



# *The Newsletter*

*Leatherhead Museum*

*May 2015*

*The Quarterly Magazine of the*

*Leatherhead & District Local History Society*



***Editorial***

Another year, another AGM but very little changes. The Committee was voted in en bloc but still has several vacant offices forcing some of the old faithfuls to carry the weight of multiple roles many of which are of prime importance to the Society. There is a further plea in the Newsletter for more members to help. The jobs are not onerous but rewarding providing a good set of friends with similar interests.



It is always good to hear from a reader of the Newsletter. It came as quite an unexpected phone call from Poole, Dorset from Geoff Hayward who obviously still receives the magazine after many years of moving from Fetcham. Many members who can go back to 1990 will undoubtedly remember him. The L&DLHS online archive comes in handy here – from it you can see his involvement in the Society those years ago. He is still very active in mind and body. It was my own article in the last Newsletter that had particularly aroused his attention - the mere mention of a 1930s Austin 7 had brought back a host of memories. We are fortunate to have his own contribution in this Newsletter - memories of his youth are particularly worth recording as they give an insight into life and comparative values almost 100 years ago quite apart from their general interest value.

By the time the Newsletter is distributed we will be in the summer period with no more monthly lectures until September. Remember to use the Museum with its excellent displays. Also the Library – there is a Coffee Morning on Saturday 27th June in the morning. Bookham Village Day is on Saturday 20th June and there will be a L&DLHS stand there. You could turn up there dressed as a ‘King or Queen’!

*Martin Warwick*

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

***Next Edition Deadline - 4th July 2015***

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# *Chairman's Report*

The AGM on the 20th March returned the executive committee for 2015/16 with some new faces in the person of Carl Leyshon the New Hon Treasurer who has taken over the role from David Lokkerbol who has agreed to remain as a committee member. Also John Rowley the Ashted Archivist was elected as the other committee member.



I wish to record a substantial vote of thanks to David Lokkerbol from the executive Committee for his diligent and able management of the History Society's accounts for the last six years and also to Adrian Radford for his dedication and commitment as the independent examiner.

The proposal of the executive committee to increase membership subscriptions for 2016/17 was ratified at this AGM. The ordinary membership subscription will increase by £2.00 rising from £18.00 to £20.00 and will take effect on the 1st January 2016.

A vote of thanks to President Alan Pooley who chaired and conducted the proceedings of the 68th AGM and to all those 44 members of the History Society who turned out in support.

The AGM was followed by two short presentations by Roy Mellick the Records Secretary and Lorraine Spindler the Museum Curator. The Roy's presentation was on access to the New History Society Archives website put together and launched by him. He encouraged new and existing members to sign up, login, access and explore the new site.

Lorraine's presentation explained her curatorial role and that of her team and encourage members and visitors to visit the Museum following its opening on 26th March for the Spring Season. There are now new displays continuing the WWI remembrance theme focused on the 'Taylor Family' and a new 'Medieval Theme' for parents and their children to experience on the first floor of the museum.

## **Museum 2015**

The opening ceremony for the museum was on Saturday 28th March (the museum opened two days earlier). Congratulations to the Curator Lorraine Spindler and her team for all their hard work in putting this year museum displays together.

The WW1 exhibition entitled 'The Taylors of Leatherhead' is focused on the moving story of Louisa Taylor the Leatherhead mother who lost four sons during the conflict.

Lorraine has created a new Medieval Room upstairs on the first floor to engage parents and their children in the pageantry and heraldry of medieval society linked to archaeology where history and artefacts are displayed from excavated sites in the parishes of Ashted, Bookham, Fetcham and Leatherhead. Lorraine and her team have focused on conveying an enhanced sensory experience introducing colour to the displays, children's costumes, exhibition boards and banners with artefacts to hold plus scent and sounds.

*David Hartley*

# *Archaeology & Forthcoming events*

## **Excavation at Cocks Farm Roman Villa, Abinger June**

The Surrey Archaeological Society website have asked for volunteers for the sixth season of excavations at Cocks Farm Roman Villa from 10:00am Monday June 1st to 4.00pm Tuesday June 30th

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, 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](mailto:nikki.cowlard@btinternet.com) or 01372 745432.

## **Medieval Studies Forum - Study visit to Chichester Saturday June 6th - 10:00am to 4:30pm**

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

## **Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeological Society (EEHAS) are providing two talks that of possible interest to members**

### **Wednesday 3rd June – A talk ‘The Excavations in Church Meadow Ewell’**

The presentations will be given by Nikki Cowlard, site director of excavations and Frank Pemberton, Archaeology Officer of EEHAS.

### **Wednesday 1st July - Talk by David Rymill ‘The History of Worcester Park, Old Malden and Cheam’.**

All meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month and are held at St Mary's Church Hall London Road Ewell KT17 2BB – Doors open at 7.45pm for an 8.00pm start. Entrance fee for each meeting is £4.00 for non-members. Visit the EEHAS website: [www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk](http://www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk)

## **Esher District Local History Society 18th June at 10.30am**

Guided Tour of the Poppy Factory at 20 Petersham Road, Richmond Surrey has been arranged by Esher District Local History Society. There is no charge but a donation would be welcome. There is no parking at the site in Petersham but the 65 Bus stops outside. Visit their web site [www.edlhs.co.uk](http://www.edlhs.co.uk)

## **Other Local Events**

### **Bookham Village Day Saturday 20th June**

The Bookham Community Association will be holding this year's Bookham Village

Day at Old Barn Hall. This year's theme will be 'Kings and Queens'

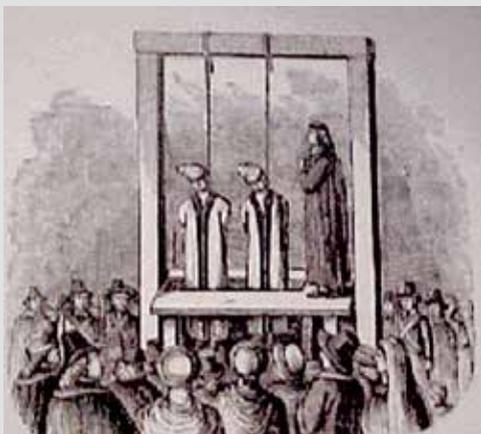
**Mole Valley Heritage open days 11th – 13th September.** This year's HOD theme in Mole Valley is 'Words and Music'.

*David Hartley*

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## ***February Lecture - A History of Crime and Murder in Surrey***

At a well-attended meeting our speaker Julie Wileman spoke of her research into the history of crime in Surrey. Thanks to her efforts to prise out details of Surrey's record over hundreds of years the audience was able to gauge the extent that society has changed as each century has unfolded. We can take comfort from the fact that we live in a relatively peaceful age in contrast to the way life was lived long ago. Horrendous crimes and gruesome punishments were revealed making us glad that we live at the present time.



From her study of Surrey records she painted a picture of how things were although she added that in fact England was less violent than many other countries at the time. Much could be found from a study of graves at 'execution sites' dating back to Anglo-Saxon times. There were eight of these in Surrey including those at Banstead, Leatherhead, Ashted and Guildford. There criminals met a grizzly end, the bones being found randomly buried, often distorted and sometimes still manacled.

Hanging was the fate of many found guilty of what we would count as minor offenses such as stealing. The gallows was a very public place and crowds turned out to witness executions. This was still occurring well into the 19th century. Some of the pictures accompanying the talk showed scenes of executions in all their morbid details.

Plotting the history of crime over the centuries revealed much that is now only a memory. Witchcraft for example appears in the records between 1560 and 1700. It occurred only rarely in Surrey, a total of 112 cases resulting in only 5 executions. Smuggling, organised by local gangs was notorious in the Dorking area, the caves there playing a part in the concealment of the contraband although several local farms were also involved. Riots frequently broke out on Shrove Tuesday, the miscreants being drunken apprentice boys. There were highway assaults, a notorious one being at Coulsdon in 1586. Prosecutions for poaching in the royal parks appeared in the Kingston records. One case involved a red deer poached from Richmond Park.

One or two offences were described by words unfamiliar to the modern ear, for example

barratry. This meant stirring up discord among neighbours. Assize records from the Tudor era noted cases of this. There was also recusancy. This was a penalty imposed for not attending church services, the fate of Catholics who resisted the changes brought about by the Reformation. There are records of duels taking place. These were illegal and at Egham where a Frenchman was shot, several Frenchmen were apprehended off a train and found to be carrying swords and pistols.

1842 was revealed as the year when the Detective Department was created. It was staffed by two inspectors and six constables.

The famous Hindhead murder occurred in 1786, and there followed descriptions of several other Surrey crimes with details of what took place and how evidence was obtained to unmask and eventually to convict the miscreant. The talk ended with a lively question and answer session followed by a well-deserved vote of thanks to the presenter. In closing Julie mentioned that the book covering her research would be appearing soon.

*John Wettern*

## *World War II Memories*

### *Beating the Sugar Ration*

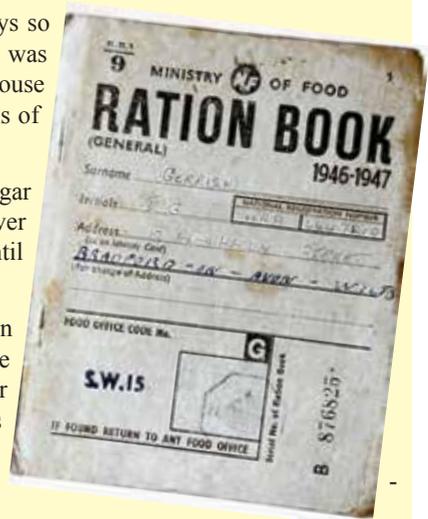
‘Dig for Victory’ was the watchword in those days so as you would imagine the growing of vegetables was stepped up. We also found space to build a hen house and a chicken run alongside. Thus the restrictions of egg-rationing were mitigated.

Not so successful was the effort to offset the sugar shortage. As rationing got tighter it became ever harder to make the weekly ration of sugar last until the following week.

One day my father answered an advertisement in the paper. It suggested that one could enhance the family’s supply of sweeteners by growing sugar beet. He wrote away and a packet of seeds arrived. These he planted in the vegetable garden and that autumn we harvested a crop of beets not unlike turnips with a pinkish flesh inside.

The instructions that came with the seeds told us how to proceed from there. The beets had to be cut up into small dice. I believe some chemical had to be added but I forget what. Then after a prolonged boiling in a large saucepan the solids had to be drained off so that the sweetening syrup could be saved into jars rather as in jam making.

The reader might ask : “Then why don’t we still do this to save the cost of sugar in the present day?” Well here’s the answer. Firstly the cutting up of the beets was a real penance. They were hard as nails even with our sharpest knives. Secondly the smell in the



kitchen whilst the boiling process was happening was quite unpleasant.

Finally the end product was not quite as we expected it to be. We used the syrup to sweeten our porridge and stewed fruits. It certainly was sweet but not very pleasant tasting. It looked rather like dark cane syrup but tasted distinctly bitter and a little 'earthy'.

A few weeks after all this effort had been expended another disappointment came to light. All those jars of syrup created with so much expenditure of effort were found to be growing grey hairs on the top. Even in these times of deprivation that was too much to put up with so it all had to be poured away.

Better to leave it to the refineries!

*John Wettern*

### ***Editor's note.....***

John's article reminds me of the time back in the sixties when I lived in the Norfolk countryside. The local farmers rotated their crops on a three year cycle with wheat, barley and then sugar beet. Beet was one of the main crops and it was taken to a large factory by the river Yare at Cantley close to Norwich.

In the sixties it was a back-breaking job farming the beet. A tractor (in fact when I was there the local farm used a horse and plough) could make a furrow beside the rows to expose the beet. But then each had to be lifted, the top cut off and surplus earth shaken off before being tossed into a wagon. A sugar beet is quite heavy to handle. Things have advanced since those days and today specialised harvesters to do this work.



The Cantley factory today produces something like two hundred thousand tonnes of sugar each year from about 1.3 million tonnes of beet. In addition, not wasting anything, they sell the surplus soil and stones that are taken off the surface of the incoming sugar beet and the remains of the beet is turned into animal feed. The factory has been there for over a hundred years.

The beet is cleaned and sliced into thin strips and mixed with hot water to extract the sugar. The remaining fibre is pressed and dried and is compressed into animal feed pellets. The sugar has its impurities taken out and is boiled to crystallise and take out the water which leaves a thick juice. A further process separates the sugar from the syrup and this is stored in storage silos.

Sugar is produced all over world by this method with Russia

being the largest. Altogether about 270 million tonnes are harvested worldwide producing around 50 million tonnes of sugar.

So, just think where your 'spoonful of sugar' came from when you have your next cup of coffee.

*Martin Warwick*



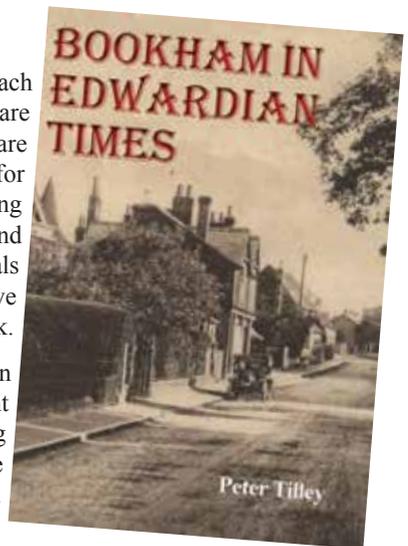
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## *Books and New Publications*

### **Bookham in Edwardian times by Peter Tilley**

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. A CD including additional data and maps is included with the book and the files on it 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 attempts 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 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 is priced at £10.00 and is available through local Bookshops in Bookham and 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

You can also purchase copies from me the Sales & Publications Secretary of the L&DLHS at £10.00 + £1.50 postage & package or free of postage if you are prepared to collect from me at the museum.

There are also new reprints currently available from the Sales & Publications Secretary of the L&DLHS of three successful past books of photographs of Ashtead, Bookham & Fetcham and Leatherhead:

Images of Ashtead priced at £12.99 + p&p

Images of England – Bookham & Fetcham at £12.99 +p&p

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](mailto:staff@lheadmuseum.plus.com) or visit our website [www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk](http://www.leatherheadlocalhistory.org.uk)

*David Hartley*

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## *News from the Friends of Leatherhead Museum*

A friend asked me the other day what ‘The Friends’ did. So here goes! We are an independent organisation whose aim is to support the museum. We liaise with the L&DHS through the executive committee and we offer some financial support towards furnishing and equipping the museum. The Friends manage a rota of stewards to keep our local history museum open to the public and through this we endeavour to make visitors feel welcome, answer their queries or pass them onto an expert who can see that the place is clean and friendly. We are responsible for the museum shop and we manage the educational visits and outreach work of the museum including the three craft afternoons in the school summer holidays. The Friends offer an annual visit open to all members to a place of historic interest. This all happens via a small committee who meet four times a year. We always welcome new members so please ring Julia Lack 01372 386050 if you are interested in joining us.

### **Briefing Session for Volunteers**

This was held at the Leatherhead institute and was very well attended. Alan Pooley and his team concentrated on procedures for opening, closing and safeguarding and there was plenty of helpful discussion on each issue aired. The new Medieval Room upstairs contains costumes for children to try on and so guidelines about how to handle this new and exciting venture will be on a laminated sheet by the steward’s desk. Also a new laminated First Aid sheet is there to read and refer to in any emergency.

### **Visit to Christ’s Hospital on March 24th**

On a sunny day in March 15 members of The Friends and the L&DHS met for coffee in the ultra modern Bluecoats Sports centre at Christ’s Hospital School near Horsham. A mixture of members of the public dashing about in modern track suits and school pupils in their long navy silver buttoned coats, white bands (like lawyer’s) and yellow stockings was very strange to see. We were labelled and escorted from the public realm of the campus into the back of the school to the old infirmary which now houses the museum. The curator gave us an

introductory talk about the history of this extraordinary charity school. Henry VIII gave the Greyfriars monastery building to the city of London during the dissolution of the monasteries in 1546 and in 1553 Edward VI granted a charter for a school to educate the poor orphans of London. 380 children were given a place, a third of whom were girls. After the Great Fire the school was billeted out



*Taken at the visit*

to Hertford. A new building near to St Paul's Cathedral designed in part by Sir Christopher Wren was completed in the early 1700s.

In 1902 all the pupils moved from London and Hertford into their new purpose built premises near Horsham.

The curator apologised for the old fashioned displays which he said were not always fully explained but he and his team of volunteers were with us the whole time expanding on what we saw and answering our questions. There were wonderful portraits of benefactors from the 16th century onward. Paintings, etchings, models and maps of the school through its progression from its original home in London to various other places till it came together as a coeducational school with 820 pupils in its current building near Horsham. I thought the museum was wonderful, full of character and we couldn't have had better hosts. I feel very fortunate that we were able to see this museum which is not generally open to the public. It is worth going onto their website if you want to find out more about this 462 year old school. Their sports centre and their theatre are both open to the public. Thanks go to Robin Christian for organising our visit.

We ended our morning with a good lunch in Stooks Restaurant at Newbridge Nurseries, Broadbridge Heath which has just won a National award for best garden centre.

### **AGM of the Friends**

The friends held their AGM on Monday 27th April. All the current committee members stood for re-election. We are lucky enough to have two new candidates for election Diana Rogers and Judy Wilson. Laurence Naylor ended the meeting with a short talk about his work in the Priory basement where we store all our artefacts

Looking ahead.....

We are holding the Craft Afternoons on 31st July, 7th August and 14th August. These are always fun events. If you enjoy messy activities and making things with children please do consider joining us. (Julia Lack 01372 386050)

We will as usual open the museum for the Annual Prudential Cycle Race on 3rd and 4th August. Last year it poured with rain all Sunday but many onlookers from far and wide took shelter and enjoyed the museum.

*Julia Lack*

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## *Developments at the Museum*

At the conclusion of the Society's Annual General Meeting we were given a useful up-date from the Museum Curator, Lorraine Spindler. As in previous years the museum will be open to visitors from the end of March and she described preparations currently being made for the coming season. There will be a large number of innovations with emphasis again being on the role of Leatherhead during World War II. This year the focus will be on a family whose life was greatly affected by the war. An exhibition of contemporary photos and replicas of current records highlights the lives of a local family,



*Museum Display on the First Floor*

the Taylors. This was a family recorded in the 1911 census as having thirteen children including six sons, some of whom gave their lives in the conflict and three whose sacrifice is commemorated on the Town's war memorial. All this was the outcome of extensive research by the curator and her team now on view in the front room at the Museum.

Several rooms have been radically changed to bring



*Patchensham Manor House by AWG Lowther*



*Museum First Floor displays*



*Front room display*

new themes for visitors to explore. There is now a Mediaeval Room covering the period from pre-history until 1600. Prominent features are the Ashtead Roman Villa, the Saxon burials from the site at Hawks Hill and pictures illustrating the exploration of the site of Patchensham Manor carried out by the archaeologist AWG Lowther.

An exciting innovation will be the availability of period costumes designed for children to try on.

*John Wettern*

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## ***What Goes Around Comes Around***

“My dear old chap how the devil are you?”

“Fine, as long as I keep taking the tablets”.

Of course I should make it clear, dear reader that the above could equally have read “old girl” and of course if the question was addressed to Moses the answer would have had an alternative meaning.

You might have gathered that what follows is a brief skirmish into the world of pharmaceuticals. It seems that most of the world rotates on a bed of tablet ball bearings.

Take Aspirin (that’s not an instruction) for example. It is estimated that as a race we consume somewhere in the region of 40,000 tons a year give or take the odd half a dozen or so. The name ‘Aspirin’ is a trade mark of the German Pharmaceutical Company Bayer. It goes without saying that the industry involves ‘a lot of money’. In the UK alone in 2013 it produced a trade surplus of £2.8 billion.

To put this in context let us play a little game that will help us to identify with these large amounts. Let us assume that we take an aspirin (or any other pill of your choice) every minute continuously day and night. It will take 11 days to consume one million tablets. If we repeat the exercise with greater determination we find that it will take thirty seven and a half years to consume one billion tablets. In the interests of Health and Safety I have to point out that this is purely an example and under no circumstances must it be tried out!

I am reliably informed that the word pharmaceutical comes from the Latin, pharmaceuticus or from the Greek, pharmakutikos.



What on earth has this got to do with an item of local historical interest? Well let me get to the point (I can hear my wife saying, “I wish you would darling”)

Those of us that travel along the Kingston Road might have noticed opposite All Saint’s Church a ‘new Chemist’s shop’ with a brilliant white frontage that has just arrived on the block and this is the real subject of this article. On first inspection it might be thought that there is nothing really remarkable about the appearance of said chemist but you could be wrong. In our world of transient insecurity it is reassuring that some things never stray far from their roots.

The parade of shops that contains the ‘new’ Chemist was built in the mid 1930s and low and behold the same premises were occupied by a Chemist named Thomas Beech. In those far of days Thomas would have made his own ointments as well as some pills and tablets. When I became aware of the shop in the 1940s it was Mr Lovegrove who was in charge and like Mr Beech he would also make up potions and lotions to suit the various need of his customers. Your local GP would prescribe certain cures knowing that the pharmacist would have the various tinctures and creams to satisfy the patients specific need. A large range of proprietary cures would also be available and the advice of ‘don’t forget the Andrews’ would be familiar to us all. There was an advert in the form of a cartoon picture showing an old chap packing his holiday case with the tin of ‘Andrews Liver Salts’ in his back trouser pocket.

Mr Lovegrove had a glass sign over the shop in the form of three coloured flasks. Woodcocks in Dorking had three large flasks in the window this being the recognised display for a chemist’s establishment. I feel that Mr Lovegroves display would have been vulnerable in todays society! He was followed by Mr Sears.

Mr Sears like the previous incumbents was a public spirited gentleman. Goff Powell was a keen footballer and played the game competitively at local club level for many years. He relates that the price of proprietary ointments and locations increased thus placing a higher cost on the local game. Mr Sears came to the rescue and made up the required medication

at a fraction of the price and was more than happy to do so. Today his lotion would have to be submitted to the Health and Safety regime not forgetting NICE, the medical assessors for new drugs to make sure it was safe to use. There may still be some folk around who can remember these gentlemen.

But wait the story does not end there. Mr Sears was followed by Keith Marsland (note the subtle move into more recent times the Mr has been dropped and Keith's Christian name is used. I don't think many customers would have known the former gentlemen's first names). Mr Keith Marsland more than amply filled the shoes of his predecessors. He will be remembered by all and sundry as a man of great integrity. He would also make up certain items to suit various ailments. He was a fount of knowledge in things pharmaceutical and I have no doubt in many other things as well. Assisted by Tracy and Janet he could be relied upon to give advice and sympathy in equal doses.

But our story continues. In 1998 and Tracy has confirmed this the Chemist's moved 'over the bridge' to share it's space with One Stop. Keith, Tracy and Janet ensured that a smooth continuity was maintained. This relocation was to be a blessing to the folk that lived 'over the bridge'. I find it difficult to believe that it was that long ago that this move took place. Whilst Keith Marsland had retired he was often in the shop acting as a locum. There would be a number of chemists in residence over the years but Tracy and Janet were the two lynch pins that maintained continuity and ensured that their customers always had a familiar contact.

During the Chemist's absence from the premises in the parade a variety of uses were made of the shop but not too many. Those that most of us will remember were Norman Singleton's second hand furniture business and the Bathroom and Plumbing Showrooms.

So here we are having gone full circle. After some sixteen years, in February of this year (2015) the Chemist's returned to the shop where it all started and yes, Tracy and Janet are still with the business (they were both very young when they joined up). One has to feel sorry for the folk at the northern end of the road who have lost the facility but we at the southern end can say, "well it was only on loan to you".

*Brian Hennegan*

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## ***We're Looking for More Helpers***

Perhaps you are looking for part time work or perhaps you know someone who is. So here's an idea which you might like to pursue. As you know our Society is a thriving organisation run entirely by its members. We are especially proud of the fact that it owns and runs the local museum in Church Street (always worth a visit).

The running of the society is in the charge of a committee – all volunteers - which meets once a month. We need to enliven our committee by introducing a few new members and in particular there are posts that need filling. One activity which is very important to us is publicity. We want more people to know about us perhaps to become members. There is the task of publicising our monthly lectures and also telling the world about our wonderful museum.



The job of publicity officer doesn't occupy a lot of time and specialist skills are not being sought; just a desire to communicate and some enthusiasm to go with it. John Wettern has information about the scope of the job and will work with the successful applicant to familiarise him or her with the kind of tasks that we hope to achieve. If you have experience of working in the area of public relations this would be immensely helpful but it isn't essential.

Another activity which you might be interested in exploring is at the museum. Most of you will know that it is staffed by volunteer stewards willing to do just three hours a month receiving and looking after the visitors. This too needs no prior

knowledge but turns out to be a fascinating experience. If you are interested John will help you (or your friend) to contact the right person. He can be reached by email at : [johnwettern@ntlworld.com](mailto:johnwettern@ntlworld.com).

If it's a friend that might be interested tell them about our web site which will give them a lot of information.

*John Wettern*

## ***A Note about the Library***

It would really be good if people would use the Library to a greater extent. Roy has very kindly rearranged the LDLHS library books within the LCA library at the Letherhead Institute. The list is up to date, and there is a copy in a pink file on the shelves.

The keys to the locked cupboards are available from the LCA librarian.

If anyone has any questions they can email me at [anne.o.fraser@ntlworld.com](mailto:anne.o.fraser@ntlworld.com), or they can arrange to meet me there.

Please use this wonderful resource.

*Anne Fraser*

# Postcard Collecting - More—Having A Laugh!

## Leatherhead & Ashtead Comic Postcards

For those of you that enjoyed the comic postcards in a previous issue here a few more that might tickle your fancy. All these cards would have been mass produced for probably every town and village in the British Isles.

With the exception of the 'An Outing at Ashtead Post Card', they are not signed by the artist.

**KISSING IN SURREY.**  
[By One Who's Had Some.]

*A Good-Looking Young Fellow has lately been "doing" this County, and has made notes with reference to KISSING in different parts.*

**H**E found that the **LEATHERHEAD** Girls keep quite still until well kissed, and then say "I think you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

An **EPSOM** Girl when kissed closes her eyes in ecstasy, and murmurs: "Do it again, George."

A **DORKING** Girl says "Oh!" very softly, and suggests a walk to  
**BOX HILL.**

A Marriagable Maiden of **ASHTEAD** on being kissed tries to look scorn, fails, then strikes her little hand into that of the bold, bad man, and in a voice as soft as butter, whispers tenderly, "Woe't Mother be pleased!"

While the Girls of **SUTTON** say: "Well, I never thought it of you, and I am very much surprised, and I hope you won't try to do it again; but don't let us stop here where it is light, let us go out of the town where no one will see us."

[R.S.G.]

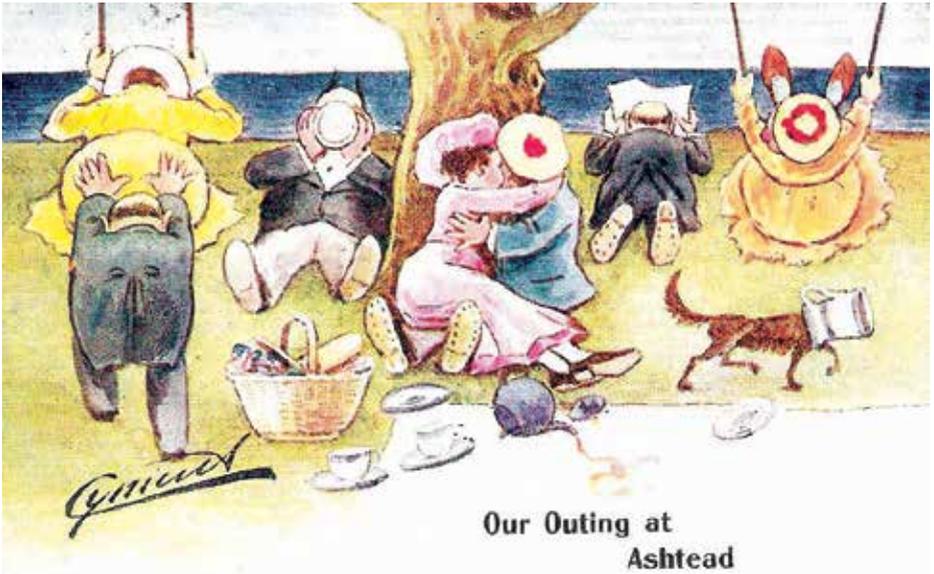


I got splendid furnished apartments  
..AT LEATHERHEAD

Two  
"Small Scotchies" from **LEATHERHEAD**

Two trusty friends I send you here,  
With wishes hearty and sincere;  
And if you raise their basket bed  
You'll find some charming peeps outspread.

1129



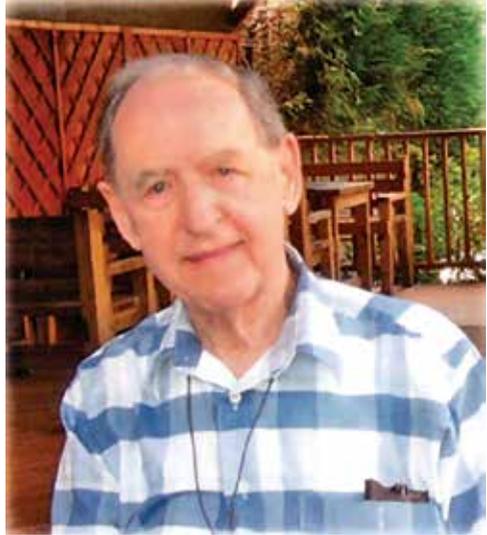
The artist in question is Martin Anderson (1854 -1932), better known by his pseudonym Cynicus. He was a Scottish artist, political cartoonist, postcard illustrator and publisher.

The 'Two Small Scotches Postcard' is called a 'Pull Out': you just open the flap to extend a neatly folded strip of miniature images. There are twelve photographs of Leatherhead in the basket.

*Goff Powell*

## ***James Roderick ‘Roddy’ Clube OBE*** ***(3rd July 1920 – 21st February 2015)***

Roddy was a long standing member of the society joining the executive committee at the AGM on 21st April 1989. There was a vacancy for the post of Records Secretary he took that on and held it until he stood down on 20th May 1997. He reorganised the records and undertook considerable research on his own account, publishing articles in a number of Newsletters and Proceedings over the years as well as contributing to chapters in the various books published by the society. An example of his research was the undertaking of a complete survey of all the graves in the churchyard of St Nicolas in Great Bookham when he recorded all the legible inscriptions on the tombstones. He was a regular worshipper at St Nicolas where he and I usually shared the same pew, giving us the opportunity to



reminisce. There are 49 references to Roddy on the society website which can be accessed by searching CLUBE. He was a close friend of Linda and David Heath, they had first met when both Roddy and David were working in the Middle East. Due to failing health he had not latterly taken an active part in the society but continued to support both it and the museum.

Roddy was born in Dublin where the itinerant Clube family had settled after serving in the British Army, mainly overseas. There was an expectation that Roddy would follow this pattern. Because of the political upheavals in Ireland the family soon moved to Ilford in Essex where he was educated and where he took up his first employment in 1936 with the National Provincial Bank. He was developing a flair for languages and soon became fluent in French and German. He joined the Territorial Army in the Artist's Rifles in 1937. When war broke out in September 1939 he was commissioned and posted as Signals Officer to the 4th battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment. He was injured in a motorcycle accident in 1941 and had not recovered and was not available for action until 1942 when he was posted to the SOE (Special Operations Executive) dealing with agents behind enemy lines. He spent a year in Air Liaison where he was trained in handling explosives and parachute drops. His skills in languages and map reading learnt in the Scouts were invaluable.

Roddy was then transferred to the F (French) Section and landed in France soon after D-Day. His daughter Anne has provided this extract from Roddy's diary of the time which shows the man. 'At six in the morning we were told to be ready to move but we had a further wait until mid-morning. We then followed a guided route through the street to a landing hard at Gosport. An LCT (Landing Craft Tank) was drawn up with the ramp down and we

were eventually loaded into it. It was early afternoon and I asked the skipper when we would sail. During the night was his reply. I was very tired by this time so I climbed onto the tarpaulin on one of the trucks and promptly fell into a deep sleep. My face was badly sunburnt when I woke up. We moved during the night and in the morning I spoke to the young Sub-Lt skipper and joked about the navigation and finding the beach. He said "I just follow the tops of the Compo ration boxes floating in the sea." When we reached the coast about 11am on 18 June we were landed at the Mulberry harbour which had only just been brought into use. We were immediately sent to the de-waterproofing area before we could go on to the HQ in the grounds of the Chateau of Creully where I joined the unit again. This was Monty's HQ. There was a formidable Countess, very short and small but with a strong will. I met her in the grounds so I saluted and said in French that this was the first 14 July for several years. She said firmly to me "The 14 July was the blackest day in the history France" and swept on. Perhaps she had lost her antecedents to the Guillotine. My abiding memory is of the friendliness of the local residents and the strong feeling that we were all on the same side.'



*Roddy Clube in WWII*

Roddy contacted members of the Resistance and worked with them until the German surrender in April 1945. He then worked with displaced agents until he was posted to Berlin in 1947 which led to his being offered a permanent post with the Foreign Office. While in Berlin Roddy learnt Russian which he found essential for his work. In 1949 he returned to London to be informed that he was being posted to Hong Kong. Travel was leisurely by flying boat with numerous stop overs along the way. It was in Hong Kong that Roddy met Mary Moore who was also working for the Foreign Office. They were married on 29 May 1950 and honeymooned in Japan. They then moved back to London with their son John and in 1955 armed with his German and Russian skills the family now including daughter Anne went to Vienna where Roddy assisted in establishing a new embassy. Roddy's work there was virtually a continuation of his post war activities but dealing this time with an influx of Hungarian refugees. Returning to London at the end of his tour there was less pressure on him and Roddy studied part time for an economics degree. Time however ran out when he was informed of a new posting to Cuba. He attended Spanish classes and acquired a working knowledge of the language enabling him to be appointed Commercial Secretary.

Mary and Anne accompanied Roddy to Havana while John was enrolled at St. John's school in Leatherhead. Seemingly it was chosen as Roddy and Mary had bought a house in Great Bookham some time previously as a base when home from overseas. Roddy wrote

a professional critique on currency reform when the Peso was devalued. While in Cuba he met both Fidel Castro and Che Guevara on several occasions. When the missile crisis blew up in 1961 the family returned home via the USA where the CIA in Washington could not believe Roddy's assessment of the communist regime and the extent of Castro's following. But he has since been proved right. In 1967 the Clubes were posted to Beirut and it was there that they met the Heaths. The children joined them during the school holidays, Anne having become a boarder at St George's, Ascot.

Their calm life in Lebanon was shattered in 1967 when the Arabs attacked Israel. It was all over in 7 days but some of the charm of the area was lost for ever by this event and the subsequent rise of Hezbollah. It was against this background that Roddy gained his considerable experience in Middle East Affairs. In 1969 Roddy was moved to Baghdad as First Secretary of Economic Affairs. His reputation had followed him and when he introduced himself at a reception for representatives of British companies in Iraq he discovered later that all present were subsequently visited by the security police. Saddam's regime became increasingly unsettled by British interests and with some security excuse declared three of the Embassy staff 'persona non grata' including Roddy. So regretfully the family returned to London Roddy had acquired a working knowledge of Arabic whilst in the Middle East but it was no longer to be of use to him professionally. It was added to his portmanteau of languages which included French, German, Russian, Spanish and Mandarin. His last years with the Foreign Office were taken up with visits to Washington and European Capitals for consultations.

Roddy's contributions to SOE and the Foreign Office were recognised by the award of an OBE gazetted on 1 January 1972 'James Roderick Clube, lately first Secretary, HM Embassy, Baghdad.' The family settled in a house at the top of Hawks Hill in Great Bookham where they stayed until Mary died. Roddy was active in retirement becoming Treasurer and then Chairman of a Housing Association in Ashted and it was during this time that he joined the Society and began his researches and writing on local history. After he lost Mary Roddy moved into Southey Court in Great Bookham where he became Treasurer of the Court Social Club. He wrote a history of Milner House in Leatherhead little knowing that he would end his days there.

He became a regular attender at the Sunday 10.00 service at St Nicolas where we met most weeks. He became less mobile as the years went by, gave up driving and latterly needed a lift to and from church and assistance to go up to the altar to take communion. It could have been given him in his seat but that was not for Roddy. He moved into Milner House for the last months of his life eventually becoming dependent on a wheelchair. His one regret in life was that he did not complete his external degree, researches into local history seemed more attractive after he retired. He was one of nature's gentlemen, quiet and unassuming but always with a cheery word for everyone he met in the street or at church or at meetings. He did not give the casual acquaintance any hint of his adventurous life or of his contributions to his country. He was a very special man and I am pleased to have been one of his friends. We will miss you Roddy and send our good wishes to his son John and daughter Mary assuring them that he will stay in our memories.

*Gordon Knowles*

# *Surrey by AR Hope Moncrieff*

*(illustrated by Sutton Palmer & published by A & C Black Ltd (First edition 1912)*

As I lay down the book, it falls open at the frontispiece – a charming scene of the bluebells at Ripley. I am immediately reminded of the hyacinthoides non-scripta that will be carpeting Surrey woodlands in a few months' time. Later, I read of Leatherhead church lying beneath 'the yew-dappled slopes' of the Downs. It is this combination of the lovingly produced watercolours of Sutton Palmer with the intricate and absorbing description from Moncrieff that make this book a very special read.

'Ascott' Robert Hope Moncrieff was born in 1846 in Edinburgh and died in Lewisham in 1927. Plagued by short-sightedness from boyhood, and orphaned early in life, he was a private man whose motto was, 'No foot over threshold of mine!' He wrote very many books, including a Treasury of Classical Mythology. He also travelled widely through the Scottish and English countryside, contributing to the publication of Black's popular travel guides.[1]

Harry Sutton Palmer (1853-1933) was born in Plymouth and studied at the Royal College of Art. He illustrated several of Black's guides. [2] His exquisite watercolour illustrations capture the beauty of the countryside, and bring to life the prose. The book jacket says it all: described by Moncrieff and painted by Sutton Palmer.

It may well be that you don't particularly want to read the book from cover to cover. Certainly, descriptions of Richmond and Bagshot may not seem relevant to an intrepid Leatherhead history explorer. However, I would encourage you to do some 'dipping' and pick out areas that interest you. We are told that the 'Swallows' of the Mole are less spectacular than in former days, the river once disappearing for two miles near Mickleham, allowing flocks of sheep to feed over it. (p7)

The style is informal, quietly rolling and meandering along, rather like the paths and rivers through the countryside described. There are many quotes of prose and verse along the way, with snippets from the likes of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Spenser and description by Harrison of Loseley House. (p81) The language is rich and jovial, with 'frumpish' canals (p86) and a personified River Mole taking 'a rather tame career on a flat arena, showing its friskiness chiefly by curving...and seeming 'to sleep under a crumbling meadow bank' (p88).

Part of the fun for the reader of 2015 is to compare and contrast. Patchesham Park was already a golf course with advertising placards for 'magnificent building plots'. I adored the description of the walk from the Spread Eagle in Epsom to Ashstead (sic), and then behind Ashstead to the church of Headley – the spire to be seen - finally taking the turnpike by Burford Bridge to Dorking. I can only imagine the tranquillity of those days. In addition, Moncrieff takes us back to former times where we can imagine ourselves in the company of historical figures such as Skelton at the Running Horses, Mickleham.

So, do a little exploring of your own, browse the mini art gallery of early 20th century watercolour which perfectly reflects the glories of the Surrey countryside, and thoroughly

enjoy your virtual journey with Robert Moncrieff chatting away at your side. Quoting Henry VIII's tutor, Skelton -

To travellers, to tinkers  
To sweaters, to swinkers  
And all good ale drinkers.  
I will keep an open door!

*Anne Fraser*

1 <http://www.electricscotland.com/art/bonnie/bonnie13.htm>

2 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold\\_Sutton\\_Palmer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harold_Sutton_Palmer)

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## *Swanning Around Leatherhead*

The swan is the emblem of Leatherhead Football Club. It also appeared in the Leatherhead Urban District's coat of arms, before that body was subsumed into the newly-created district of Mole Valley. Long before then, swans were a feature of the district. When the Swan Hotel in the High Street closed in September 1936, exactly 300 years after its first certain record, a life-sized model swan was rescued during demolition and lay for many years in the garden of 37 Cannonside, Fetcham, until it was very carefully restored by Sheila Warner. Now [2015] the swan is displayed in the garden of Hampton Cottage Museum and Heritage Centre, 64 Church Street, Leatherhead. A swan (almost certainly the same one) can be seen amid foliage above the hotel's entrance porch in both an engraving and a photograph of about 1860[1]. That above the entrance to the modern TraveLodge (which occupies part of the site of the Swan Hotel) is a recent copy.



From the twelfth century at least, the swan was regarded as a royal bird and something of a delicacy. Later on, the right to mark swans' bills as private property was granted to certain people and illustrated lists of marks were made for the Thames Swan Master and his deputies. The annual 'Swan-Upping' ceremony on the river Thames is a survival of such grants. Of our district's local Tudor landowners, the abbot of Chertsey's and Henry Norbury of Stoke d'Abernon's marks are recorded on a list of 1539-47 and those of Lord William Howard (Eastwick Park, Great Bookham, Effingham), Lady Windsor (Headley), Thomas Lyford (Fetcham, Stoke d'Abernon), Edmond Sliffield (Slyfield House, Stoke d'Abernon), John Stydolf (Polesden Lacey, Dorking, Mickleham, Randalls) and Robert Gardener (Thorncroft) in a list of probably 1572-76 [2]. William Tanner of Ashted had a swan mark registered on another list of about the same date. This was almost certainly the elder William, farmer of the demesnes of Ashted, accused at a manorial court in 1574 of cutting down underwood and trees who made 'a mark of a swan instead of a signature' [3]. The same list figures three swan marks for John Sandes (Little Patensham).



Why, then, is the riverside inn in Bridge Street (next to resident swans) called the Running Horse and not the Swan? Perhaps the High Street inn was called the Swan before the other became a public house. Or did the latter get its name onomatopoeically in a roundabout way from the title of John Skelton's early sixteenth century poem 'The tunning of Elinour Rummung'? Otherwise, why 'Running'? 'The Running Horses' (previously 'The Running Horse') at Mickleham took its name from the 'Dead-heat Derby' of 1828 [4], perhaps to distinguish racehorses from draught animals.

1 Mary Rice-Oxley, *The Swan Leatherhead and its brewery* (Leatherhead & District Local History Society, 2001), pp.13,14,17. The date and origin of the tradesman's token with a swan emblem (on the back page) is uncertain: such tokens usually date from the Commonwealth period (1648-60) when there was a shortage of small change.

2 N F Ticehurst, 'Surrey Swan-marks' *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 38 (1930), pages 34-38.

His spelling has been followed here.

3 *ibid*, and K N Smith in *Ashtead- a village transformed* (ed A A Jackson, Leatherhead & District Local History Society, 1977), page 41. R A Lever (*Proceedings of the Leatherhead & District Local History Society* 4.1 (1977), page 26, stated that 'half-grown cygnets were removed annually from the pond in Barnett Wood Lane by the River authorities.' Swans have not nested here in recent years, according to the *Ashtead Residents' Association* (John Rowley, pers. comm. January 2015).

4 Ronald Shepperd, *Micklam – the Story of a Parish* (Mickleham Publications, 1991) page 116; Goff Powell, *The Inns and Public Houses of Leatherhead and District* (Leatherhead & District Local History Society, 2006), page 59.

*Derek Renn*

## *More Motoring Memories!*

The article in the February Newsletter (Motoring Memories by Martin Warwick) aroused interest from Geoff Hayward (now an enthusiastic 93 year old) who used to live in Fetcham but now is in Poole Dorset. Geoff should bring back memories to the more long standing members of the History Society as he was a very active member as Sales Secretary in 1990, serving on the committee and amongst other things led tour parties and even helped with the decorating. (We could do with him now!)

As you can see from the photo my motoring began in 1925 at St. Paul's Avenue, Slough where my parents had moved in 1924.

The description of Austin Seven days in the February edition article is so similar to my own memories of such a car that I cannot resist describing them especially as I have just given up motoring after 76 years of driving. My only regret is that I have not handled a steam lorry, a tram or a double-decker bus!



*1932 Austin 7*

Here is a picture of my 1932 Austin Seven which I bought in 1953 for £55 when I lived in Bradford. The picture shows it on our unmade drive at Fetcham probably about 1959 or 1960. We moved to Fetcham in 1956 and used the car until 1960 when I sold it to a learner driver for £20. I warned the buyer about the cable brakes mentioned in the previous article.

My family's time in Fetcham stretched for nearly 39 years - the longest period we have lived anywhere although surprisingly we have just reached our anniversary of 20 years in Poole. So we could be described as originally natives of the Leatherhead area. After I joined the YHA in 1937 I had cycled through Leatherhead on my way to visit hostels in Surrey and Sussex.

My father must have visited Leatherhead around 1932 to hire or buy stage scenery from a firm called 'Granthams' as he was heavily involved in the Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas staged by the Horlicks Amateur Dramatic Society of which he was founder in Slough (in a copy of one of the programmes Geoff

attached is an entry 'Scenery by C E Grantham & Sons Ltd, Leatherhead' – any memories?).

After demobilisation from the 11th Armoured Division in September 1946 having had five

years or more of driving all kinds of vehicles I found myself without transport and not much money. I hastily bought a Hercules 3 speed cycle and one for my wife and even cycles were in short supply like the cars. The reason for buying the cycles was because my wife and I were living with my parents in a five bedroom house at Cippenham between Slough and Maidenhead. My two sisters and a younger brother were also there so it was a little crowded

At this time (Oct. 1946) I was working for the Friends Provident and Century Insurance Company in Leadenhall Street in the City for the princely salary of £264 a year. (In 1938 it was £60). We had married on my last leave in the Army (May 1946) at Ypres, Belgium where my wife was born. Our first child was due to arrive in August 1947 and the doctor said my wife would feel more comfortable if she went back to Belgium for the birth. This she did about June 1947 hinting that when she came back she would like to be in our own home! With the bombed out Londoners taking priority I could see no chance of getting a home started in the Slough area. Hence the reason for going to Bradford where I had a good supply of relatives and they had not suffered severely in the bombing.



*The terraced house*

A favourite aunt knew of a landlord who was about to sell an 1880's terraced house because of rent control and persuaded him to let it to us at 10/- (50p in today's money) per week which stayed at that figure the whole of the nine years we lived there. Curiously this house was in Thornton Road about two miles from central Bradford and two miles in the other direction to Thornton where Patrick Bronte began his ministry after Ireland. It was also about six miles from my birthplace at Stanningley (Pudsey).

Grandfather in the photo had a wooden leg as a result of getting the leg trapped in a horse and cart accident when he was a lad. This did not prevent him from playing wicket keeper at Pudsey St Lawrence cricket ground, a ground was well known to Herbert Sutcliffe and Len Hutton. My birthplace in the photo disappeared for ever after the war when a deep underpass was made under the road to Pudsey. This area was very familiar to my brother John and I because in the days before family holidays were 'invented' or even possible the custom was to send young children away to relatives for the summer holidays. My brother and I were country bumpkins living in a house on a working farm and we found this industrial area absolutely fascinating. Our grandmother's house then adjoined the railway viaduct where you see the Leeds tram climbing through the railway arch on its way to Pudsey. This route closed in 1938 and as grandmother had died in 1935 our holidays in the area ceased then. The other tram was to Bradford, about four to five miles away. It ran on a track gauge of four feet whereas the Leeds track was 4ft 8½ in (the standard gauge). This difference explained why the Bradford tram looked antique. The government would not allow narrow gauge trams to be fully enclosed.



*Grandfather with his wooden leg*

This gives you some background - my childhood and war memories have been printed by an amateur desktop printer but not published. He suggested I call it 'Hayward's Way'!



*Stanningley area - the trams*

So having settled in Bradford in August 1947 working for the Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation, an insurance company in City Square Leeds, I began to hanker after getting back to motoring but this just was not possible on the low salaries of that time I had bought a six months season ticket from my meagre savings to travel to Leeds by train but could not afford to renew it so out came the Hercules 3 speed and for the next two and a half years I cycled eleven miles each

way winter and summer. At the end of 1950 I could stand it no longer (even managers were leaving) and left Leeds in favour of working for the Phoenix Assurance Company in Forster Square, Bradford where I could walk to work and go home to lunch - heaven! Nevertheless it took me until 1952 to get hold of a motor vehicle - a 1927 Triumph 277cc motor cycle with acetylene gas lighting. There it is sitting in the backyard of our house in Thornton Road.

In the professions you were not supposed to let it be known that you engaged in part-time work. Something to do with stiff upper lips? I sometimes helped people with their gardens or a bit of decorating but one man wanted help in restoring a caravan in a field near Bradford for his children to play in. When finished he asked me what cash I would accept but I had spotted the old Triumph in his garage which he had used in wartime still with blackout mask on the gas headlamp! He said it was a wreck and his children had been pouring water in the petrol tank which had rusted and the holes caused the petrol to leak into the adjoining oil container. He agreed to let me have it and I wheeled it home with its decrepit tyres and rusting wheels but I was feeling quite excited. After a winter restoring it I had a trial run over the Pennines visiting a friend in Oldham and later sold it for £20 to a learner in 1953.

This gave me a start in seeking transport for the family as in 1953 our daughter was six and son four. This involved us in comparatively expensive train fares for my wife's annual visit to her folks in Belgium New cars were still scarce even eight years after the end of the war and pre-war cars were being sought. Somehow I heard of a garage on the Wakefield Road, Bradford which had a 1932 Austin Seven for sale at £55. While I was examining it a small queue formed behind in case I turned it down. I just had time to lie on the pavement and look at the underside of the bodywork. The car was originally from Northumberland as the letters number plate TY indicated.

I bought it and had a little help from my father over finance. My salary in 1953 was £516-13-4 - not quite £10 per week at age 31.

After an initial test run I laid it up for the winter. In those days you returned the certificate of insurance to the Company and when you wished to put it on the road again they gave you a credit or refund off your next premium. My first premium for Third Party, Fire & Theft cover was about £6!

My plan during the winter of 1953/54 was to take the Austin to pieces and restore it so that I could be satisfied that it was safe for the family to travel 200 miles to Buckinghamshire. I was an office clerk but I had spent over five years in the Army as a mechanic by way of a change from office work.



*1927 Triumph 277cc motor cycle with acetylene gas lighting*

The terrace house was ideal for my plan. First there was an archway next to the house leading to a back passage behind the other houses which in earlier times had been used by the night soil men with their

carts to collect the pails from the outside toilets. Yes our house still had an outside toilet but it had been converted to flush. The roof over our toilet was one massive block of millstone grit about 6 inches thick which due to its weight caused the walls to bulge rather alarmingly.

So this back passage had a convenient left hand turn leaving just enough room for me to park the body of the car under a tarpaulin. The wheels of the car and the triangular chassis went down into the cellar of the house whilst the engine I managed to carry into the attic. You can imagine the work over the winter and when the bodywork needed some small welding I persuaded a local blacksmith (still shoeing horses) to wheel his gas cylinders round to our house on a sack trolley. The running boards on the body had rusted badly at the front end and I asked a sheet metal merchant nearby to make me some new ones out of galvanised metal - better than new. There was of course much more to the restoration work - for instance the dynamo needed attention as it was not charging the battery sufficiently but again a local firm did the job for about £6. Notice from the photo of my Austin the handle to start the engine just above the number plate. It tended to rattle when the car was in motion so I made a strong rubber band out of an old car inner tube and stretched it between the handle and a convenient anchor point. Although the engine had a starter motor with a switch on the floor near the driver I used the handle a lot because our low mileage didn't put much energy into the battery. The handle was invaluable if you found you had parked in a boggy place and had wheel spin in trying to get out. You simply chose a low gear, either reverse or forward and with the engine switched off you could wind the car out of trouble with the handle much to the astonishment of onlookers.

We planned to visit my parents at Easter 1954 and when it came to reassembly I was reluctant to put the old body back once I saw the chassis, wheels etc. gleaming with about three coats of paint. I could go into much more detail but thanks to changing my workplace from Leeds to Bradford I had more spare time and was even studying for insurance exams then. In those days the M1 had not been built and we followed A roads when possible. We crossed the Trent at Long Eaton rather than go through Nottingham or Derby. It was usually an eight

hour run including meal stops. Our faithful Austin would cruise happily at its maximum speed of 45 mph on the flat and would only get overheated when we chose to go over Holme Moss near Holmfirth. All went well on this first long run until we reached the foot of the hill past the Rank film studios at Denham. The car engine stopped and I found we had run out of petrol! The petrol tank was under the bonnet - gravity feed (no petrol pump). It was not a large tank but some previous owner had fiddled with the reserve system - it had a two-way tap but this did not work because the necessary pipe had been sawn off. I had to walk to a garage about a mile away and borrow a can of petrol. One of the specialities of owning a pre-war car at that time was that if you encountered a similar model on a journey the custom was to wave vigorously at each other and also stop if you saw another having trouble. Hand signals were necessary as there were no trafficators. At one stage to comply with the law I had to fit two rear lights to shine on the number plate instead of one. I also reduced the number of headlights to one to save punishing the battery.

Whilst in Yorkshire we visited many places of interest and as I had been in a tank regiment in the war I expected the Austin to take us over some very rough ground! On one occasion after crossing a field we had to move some rocks to get through a gate leading on to one of the old grass drove roads in the Grassington area. Another advantage in possessing an Austin Seven was that its tyres were the same size as motor cycles (3.50x19) so my brother who was a keen club motor cyclist would pass on to me his used tyres to finish their life on our car! My brother being an engineer noticed how noisy the gearbox was and said "How can you put up with that frightful noise!" When available he took the gearbox apart and found the cause. One of the shafts had worn from a straight line into a series of steps! He made a new case hardened shaft at his workplace and said that it would last longer than the original. With help like that how could I lose?

I had located a firm in London that specialised in Austin Seven spares and I used them a lot. When our Austin came from Bradford to Fetcham in 1956 it was still in use until 1960 and not long before I sold it I gave it a treat. The firm in Balham did rebores so I took the block off the engine, wrapped it in a sack and took it to Balham using my season ticket one Saturday morning. When I collected it the cylinders had been rebored and new pistons and valves included. What a difference that made when climbing hills for instance.

I would have loved to have kept the Austin, perhaps in mothballs, just to look at occasionally and reminisce.

In 1960 I sold the car to enable me to build a garage and it was not until 1962 that I acquired another. This time it was a much bigger car - a Humber Hawk. We had seen one when on holiday at Weymouth and took a fancy to its appearance. This certainly suited our eldest daughter who when I occasionally drove her to St Andrews School in Ashted in the Austin Seven she had laid down on the floor so that her school friends would not see her arrive in such an ancient car!

Geoff Hayward

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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 at the Letherhead Institute are held on the **third Friday of each month** but not in June, July or August. The last lecture before the summer break was on May 15th 'Leatherhead & India'. They will be resumed on 18th September and announced in the August Newsletter and on the website.

## L&DLHS Coffee Morning

**Saturday 27th June**

This will be held at the LCA Library, Letherhead Institute Saturday 27th June 10.00am -12noon. It is open to members and non-members - please invite a friend or two! Entry is free and coffee will be available.

There will be displays and information on lectures and museum information

Please put the date in your diary and come along to support this event.

If you'd like to contribute any displays/photos/ documents please let Anne Fraser know asap on [anne.o.fraser@ntlworld.com](mailto:anne.o.fraser@ntlworld.com)