

Potters Bar & District
Historical Society

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Regd. Charity No.299475

The Newsletter

January 1990

Vol.5 No.1

As the chairman visits members he is not always greeted with good news, so if 1989 has not been a happy or successful year then hopefully 1990 will see an improvement in one's fortunes. As Ken Dodd said on T.V. recently, 'Pick yourself up, dust yourself down and get on with living'.

Once again subs' renewal forms have been included for those members who have not yet paid their subs for 1989/90. It would be of great assistance to the Treasurer if everyone returned the form and money, as soon as possible. This would save time and petrol in chasing up those who have forgotten. Again the aim is to reach the magic figure of two hundred members.

At the November meeting Roy and Mabel Hammett provided an interesting display at the monthly meeting and we express our thanks to them. If there are other members who would take responsibility for a month's display could they contact Brian Warren, as soon as possible.

Lastly, a happy and prosperous 1990 to everyone, their relations, friends and acquaintances.

THE NEWSLETTER

Volume one, No.I was produced as a single sheet in Sept.1984 and if anyone still has a copy would they either photocopy it or loan it to Brian Warren to be photocopied, as he cannot find his copy. Thank you.

ON THE MOVE

Members in South Mimms might like to keep in contact with the following:-

Theo Crowder,
'Dane Way'
The Street,
Swanton Novers,
Melton Constable,
Norfolk,
NR24 2QZ

Dr. & Mrs. A.L.Fawdry,
Vine Cottage,
High Street,
Great Linford,
Bucks.
MK14 5AX

We were pleased to hear that Mrs.V.Harding has settled into her new home at 62,Aberdale Gardens, after her move from Auckland Road.

OUTINGS 1990

Any suggestions to Bruce Chanter, 35,Tiverton Road, as he will soon be planning this summer's activities.

WINTER PROGRAMME REPORTSOCTOBER "South Mymms" by Mrs.Muriel Brittain

This talk was a slightly adapted version of the very first lecture given to the Society, in September 1959, by Dr.Brittain, and was presented as the Thirtieth Anniversary Lecture.

Using Terry Goulding's copies of the original slides and some enlargements our President talked about South Mymms from the turn of the century to the 1930s. A majority of the slides were concerned with the church. There were interior and exterior views of the building, along with slides of the alms-dishes and pages from the Parish Registers and Vestry Minute Books.

The lecture ended with views of Knightsland, Wyllyotts, Wrotham Park, Myms Hall and the Dyrham Park gateway with Major Smith-Mosanquet's hounds entering the Park, in 1931. The final slide was of bluebell time in Myms Wood in 1930, today there are very few bluebells.

Dr. Lynch thanked Muriel Brittain for an interesting reminder of South Myms in bygone times.

NOVEMBER "Ralph Treswell: the 17th century surveyor of London and Potters Bar."

by John Schofield.

John Schofield, Head of the Department of Urban Archaeology at the Museum of London said that Ralph Treswell came from St. Albans where he was born in about 1540. He was by trade a painter-stainer but from at least 1580 he was also carrying out pictorial surveys. One of these studies was his survey of the manor of Wyllyotts in 1594. His studies of rural estates formed the main part of his work until about 1607.

Treswell was also a map-maker and a surveyor, and each activity had its own particular skill which was of value to him as one of the first modern land surveyors. A pair of compasses on a scale became the mark of his work.

Treswell surveyed buildings in London for the Clothworkers' Company and Christ's Hospital from 1607-12. His plans are of great value because they are the only record of medieval buildings which were subsequently destroyed in the Great Fire.

From these detailed plans the speaker showed slides of the isometric reconstruction of the actual buildings. At that time the buildings were being sub-divided into smaller tenements, thus showing the pressure of population in London.

Treswell's work complemented that of John Stow as he provided exact details of the structures known to Stow.

Joan Groves thanked the speaker for an excellent lecture.

DECEMBER "The Hertford Loop Line" by Peter Hodge.

The publicity officer of the Southgate Civic Trust presented a comprehensive description of the Hertford Loop Line.

The first part of the talk was a pictorial history of the line starting with a slide of Maiden Lane, the terminus before Kings Cross was built in 1852. The Enfield branch (1871) was the second minor line to be constructed off the main line. A slide of the construction of the railway near Vicars Moor Lane was shown, along with some contemporary watercolours of Henrietta Cresswell. Housing development was slow because the large landowners adopted a private Green Belt policy by not selling their land.

The speaker then showed a few slides taken by the son of the proprietor of Webb's tannery, Hertford, of the construction of the line in the Bayford area in 1912-13. The photographs were then sold to the navvies. Further slides were shown of a few trains, whilst mention was made of the first proposed electrification in 1908; it was finally completed in 1976.

The talk ended with a train journey from Kings Cross to Langley junction about twenty years ago. Special mention was made of Mr. Collins of the Old Wheatsheaf pub, as he was on the first train in 1871 and was the first passenger when the line was extended in 1910. Cuffley was the terminus until 1924 and it took thirty million bricks to build the Ponsbourne tunnel, whilst the ventilating shafts are 140 feet deep.

Finally it was confirmed by George Case, from the audience, that the Royal family did use the Molewood tunnel as a means of refuge from the Blitz.

Terry Goulding, when he proposed the vote of thanks, said he was envious of some of the speaker's slides.

THANKS

Mrs. B. Wheatley has donated to the Society copies of Hertfordshire Countryside from April 1971 to August 1983.

Len Devonish has used his skill to repair the Society's copy of the local 6" O.S. Map, engraved and published 1868-77. It was originally donated to the Society by Mr. Briers, whose ancestor was overseer of the poor, in the last century. The Briers' family farmed at Potters Bar Farm, the corner of Barnet Road and Mutton Lane for four generations.

Mrs. V. Watts has kindly donated the tape recording of her late husband's well-known talk, on the same arrangement as the slides, which have already been donated. The Society also acknowledges Arnold Lynch's assistance in obtaining this valuable record for the Society. Perhaps we will be able to reconstruct the talk, using the slides and tape, as we did with Mr. Butcher's talk a few years ago.

RESEARCH

Enquiries concerning various aspects of local history have been answered by the archivist from time to time. If you know of anyone who might be doing a topic, etc. at school please refer them to 'A History of the County of Middlesex, Vol. 5, Victoria County History series,' as it is more upto date than, 'The Story of Potters Bar & South Mimms' published 1966.

There are three copies of Vol. 5 at Oakmere Library.

THE WINTER 1988-89

That winter was the mildest one since records began and this was shown by the four months of unusual weather, with plants flowering, frogs spawning and birds returning early to Britain.

All gardeners or allotment holders among our members would have been well aware of the mildness.

SPRING LECTURE PROGRAMME - Monthly MeetingsMONDAY 22 JANUARY'Leisure and Pleasure in a Victorian Suburb'
by Mr.D.Pam

David Pam was the Local history and Museum's officer to the London Borough of Enfield, until he retired in 1982. Since then he has carried on research into local history, producing in 1984, 'The Story of Enfield Chase' and due in April of this year, 'A History of Enfield Volume I - Before 1837 Enfield - A Parish Near London' (Details elsewhere in The Newsletter). He is widely known to members of clubs and organisations through his excellent talks.

The Victorian period was to see a slow improvements in the happiness of the poor. More leisure time was provided by the gradual introduction of the 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ day working week from the 1860s.

Working men took an active role in organisations by joining the Volunteers and forming Brass Bands. Cricket flourished and Enfield had a Rugby team and a Swimming Club, cycling became popular with the advent of the Safety cycle. Billiards, quoits and bowls were played at public houses, whilst on Bank Holidays trains were taken to the seaside.

There was an air of seriousness about the suburban Middle Classes. They attended lectures on such obtruse subjects as Cardinal Richlieu and Thomas Hood, they went to concerts, oratorios and read books. Music Society's were formed for appreciation and performance.

In Enfield Bonfire Night continued to be celebrated in the old way and a Maypole was erected on Chase Green, on May Day and sweeps exchanged clothes with their wives to celebrate. The Enfield Fair flourished until 1869 when it was terminated in its prime by Non-conformist and Evangelical zeal.

'The History of Packaging' by Mr.J.Griffin

John Griffin is the Museums Officer for the London Borough of Enfield. He is a native of Bristol and worked at the Bristol City Museum before his appointment to Enfield.

The packaging of products must originally have been purely functional, merely to protect and perhaps conceal a purchase. It became in the 19th century a means to induce people to buy, and grew up alongside the rapidly developing art of advertisement.

The front page of local papers, in the last century, carried no news, only advertisements.

Today packaging and advertising are very common features in all our lives. Products change name and style in order that attractive images entice the customer.

Forty Hall Museum has tried to document the history of these changes within the context of the L.B. of Enfield. It is an exercise in which all the Borough's population can take part, as everyone has packaging in their homes and many people are inveterate hoarders. Therefore it will not be surprising if the speaker shows examples of bottles, cans, packets and tins from local firms in Enfield.

FRIDAY 16 MARCH

'Roman Roads in Potters Bar?' by Dr.A.C.Lynch

Of the famous Roman roads, the nearest to Potters Bar are Watling Street and Ermine Street, each about six miles away. But there were certainly Roman roads nearer than those, possibly through the centre of Potters Bar.

This talk will explain how to recognise the line of a Roman road, and will suggest that some local roads may already have been in use in Roman times - perhaps !

ALL MEETINGS IN OAKMERE HOUSE, downstairs, at 8p.m.

REMINDER:- THURSDAY 26 April Annual General Meeting

INCREASING INTEREST IN THE IRON AGE by B.Warren

As a result of finds at the South Mimms Castle site and on the recent Wyllyotts' excavations dated to the Iron Age, one wonders what might be found at Myms Hall, as it has very similar physical features to Wyllyotts. Also, one's interest was further aroused on receiving reviews of English Heritage's Archaeological Reports No.12 and I4.

Report No.12 - Verulamium: the King Harry Lane site by I.M.Stead and V.Rigby.

This reports on the extensive excavations of 1965 - 68 and states, "The most significant discovery was a chance find -an extensive Late pre-Roman Iron Age cemetery" of 472 burials.

Report No.I4 - Excavation of the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval settlement at Gorhambury by David Neal and Angela Wardle.

This was excavated from 1972 - 82 and revealed a late Iron Age Settlement.

At the Verulamium 50th Anniversary Conference "Roman Towns: The Wheeler Inheritance - A Review of 50 Years' Research," in November of this year, the speakers on the Roman towns of Silchester, Canterbury and Winchester all revealed that recent evidence indicated earlier Iron Age settlements prior to the Romans.

On the other side of the R.Lea Ian Jones reporting in the bulletin No.II5 of the Enfield Archaeological Society on, 'The Temple of Minerva at Harlow. New excavations 1985-89' reported, 'The next major use of the site was during the later Iron Age. Large numbers of coins, brooches and other votive offerings found earlier had suggested that the Romans were not the first to worship here and part of an Iron Age Ring Ditch (not identified at the time) was uncovered.'

Members who went on the Society's visit to Harlow, conducted by Ian Jones, might be interested to know that the finds will be on temporary display at the Museum in April 1990.

Finally, Howard Brooks on reporting on excavations at "The Stanstead Temple", in Current Archaeology, No.II7, pp.322-25 notes that a complete Iron Age village was revealed from 75 BC with a shrine within the village, which is at present unique.

The report in 'The Times' of the 19th August noted, "This was the site of a Roman farm with origins in the late Iron Age."

From this evidence one finds important Roman towns showing previous Iron Age origins, then to the west and east of our area one has the same evidence and also within our area the picture appears to support the same theory.

The evidence in our area amounts to few finds but does it mean one should be looking more carefully when the opportunity arises?

MEMBERS' NEWS

We were sorry to read that John Guttridge has broken his ankle. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Our best wishes are sent to John Clarke when he eventually has to go into hospital.

Congratulations to John Harrison and Brian Warren on their retirement. John is busy with decorating and has more time to discover Mesolithic flints, in his garden. He found four in 1989. On the otherhand Brian will be able to devote more time to his research and recording of local history in the area. We wish them many more years of happy retirement.

Sincere wishes are sent to all those members who may be ill, or caring for someone who is ill, and it is hoped they may soon improve.

Those members who have suffered a recent bereavement are in our thoughts this New Year.

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members:- Eric Tasker, Joan Charlton, Peter Long, Penny Love and Kathleen Green. We hope to see them at the monthly meetings and making full use of their subscription.

A History of Enfield

by David Pam

Volume 1 — Before 1837

ENFIELD — A PARISH NEAR LONDON



Enfield Market Place, 1827

Enfield Preservation Society is proud to announce the publication of David Pam's eagerly awaited HISTORY OF ENFIELD.

The first volume — A PARISH NEAR LONDON — describes Enfield's development from earliest times up to 1837, and will be published in April 1990.

Illustrated with maps, prints and photographs, we are confident this first edition will fast become a collector's item. See overleaf for more details, and application form for our pre-publication offer, with a special limited edition to include subscribers' names.

His research has enabled David Pam to build up a vivid picture of a town with a character of its own — a character it still retains today. He claims that when both volumes of his HISTORY OF ENFIELD have been published, there will be no place in England whose story will have been more fully related than Enfield — A PARISH NEAR LONDON.

A HISTORY OF ENFIELD, Volume 1, A PARISH NEAR LONDON, 234 mm x 153 mm, 384 pp, 80 illustrations, 9 maps, gold embossed hard covers, will be published in April 1990 by Enfield Preservation Society. Price £16.95.
ISBN 0 907318 09 6

SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER

Take advantage of this special pre-publication offer and reserve your copy of A PARISH NEAR LONDON, signed by the author, at the unrepeatable price of only £12.95 per copy, (plus postage & packing, if applicable) — a saving of £4 on the published price. All advance orders, with full remittance, must be received by 5 March 1990.

Unless you wish your book to be posted to you (see order form) you will be notified when it is ready for collection at EPS headquarters, Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield. We anticipate this will be some time in April 1990.



ORDER FORM

To: Mrs Irene Smith, Hon. Secretary, Enfield Preservation Society,
107 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, Middlesex EN2 0AB.

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FAMILY HISTORY

Just a reminder to anyone who might be contemplating finding out about their ancestors, that within the Society there are members who could be of assistance.

Always obtain all the information from one's oldest known relatives and write everything down, because one never knows when a seemingly insignificant fact might assume great importance. This is the first step.

If one's relative is a long way away then write a letter. Letters and phone calls can save one money and time.

Contact the chairman for more information.

PUBLICATIONS

If any member did not receive a copy of this year's Journal, please inform Brian Warren.

NEXT Publication will be Occasional Paper No.2

Reminiscences of Potters Bar 1938 - 46
by Mrs.M.Drinnan

DAN RUGE-COPE

Once again the Society offers its grateful thanks to you for running-off yet another Newsletter.