



Potters Bar & District Historical Society

REGD.CHARITY NO.299475

The Newsletter

JANUARY 2004

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COVER PICTURE

This is the twenty-fourth 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.



Lochinver House. Comparison with the large-scale Ordnance Survey maps proves that the present building has greatly changed through time from the original property, which was about half the present size in the 1860s. Mr. John Hart, a High Churchman and benefactor to Potters Bar lived here for many years until his death in 1921.

Since 1947, Lochinver School, established by Dr. H. M. Bayley, Headmaster of Ashford House School at St. Albans, has occupied the house.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

The Committee and I hope that you had a Happy Christmas, and we wish you all a Happy New Year.

For myself, I was on Swanage beach on Christmas day, just checking that no one had moved the sea in my absence. It is still there but I was a little surprised to catch it at such a very low tide.

What a terrible earthquake has occurred in Iran, and we should count our blessings that our house bricks are much stronger than those baked in the sun mud bricks. Our own social problems seem to have been in Darkes Lane, where the main power cable off-takes to the shops have started to give up the insulation struggle. They were originally connected about 70 years ago to a cable that in some cases was laid in c1924. At one stage in the repair work, the workmen had just finished the replacement jointings and gone off for lunch, leaving an empty trench. When I passed by on my return about half an hour later, the trench was filled to the top with water from a damaged mains water polythene pipe! The timing was perfect, but not for the Water Company.

Our New Year lectures start on Friday the 30th January with a talk by Dr. Graham Handley entitled "John Betjeman's Poetry and London." I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Mr. E. Pearce, Mr. & Mrs. Grammer, Mr & Mrs. Almond, Mr. A. Butcher and Mrs. D.J. Parks, 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.

MURIEL BRITAIN

Muriel has made good progress and is now resident at Jesus College for the present, unless the college is closed.

GARDEN FINDS

Over the years a few bits and bobs have turned up in the garden. I sent a few of them to an archaeologist friend of mine, and Brian Warren also very kindly took them to the Museum of London for identification. Opinions differed but identifications included a medieval or possibly Roman sherd, a prehistoric flint blade/flake and a prehistoric 'trimming' flake with multi-faceted flake scars. Opinions differed as to whether certain features were natural or man-made, particularly as battering, trample damage and ploughing can create confusing scarring on flints, which just shows how very difficult positive identification is, and also how worthwhile it is keeping ones eyes peeled whilst in the garden! *Jean Smedley, Baker Street.*

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL, TUESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2003

Due to the new arrangement of the tables at the Sixty-Plus Centre, it was much easier to arrange the setting for the social. Thirty-four seats were available and all but three were occupied. Terry Goulding provided each table with a set of mystery objects, which members tried to identify,

while Ian Cumming plied them with a glass of something. All the while Michael Cawrey was encouraging members to purchase raffle tickets for the eight prizes.

Terry announced the answers to nearly all the objects and requested suggestions for those he did not know. Then the delicious array of food was consumed before the raffle was drawn. As in previous years Wendy Davey provided the table decorations, which were taken home by the lucky winners.

The proceedings came to a conclusion when Arnold Davey thanked all those who had contributed to a successful evening, especially Mabel Hammett. *BW*

100 YEARS OF FLIGHT

The latest exhibition in Potters Bar Museum commemorates the centenary of Orville Wright's historic first flight on 17th December 1903, now accepted as the first powered flight that landed at the same level as the take-off. The exhibition traces the astounding progress in those 100 years that has seen men on the moon and supersonic air liners (up to October 2003, that is). There is also some speculation about the future.

The exhibition will stay until June with the usual museum opening hours: 2.30 to 4.30pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11am to 1pm on Saturdays and all day on Antique Fair Sundays.
Arnold Davey.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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| Saturday 8 May 2004 | County Hall (Council Chamber), Hertford.
Herts. Assoc. for Local History Spring Meeting and AGM.
Sandwiches and coffee/available from 12.30 and the
AGM starts at 1.00 pm,
Afternoon lecture by Dr.Margaret Gelling on
' <i>Hertfordshire Place Names</i> '. |
| Sunday 16 May 2004 | County Hall, Hertford, Herts.
Archives & Local Studies Open Day and book sale.
There will be a significant amount of surplus
stock available but less of a crush than last year! |
| Sunday 20 June 2004 | Annual Garden Party. Berkhamsted at the Bothy.
More details later. |
| Saturday 13 Nov.2004 | Herts. Assoc. for Local History Symposium at Baldock. |

MUSEUMS

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|------------|--|
| BARNET | Exhibition 100 years of the St. John Ambulance in Barnet until February. |
| MILL GREEN | New Exhibition, ' <i>The Dresses and the Dame</i> ' - outfits worn and owned by Barbara Cartland. |
| STEVENAGE | ' <i>Most Secret</i> ' the story of the SOE from a Hertfordshire perspective, opens from 22nd January. |

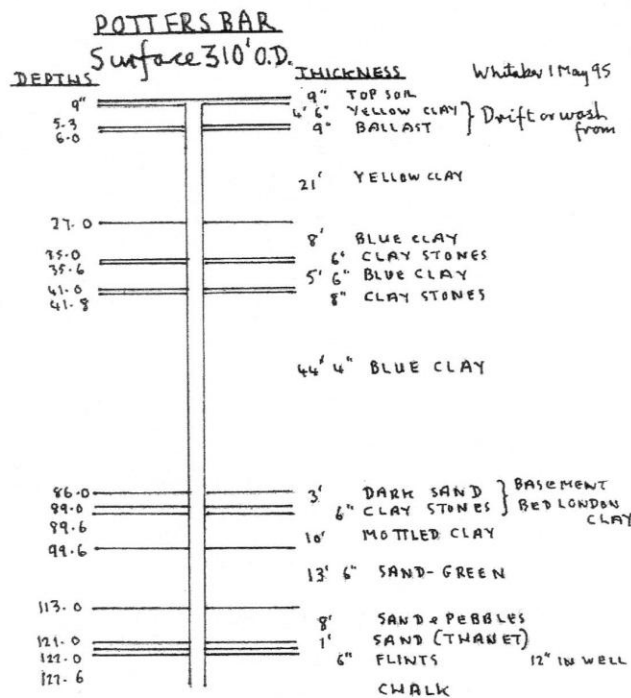
Further information from www.hertsmuseums.org.uk

BW

BARNET & DISTRICT GAS & WATER COMPANY'S borehole and well.

Members who subscribe to the Potters Bar edition of the Welwyn and Hatfield Times in November, would have read of the discovery of a well, on the Fairview Homes' development, on the former Comet site. When researching for my book on Little Heath I made comprehensive notes from the Company's Engineers Reports. The following has been extracted from the 1890-97 report book (HALS - Puw 1 2/4).

The purchase of the six acres (off Station Close) from the Clerk to the Brewers' Company was completed after 20th July 1894. Messrs. Docwra commenced the trial boring on 1st April 1895 and reached the chalk at a depth of 122ft. 6ins. on the 24th, passing through the following strata:



Boring continued till the 11th May when the depth reached was 250ft. from the surface and 128ft. into the chalk. A pump was fixed at this point and it was recorded as taking a yield at 20 gallons per minute, which equalled 28,800 gallons per 24 hours. Docwra's foreman reported the pumping had been practically uniform. By the 24th May the borehole had reached 320 feet down.

A sample of the water was sent for analysis, the result being, "This water possesses an extremely high degree of organic purity and is of most excellent quality for dietetic purity, and well suited for a public supply."

As a result of the large increasing consumption of the Company's district it was proposed that Potters Bar's well should yield not less than two million gallons in twenty-four hours.

Messrs. Docwra commenced sinking the well (11ft 3ins. in diameter) on the 10th July 1895, using 9inch brickwork, in Portland cement at £7 16s per foot, later reduced by a shilling. On the 27th September the well had reached 95 ft. and was lined with brickwork to a depth of 90ft., when it was reported a little water was coming in. Ninety-nine feet of brickwork had been completed by the 3rd October. Six cylinders 10ft. 9ins. in diameter and 5ft. deep had been lowered into the well and this

process continued until the 6th February 1896, when the chalk was reached at 123ft.3ins. The foundations were being prepared for the 12inch pumps and machinery and when this was completed pumping started on the 24th March 1896. Sinking in the chalk then followed and by February 1897 had reached 226ft., the depth from the surface being 349ft. From that point a smaller 12inch bore was continued.

Several horizontal tunnels (referred to as headings) were excavated to over 400ft. in length from the well, in various directions. In the 23rd April report it was noted a tunnel had been driven 50ft. to intersect with the trial borehole, The engineer reported that from the 20th July he had been using Blake's pumps to supply water into the district.

According to Three Valleys Water the well was still in use until the late 1950s. *Brian Warren*

ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

In the January edition of the Newsletter 2002 I wrote about the route of Queen Eleanor's cortege (1290), as I was having correspondence with Jean Powrie, who had written a book '*Eleanor of Castile*'. She suggested the route of the Queen's funeral cortege was via Sandridge, Watton-at-Stone and Ermine Street, whereas the Museum of London's map indicated Hertford and Ware.

As a possible alternative I postulated the local route (see Journal No.1 'Cathale and its Medieval Setting'). I have been recently informed that a metal detectorist has located the following coins on a half-mile stretch near White Webbs Farm on the line of the medieval road:

1154-1189	Henry III	penny
1189-1199	Richard	silver short-cross penny
1272-1307	Edward 1 st	silver 1d
		silver 4d
1413-1422	Henry V	silver half-groat
and	1575	Elizabeth
		silver 3d with rose.

This spread of coins would provide stronger evidence for a possible pilgrims' route between St.Albans and Waltham Abbey.

Since the May 2002 Newsletter I have been listing the local entries from the 'London Apprentices' by Cliff Webb. Though only slim A5 booklets there are 36 volumes from which it took sometime to extract the local entries. I hope that my lists will save future local historians the time of consulting the various volumes.

From my extensive researches some of the names are just names, others, like John Lofty, have a greater significance. He was a Quaker who lived in South Mimms near the present flyover in the village. I wondered if Robert Tapster, son of Thomas of Barnet (1796) was connected to the family that is remembered in Tapster Street? Other names like Broomer, Layton, Rosse and Gladman occur regularly in the records. On the Vickers' survey map of the Manor of Willliotts, 1743-45, the name Cleaver is marked on a field not far from the Black Horse P.H. in South Mimms. William Cleaver son of John was apprenticed to his cousin, John Cleaver, in the Ironmongers' Company, The names Henton, Sheffields, Sams, Hill and Whetherhed like many others occur in the South Mymms Parish Registers.

Finally, I was interested in the Brewers' Co. reference of 23rd May 1588 to one Richard Flaxman son of Simon, collier, to Maurice Waide. Helen Baker wrote up her researches on 'The Flexmeres of Potters Bar' (see PB.Hist.Series No.6). The earliest one was a John Flexmere of Potters Bar, who died in 1471, as he is described of Potters Bar; that indicates *his* property was near

Colliers Lane (roughly the line of Blackbury Close today). Also many of the Flexmores were called Simon.

I wondered if there had been an error, so I examined the Brewers' Minutes 1586-1589 (Guildhall Library Ms 5445/8) to see the original minute. The Court entry of the 23rd May 1588 stated, "Richard Flaxman son of Symon Flaxman lately of South Mymms in County Middlesex Collier deceased". As their evidence gave South Mymms perhaps I was wrong.

However, in searching the South Mymms Parish Registers from 1558 to 1600 two of the earliest references to the Flexmore family are - 10-8-1558 Ralph Flexmore buried and 18-12-1560 Symon Flexmore baptised. There are no Flaxmans and I have never come across the family, so I am still wondering whether there was an error in the apprenticeship record.

AMENDMENT 'The Growth of the Little Heath area to 1914'
p.38 line 15 from the bottom £500 should read £5,000.

Brian Warren

The Waggon and Horses. Ridge Hill. 1913-21

Mr. and Mrs.F.Coles were the first managers of the first Trust House in Hertfordshire - The Waggon and Horses. Sometimes the well would run dry and when the men from Hadley Brewery delivered their usual supply they would bring barrels of drinking water. The milkman, Mr.Brown of Shenley, also brought water and more came from the artesian well at Shenley Lodge. Carter Paterson's horse-drawn vans would come over the brow of Ridge Hill on their way to London, later their vans were commandeered by the Army, in WWI. The Royal Engineers attached to the 47th London Division were stationed at Shenley. The soldiers and their relations using the 84 bus from Golders Green to St. Albans would often call at the Waggon.

The carters from Redbourn would rest at the top of the hill and might have a twopenny ginger wine on a cold day. All types of people patronised the Waggon, from labourers who came round with the threshing machines, tramps, actors like Fred Karno and locals. During all this period there was only well water, oil lamps and a bucket lavatory, and only eighteen miles from London! *BW*

WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME

Friday January 30th, 2004 "John Betjeman's Poetry and London" by Dr. Graham Handley

Friday February 27th, 2004 "The Auxiliary Hospitals in Herts. 1914-18"
by Col. J.D. Sainsbury

Tuesday March 30th, 2004 "Timber Framed Buildings" by Mr. Adrian Gibson

Tuesday April 27th, 2004 **Annual General Meeting**
followed by "The Development of Darkes Lane",
by Mr. B. Warren and Mr. T. Goulding

The lecture will commence with the original estates, and their early owners, that once adjoined Darkes Lane. Through time the highway has been variously known as, 'The highway leading from Williotts Pound to Potters Bar' (1623), Darkes Lane (1851), Green Dragon Road (1855), Dark's Lane (1861), Station Road (1914) and Baker Street (1927). The main expansion took place in the 1930s and so developed a parallel shopping centre to the High Street.

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

RECORDER GROUP

We should like to welcome Heather Rae to the Group. Although Heather brings our numbers up to five, we should still like to see some more of you becoming involved in this worthwhile work. It just involves keeping your eyes open to any changes in Potters Bar, jotting them down, and meeting with the other Recorders every six months. If you are interested, please phone John Scivyer on 01707 657 586.

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 Arnold Davey on	01707 654 179
Saturdays	11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Denis Lore on	01707 656 833

Recorder Group. Volunteers are still needed to help record the everyday changes taking place in Potters Bar, details from John Scivyer 01707 657 586.

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.

BOOK REVIEW

THE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON'S CONNEXION by Alan Harding.
Oxford Theological Monographs, OUP.

Alan was a student at St. John's College, Oxford and then served as a member of the Senior Civil Service. He is now the honorary Priest-in-charge for the parishes of South Mymms and Ridge. He was a member of our Society and served as Hon. Secretary from 1972-77, living in Quakers Lane for many years.

The subject of the book was his doctoral thesis, which he started many years ago, plus a development of that theme. Chapter two is a concise outline of the religious background to the eighteenth century and the subject of a lecture delivered to the Society in the 1970's. The Connexion was one of the most important of the non-Wesleyan Groups within the eighteenth century Evangelical Revival. It was directed at the ordinary people and had its training college at Cheshunt (now the Borough of Broxbourne's Council Offices). There was a network of chapels in towns and villages, as is shown on a map before chapter one.

As one would expect of Alan the book is well-written and researched, with copious references at the foot of most pages. The book describes in every aspect the workings of the Connexion and its relationships with other religious groupings of the time. In addition there is a comprehensive bibliography at the end.

The price is £65 but if you contact the author, The Revd. Dr. Alan Harding, The Vicarage, Hamilton Close, South Mymms, Herts. EN6 3PG (01707 634 142) he will be able to obtain a favourable reduction. Alan only comes to the vicarage for weekend services, as he now resides in Suffolk, but he has an answerphone.

Brian Warren

POTTERS BAR SOCIETY, SOCIAL EVENINGS

The following illustrated lectures have been arranged for the start of 2004. 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 22 nd	<i>"Travels in New Zealand"</i>	by Mr. A. Gray.
Thursday,	February 26 th	<i>"Georgian London"</i>	by Mr. J. Neal
Thursday,	March 25 th	<i>"Hertfordshire You May Have Missed"</i>	by Mr. D. Pearce

ENIGMATIC STONE

If you stand in Darkes Lane and look directly at No.75 (*Smokers' Paradise*) you will see, at the bottom right hand corner of the building, a stone set in the wall. On that stone is carved **N. VAN. S. 1953**. Does anyone know the significance of that? *JD*.

FINALLY

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

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 (01707 642 886) 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.