

The Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2002

VOL. 19 No. 1

COVER PICTURE

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



This picture is looking across the grass towards St. Michael's Way, which links Osborne Road and Church Road. Once there stood an Iron Church, facing Church Road, which was inaugurated on March 12th, 1876. Subsequently it declined in support, and in late September 1899 it was renamed St. Michael's Mission Church. There was a church hall next door. In the Second World War much of the grass was dug over for allotments.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

It is September again and the start of our new lecture season, but what seasons we have just had. The early part of the year was the warmest for ages, the past three months all had above average rainfalls, and how about the terrible flood on Friday the 9th of August? Many homes and garages in our area were flooded - for the record. -Ashwood Road, Beechwood Avenue, Brackendale, Clive Close, Honeywood Close, Mountgrace Road and Sunnybank Road.

The houses in these roads are all at the bottom of the various sides of the High Street and Barnet Road hill. On the north and west sides of our town, all the water drains into a culvert that goes under Mutton Lane, the railway and then under the Woolworth's side pavements of Darkes Lane. It exits in front of the Hudsons Court Retirement Flats, or is supposed to. In fact it blew up the manhole covers in Darkes Lane, flooded again under the Railway Bridge, and when it did exit the water shot up at least 2 feet above the top of the culvert. Then it was joined by the Church Road and Mount Grace Road water overflows. The Golf Course car park entrance at one stage (10.30pm) had a wall of water 12feet wide by 8 inches deep flooding through it.

Many shops and the banks had water flowing through them, Hudsons Court (again) had 2 feet of water in their entrance, and the Golf Course Clubhouse called in the Fire Brigade to pump them out. The Golf Course people could help themselves in particular by increasing the size of their restricting bridges, the opening under the first of these is only c6 feet by 4 feet, so it was no wonder that the water shot over the top and into the Clubhouse. Historically, the last real flood of the shops in Darkes Lane (before the brook was culverted over in c1935) was after Christmas in 1927 when a sudden thaw of snow occurred. The newish flood storage tanks do not seem to work, so expect a new or widened culvert under Darkes Lane one-day - you saw it here first!

Our lectures this year are again varied, wide-ranging and look interesting. Do come along for the first of these on Thursday the 26th of September for David Pam's lecture on 'The Enfield Small Arms Factory'. David has talked to us several times in the past so give him a good welcome back to our Society. *Terry Goulding*

OBITUARY

DR. MALCOLM GRAHAM 1931-2002

Sadly Malcolm Graham passed away on July 2nd 2002. He served the local community as a dedicated doctor for over thirty years. Malcolm had a wide range of interests and talents and was particularly interested in local history, he contributed articles on a regular basis to the popular *Hertfordshire Countryside* magazine.

He was also a fund of knowledge on almost any subject and was a particularly enthusiastic observer of country life, indulging in weekly 15 mile walks studying and exploring. His sporting interests included rugby, squash, tennis, and golf and he was also at one time a keen motor cyclist! Additions to this wide range of interests included bridge, the study of insects, animals, reptiles, jazz music and gardening, especially growing his own vegetables.

He was a unique, friendly, smiling giant of a man. His passing is a great loss to his family, friends and Potters Bar. Rest in peace Malcolm. *Gerald Twyman.*

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome D.E. Baker, Mrs. A. Downie and Mr. Richard Watkins to the Society. We trust they will enjoy the lectures, walks and outings that are part of our yearly programme, and we hope that they will take an active part in the life of the Society.

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.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE HOLYHEAD ROAD

On 28th June, 2002, ten members met outside the "Black Horse" in South Mimms to look at the course of the St. Albans Turnpike; a section of the Holyhead Road. We looked at the lane where it narrowed beyond the houses and could not believe that in the 1700's this was one of the most important roads in the country.

We walked up to where the tollgate had stood at the green outside the "White Hart". Noting the dead straight line the road took down Ridge Hill. This formed the line of the road which opened in the early 1800's. Its straight line was in contrast to the narrow winding course we had just left.

Continuing on the original line of the road up Blanche Lane we noted the Hickson almshouses, St. Giles Church (one of the three buildings in Hertsmere listed grade 1) and the spelling - Mymys - on the parish room of 1896.

We continued to follow the original line round Greyhound Lane again and wondered how a stage coach with four horses kept up speed on this narrow twisting lane. At the junction with the St. Albans Road it was not possible, due to the thick trees, to trace the line into Wash Lane.

From this point we walked back to South Mimms village. This was along the line built by Telford in the late 1820's. Again dead straight and wider than the lanes we had been following. We remembered this last improvement came very shortly before the building of the London and Birmingham Railway took most of the traffic from the road. Back at the "White Hart we took a last look at the way the new straight line was at right angles to the original. The toll gates had also been shifted to suit.

John Scivyer

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

There was a recent letter from Richard Smart (Director, National Index of Memorial Inscriptions) in *The Times*, referring to the inception of a new scheme to record the inscriptions on gravestones. These recordings would be noted on the National Indexes of Memorial Inscriptions and would be similar to the Imperial War Museum's coverage of war memorials, to which I have been subscribing for ten years.

Doreen Willcocks and her team have already recorded the inscriptions near Barnet and the Hertfordshire Family and Population History Society has been recording and publishing inscriptions in Hertfordshire. I have corrected their book on Ridge.

In *our* Society's area I have an updated unpublished list of old St. John's graveyard (now the War Memorial site), the Baptist churchyard in Barnet Road, Northaw, and St. Giles, South Mimms, the latter is being updated. At the request of the Reverend Peter Bevan and Charles Nethercott I have made a start on the Mutton Lane cemetery.

The Guildhall Library, London

'London Apprentices' (from South Mimms), continued from May 2002 Vol. 18, No. 3.

Volume 19 Upholders' Co.

4-7-1716 Thos Roberds son of Edward yeoman to Jn Haward jnr.
5-12-1721 turned over to Philip Bedham citzn and merchant taylor.

Volume 21 Founders' Co.

7-11-1757 Wm Perdew son of Jn victualler to Richd Jones.

Volume 22 Armourers and Brasiers' Co.

24-6-1656 Jn Brocke son of Thos husbandman to -- Thomas
24-6-1646 Thos Brocke son of Thos husbandman to Edmund Clarke
22-1-1613/14 Hy Broomer son of Hy husbandman to Alex. Narmington
10-2-1653/54 Thos Chawkeley son of Thos mealman to Edw. Layton
29-9-1627 Edmund Clarke son of Edm husbandman to Edw Ible
31-8-1654 Thos Hill son of Jn husbandman to Edm. Clarke
24-12-1644 Edw Layton son of Wm husbandman to Jn Winzley

Ridge Walk

It had been hoped to repeat Ted Salters' Village Tour 1986, but due to circumstances beyond my control this is not now possible. *BW.*

High Street walk 25th May 2002

Thirteen members of the Society walked the length of the High Street from Abbey House to the end of Cotton Road. In this length their guide, Brian Warren, pointed out that most of the surviving buildings dated from the 1930's, but he wondered how long would it be before they began to vanish. The oldest surviving building is the partly timber-framed *Green Man* public house. The Georgian period is represented by St George's House, the bus garage wall of Parkfield and the original part of *The Cask and Stillage*. Oakmere House and the former Ladbroke School are Victorian, but all the small, slate-roofed cottages have gone and there is one dated building of the Edwardian time. It was a most enjoyable historical time-walk on a very pleasant evening.

PBHS AUTHORS IN THE 21st CENTURY – ARE THERE ANY OUT THERE?

The Society is justifiably proud of its formidable library of published articles and papers on local history, written almost without exception by our members. To date about twenty people have put pen to paper to ensure that whether concerning a person place or thing, a particular aspect of Potters Bar's past is published as a formally recorded reference.

Under a relatively new set-up the members of the Publication Committee operate in a domestic mode covering all aspects of publication i.e. proof reading, editorial, text/photo layout, printing and distribution. The committee are very hopeful to receive from members, contributions of any length from a short statement, observation or report of two or three hundred words, to a paper of perhaps 12,000 words or so.

The four members of the Committee, Brian Warren, Terry Goulding, Colin Field and Brian Kolbert, wish to be supportive and helpful to any member who would like to see their work published by the Society. This resolve is particularly directed towards those who may consider writing for publication for the first time.

Should you feel tempted but unsure, select an aspect or topic associated with the history of Potters Bar or its surrounding district, which includes South Mimms, Old Fold, Ridge and Northaw, and discuss your idea with a member of the Publications Committee. Find out whose heart your subject might be nearest to among other Society members and possibly discuss it with them. In this way you could gain advice regarding existing sources of information for your initial research, and very often one thing leads to another.

If it is your first attempt, you could work on a short account of around 1500 to 2000 words i.e. two to three pages, and if eventually there is a surplus of interesting aspects or anecdotes, the article can be extended accordingly. For those who may feel pensive about going it alone, why not work on a topic with someone else as a joint venture?

If you are beginning to feel seriously tempted, gain heart by reading paragraph number three again and then take full advantage of its sentiment. The pleasure gained when your writings are first published is very fulfilling and makes the whole effort worthwhile.

Have a try for at least three reasons; a personal sense of achievement, for the benefit of your Society, and for posterity. Leave *your* mark in the written history of Potters Bar and district.

Publications Committee.

Footnote:- If you would like to know more about the sequence of events between presenting the first draft copy of a text, and actual publication, I have a typed sheet available which describes the process. To obtain a copy please ring me on P.B. 653449. *Brian Kolbert.*
[For your information, the above article is 450 words long. *JD*]

BOB THE BUILDER

Well, not quite, but our Chairman has been at it again! Flushed with his success in repairing the XVth milestone on the A1000, after its unfortunate meeting with a speeding car, he has now repaired a boundary stone at our local National Trust property. A person or persons unknown had not only smashed the top off the stone, but hidden all the pieces out of sight. Terry hunted them down (the pieces, not the vandals) and carried out a fine piece of 'invisible mending.'

LEIGHTON HOUSE

You will recall that, in the text describing Leighton House in our last issue, I said, "There does appear to be an Estate Agent's to the left of the bank, but I can't make out the name." Well, one of our members, Mr. Gamby, has kindly supplied that name – L.G.Hall & Son.

POTTERS BAR'S COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Hospital Road (now Richmond Road)

As I was involved in researching the history of the hospital in Potters Bar for publication, it was with some chagrin that I discovered a large number of original records relating to the hospital, in the basement of Barnet Museum, when looking for other things. The First Annual Report (1885) declared, "The Hospital is designed for the benefit and accommodation of persons suffering from accidents or disease, of probably temporary character which cannot be adequately treated at their own homes, more especially for the assistance of the 'Industrious Poor', who are members of the Provident Dispensary established in connection with it, or members of the North Mimms Sick Club." There was a nurse, a medical officer locally and four consulting staff, who were attached to other hospitals.

In the annual reports there are lists of the statement of cases admitted to the Hospital, stating the sex, age, residence, occupation if known, disease, days in hospital and the result. No names were given but it would be possible in some cases to identify from information provided and consulting the Census Returns. When I looked at the years 1884-1888 my attention was drawn to the fact that very few people who were admitted to the Hospital actually died. I made a closer study of the year 1885 as follows:

In that year 26 females (2.5yr old to 75) and 30 males (3yr old to 85) were admitted.

The females stayed on average 43 days (10 days to 183 days).

The males stayed on average 38 days (7 days to 227 days).

Of the 56 patients 23 were cured,

13 relieved,

10 recovered,

4 still, in hospital,

2 cured by amputation.

2 cured by operation and

2 died.

The two who died were a seven-year-old male of meningitis and a fifty-eight-year-old female of cancer of the pancreas, both possibly unlikely to survive in a modern hospital.

As a matter of interest I now record a summary of the reasons for admission to the Hospital:

MALE

Inflammation of knee-joint
wound of knee/fingers
rheumatic fever
paralysis
abscess of scalp
hip joint disease
lacerated wound of arm
poisoned hand
granular lids

FEMALE

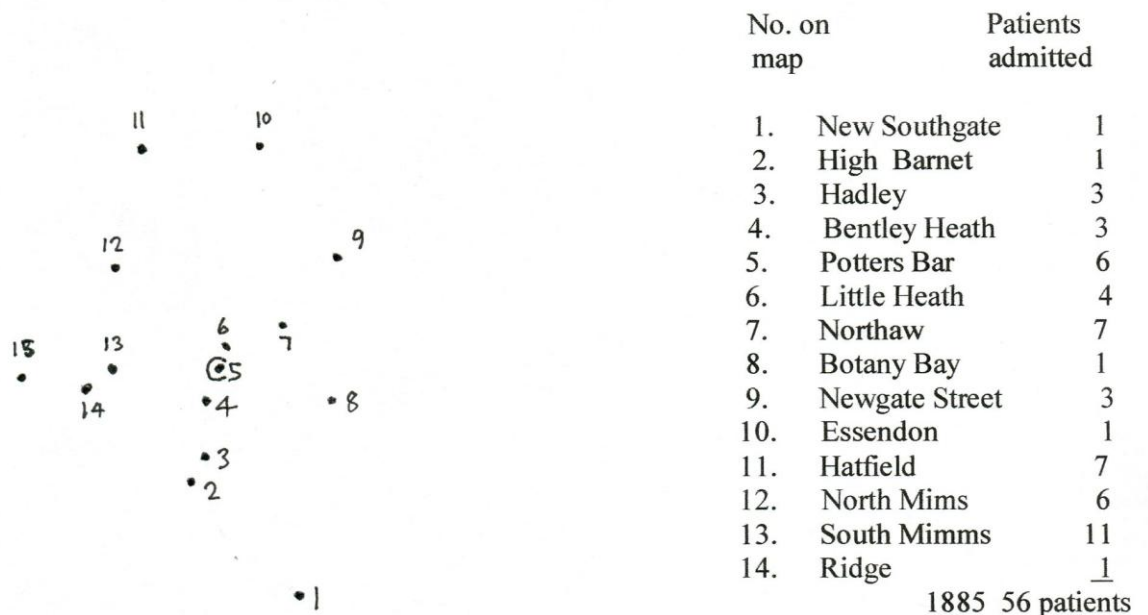
Inflammation of knee-joint
wound of ear
rheumatic fever
paralysis
abscess
caries of spine
haemophilia
tumour
anaemia

fractured thighs/ribs
 senile gangrene
 hip disease
 periostitis
 sprained ankle
 neurosis
 tuberc. meningitis
 injury to shoulder
 phimosis
 severe neuralgia

enteric fever
 gall stones
 cleft palate
 eczema
 apoplexy
 burn
 glaucoma,
 pleurisy
 enlarged tonsils
 debility

Some of the terms are no longer in common usage and others require more medical knowledge to explain than I possess.

In the past one has thought of the Potters Bar Cottage Hospital serving the local, community but casualties came from further afield as is indicated on the diagram below:



SCALE: 1 inch - 4 miles

Before the days of ambulances and considering some of the complaints the journey to hospital could have been quite an experience.

Between 1884 and 1888 did the upper classes pay to be admitted to a London hospital in times of an emergency? No doubt they were attended by local doctors at home, as later evidence has been shown with the coming of the telephone to the district. Dr. A. Waddell, The Hermitage, Southgate Rd. was the sixth person to have a telephone and Dr. H. F. Vaughan-Jackson, Carramore Cottage, near Oakmere Lane, was the twelfth, so their rich patients could seek immediate attention and the doctors did not lose any fees.

It was the fact that so few died in the hospital that aroused my interest and here are the figures for the first five years:

YEAR	NUMBER OF PATIENTS	DIED
1884	29	2
1885	56	2
1886	53	4
1887	56	0
1888	56	3

I am grateful to the Barnet and District Local History Society for allowing me access to the records and permission to publish this. In future anyone contemplating writing on Potters Bar's hospitals should first consult the records in Barnet Museum.

Brian Warren

RECORDER GROUP

Part of the work of a local history society is concerned with preserving items and images of an area for the future, and *our* Society does this by recording all the changes that take place in Potters Bar on a weekly/monthly basis. Such changes can involve roads (junctions, traffic lights, re-surfacing), private houses (extension, loft conversions), shops (new frontages, new owners, new businesses), public buildings (demolition, alterations), in short, anything at all that changes the appearance of the town.

Our group comprises several volunteers who each have a section of the town to record, and twice a year we meet to discuss our findings. All the reports are then collated and sent to Dr. Gillian Gear, the County recorder, who keeps the records of *all* the Recorder Groups in Hertfordshire for posterity.

One or two of our 'sections' are currently without recorders so, if this is something with which you would like to become involved, please ring John Scivyer (01707 657 586) for details.

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME

Thursday, September 27th 2002 "The Enfield Small Arms Factory", by Mr. David Pam.

This talk will include the establishment of the first arms factory due to the shortage of muskets in the Napoleonic wars, and the decision to build a new factory by the River Lea at the time of the Crimean War. This became the first modern arms factory, much visited. In spite of its remoteness all facilities were provided for the work force. The circumstances of its closure in 1988 will also be dealt with.

Tuesday October 29th 2002 "Engineering Marvels of the Waterways System", by Mr. R. Thomas.

This talk will take the form of an illustrated tour of some of the engineering marvels of our waterways system. We visit Foxton Inclined Plane, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Harecastle Tunnel, Anderton Lift, Bingley Five Rise Locks and the contemporary Falkirk Wheel project as well as others less well known.

Thursday November 28th 2002 "Hidden Hertfordshire", by Ann Marie Parker

This will be a more participatory chat in which the audience will be invited to become involved in sharing their recollections of other parts of Hertfordshire. Coal posts, mile posts, the oldest churches, interesting buildings, landscape gardens, Capability Brown and Humphry Repton, road systems from Roman times, and Domesday Records, all radiating from St. Albans, will be included.

Tuesday December 10th 2002 The Christmas Social.

Including refreshments and quizzes.

THE MEETINGS START AT 8PM *PROMPT* IN THE 60 PLUS CENTRE. WYLLYOTTS CENTRE.
EVERYONE WELCOME.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Although subscriptions for 2002/2003 were due on April 1st 2002, several of our members have yet to pay. Please check that you have your receipt and, if you have not paid, please send your cheque to our Membership Secretary, Eileen Field, 51 High View Gardens, Herts. EN6 5PN (Adults £3, Family/Group £5).

WANTED!

WE NEED YOU

Working in our museum is very interesting.

Meeting people - young, old and in between

Passing on knowledge - Local information - Help with students studies - Accepting items from the public that will add to the Museum collections - Selling the many information booklets that are produced by our society.

The Museum is open Tuesday / Wednesday 2.30pm - 4.30pm. Saturdays 11.0am - 1 00pm

Could you spare two hours of your time perhaps once in six months or twice would be better

Training and help is given Please contact Arnold Davey 01707 654179

We also require an organizer to arrange the Wednesday Rota's (Please help if you can)

THE FINAL JOURNEY

"Ron Kingdon's note in the May issue of the Society's Newsletter about King George VI's funeral train passing through New Southgate station certainly struck a chord for me.

At that time (1952) I was a district reporter covering East Barnet Urban District for the 'Barnet Press', and I was positioned among the Standard Telephones and Cables staff overlooking the line.

The silence and the sadness among the workers seemed almost tangible, as for many of us George the Good – as I think he could be remembered - was one of the formidable triumvirate, along with his wife Queen Elizabeth and the Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who strengthened and sustained Britain's morale during its darkest hours. We took his loss almost personally." *John Lucas.*

POTTERS BAR SOCIETY, SOCIAL EVENINGS

The following illustrated lectures have been arranged for the start of 2002. 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,	October 24 th	<i>Walking the Lea.</i> Mr. Ken Cain.
Thursday,	November 21st.	<i>Beauty and the Beast.</i> Mr Terry Over.
Thursday,	January 23rd.	<i>Mediaeval Magic.</i> Mr. David Pearce.

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

FINALLY

Thanks go to our team of volunteers, without whose help we should not be able to distribute the Newsletter, and the man who organises the volunteers, Michael Cawrey.

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season.'

If you wish to submit an item for inclusion (preferably of a 'local-history' nature), please phone the Editor, John Donovan (01 707 664 447) at least one month before the publication month (i.e. August, December or April).

Note; inclusion of such items is at the Editor's discretion.