishops and Peasants: David Stone - Everyday life in 13th century Esher.

14.45 A late Upper Paleolithic site at Guildford Fire Station - discovery, excavation and the results so far will be provided by Gerry Thacker of Oxford Archaeology.

15.15 Tea/Coffee

15.45 Archaeology South-East - recent excavations to the north of Horley presented by Dan Swift and Simon Stevens of ASE

16.15 Dismantling and displaying the Reigate Roman Tile Kiln fire tunnel presented by Emma Corke and Peter Burgess.

17.00 Close

A Conference on 'Moated Sites and Churches in the Landscape' on Saturday, March 21st – 10.00am to 4.00pm

The Surrey Archaeological Society's Medieval Studies Forum have arranged a full day meeting of the Medieval Studies Forum and Villages Study Group at St Catherine's Village Hall, Chestnut Avenue, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4HF

The Local History Committee Annual Symposium – ‘Death, Disease and Damnation’
Saturday May 2nd – 10.00am to 5.00pm at the Ashted Peace Memorial Hall, Ashted,
Surrey, KT21 2BE.

The theme for this year’s Annual Local History Symposium will be exploring attitudes to death and its causes, belief, burial and commemoration. It will be attended by local historians from across Surrey and local history societies will put on displays. The Gravett Award will be presented to the group presenting the best display.

If you would like to reserve a display space (which is free) please contact Glenys Crocker, 6 Burwood Close, Guildford GU1 2SB; 01483 565821 or glen@glfd.freereserve.co.uk

The Programme for the Day

09.15 Registration.

09.55 Chairman’s Opening Remarks - Dr Catherine Ferguson - Surrey Archaeological Society-Local History Committee.

10.00 Surrey Chantries: hastening through purgatory in the Later Middle Ages - Peter Balmer Surrey Archaeological Society.

10.40 Death in Tudor and Stuart Surrey: microbes, malnutrition and misadventure - Sue Jones, Research Student - Continuing Education Department, University of Oxford.

11.10 Coffee.

11.40 The Black Death in London: The impact of an epidemic - Dr Barney Sloane, Historic England.

12.20 Cholera and conflict in nineteenth-century England - Mike Brown, University of Roehampton.

13.00 Lunch.

14.00 Introduction to afternoon session - Dr Gerry Moss – Chairman - Surrey Archaeological Society - Local History Committee.

14.05 Mausoleum and Monuments in Surrey - Alex Bagnall, Mole Valley Borough Council.

14.40 ‘Looking downwards in sympathy and upwards in hope’ - The Watts Memorial Chapel and Cemetery - Hilary Underwood - Curatorial Advisor, Watts Chapel.

15.20 Tea.

15.50 Presentation of the Gravett Award - Dr Gerry Moss - Surrey Archaeological Society

15.55 Brookwood Cemetery - John Clarke, Historical Consultant, Brookwood Cemetery

16.25 WWI from India: The Muslim Burial Ground in Horsell - Dr Zafar Iqbal, Woking Borough Council.

16.55 Chairman’s closing remarks - Dr Gerry Moss, Chairman Surrey Archaeological Society Local History Committee

17.00 Close.

The cost will be £12.00 if registered in advance. Please register in advance with Janet Balchin at janet.balchin@btinternet.com; Hullbrook Cottage, Cranleigh Road, Ewhurst

GU6 7RN; 01483 277342 . Tickets will not be sent out – please pay on the day. Applications will be acknowledged by email, postal applications will also be accepted but only acknowledged if SAE included.

Tickets will also be available on the day for non-registered attendees at £14.00 The hall has a Pay and Display car park. Ashted is also served by bus and rail. Tea and coffee are included. Ashted has a good selection of cafes and pubs or bring a packed lunch.

Excavation at Cocks Farm Roman Villa, Abinger in June

The Surrey Archaeological Society website have put out for volunteers for the 6th Season of excavations at Cocks Farm Roman Villa in June from Monday, June 1st – 10.00am to Tuesday, June 30th – 4.00pm

A sixth season of excavation will take place close to Cocks Farm Roman villa, Abinger during the month of June (provisional dates 1st-3rd, 6th-10th, 15th-17th, 20th-24th, 27th-30th). 2014's field trench will be re-opened and expanded to further investigate Iron Age and Roman features found during CFA12/14. Work in the fields around the Roman villa is adding enormously to the picture of pre-villa occupation and the transition to a Roman way of life.

Volunteers from the Society will be given priority and non-SyAS members will be charged £25 a week (or part thereof) to cover costs. If you would like to register your interest please contact the volunteer coordinator Nikki Cowlard, nikki.cowlard@btinternet.com/ 01372 745432

Medieval Studies Forum - Study visit to Chichester Saturday June 6 - 10:00 to 16:30

A guided tour and talks are being arranged for the day. Details on cost and a full programme for the day are to be confirmed.

Leatherhead's First Inventor?

I have made a search in the archives of the National Reference Library for Science and Invention and have uncovered what appears to be Leatherhead's first inventor, one Jeremiah Johnson of Church Street, Leatherhead. He filed a Patent Application on 7th March 1854 for 'A New Stop for Railway and Other Carriages'. This depended upon a system of hooks dropped suddenly on to ratchet teeth on the carriage wheels so that 'every wheel can be firmly stopped in one moment, so as to cause the train to slide a short distance, like a boy on ice'.

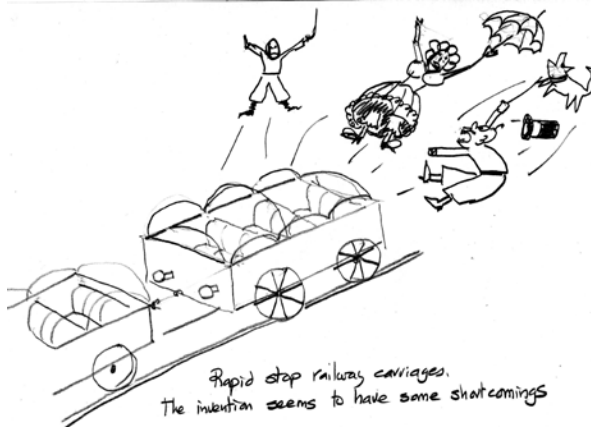
According to the 1851 Census returns, Jeremiah Johnson (aged 40) lived at No 22 Church Street, Leatherhead, with his wife Sarah (aged 32) and was a Master Cordwainer employing two men. He was born at South Stoneham, Hants and his wife at Botley, Hants. There were two other people in residence - Janet Sutherland (aged 19) house servant, born in Scotland and Edward Taylor (aged 20), Cordwainer's Journeyman born at Holmwood, Surrey. A Cordwainer was a worker in leather and not necessarily just a shoemaker. It would be

interesting to know whether he purchased his leather locally or used cordovan, a superior grade of fine soft dyed leather from Cordoba in Spain.

Unfortunately Jeremiah Johnson failed to suggest how the passengers in trains fitted with his invention were to be prevented from being shot across the compartments like bullets! Seat belts had not yet been invented so it is hardly surprising that no more was heard of his idea.

However it would be interesting to know what happened to the working model he referred to which stopped the carriage ‘in a few feet’.

Leatherhead was rather slow in producing an inventor as Guildford had one in 1771, Cobham in 1777, Richmond in 1778, Farnham in 1786, Reigate in 1792 and Abinger in 1793. Towns nearer London such as Kingston-upon-Thames put the rest to shame but they are no longer in Surrey.



A M Edwards

Paving Tax in 18th Century London

I recently researched Mary Chrystie’s ancestors who were living in London from the late seventeenth century. This was for a talk I gave to a London History Group. I was mapping how one of the maternal lines of her family tree fitted together. This is interesting in itself but it provides a limited view of the family. I wanted to find out more than where and when her family lived and so I searched for records to see if they had jobs. I looked for information about their incomes, what local taxes they paid and what was their religion. I was curious to find out what life might really have been like for them. This involved looking at social, religious, economic and political history and illustrates the fact that family history research should give you an insight into what was going on in the world whilst the ancestor was alive.

In my research I found a great deal of information about Mary’s ancestors that is very interesting. Just one of the discoveries was that one of Mary’s ancestors was living in Great Marlborough Street in 1773 and paying paving tax, among other taxes. I wondered what was paving tax?

In order to understand this I found myself studying the economic rivalry between the City of London and Westminster during much of the eighteenth century. From the early eighteenth century Westminster and the Parish of Marylebone prospered. Houses were built in Berkeley, Hanover and Grosvenor Squares. All the new houses had water laid on coming



Westminster Bridge 1750

from reservoirs in Green Park. The smaller Green Park pond took the sewage. As a result wealthy citizens moved westward to prosperous Westminster from the City of London. Until these new houses were built, aristocrats and the gentry from the country stayed in lodgings when they visited London. But increasingly the wealthy and fashionable had a London town house in these new areas even if it was rented and not owned. A movement of trades followed the movement west from the City to serve the wealthy. The City became worried about the money stream moving westward, particularly as banks also looked in that direction to provide services to moneyed Westminster residents.

In eighteenth century London a practical difficulty faced by its population was the problem of making relatively short journeys due to the increased number of people and traffic. This meant that people living in Westminster were less likely to travel to the City to bank or purchase their goods. This difficulty in communication and travelling around became one of the greatest drivers for change.

The streets of Westminster had poor paving and it was difficult and dangerous for carriages to pass along the roads because of the deep channels and ruts in the road surface. It was hard to walk along the pavements because of the amount and depth of the mud and horse dung thrown on to the pavements from the passage of carriages along the roads. Added to this when it rained water poured down from high level waterspouts on houses making it necessary to wade through this muck on the pavements. There were numerous paving acts from 1709 to 1724, but this did not produce much improvement.

In order to improve the transport and communication situation Parliament decided upon the construction of a second bridge across the Thames and a bill was proposed in 1721 to build the bridge close to the Houses of Parliament.

However, the City Corporation and many others in the City opposed this fearing the loss of trade from the City. But in 1736 the burgesses, freeholders and inhabitants of Westminster argued that a new bridge was essential and although this faced much opposition from the City, the Westminster Bridge Act was passed. The bridge opened in 1750. In 1739 the Government's Commissioners were given powers to acquire land to widen existing streets and build new ones in Westminster and improve traffic movement.

In 1756 the City petitioned for a new bridge at Blackfriars and the widening of London Bridge to attract back prosperous people who had left the City. London Bridge was widened by 1762 and Blackfriars Bridge was built by 1769.

After a petition to improve the streets, Parliament passed the Westminster Paving Act in 1762, which allowed for street improvements. Stone was used to lay carriageways and pavements were raised above the carriageway, lights were placed at regular intervals, streets had nameplates and houses had numbers, and high level water spouts were removed. Once these improvements had taken place Paving Tax was levied on householders who benefitted from them.

These improvements in Westminster sparked the City of London into action and by 1766 they had an Act of Parliament that allowed the City to improve its streets in a similar way to Westminster.

During the period 1750 to 1770 there was immense change in the streets of both Westminster and the City as each area saw the other as a competitor for trade and fashionability. Mary Chrystie's ancestors lived in the Westminster and Marylebone area from 1700 until 1813 so would have experienced all these changes and the political and economic battles that took place between the City and Westminster. Instead of just knowing where Mary's ancestors lived I had much more sense of what it was like to live there and the difficulties of moving from one place to another. Reading this history helped me understand why Mary Chrystie's ancestor was paying Paving Tax. I also learnt a lot about eighteenth century London that I had not known before.

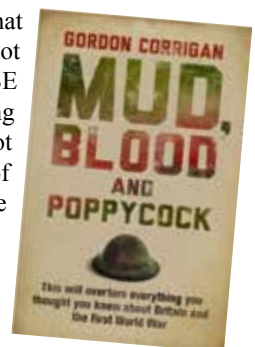
This illustrates what is so interesting about family history research. You will always be learning about aspects of history you had not known before.

Judith Witter 2014

World War I - Leatherhead Library Book Review: Mud, Blood and Poppycock

The front cover of this book says, "This will overturn everything that you thought you knew about Britain and the First World War". It is not a new book, it was published in 2003. It is by Gordon Corrigan MBE who after running the Ghurka Centre in Hampshire was a visiting lecturer at the Joint Services Command and Staff College. He was not the first to rebut what has come to be called the Blackadder view of WWI, that is our dreadful casualties stemmed from the incompetence of officers.

The British Army of 1914 was a comparatively small professional force that was benefiting from the Haldane reforms - its focus was beginning to take in more than the policing of the Empire. However it was not backed up by the vast reservoir of trained men created by years of conscription as existed in France, Germany and Russia. Corrigan argues that Haig

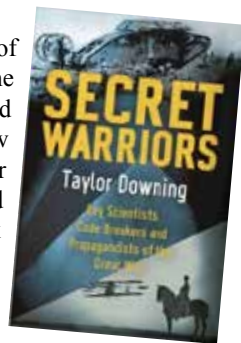


was the man who took that tiny army, expanded, trained and prepared it until it was the only Allied army capable of defeating the Germans in 1918. Learning on the job in a fast changing technological wartime environment was always going to be painful. Corrigan's unpicking of a number of widely held beliefs about WWI is truly thought-provoking. This book is in Leatherhead Library.

Frank Haslam

World War I - Leatherhead Library Book Review: Secret Warriors - Key Scientists, Code-breakers and Propagandists of the Great War

Taylor Downing's book published this year opens with the stuff of thrillers. In the early hours of 5th August 1914, the captain of the GPO cable laying ship 'Alert' moored in Dover Harbour received a special coded telegram ordering him into the North Sea. A few miles off Emden six hours after Britain had formally declared war on Germany the ship's grappling equipment hauled a thick insulated cable to the surface. After hacking it apart and dropping it back into the sea four further cables were similarly destroyed. These cables carried Germany's secure links to France, Spain, Africa and America. From now on Germany's communications with many of these areas would have to be by radio. This one act was to have huge consequences in the battle to read enemy signals.



Downing looks at the scientific and technological background to the Great War focussing on Aviation, Code Breakers, Engineers and Chemists, Doctors and Surgeons, and Propagandists. It is a highly readable account of how the need for victory drove innovation forward and in many ways created the groundwork for the better known developments in WW2. His descriptions of the players - not just what they did and what they had to overcome to succeed - is fascinating. At the end of the book he provides a Who's Who that tells what happened to them afterwards. Highly recommended. This book is in Leatherhead Library.

Frank Haslam

World War I: From the Vicar in the October 1914 issue of the Leatherhead Parish Church Magazine

My Dear Friends,

The effects of this terrible war are beginning to make themselves more directly felt among us. One of those who went out from this place to the front has been able to return home after being very severely wounded. Another who was slightly wounded is also in England and may be expected home next week; a third has been invalided to a hospital at the base in France from the results of long exposure in the trenches. Of a fourth, his poor wife can obtain no news except that he was severely wounded in action on August 26th. And there are many of us who are in the greatest anxiety and suspense from their inability to learn

anything of what is happening to those dear to them. It is a sore burden to bear - those on whom it falls will remember that it is part of their share in upholding the cause of their country and of all humanity.

As the winter comes on it is to be feared that the effects of the war may be felt in more material ways: we must not be tempted to forget that not only our existence as a nation, but our own personal lives and the lives of those dependent upon us and the possibility of maintaining ourselves at all depend upon the staunchness of us at home to endure the cost and the distress whatever it may be, as well as upon the gallantry of those who are directly engaged in the Fleet or in the fighting line on land. If all our trouble makes us think less of material things, makes us realise the passing nature of all that we have in this life and brings us nearer to God and to value more highly the things that are eternal - as there are signs that it is doing - then the stern lesson which God is teaching us will not be taught in vain.

For one thing I would plead, namely that every one will be very careful not to repeat stories about what is supposed - and often quite wrongly supposed - to have happened or to be going to happen in connection with the war and all that is in any way concerned with it. The wildest statements have been spread about very freely, and, without exception have been quickly proved not to have had the slightest foundation in fact. In many of these cases a great deal of unnecessary anxiety has been stirred - in some of them the acutest distress must have been caused had they come to the ears of those most directly concerned. A very little thought will shew that it is unworthy and often actually cruel to take any part in spreading statements of this kind. English men and women who have so gravely committed to God as we have done, our cause in which all that makes life worth living is at stake ought not to be so liable to be carried away by momentary excitement, and by the pleasure of 'telling some new thing'.

A great stir has been caused in the place by the billeting upon us of some 700 men of the new Public Schools and Universities Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. It is much to be hoped that their sojourn among us may be well for both us and them. We have done our best to welcome them and very much will depend upon the care and vigilance of parents and employers with regard to those of whom they are the natural guardians. A great increase of responsibility is just now thrust upon them and it is to be hoped that they are fully alive to it.

I am publishing in this Magazine* a list of those belonging to this Parish who are serving in His Majesty's Forces, in the Fleet, at the Front or elsewhere so far as I have had means of compiling one. It is likely of course to contain many errors and to be far from complete - the information received has often been of the most meagre and uncertain description and I shall be most grateful for any corrections and additions which may be sent to me.

I remain,

Yours very faithfully,

T. F. Hobson.

* Frank Haslam, Leatherhead Parish Church Parish Archivist - this list can be seen together with other WWI Parish magazine extracts as they are re-published in the History pages on the parish website

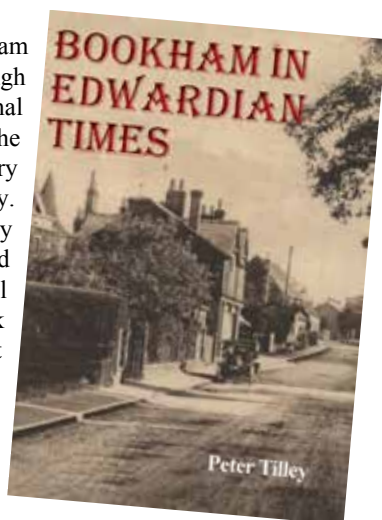
http://www.parishchurch.leatherheadweb.org.uk/go_to_church_history.htm

Books & New Publications

Bookham in Edwardian times by Peter Tilley

(A snapshot of Great and Little Bookham, Surrey based on the 1911 Census)

The villages of Great Bookham and Little Bookham are included in the Domesday survey of 1086 although settlements existed well before that time. Their original name was Bocheham or hamlet of the beech trees. The limited records available to us show that from 8th century Great Bookham was part of the Manor of Chertsey Abbey. Following the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, in 1550 the Manor of Great Bookham was granted to Lord William Howard. After passing through several families it ended up in the hands of William Keswick M.P. in 1882. The Manor of Little Bookham, whilst previously linked to Chertsey Abbey, had by 1498 come into the possession of Thomas Howard. On his death it passed to his son, Lord William Howard, this being the only time the two manors were joined. In 1637 it was acquired by the Maddox family and remained associated with this family until 1937 when Edward Pollen sold the Manor House for it to become a school.



The Bookhams are two in the line of a dozen 'strip' parishes between Epsom and Guildford which extend from the crest of the North Downs northwards down the dip slope. Two roads form a rectangular pattern with the two main axes running parallel from east-north-east to west south-west. The Lower Road links the village centres of Fetcham, Great and Little Bookham and Effingham. It follows approximately the two hundred foot contour and coincides with the narrow outcrop of Reading and Thanet Beds which lie between the chalk of the Downs and the clay of the Common. The Guildford Road runs across the Downs further south, half a mile away from the Lower Road in Little Bookham, but under three hundred yards away in Great Bookham. These two roads were described in 1882 in C. Howard's 'The Roads of England and Wales' as alternative routes between Leatherhead and Guildford, both being 'undulating' with 'hard smooth surfaces'.

Up to the late nineteenth century the two villages were typical of agricultural communities in the South of England having developed from a feudal system of manorial based agriculture dominant in the middle ages into a system of mainly tenant farmers renting their farms from a local landowner and employing labourers. A few small farmers even owned their own farms.

However, the 1870s and 1880s saw a major change in village life, not just in Bookham but over the whole of Britain. Cheap imports of grain from North America and frozen meat from Australia and South America meant that many tenant farmers were unable to compete

and Britain lapsed into what was known as the agricultural depression. When farming became unprofitable many farmers gave up their tenancy and ceased paying their rent to the landowners. Some landowners had been financing their extravagant life style directly from these rents, whilst many others were living on bank loans with interest paid by rental incomes. In these latter cases, when landowners could no longer pay the interest banks would call in the loans forcing the landowners to sell off large chunks of land at a time when agricultural land values were poor. Especially in the Home Counties, their buyers were often nouveau riche business men (and women) who could break up their purchases and offer plots of highly desirable building land to well paid professionals who wished to commute to London on the newly established railway network.

From 1801 National Censuses were held every ten years in the spring of the second year of the decade. Until 1841 these were simple body counts by a parish official but from then on each household was required to complete a schedule recording details of all those present in the house on census night. Between 1841 and 1901 these were collected by an enumerator who was then required to transcribe these details into a ledger known as the Census Enumerator's Book (CEB). The original schedules were then destroyed whilst the CEBs were sent to the Registrar General in London for analysis and storage. For the 1911 census the original schedules were not transcribed on to CEBs but were sent as individual documents for analysis and archiving. Copies of all the archived CEBs and schedules are available to the public once 100 years have passed.

For Bookham these have been digitised onto a computer database. Civil registration of births, deaths and marriages became compulsory from 1837 but certificates are only available as individual documents upon payment of a fee. Hence it is not feasible to collect registration data for whole communities and it is necessary to rely on the baptism, marriage and burial registers of the parish churches and the very limited information from the indexes of the civil registers. Such information as there is has been added to the database.

Another source of information is Lloyd George's 'Domesday' land survey resulting from the 1910 Finance Act. This is a record of 1909 property values, ownership and occupancy intended for assessment of capital gains on any future disposals.

In the 1860s the first edition of the Ordnance Survey maps on a scale of 1:2,500 was issued. At this scale the shape of individual buildings are clearly visible. The maps for Bookham were updated about 1895, again about 1912 and finally in 1934. Copies were obtained from the Surrey History Centre in Woking. Unfortunately Bookham is spread over four maps and the joins are sometimes obvious.

Finally, many photographs and postcards from the turn of the century which have views of the local area have been copied.

For the 1911 census Bookham was divided into two enumeration districts. The enumerator for District 11 was Thomas Hamshar who was a blacksmith and engineer living in the Red House on Lower Road. For District 12 it was Charles Pearce who was a carpenter living on the High Street. This book will retrace the routes taken by those two men to collect the records making up the 1911 census. Their journeys have been broken down into manageable segments and each segment allocated a chapter. Because the enumeration districts shared the same schedule numbers these have been prefixed by the district number, hence 11/001

refers to Station House in district 11 whilst 12/001 refers to Cordingly's shop in the High Street which is in district 12.

The narrative in the book gives a brief summary of each household, preceded by the schedule number in square brackets. The maps at the beginning of each chapter are annotated to show the relevant schedule numbers for each property or group of properties. However, the files on the CD give full life histories of all the individuals making up each schedule. A guide on how to retrieve information from the CD is given at the end of the book.

This book will attempt to present a picture of Edwardian Bookham which is likely to be very different from Victorian Bookham and bear only a passing resemblance to the modern Elizabethan Bookham we know and enjoy. However, it is hoped that your imagination will enable you to conjure up images of what life was like for the inhabitants of our village a hundred years ago.

Bookham In Edwardian Times by Peter Tilley, priced at £10.00 includes a CD with Additional Data & maps and is available through local Bookshops in Bookham & Leatherhead;

Bookham - David Smith at the Wishing Well 7 High Street Great Bookham Surrey
KT23 4AA

Leatherhead - Peter Snell at Barton's Bookshop 2 Bridge Street Leatherhead Surrey
KT22 8BZ

Otherwise from the Sales & Publications Secretary of the L&DLHS at £10.00 + £1-50 Postage & Packing.

Other Books

There are three new reprints currently available from the Sales & Publications Secretary of the L&DLHS of three successful past books of photographs of Ashted, Bookham & Fetcham and Leatherhead; **Images of Ashted** priced at £12.99 + p&p., **Images of England – Bookham & Fetcham** at £12.99 +p&p and finally the **Archive Photograph Series Leatherhead** priced at £12.99 + p&p.

Contact; David Hartley 07947471165 or Hartley1949@msn.com, email or write c/o the L&DLHS Registered Office; Hampton Cottage 64 Church Street Leatherhead Surrey KT22 8DP or email staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com or visit our website www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk

Bulletin of the Surrey Archaeological Society

The latest Bulletin of the Surrey Archaeological Society (December 2014) contains two articles of local interest.

Our member William Whitman adds and expands on his guidebook of 2012 to the parish church of Great Bookham

Pauline Hulse and Lyn Spencer report on the small area excavation in The Park north of the same church, possibly the site of Chertsey abbey's medieval farmhouse. Excavation will resume in 2015.

Derek Renn

News from the Friends of Leatherhead Museum

Chiming in with the theme of the 2014 museum season the committee chose a WW1 theme for the Christmas Thank You party for stewards and helpers. We suggested that anyone who wished to do so could dress up in something appropriate to that period. Room G6 was greatly enhanced (thanks to the office administrator of the Leatherhead Institute) by the loan of four large side lamps to soften the lighting. Following the food there was a WW1 sing song directed by three splendidly dressed 'band leaders' - 'we packed up our troubles' and said 'Goodbye' with full voice. The period quiz caused a few discussions and head scratching but tasty food (thanks to the committee) and wine of all colours made the evening go with a swing.



Robin Christian, Julie Lack and Gwen Hoad lead the Stewards party in WW1 songs

The main news to announce is that there is to be an outing to Christ's Hospital Museum on Tuesday March 24th at 10.30am where we will be given a guided tour by their volunteers. This museum is not open to the general public and can only be visited in a pre booked group. This event is open to all members of the History Society and the Friends of the Museum. Please can you let Julia Lack know on 01372 386050, upper.mole@ntlworld.com if you are interested in coming along or would like further information, or would like to come but need a lift. For anyone with walking difficulties I am assured that they can be set down at the entrance and there is a lift up to the museum. We can buy tea or coffee in their cafeteria on arrival. For anyone wanting a companionable lunch afterwards there are pubs within a short distance and nearer the time I can arrange to book a table if that is what people would like. Further Friend's news can be seen in the bulletin included with this newsletter. We look forward to seeing everyone back in action at the museum in Spring 2015.

Julia Lack

Is there a Membership Application Form in your Newsletter?

If there is it means that at the time of despatch, we have apparently not yet received your renewal for 2015. Please use the enclosed form to bring your membership up to date. The same form can be used for the Friends of the Museum.

Thank you to all those who have already renewed your membership(s) of the Society/ Friends (all being well you should not have had a form with your newsletter!).

Frank Haslam Membership Secretary

The Roman Villa in Ashtead Woods

Dr David Bird, the former County Archaeologist and author of the standard book on Roman Surrey gave us an enthralling talk on 'The Roman villa in Ashtead Woods: a century of research' at our October meeting. He paid special tribute to the help he had received from the Corporation of the City of London rangers who looked after the Common, removing tree stumps and bringing in equipment over the seven years of excavation. Writing his final report now gave David the chance of a fresh perspective. He had just returned from a conference at Xanten (Germany) where features of the villa and bathhouse unique in the Roman Empire had been seen by international experts.

Ashtead woods had always been oak forest farmed only for its timber. The villa was not the first human occupation: underlying it was a chalk floor and traces of a timber building. A triangular earthwork of bank and ditch nearby had been used both before and after the Romans.

Tony Lowther (our first President) claimed to have discovered the site in 1924 by noting pottery thrown up by burrowing rabbits. (However Roman pottery finds were recorded on the 6" Ordnance Survey map of 1867-8 and in Paget's book of 1873.) In 1925 Lowther's colleague Arthur Cotton bought the manorial rights (including the Common) and they began excavating. Although Lowther produced interim reports these often conflicted with each other and with his 1959 reappraisal. It was very frustrating not to know where exactly most finds came from, like the painted wall-plaster, the Anglo-Saxon knife and pot mentioned only briefly in other writings by Lowther. The most reliable evidence was the frequent newspaper reports and the lecture notes of both Cotton and Lowther.

The bath-block (the first building to be excavated) had its main rooms provided with hypocausts (underfloor heating) which had been rebuilt with tiles facing the flint walls. The villa itself had an added 'en-suite' bath block: bathing was a Roman social event like the jacuzzi of today. The villa's unique plan consisted of two rows each of six rooms of different sizes and joints, several with floors supported on tile pillars to allow under-floor heating and one with horizontal flue channels. Some loose tesserae were all that was left of the mosaic pavements. Another room was completely lined with flue-tiles with a hole cut in one side to allow fumes to escape below floor level. The only other known example of such complete 'jacketing' known to the speaker was in the town baths of Lepcis Magna. Several floors had been raised further to avoid flooding. A front corridor had been added later with attached tile half-columns and sandstone carvings surrounding a painted inscription together with a porch with flanking apses. A road ran directly to the nearest point on Stane Street.

In the 1960's John Hampton extended the survey area discovering a wall surrounding the villa site beyond which were large Roman clay-pits and tile kilns. A recently-excavated kiln was one of one of the largest known with a 6metre long heating duct, with cross-flues and an entrance arch still in situ. The most remarkable products were box-flue tiles designed to carry fumes away from under-floor heating. These carried patterns applied by a roller: over half the complete flue tiles known in Britain were found here at Ashtead.

Our speaker showed pictures of the domestic pottery found: bright red Samian ware, colour-

coated indented Castor wares, a beaker made near Cologne, a mortarium stamped by the potter Albinus about 80AD, a 'facepot' an incense-burner and a unique long-necked onion-shaped vessel. Some was made on the site and a nearby pond was a Roman 'puddling-pit' used to prepare clay for use.

The volume of clay dug and of tile 'wasters' indicated that this was a trade centre probably operated by an army veteran willing to experiment. The layout of the site resembled that of the works depôt of Legion XX at Holt (Denbighshire) and the bath-block could be paralleled at the forts along Hadrian's Wall. We may even know the owner's name: the 'wolf and stag' roller-stamp (the only one with animals) also has the initials G.(aius) J.(ulius) C.

Derek Renn

DORKING CONCERTGOERS PRESENT

DANTE STRING QUARTET

Sunday 8 February 2015 Dorking Halls 3.00pm
Works by Haydn, Kodály & Schubert

Sunday 1 March 2015 Dorking Halls 3.00pm
Works by Haydn, Bartók & Debussy

Saturday 21 March 2015 Dorking Halls 7.30pm
Works by Haydn, Sibelius & Beethoven

ROSANNA TER-BERG FLUTE RECITAL

with **Leo Nicholson** Piano

Saturday 18 April 2015 Dorking Halls 7.30pm
Works by Debussy, Mozart, Schubert, Frank Martin, Liszt,
William Alwyn, Ian Clarke & Poulenc

ADELIA MYSLOV VIOLIN RECITAL

with **Craig White** Piano

Saturday 16 May 2015 7.30pm
The Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon PLEASE NOTE VENUE
Works by Bach, Beethoven, Respighi, Brahms & Frolov

Tickets from Dorking Concertgoers' Box Office 01306 740619
or Dorking Halls 01306 881717

Details of membership from Dorking Concertgoers on 01306 740619
www.dorkingconcertgoers.org.uk

Season sponsored by CLASSIC FM



Dante Quartet © Philip Pratt



Rosanna Ter-Berg © Orde Faulner



Investigating Great Bookham's Past

In 2012, members of the Surrey Archaeological Society planned a test pitting project for Great Bookham. A detailed initial report was prepared into the history of Great Bookham to ensure that the test pitting programme met the Society's criteria.

The Society uses a standard test pitting methodology, which involves digging a metre square area, sieving the soil from each 10cm layer and looking for any finds. The most likely things found are the bits and pieces people have thrown away over the years, such as pottery, metal, glass and bone. We analyse all the finds as they provide important clues that will help to date the layers of the pit (if the layers are undisturbed) and tell us what people were doing in the past. After analysis owners can claim any of the finds from their pit.

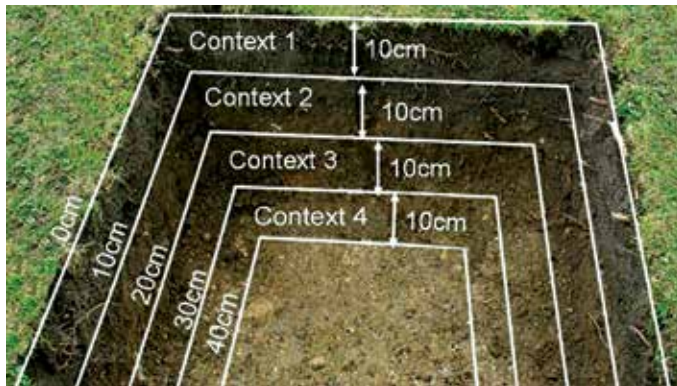


The purpose of digging a number of test pits across a settlement is to try to determine the earliest location of human occupation in the area, and how today's settlement grew from one or more farms or hamlets over a thousand years or more. During the medieval period, settlements not only grew, but some also declined and even disappeared. The test pits in this programme were not designed to find historic buildings and structures but to recover evidence under controlled conditions of human activity in each locality. Statistical analysis of the finds from each test pit helps establish the density of occupation at different locations.

Great Bookham was a farming community with a reasonable size village centre but we have relatively few early buildings in Bookham and further information would be helpful in building a picture of the development of the village.

A call for residents to offer an area of their garden for test pitting went out in the August 2012 edition of the Bookhams Bulletin and also in the Leatherhead and District Local History Society's Newsletter. Nineteen residents offered their gardens for test pitting in 2013. The sites were randomly scattered throughout Great Bookham with three in Little Bookham. This was ideal as we wanted to avoid any preconceived ideas about where to dig. Similar random test pitting in East Anglia added considerably to the history of the area which would not have occurred if test pits had been placed on known sites of interest.

The 19 volunteer residents determined the position of the pit in their garden and the majority chose an area of lawn to dig the pit. Several owners took part in digging and all were generous in offering tea and coffee to the archaeologists. Each pit was dug in one day and the ground restored to its original condition.



The soil was removed in a series of 10cm spits or layers, and all the soil sieved to help recover artefacts, such as pottery, brick or bone. The bottom of each spit was scraped clean using the side of the trowel and examined and

recorded. The earth that was removed from the pit was placed on a sheet of polythene with the earth from each layer kept separately after sieving.

At the end of the dig the spits were returned to the pit in the reverse order from which they were dug, i.e. last out, first back in, and the turf replaced. The finds from each layer were placed in a tray for processing. Each test pit and layer was given a unique code by the archaeologists to help identify it and the material within it.



After cleaning and analysis, the finds from the pits provided some information about the development of the village. A lack of finds in properties near Bookham Common suggest that few people lived in these areas. Similarly, there was a lack of finds up on the chalk area downland.

The pottery helped date the layers and the finds of Roman pottery were unexpected and are worth further investigation in the Keswick and Eastwick areas. There were no Saxon finds but the post-Norman period saw finds from the village centre extending down Church Road. This suggests that this might have been an older route probably going to Chertsey Abbey, which once owned Great Bookham. The later medieval finds cluster around the village. One property in Little Bookham produced Late Iron Age pottery. The diagram gives the pit letter and the layer number for each piece of pottery. The higher the number the deeper the layer.

Apart from the pottery other finds included brick, glass, bone, clay pipes, tiles, charcoal and worked flints. A flint courtyard and a chalk floor were discovered during the dig.

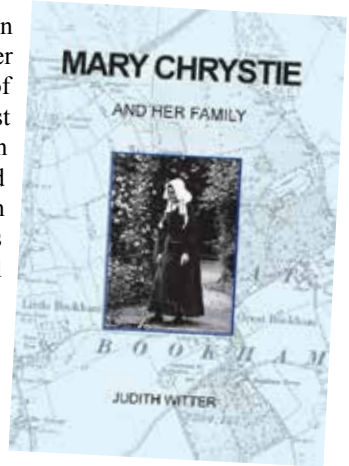
The Society would like to thank all the test pit volunteers for their hospitality. A short report on each garden is being prepared by Chris Hayward but all volunteers have received a CD with details of all the finds from each pit. The results will be held by the Surrey History Centre in Woking.

The Society is now keen to investigate specific areas and try to find evidence of Saxon occupation. If you live near St Nicolas church we would love to hear from you. Please contact

Lyn Spencer at lyn-spencer16@sky.com.

Mary Chrystie - November Lecture

Most amateur genealogists study the history of their own family but Judith Witter, the speaker at our November meeting had embarked on a different project: the story of Mary Chrystie, a wealthy widow who was the third largest landowner and developer of Victorian Bookham. Rather than just repeating items from her book Mrs Witter explained and illustrated her sources. Starting from Mrs Christie's will in the National Archives at Kew, thence to the inscriptions on the monuments above the family graves and parochial church records both at Great Bookham and Great Dunmow (Essex), the national registers of vital events and the census, our speaker's research had included an amazing variety of other sources including the India Office Records in the British Library, the London Metropolitan Archives, newspapers (including *The Morning Post* and *The Railway Times*), an academic project at University College, London, commercial family history websites as well as the public registers and local societies of Scotland and Australia.



Judith Witter's book 'Mary Chrystie and her family'

Mary Christie (and her parents) came from large families whose family trees had been worked out (and a number of errors resolved) by our speaker. She gave us potted biographies of many of Mary's relatives. There were links with Nelson's Victory and the battle of Trafalgar, the East India Company, the abolition of slavery, the Indian Army, the Crimean War – and Coutts' bank.

Mrs Witter said that the reasons for Mary's widowed mother moving from London to Bookham where Mary rejoined her after her own short married life to a cousin could only be guessed at. A shrewd businesswoman Mary's wealth came from bequests principally those of 'in-laws'. Similarly, in the absence of family papers or descendants (she had no children) Mary's reasons for devoting so much money and effort over the next 50 years to promoting temperance - abstention from alcohol – is uncertain although a known family 'black sheep' and a brewer relative are likely explanations.

Judith had been delighted to find a firm of solicitors in Great Dunmow still practising under the name Wade just as Mary's mother's family had done two centuries earlier. She also showed us a painting of 'Thomas Coutts', a sailing ship which held the 'China to London and back' record while captained by Mary's father-in-law.

Judith Witter's book, *Mary Chrystie and her family*, is on sale at the Leatherhead Museum and local bookshops, price £10.

Derek Renn

Our December Event – The Quiz Night

Our final monthly meeting in December has never attracted an impressive audience, in fact it has sometimes been downright disappointing.. This suggested that something different was needed to bring the crowds. This year there was an innovation which turned out to be a huge success. It was the initiative of Frank Haslam, our Membership Secretary and master of the Society's web site. It took the form of a social evening based around a quiz programme. To be successful the evening needed to be well advertised, well organised and above all, enjoyable. In all these categories it scored top marks. On top of this it made a profit which will be a great boon to the Society which as ever needs funds.

Fifty two tickets were sold and participants were divided into competing teams each with their own table. The quiz itself consisted of batches of questions centered on a different topic – for example, local scenery, book authors, music, etc. Each team kept its own score and the score sheets were collected for evaluation at the end of each round. Marks were announced for the highest score and for highest average score (this being important because the numbers in the teams varied). Frank won everyone's praise as a skilled master-of-ceremonies. In addition he and his wife with the aid of their computer arranged the posing of the questions and the keeping of the scores.

The social element was enhanced by another innovation. During a break in the proceedings every person was presented with a box containing a fish and chip supper still piping hot. The event concluded with a raffle offering very attractive prizes.

The success of this delightful evening was undoubtedly due to the talents of Frank. There was also however an energetic crew to help run the event drawn from the ranks of the Society's Executive Committee.

John Wettern

Motoring Memories

It always makes me feel sentimental to visit Brooklands to look at the old cars. Those were the days when motoring was more than motoring - more a challenge against faults that could develop on the shortest of journeys, the thrill of the car starting in the first place or a few greasy fingers after pumping the carburettor or changing the plugs. The modern car takes so much away and for granted - no longer a need to pack overalls and a tool kit in the boot!



My first car was back in 1952, not so long after WWII. In those days you were awarded a grant to go to University or even more with a scholarship - might as well invest it in a car even if it had to be sold near the end of term! New cars were few and far between on the road and also personally out of the question - way

outside my budget. With money to spare a 1937 or 1938 car was 'nearly new' for those days so soon after the war. For me the prospect of mobility had to mean something of the class of an early 1930s Austin 7.

The engine was 747cc and produced 10 hp. The lubrication of the crankshaft was by splash and it had a three speed gearbox until a fourth one was added in 1932. It wasn't until 1933 that synchromesh was introduced on the top two gears so it meant 'double de-clutching' until then. The brakes were a nightmare as they worked by wire cables - a single wire cable in the front joined both front wheel drum brakes. It wasn't long before the cable stretched leaving very little braking indeed! The clutch had a ¼ inch movement - not a very clever design but surprisingly not a great problem.

My first Austin 7 was a 1933 model and gave me a good introduction to hands-on engineering - everything was accessible and suitable for home engineering. Soon the carburettor and ignition were in pieces, the cylinder head off, brakes disassembled. New parts could be bought and being in South East London there were many breakers' yards for parts at low prices.

By December in the first term money had run out so it had to be sold with a small profit so Christmas went car-less until January came. The pattern continued through the year with several 1930 to 1933 Austin 7s appearing at our door. My brother had the same urge to be mobile but chose to have somewhat larger vehicles. Perhaps he preferred beauty to mechanics and he bought a succession of cars unaware of the engineering challenges of them. For a very short time he had a Morris Cowley which to me did not look nearly as engineered as my Austin. One of these Morris cars had the foot pedals in a different order. The accelerator was in the middle. After driving most cars this Morris was alarming - the attempt at an emergency stop found one putting a foot hard on the accelerator!

Where did we keep all these cars? Together with my brother we were usually at least a two car household. Our house was a very ordinary rented one built in 1928 at a time when owning a car was not expected and there was no garage, forecourt or drive. The cars had to live on the road outside. In 1952 our road had just one other car owner who was 'up-market' with a 1937 Ford Anglia. It was in the road that the mechanics were done whether it was taking out the engine or jacking the car up to lie underneath. Of course in those times there were very few vehicles using the road, the occasional car, the horse drawn milk float or the coalman (Mr Whiffen) delivering the sacks of coal with his horse and cart.



One curiosity was that the law required every vehicle to have lights on after dark even if they were only parked and it was impossible to do this without running down the precious battery. Down the road came the 'bobby' in his helmet and notebook at the ready, "Your car(s) haven't got their lights on." The answer was not over successful but fortunately sufficient. "Oh dear, the wind must have blown it out." The tactic was to put an oil light at the side of the car. When the policeman came along apologies were made and the light was lit at least until the policeman went out of sight round the corner.

In Mitcham there was a car dealer called Vintage Autos with a mouth-watering display of cars - all very pre-war. One feature was an astounding line of old Rolls Royces with some dating back to before 1920. A hundred pounds was the average price for one of these but

remember the value of money in those days. Families could well manage on wages of just £250 a year so £100 was not such a small amount. Other makes were of course cheaper but still well outside my range.

My brother who by this time had money to spend bought a beautiful car from Vintage Autos for the princely sum of £40 but which today would be worth a fortune. It was a 1928 Austin Heavy Twelve Tourer, the model that developed later into the standard London taxi. The twelve referred to its



horse power (power at wheels against about 20 brake horse power at engine). He had it some years and several times it went touring to Scotland, Wales and The Lakes. It was a real workhorse. It had an absolute top speed of 50 mph - it would not go at more than this speed even downhill with the wind behind it!

A car today has an engine that may well go 200,000 miles before showing real signs of wear. It was a different picture in the 1950s when at around 20,000 miles the engine would become 'smoky' and the pistons would need a new set of piston rings or the piston cylinders would need to be rebored to retain the engine compression and prevent engine oil getting into the upper chamber. The modern success has resulted from better engineering and metals and quality of oils. It was a normal job to strip down an engine for either a rebore or a new set of rings. In our case this was done at the roadside.

About this time I had become friendly with a chap who ran a garage selling cars and carrying out servicing and repairs in the forecourt of a house in the Lee High Road in South London. This garage specialised in pre-war Riley cars. The Riley was a specialised car with many advanced features. It became a favourite on the racing track and was often seen at Brooklands. Today in their museum can be seen the car raced by Mike Hawthorn.

By 1934 the Riley 9 was in its prime with a 1087cc engine, hemispherical combustion



chambers, twin overhead camshafts and good suspension and braking. It had a preselector gearbox and centrifugal clutch - to change gear the lever was moved without touching the clutch into the gear position you wanted to use next and just by kicking the clutch pedal the new gear was immediately selected. Instantly changing gear was possible such as when overtaking or negotiating a curve. It was a beautiful design but had the disadvantage that it became noisy as all the gears were engaged at

all times and were 'whirring' away.

It was the ideal surroundings for a student working on cars and also acquiring one of them. The mechanics of the cars was far in excess of the bodywork. Some models used fabrics and has lead to making the car a fair rarity today. Also the design was constantly being updated with both the 9 and the larger 1.5 litre engine.

My personal finances did not stretch to running Rileys and concentration remained on Austin 7 cars. One acquisition was a 1928 model with poor bodywork which was ideal to strip down to make a 'special'. Off came the body, in came aluminium sheets, motorcycle type mudguards and new barer seats. Now for the engine - amazing how much you could shave off the cylinder head to make the combustion chambers smaller and compression ratio raised. And so on..... straight through exhaust to make it at least sound like a racer and of course better brakes to make sure it could stop. Finances never stretched to making it race but the enjoyment was in making it.

Of course nothing like this style of motoring could be achieved today on such limited budgets. Today there is the MOT and all the safety features not even considered in the days after WWII. In 1964 the MOT was introduced and compulsory seat belts not until the middle '70s. In the 1950s anything went and the old pre-war cars could freely drive about with dubious braking and bodywork which gave a free hand to taking any vehicle on the road. Petrol in 1951 was 3s 4d (40 old pence) a gallon or the equivalent of 4p a litre today. In 1952 it went up to 4s 2d a gallon with a tax increase or 5p a litre. Four gallons (roughly 45 litres) was comfortably bought for one pound

One of the greatest differences between motoring then and now was the number of cars on the road. In 1950 there were about 4 million cars in the UK against a population of 50 million. In 2014 with a population of 64 million there are around 35 million vehicles - a rise from one in twelve to more than one in two (a surprising statistic). As a consequence the road used to be comparatively empty even though they were not so good as now with all their faults. I well remember going up to North London to drive my Austin 7 on the newly opened M1 in 1959 (Watford to Crick two lane dual carriageway) and being the only car on the road. Living in South East London the quickest way to drive across London was to go through Marble Arch rather than on a 'ring' road (A25/A406) as the traffic was so light.

Speed was also a major difference. Even new cars were coming on the road with a maximum speed of 60 mph. This compares with an ordinary car of today, such as my current very moderate model with a stated top speed of 127 mph (200kph). Most cars that went through my hands back in the 1950s went little over 50 mph flat out.

I suppose I am one of many who visit Brooklands reminiscing about long ago. It is full of ancient cars and vehicles beautifully preserved. I must admit I really go to see the ones that I used to drive, dismember and reconstruct to picture myself behind the wheel all those years ago. It's such a shame you can't go back to motoring in the '50s but time has long overtaken. Now it is a question of tearing along the motorway with everything doing 70 mph and more or most likely being stationary in a five mile queue on the M25.

Martin Warwick

Friends of the Leatherhead Museum Secretary (Chairman - Vacant)

Julia Lack (Secretary) 01372 386050 upper.mole@ntlworld.com

Librarian (Letherhead Institute):

Anne Fraser 01372 278500 Anne.o.fraser@ntlworld.com

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:

Frank Haslam 01372 379341 frank.haslam@gmail.com

Records Secretary:

Roy Mellick 01372 457839 roy.mellick@btinternet.com

Sales Secretary:

Vacant (David Hartley - Acting)

Programmes & Lectures Secretary:

Vacant (John Wettern - Acting)

Newsletter Editor:

Martin Warwick 01372 453717 martin_warwick@hotmail.com

Website Editor:

Frank Haslam 01372 379341 frank.haslam@gmail.com

Committee Members:

Fred Meynen (Trustee), Doug Hollingsworth

Archival Material

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

Ashtead	John Rowley
Bookham	Roy Mellick
Fetcham Documents	Alan Pooley
Fetcham Photographs and Maps	Ed Tims
Leatherhead Documents	Vacant
Leatherhead Photographs	Vacant
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

Meetings and Lectures

The Society's lectures are held on the **third Friday of each month** (not June, July or August) at the Letherhead Institute (top end of Leatherhead High Street) Time: 8.00pm; Tea/coffee served from 7.30pm. Admission £2 Visitors most welcome

Friday March 20th: Annual General Meeting

After the AGM there will be short updates on their work from Roy Mellick (Records Secretary) and Lorraine Spindler (Leatherhead Museum Curator).

Tuesday March 24th: Outing to Christ's Hospital Museum

Everyone welcome. For information contact Julia Lack on 01372 386050 or at upper.mole@ntlworld.com

Friday April 17th: 'History of Great Bookham through Local Names'

Peter Edwards is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Humanities at the University of Roehampton. Apart from local history he has particular interest in the history of British Agriculture, especially horse and livestock. He is a member of our Society. This talk looks at the history of Great Bookham through local names. For instance, Saxon Bōchām, the settlement by beeches, indicates that the invaders settled here early. Minor names, such as those of farms, fields, tracks and even pubs provide additional evidence and often reveal the 'hidden history of the community'.

Friday May 15th: 'Leatherhead & India'

John Morris has for many years been involved in researching the history of the Leatherhead area and those who lived here. He will tell us about the most interesting of the several hundred suspects he is investigating. Some Leatherhead people have devoted their lives to India. From ordinary seaman to Chairman of the East India Company is quite a career. Running Bombay is another. Pioneering Women's education in India is a third.