

The Newsletter

JANUARY 2001

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COVER PICTURE

This is the fourteenth in the series of black and white photographs of Potters Bar, taken between 1969 and 1972, by Mr. E. Bartlett, a former Secretary of the Society.



Darkes Lane - where are all the cars and people?

Tesco's first store in Potters Bar can be seen on the far right having, by this time, replaced the much-loved Ritz cinema. On Saturday 1st July, 1967, following the showing of 'That Riviera Touch', Frank Seymour, the manager for the previous twelve years, closed the doors for the last time.

It was only in the 1930's that Darkes Lane developed to serve the growing number of families coming to Potters Bar.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Hello everyone,

I trust you all had a great Christmas holiday; may I take this opportunity on behalf of myself and the rest of the committee to wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year. I hope to see you at some of our lectures (the first one being held on Friday, January 26th).

Starting this month the Museum will be opening on Saturday mornings at **11am to 1pm** instead of 2 to 4pm. This is to enable the staff at Wyllyotts to close at lunch-time instead of staying open just for us. If the centre has a special event on any Saturday afternoon then we are going to try and open the Museum between 2 and 4pm, as well as in the morning.

There are quite a lot of new exhibits in the Museum so do come along and see for yourself. We have a beautiful, large ink drawing of the Lych Gate, donated by the artist June Edwards of *Imago* (16 High Street); this has also been put in the Museum, really worth a visit.

We are still short of Saturday Stewards - can anyone help us out from 11am to 1pm once a month? If you feel you can, please ring Denis Lore on 656 833, who is the Saturday Rota organiser.

Hope to see you at sometime during the year. *Jean Foster.*

OBITUARY - Dr. John Kent (1928/2000)

John was born in Palmers Green, though it was not long before his parents moved to Potters Bar. Like other children at that time, his secondary education was away from Potters Bar, in his case, at Minchinden Grammar School, Southgate. In the summer of 1949 he became part of a small team which excavated the mediaeval moated site at Puttock's Farm near Welham Green. Ten years later he directed the Enfield Archaeological Society's excavation of Perriers Manor, in Cheshunt. During that time he had gained his doctorate at University College, London and, following his belated National Service, in the Royal Army Pay Corps, he was appointed Assistant Keeper of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, 1951. Later, he became Deputy Keeper in 1974 and was Keeper from 1983 until his retirement in 1990.

In that time he published many learned works and as a result gained an international reputation on late Roman coinage. Also, he held high office in the Royal Numismatic Society, the British Association of Numismatic Societies, The London & Middlesex Archaeological Society, and served on the International Numismatic Commission. As a result of his scholarship, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and the British Academy.

Locally, he founded the Enfield Archaeological Society, was President of the Barnet Local History Society and Vice-President of our Society for many years. In the 1960's he directed the excavation of South Mymms Castle, which concentrated mainly on the motte. It was one of the earliest excavations to have been photographed in colour.

John Kent died from leukaemia on Sunday 22nd October last year, and the Society was represented, at the Funeral and Service of Remembrance on Friday 27th October, at New Southgate Crematorium, by myself. As requested, the Society made a donation to the Leukaemia Research Fund. *BW.*

WINTER THE HUNTSMAN

by Osbert Sitwell

Throughout his iron glades
Rides Winter the Huntsman
All colour fades
As his horn is heard sighing.

For through the forest
His wild hooves crash and thunder
Till many a mighty branch
Is torn asunder.

And the red reynard creeps
To his hole in the river,
The copper leaves fall
And the bare trees shiver.

As night creeps from the ground,
Hides each tree from its brother,
And each dying sound
Reveals yet another.

Is it Winter the Huntsman
Who gallops through his iron glades,
Cracking his cruel whip
To the gathering shades?
(*Jean Foster*)

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME

Friday January 26th. "Comparing the Centuries." by Dr. Arnold Lynch

"At Watford, in 1901, a lecturer discussed the great improvements in living conditions since 1801, mainly derived from advances in science, engineering, and medicine; and in particular how they had affected Hertfordshire. Since 1901 there have again been great changes, mostly for the better. But greater knowledge has brought greater doubts, and it is no longer possible to be so optimistic about the future as the lecturer was in 1901."

Thursday February 22nd. "The work of the Museum of London Archaeology Service."
Mrs. E. Howe.

This is a recently-formed department now incorporated as part of the London Museum, near Eagle Wharf Road, in a warehouse next to the Grand Union Canal. The lecturer will outline the working of the Museum Service and its progress to date.

Tuesday March 27th. "Roman Roads in London." by Mr. Harvey Sheldon.

Harvey Sheldon is a former president of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society, and a well-respected archaeologist of London. In particular, he specialised in research south of the Thames in Southwark proposing, many years ago, that a Roman road went from there to cross the Thames at Westminster. Those who are avid watchers of Channel 4's "Time Team" will recall that he related this fact in the programme on the excavation in Lambeth Palace.

The speaker is a well-known lecturer and members should find this talk of particular interest.

THE MEETINGS START AT 8PM **PROMPT** IN THE 60 PLUS CENTRE, WYLLYOTTS CENTRE. ALL ARE WELCOME (MEMBERS FREE, VISITORS £1).

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome the following new members to the Society. We trust they will enjoy the many lectures, walks and outings which are part of our yearly programme, and we hope that they will take an active part in the life of the Society:- Mrs. V. Lonkhurst (re-joining), Mrs. Ruth Peck, Mr. & Mrs. Antill, and Mr. & Mrs. D. Clark.

OBITUARY - William (Bill) Gelder (1912-2000)

Bill spent all his life in Barnet, having started as a pupil at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in 1923. In his working life he spent thirty-two years teaching handicapped children at a school in Islington but, out of hours, he became the drama critic for 'The Barnet Press.' The only person he encouraged to become a professional actor was David Jason, who worked with Friern Barnet Incognito Players. His summaries at local performances were much appreciated for their words of wisdom. He had a gift for words and wrote 'Georgian Hadley' (1974), 'Historical Barnet' (1984), and 'Monken Hadley Church and Village' (1986), always saying that he was no historian. In addition, he wrote 'A Barnet Boyhood' and 'Local Plays'.

He was a Vice-President of the Barnet Local History Society, and stewarded at Barnet Museum; in his latter days this was very convenient as there was a bus-stop outside his house at 52 Meadway, and one outside the Museum.

From the very beginning of our Society's publications, Bill always wrote a favourable review in the Barnet Press, which helped in establishing their reputation and in increasing their sales. His first review was on 21st August 1986 and thirteen reviews later, at the time of the second edition of 'The Railway Through Potters Bar' he wrote, "The first booklet had sixteen pages and eight illustrations... It cost one pound. A second edition ... has twenty-eight pages and twenty-six illustrations - and still costs only one pound! If that isn't value for money, I don't know what is."

The Society was represented at the well-attended and most moving 'Service of Thanksgiving', at St. Mary the Virgin, Monken Hadley, on 10th November, by myself. *BW.*

HELP REQUIRED

Stewards to help look after the Museum. If you could help just one day a month it would be of great assistance. You will be on duty with an experienced steward and you will be assured of a pleasant afternoon.

Tuesdays 2.30-4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on 01707 642 296.

Wednesdays 2.30-4.30pm, contact Don Green on 01707 854 613.

Saturdays 11.00am - 1.00pm, contact Denis Lore on 01707 656 833.

Recorder. We also need more volunteers to spend time on a regular basis at the Museum (especially on Tuesdays) indexing and recording the Society's and the Museum's collections of artefacts and historical items. Such a person could be a Society member or a student or an undergraduate. If you can help, please ring the Curator, **Arnold Davey**, on 01707 654 179.

CAR LIFTS FOR MEMBERS

Certain of our members are unable to attend the lecture meetings due to lack of transport. It would be appreciated if any member who is willing to offer a lift to meetings would contact the Chairman, who would then put them in touch with the member needing the lift.

POTTERS BAR SOCIETY. SOCIAL EVENINGS

The following illustrated lectures have been arranged for the start of 2001. These will be held at the Tilbury Hall, Darkes Lane, commencing at 8pm, admission £1.50 (incl. refreshments), payable at the door. Non-members are welcome. Dates as follows:

Thursday, January 18th.	A Day in the Life of a Thames Tug	Mr. R. Thomas
Thursday, March 15th	Nigeria in the 1950's	Mr. & Mrs. E. Bell
Thursday, April 19th.	Trent Park	Ranger A. Jones

For further details (tickets, lifts, mailing list) contact Mrs. P. Hardiment, 34 Parkside, High Street, Potters Bar, EN6 5AU.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2001/2002 will become due in April 2001 so please send your cheque, payable to "Potters Bar & District Historical Society", to our Membership Secretary, Eileen Field, 51 High View Gardens, Herts. EN6 5PN. Tel. 653801 (Adults £3, Family/Group £5).

Prompt payment would be appreciated and, if you do *not* intend to renew your subscription, kindly inform the Membership Secretary.

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

A FAMOUS PERSON IN POTTERS BAR

I expect that some members recall learning about the 'Appleton Layer' at school, if one does not, then perhaps one has heard of it. Sir Edward Appleton, widely-recognised as the discoverer of the ionosphere (the Appleton Layer) was born in Bradford on 6th September 1892, the eldest of three children. He attended Hanson School for his secondary education, where J. A. Verity, his physics master, gave him every encouragement, even giving him the key to the laboratory. His master's foresight was amply rewarded, as his pupil gained various prizes before, at the age of eighteen, winning the Sir Isaac Holden Scholarship, at Cambridge University, although he could not be admitted for another year. Edward Appleton attended St. John's College in 1911 and won 'a double first'.

Following service in the First World War, he returned to Cambridge at the Cavendish Laboratory. In 1924 he was appointed to the Wheatstone Chair of Physics at Kings College, London University. It was at this time that he had a house built at what is now 197 Darkes Lane, for which conditional approval was given on 18th September 1924, the builder and architect being a certain C.W. Smith. Some members will recall it better as the residence of Dr. H. M. Brown from 1933. It was at that time, as a result of Edward Appleton being transferred to Holley Stewart Laboratory in Hampstead, an outpost of Kings College, that he moved his family away from Potters Bar.

In 1947 Professor Sir Edward Appleton received the Nobel Prize for Physics as the pinnacle of an illustrious career, in which he gained many other honours.

I should like to express my thanks to Dr. Lynch for drawing my attention to, "*Sir Edward Appleton and Joseph Priestley: Two Yorkshire Giants of Electrical Science*," by P. S. Excell, in the Proceedings of the Institute of Electrical Engineering.

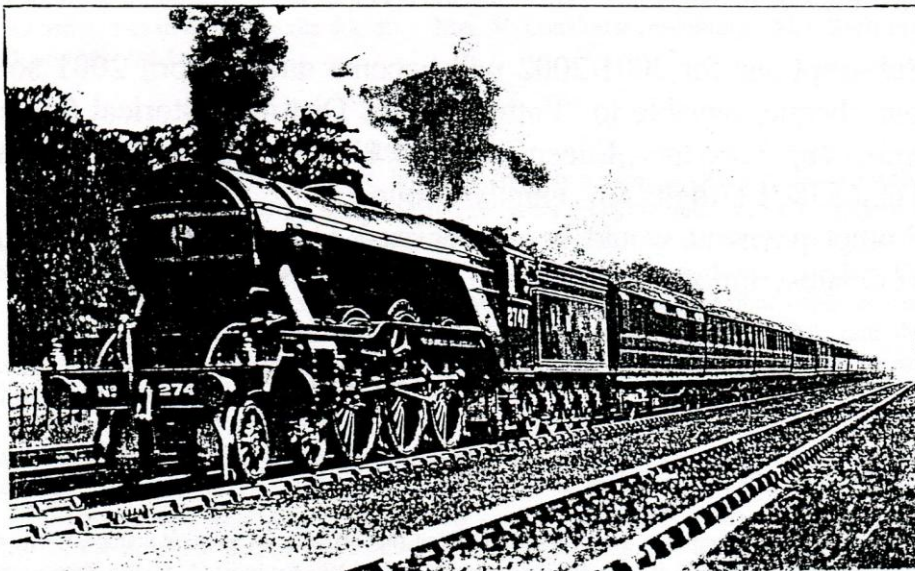
HOW TIME PASSES - Ten years on

An open day was held at the Wyllyotts Centre in December 1989, whereby nearly 500 visitors followed a trail around the building to view the new amenities. However, it was the 15th January 1990 that the Museum officially opened its doors, with Len Field and the late Fred Sanders as the first stewards. It was not until Saturday 26th January 1991 that the Right Hon. Cecil Parkinson, M.P., officially opened the Wyllyotts Centre, eighteen months after the laying of the foundation stone in June 1989.

Potters Bar & District Historical Society



RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHS



Gresley Pacific 2747 'Coronach' heads the heavy 4 pm express from King's Cross to the North in the 1930's. Most engines of this class were named after famous racehorses, Coronach being the winner of the 1926 Derby and the St Leger. The owner, Lord Woolavington, was connected with Northaw House, Northaw.

FROM HADLEY TO HAWKSHEAD WHEN STEAM REIGNED SUPREME

PRICE £2,

From the Health Food Shop, Brays in the High Street, the Museum
and the Society's monthly meetings.