

Potters Bar & District
Historical Society

PB

Regd. Charity No.299475

The Newsletter

September 1991

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

It is said that the membership in any organisation is made up of four bones:

There are the wish-bones who spend all their time wishing someone else would do the work.

There are the knuckle-bones who knock everything that anybody else tries to do.

There are the jaw-bones who do all the talking and very little else.

And there are the back-bones who get under the load and do the work.

Which category do you fall under?

I thank Gordon Eve for drawing my attention to this item.

Bearing the above in mind it was sometime ago that the Committee sent out a form entitled, CAN YOU HELP THE SOCIETY? All that information was recorded but since then there have been quite a large number of new members. Therefore we would be grateful if you would complete the enclosed form and return it to your Road Steward, as indicated.

I am certain that all members who attended last December's talk on bricks, will be as shocked as I was to learn of the passing of Sid.Beadle. His lecture was much appreciated and some members asked if he would return.

His wife, who came with him to Wyllyotts, was so overcome two hours later that she also died.

The Society sends its sympathy to their two sons.

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME - Monthly meetings.FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER at Wylllyotts Centre 8 pm PROMPT

'Photography as Information,
Propaganda and records in Wartime.'
by Mr. Michael Seaborne

The speaker is the Curator of Historic
Photographs at the Museum of London.

Last year a one-day seminar was held at the
Museum of London to celebrate the 50th anniversary
of the Blitz. Mr. Seaborne gave tonight's talk at
that seminar.

THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER

'CAPTURE AND ESCAPE, 1940'
by Mr. Denis Hoy

Denis Hoy wrote this poem some four months
after becoming a prisoner-of-war at Calais in May
1940 but it was not until April, 1945 and after
quite a lot of patience that he reached his open
gate.

Reminders

The sudden sweetness of the rose,
The tang of tar and wood fires smoke,
The rustling leaves when autumn's breeze
From cherry trees removes their cloak,
The lash of rain against my face,
The pop of chestnuts on the fire,
The tender touch of lips so sweet,
The vibrant strumming of the lyre -
Of those I've loved in bygone days
These scents, these sounds, these touches all
Remind me and yet more amaze
That life goes on beyond the wall
Which holds me here, whilst I await
With patience small the open gate.

The speaker will relate two episodes of this
five years - the two weeks immediately after his
capture and the two months or so preceding his
escape.

'ALLEN HAY at SOUTH MYMMS, 1898-1954'
by the Reverend Robert Gage

The lecture will be an historical biography on the life and ministry of the Reverend Allen Hay, mainly based on his correspondence with Frederick Brittain, Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, for 32 years. It will cover his early life and his heyday before the First World War, which is no longer remembered by present inhabitants of South Mimms. Those residents who do remain in the village mainly remember him as an old man.

MEMBERS' NEWS

It is with regret that since the last Newsletter one has to record the passing of four of our members.

The Committee and members send their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mrs M.B. Bennett, Mr.N.Brown, Mrs.P.Eve and Mr.C.Case.

One is pleased to record that Don.Green has made satisfactory progress since his operation and is back on duty at the museum.

Another of the museum stewards, Chris.Christie sustained a fall whilst on holiday and we wish her a satisfactory recovery.

The following new members are welcomed to the Society and it is hoped that they will find their membership to be profitable. They are Mr. & Mrs.Carter and family, Mr.P.H.Trowsdale, Mr. & Mrs. J.D. & H.O.Brien and Mr.& Mrs.C.R.C.Edwards.

14th September - 5th October

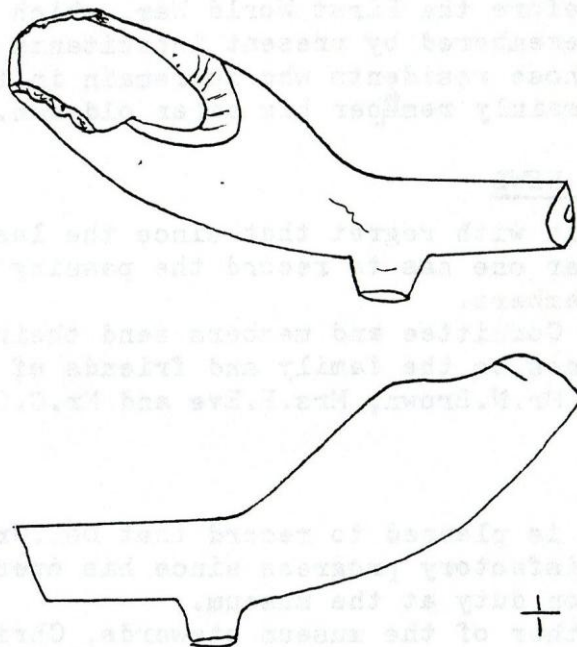
Exhibition in OAKMERE LIBRARY

This includes the material used for the 50th anniversary of the Methodist Church and King ~~EXXVIII~~ Charles the Martyr Church, plus further information on, "Potters Bar in 1941".

OPENING HOURS as per the library.

KEEPING YOUR EYES OPENCLAY PIPES

The occupier of IO4, The Walk brought the illustrated pipe into the Museum. It has now been dated to c.I690



This find fits very nicely with the previously reported finds in The Walk, (The Newsletter April 1987 Vol.3 No.3)

No.44 The Walk

2 bowls dated I620-40 and I690-I740

No.93 The Walk

I bowl dated I670-I710

So keep looking in the gardens of The Walk.

This exercise has illustrated the value of plotting even the most basic of finds and thereby discovering a previously unknown pattern.

Barbara Clinton noted:-

Edmund Bramston born 18th April 1808
died 9th June 1859
of South Mims and North Street, Pentonville.
Amelia Anne born 22nd Oct. 1815
widow of above died 12th March 1904.

Edmund Bramston was one of the trustees of
George Byng, who died in 1847.

THANKS

Thanks are due to John Scivyer for volunteering
to become the Recorder for Area 9, Potters Bar to
Barnet. This now means we have a Recorder for all
the areas for the first time.

SUMMER OUTINGS' REPORTS

Sunday 9 June

Twenty-three members and their friends
enjoyed a pleasant walk around Ganwick Corner
and Bentley Heath, starting at 2.30 p.m. Brian
Warren, the guide for the afternoon, gave a brief
history of some of the properties, noting the
dates of erection and some of the more famous
occupiers. Most of what survives dates from the
last hundred years and is the result of the work
of the Byng family. However, evidence of earlier
occupation does still exist; the house Homefield
is over 200 years old; the Duke of York once the
White Horse comes from an earlier period, as does
Ganwick House.

Bentley Heath was the estate village created
by George Stevens Byng (1806-86), but even there
one noted the ridge and trough of an earlier
roadway, Bentley Heath Farm and Elm Farm, the
latter probably the oldest extant building in the
area. In the village itself one found pre-Byng
buildings in Harding's Farm and Miss Smith's
property. The walk ended at Wrotham Park Gates,
dated 1865 and where one noted the stonework
shields above the entrance gateways, which were
in a rather sorry state.

Wednesday 17 July

The Rev^d.J.Price, of Little Berkhamsted, welcomed thirty-three members and friends to the village. The first stop on the evening's stroll was the parish church of St.Andrews, where after a brief introduction were allowed to wander round. As it was the evening of the Archdeacon's inspection one could view some of the ancient books held at the church. There were monuments to the Culling-Smiths and the Bosanquets in the church and Reginald Maudling, M.P. for Barnet, is buried outside.

The owner of Strattons Tower welcomed the party to his unusual home. His delightful residence occupies the three sections of the 155 feet high tower, with a modern kitchen on the ground floor.

The Tower, a wellknown landmark because of its height, is sometimes called "The Folly" and perhaps this was the reason for its existence.

Though the owners were absent the group was allowed to view the gardens and old Manor House. This house was for centuries called Welds and may be so-called from the Manor of Little Berkhamsted being held by Humphrey Weld from 1600-45. In 1703 it was described as "Brewhouse which was the Manor House."

Finally, tea was taken in the Village Hall, where the Rev^d.Price, Mr.Tatton Brown and the lady who prepared the tea were all thanked for making the visit an enjoyable one.

BARNET LIBRARY, STAPYLTON ROAD

081-449-0321

Opening hours:-

Monday	10	-	6pm
Tuesday	9.30	-	5pm
Wednesday	9.30	-	8pm
Thursday	9.30	-	5pm
Friday	9.30	-	8pm
Saturday	10.00	-	5pm

This new library is well worth a visit, even if you are not going to borrow books.

W.E.A. Course

10 weeks starting 26TH September
at the De-Havilland College, The Walk
(Room PG 09).

Thursday 2.00 - 4.00 p.m.

The History of South Mimms and Potters Bar by Brian Warren

Cost £21.50

Concessionary £16.10

SPRING PROGRAMME REPORTS

31 January

"Capel Manor" by Mr. J. Edwards

Jack Edwards, the former librarian at Cheshunt, spoke to a large audience on Capel Manor. Using slides he illustrated the history of the buildings. In 1486 the Manor of Honeylands and Pentriches or Capels was sold by Jane, wife of Sir Thomas Lewknor and widow of Sir John Yongs, to Sir William Capel. It was held by the Capel family until it was surrendered to the Crown in 1546.

The speaker traced the descent of the manor which was situated on the outskirts of Enfield. Robert Jacomb, Lord of the Manor 1751-83, demolished the old manor house and built Capel House near Northfield.

That house was demolished by Rawson Boddam, a former governor of Bombay, who transferred the name of Capel House to his house, which had been built by Alexander Hamilton, north of Bullsmore Lane. Boddam greatly improved the house and it was bought by James Warren in 1840.

Views of the modern house were used to illustrate its many interesting corners, since it had been used as a centre for horticulture, dating from 1968.

Cyril Overend thanked the speaker.

25 February

"Prehistory North of the Thames"
by Dr.N.Merriman

This talk was a fascinating historical trip through the ages from the days in pre-history when ice-flows edged as far as Finchley, Potters Bar and Chingford until the time when the Romans first set foot on our southern shores.

Dr.Merriman, of the Museum of London, gave a talk based on his book. Painstaking research and not a little luck revealed more about our ancestors than was known even 50 years ago. The days when men first stood upright and hunted for their food with flint-tipped arrows fired from wooden bows were detailed. Following victory celebrations or funeral ceremonies they often deposited trophies made of pottery or metal into rivers or deep pits. They are still there to be found and using modern techniques can be accurately dated. It was from such finds that Dr.Merriman made pre-history come alive.

Dr.Lynch expressed his thanks to Dr.Merriman on behalf of members for such a vivid revelation at times gone by.

22 March

"The History of Bentley Heath"
by Mr.B.Warren

A record number of 87 members and friends gathered to hear this talk, which commenced with a tour of the present village and noting what had survived the passage of time. Reference was made to a house called Gannox, which had been demolished in the last century. Its exact location is unknown but the speaker suggested it must have been near the present Bentley Heath Farm.

The premises known to the locals as The Drum and Monkey was, in fact, licensed as The Prince of Wales, and became The Strafford Arms, in 1881. When the latter title lapsed in 1933, it was subsequently transferred to the new public house in Mutton Lane.

It was noted that it was as a result of the work of the 2nd Earl of Strafford, George Stevens Byng '1806-86) that the present Bentley Heath came into being.

Some of the land along Bentley Heath Lane had been part of the Deeves Hall Estate, once owned by Sir Edward Turner. The important points of the medieval open-hall house of Elm Farm, discovered by the speaker in 1975, were then outlined.

Finally, using evidence from I606 and I479 the speaker noted further lands that might have been part of the Manor of Mandeville, of which so little is known, also several references to the old word 'wick', which might link with the Domesday reference to Mimes as a 'berewic'.

Joan Groves thanked the speaker for another interesting insight into the lands around Wrotham Park.

24 May

"Changing Potters Bar"

by The Society's Recorder Group.

The last talk of the 1990-91 series of lectures showed members how the Recorder Group was making a comprehensive record of the rapid changes in and around Potters Bar.

The meeting commenced with Gillian Gear, the Hertfordshire County Organiser of the scheme, relating how Hertfordshire started its recording. She had held annual meetings for all recorders, produced a Newsletter and a list of all the names and addresses of the County's recorders. Not all the towns and villages had joined the scheme but a fair proportion of the County was covered. The annual reports of each group/individual were now lodged with the Local Studies Library, County Hall, Hertford, as a record for the use of future local historians.

The Chairman then introduced each of the Society's recorders to the meeting, before the evening continued with slides showing a different aspect of recording in each of the ten local areas. Gordon Eve spoke about the complete photographic survey of Chace House and Len Field gave an update on the "Well" discovered at

10 Hillside. The other areas showed how the original house of the White Horse P.H. was discovered during renovation; pre demolition photographs of the Great Slades' site; a complete survey from demolition to re-erection of 92-94, Wroxham Gdns.; photographs taken from the same view point over a period of time at P.B. Station; 1960s-70s infilling of the area; some of the monuments and their history in South Mimms churchyard; small survivals between Potters Bar and Barnet and the pottery recently discovered off Mutton Lane.

The meeting ended with slides on the most recent discovery, which had first been reported to the Museum, of a "well" in Strafford Gate. It is now thought to be a sump, connected with the drainage of the area since the coming of the railway.

Experiences of an Enumerator

1871 (concluded)

The schedules had their comic as well as serious aspect. In giving instances of these I do not intend to dwell upon the misspelling of names, some of which were very ludicrous and puzzling; neither shall I use any of my memoranda to raise a smile; but will illustrate some of the trials which the enumerator met with when called upon to give a fresh schedule and fill it up himself. One schedule was returned (I omit the real name) as -"Better known as Cast-Iron Jack; lodger, unmarried, N.B., not my fault; ironmonger's assistant and a good hand at mixing tacks; born at - ; mother says I am a lunny, but I don't think I am." This was filled up by one who took the jocular side of question; but the poor fellow will not be included in the next census. Within a fortnight the grave contained all that remained of poor, "Cast-iron Jack." He little thought, when he made out his schedule with such a light heart, what trouble he was giving the

enumerator, who had to make enquiries respecting him in order to make out a fresh schedule; and he thought still less that, before he was tabulated as one of the population, he would have passed from amongst his fellow men.

How different was "Cast-iron Jack's" view of the census from those who with indented brow and solemn looks brooded over the "awful responsibility" which they felt at the task imposed upon them by the State, and returned their schedules, sealed up, with strict injunction that they were not to be opened except by the Register-General himself!

One more illustration of the trials of an Enumerator. I had one schedule returned to me filled in with the names of the father and mother in the first column; the children being all placed in the column headed, "relation to family." Neither age nor condition was stated, and the only information beyond the mere names, placed as stated, was the important fact that "this was rote April 3," the latter being written in the column set apart for "rank, profession, or occupation." I supplied another schedule; but neither father nor mother was at home when I next called, - the house being in charge of the children, who, from inquiries made of them, told me they "minded the house" and didn't know when their parents came home; and they went away early in the morning. I set about filling up the schedule, but having written in the names from the schedule presented to me, I came to a deadlock. The children could, between them, tell me their own ages; but they could neither furnish me with the ages of their parents, where they were, nor what was their occupation; and these particulars I had to call from the neighbours.

Amongst my returns I believe that, I had the oldest and youngest of the inhabitants of -. One couple were very patriarchal, the man returning himself as 508 and his wife 506! In making up my return to the Registrar I took the liberty of leaving out the "0". The youngest had a very close run of being included in the present Census at all. I allude to this fraction of the population as "its" sex. The head of the family had simply written in "baby"; and as it had been

neither registered nor christened, and no name been chosen for it, I was puzzled to know what to do with "baby". I ultimately returned it as a blank "ditto" - "male". Another youngster in my list, "one month" old, and a female, was returned as "unmarried!"

The "affliction column" presented some very curious facts. Only the deaf and dumb, blind, imbecile and lunatic were to be returned; but in many cases persons having little ailments had minutely described them, and in one case I had a family returned as "all healthy." A curious kind of affliction that! But perhaps it referred to the good appetites of the juveniles, which may be a real affliction to the "haed of the family!" To show the minuteness with which some chronicled their cases, one old lady filled in her occupation as "inability," which she explained as being unable to keep herself, adding that she was living upon parochial relief with assistance from her daughter.

Having given a brief outline of some of the experiences of an Enumerator, I will conclude with one more experience common to the 33,000 Enumerators employed to collect the papers, viz, that Government did not overpay those who did the work.

The Barnet Press,
20th May 1871.

WAR MEMORIALS (See Sept. 1908 & April 1989

Newsletters)

As a result of the discovery of a postcard showing the war memorial in Northaw Place School, a letter was sent to the Headmaster, near Salisbury, where the school is now. He has promised to send a list of those who fell to the Society.

MUSEUM OF LONDON CHARGES, as from 3rd Sept.

A ruling by H.M. Customs and Excise means the Museum can no longer reclaim VAT, and that will cost the Museum in excess of £350,000 per year.