

# *The Newsletter*

May 2009

VOL. 25 No. 3

## **COVER PICTURE**

This is a photo taken from the collection held by Terry Goulding.



The May Queen at St. Michael's Church in Church Road in c.1937, in the days when local groups knew how to, and were allowed to, celebrate the seasons and special occasions. Alas, the Church was burnt down in 1942, but not by enemy action. Do you recognize anyone in the picture, even though they could well be aged over 80 now?

## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

To all our Members.

Another spring and nearly the end of our season of lectures and what an interesting and varied selection we have had. For our Committee and other Members however, they carry on working, keeping our Society and Museum etc. going. Many thanks to all of them for all this voluntary work. Mind you, it really gives most of us an interest in life beyond the television.

My talk after our A.G.M. on Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> of April, that I had called *Pictures and Postcards from WW1*, was not really on the battles and guns of the war. I was put off that sort of lecture many years ago when it was previously envisaged. Helen Baker, a stalwart Society member who had lost a member of her family in WW1, was astounded that any talk on the war could even be considered. So my lecture was on the lighter side with a number of local pictures that few people have seen before.

*Terry Goulding*

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## **NEW MEMBERS**

We should like to welcome Diane & Frank Brooks, Beryl Hickson, Denis & Hazel O'Brien, and Betty Tucker. We hope you will enjoy the lectures and occasional outings that are part of our yearly programme, and that you will take an active part in our Society.

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## **MEMBERS' NEWS**

Congratulations to Joan Charlton who will be ninety on the 18<sup>th</sup> May. Also, to John Gamby who is not far behind and once lived at 17 Whaley Road, a long time ago.

Michael Cawrey is recovering from an operation and we wish him a speedy recovery.

We have heard that Mrs Luxford has died. She regularly attended meetings with Mr & Mrs Osborn, until they moved to Tiverton Road. Condolences to her son, daughter and family.

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### ***MUSEUM STEWARDS REQUIRED***

Members are needed to help look after the Museum. Perhaps you could help for just one day a month? It would be of great assistance and you would be on duty with an experienced steward.

<b>Tuesdays</b>	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on	01707 642296
<b>Wednesdays</b>	2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on	01707 654179
<b>Saturdays</b>	11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Mabel Hammett on	01707 657120

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## **RECORDER GROUP**

The Recorder Group monitors changes to Potters Bar on a daily/monthly basis and generally meets twice a year to collate the findings. This work has been going on since 1984. Reports are sent in from all over the County and stored in the Hertfordshire Archives, County Hall, where they form a valuable record for the use of future historians and researchers. The next meeting is at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June.

If you would be interested in helping, please contact the Group's Chairman, John Scivyer, on 01707 657586.

## **SPRING LECTURE**

**Thursday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

***Revoltng Councillors – East London, 1921* by Chris Sumner.**

(Chris Sumner is the Chairman of the Waltham Abbey Historical Society)

This talk, illustrated with photos taken at the time, will centre on events in East London culminating in a Council refusing to levy a rate for the L.C.C. in a very poor area where benefits like unemployment were dependant on the rates. The refusal to pay the precept to the L.C.C. and the subsequent refusal to do so after a Court Order led to Councillors being imprisoned for six weeks. Later the law was changed to even out the burden. However it is a fascinating piece of social history almost within living memory. George Lansbury (subsequently leader of the Labour Party) and the speaker's grandfather, Charlie Sumner (Mayor) were two of the Poplar Councillors involved.

THE MEETING WILL START **PROMPTLY** AT 8PM IN THE 60 PLUS CENTRE, WYLLYOTTS CENTRE. EVERYONE WELCOME.

## **AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME (PREVIEW)**

Tuesday	September 29 <sup>th</sup>	Brian Warren's Presidential Address for our 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary – <i>The History of South Mimms and Potters Bar.</i>
Friday	October 30 <sup>th</sup>	<i>The British Schools Museum, Hitchin</i> , by Kenneth Burton.
Thursday	November 26 <sup>th</sup>	<i>History of Churchyards</i> , by Michael Worms.
Tuesday	December 8 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary social & quiz evening.

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## **DELIVERERS REQUIRED**

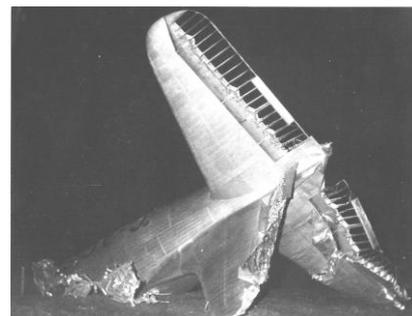
In each issue we pay tribute to Michael Cawrey and his band of helpers, who save the Society pounds in postage by delivering your copy by hand. Naturally, our volunteers do come and go, however at the moment we do have a full complement. If you would like to help in the future, three times per year you would be required to push a Newsletter through the letterbox of half-a-dozen or so of your neighbours' front doors. If you can help, please ring me on 01707 652975.

Thanks are also due to Jean Foster for delivering Newsletters for a long time and is now passing her *round* over to Andrew Hull. Also thanks to Chris Dixon for starting a new round last year.

*Richard Lee*

## THE HANDLEY PAGE HERMES

Brian's piece in the last Newsletter (Vol. 25 No. 2) brought back memories. I saw this prototype *Hermes* airliner on its first and last flight. We lived on the western edge of Radlett under the flight path from the Handley Page airfield. The planes from there would suddenly appear over a wood.



At the time (December 1945) I worked at Handley Page and knew it was due for its first flight. We saw the plane appear and it was obviously in trouble. It swooped up and down like a switchback. After it passed us it rose almost into a loop, rolled off the top and went down. We ran about two miles to the crash site. There only the tail was visible as in the photo, the rest was just so much scrap metal spread across the field.

The next plane in this series was the military version the *Hastings*. It was decided the runway at Colney Street was too short to do hops before the first flight. Consequently the *Hastings* made its first flight from the longer runway at Wittering near Peterborough.

What became of the *Hermes*? It never fulfilled its potential. In spite of developing a longer version with a tricycle undercarriage and a version with turboprops it had a short life on B.O.A.C.'s West Africa route. It then went to charter airlines where it was used on troop carrying flights.

*John Scivyer*

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## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2009/10

The subscription year runs from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> at a cost of £3 for adults, and £5 for a family/group. We are trying to simplify the administration by including an application form (below) to be sent to our Membership Secretary, Eileen Field, at 51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5PN. You can check your current membership status by phoning Eileen 01707 653801.

Should you pay by post, be sure to collect your receipt at the subsequent lecture meeting. If you want us to *post* the receipt to you, please enclose a SAE. **Note:** you should make your cheque payable to Potters Bar & District Historical Society, and **not** Mrs. E. Field.



To Mrs. E Field, Membership Secretary P.B. & D.H.S.  
51 Highview Gardens, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 5PN

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS

Dr, Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms      \_\_\_\_\_ First name(s)      \_\_\_\_\_ Last name      \_\_\_\_\_

Address      \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode      \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone No.      \_\_\_\_\_

I/We enclose £      as my/our subscription to P.B. & D.H.S. (Cheques and postal orders to be made payable to Potters Bar and District Historical Society.)  
Subscriptions are:-Adults £3, Family/Group £5

## GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY WALK

Meet at 6.30 p.m. for 6.45 p.m. on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2009, at St. Giles Church, South Mimms.

An evening stroll to view the church from the outside and learn about some of the interesting monuments and their stories. It was the intention to view the inside of the church, but it is understood there is building work in progress there. If open, the tour will include the inside of the church.

Led by Brian Warren.

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## THE SOCIETY'S 50<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was attended by the President, Chairman, and 40 other members. Terry Goulding, the Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming the members to the Anniversary AGM, and pointed out that it was about half a lifetime ago that he joined the Society when it was meeting in a classroom at Parkfield School. The school opened in 1938 and was demolished in May 1997.

Richard Lee read the Secretary's report to the meeting. The Society had had 8 open meetings since the last AGM, on subjects such as St Albans Abbey, Elizabeth Gaskell, Waltham Abbey, and Roman Enfield. Also the continuing story of Public Houses in the local area. He thanked Colin Field for arranging these talks. Mabel Hammett was also thanked for organising refreshments, Eileen Field for managing the Membership subscriptions, and Joan Charlton for selling the Society's booklets at the meetings. Last November, there had been a well-attended and timely visit to the Poppy Factory in Richmond. This proved to be very interesting with an excellent talk by the tour guide. There are currently 189 members, the same number as last year, but not, of course, all the same people. There had been one new publication since last year, which is Brian Warren's *Reappraisal of the Battle of Barnet 1471*. This questions whether the established location of the battle is, in fact, correct, and now English Heritage have agreed the site of the Battle of Barnet to be in Wrotham Park. John Donovan's death was reported. For a number of years, John, at various times, had served on the committee, been assistant treasurer and secretary, edited the Newsletter, and maintained the Membership list. Michael Cawrey and his band of Newsletter deliverers were thanked for their help in saving postage costs in the past year. Also Michael Keevil for examining the accounts, and Messrs. Griffith, Irons and Lucas for acting as the Society's trustees.

The Treasurer, Terry Goulding, covered the Annual Accounts distributed at the meeting. Income was up from last year, notably because subscriptions had increased, although this had more to do with timing. The year-end balance was up from £2917 last year to £3106 this year.

Vice-chairman and Museum curator, Arnold Davey, talked about the Museum's activities in the past year. In January, heavy rain had caused a flood of water mixed with pigeon droppings. The mess had been cleared up but the Museum is still prone to rain-water leaks. Application has been made for museum Accreditation, but this is being delayed because of an inability to get the future lease arranged. There has been an exhibition on *Canals* since last autumn, which will be replaced by *Votes for Women* including the rise of feminism. Arnold thanked the Museum stewards for their hard work in the past year. If 6 more stewards could be found, the Museum could open for a further day in the week.

The meeting was followed by free tea and biscuits, after which Terry Goulding gave a slide show of some fascinating postcards and pictures from World War I, including advertisements of women's fashions of the time.

*Richard Lee*

## ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

From time to time I inform members of the requests for assistance which I receive from the general public and members. The following were received between January and mid-March this year.

On one of my visits to HALS (Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies) a member of staff asked if I could decipher an inscription on the North Mymms war memorial to Pte. W. Juby, as it was not possible on a modern machine! From my records at home I discovered that he was in the West Kent Regiment.

The first South Mimms Parish clerk had received an e-mail from Holland requesting information on Queen Wilhelmena's short stay at The Grange, Blackhorse Lane. As a result there are now three versions of why she left so suddenly, but which is correct?

Our new member, Bob Crawley, 67 Hardwicke Place, London Colney, Herts., AL2 1PX is intending to write his memories of working at Effra, Cranborne Industrial Estate. He would welcome any assistance from our members who worked there or have memories of the place. If you can help, contact him at the above address.

Eileen Fox, a resident of 5 Whaley Road for three years, wanted to know about the history of the building and its occupants. I was able to be of assistance.

Then came a request from Philip Allen, Clacton-on-Sea, wanting to know about his grandfather, Walter Joseph Allen and his great-grandfather, William Alfred Allen. One Sunday morning I took photographs of 44 Blanche Lane, 111 and 113 Cranborne Road, and sent them to him.

When on museum duty Andrew Mims, who had visited South Mimms, came in. His ancestor, Thomas Mims, had emigrated to the USA in 1620. Luckily, a Jeanette D. Mims had contacted me in April 1995 and sent me *Leaves from the Mims Family Tree - the first five generations of American Mimses* by Sam Mims, March 1961. I wrote suggesting that he should contact Jeanette. I did not say that her earliest baptismal record from St. Giles was not only not there but was unlike any associated entries. I never had a reply from Jeanette when I informed her.

One evening I received a phone call from our former member Andrew Butcher, as he required information concerning an enquiry relating to a Sid. Chilton. After contacting two long-standing residents of South Mimms I discovered that he was a bell ringer, wound the clock, a server, sang in the choir and did operate the organ, though not trained. He at one time worked on the trolley buses at Barnet and later drove a 29 bus.

Some members might remember Mr. & Mrs. Mackinley's nursery at New Road, South Mimms. Mrs. Mackinley was a relative of the Stephens' family and that was how I became involved in research for her.

About twenty-five years ago I had correspondence with the late Paddy Musgrove concerning Inky Stephens, of Stephens' Ink and Avenue House, Finchley. A Joseph Stephens held The Bull, Redbourn (1802 - c.1820). His son, John, held Fish Street Farm, Redbourn. Another relative Samuel Josiah farmed at Deeves Hall Farm in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

I sent all my correspondence of 25 years ago to Stewart Wild, who is involved with the Stephens' collection, Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley, open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 2.00 - 4.30.

## UPDATES

### RED LYON, POTTERS BAR (Newsletter January 2008 p.8)

In the above article I linked the Flexmore family with the Red Lyon at Potters Bar and The Red Lyon, in Grace Church Street, London.

The Barnet Manor Court Book (British Library Add Ms 40168) gives reference to a Flexmore branch in Barnet; no direct line was established by Helen Baker with those in Potters Bar (Potters Bar Historical Series No. 6 p.21). At Barnet, in 1611, the Court Book recorded that Le Red Lyon was occupied by Ralph Flexmore. In May 1617 he was fined 2d for selling unlawful measures and as a chandler fined 3d for excessive prices. He made his will on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 1626, then being sick in body but of perfect memory. All his freehold lands and tenements were left to his wife, Elizabeth, and after her death to their only son, John. Ralph died before April 1627.

This links a member of the Flexmore family to three Red Lyon taverns in three different areas.

### ARMOT FRYERS (Newsletters September 2008 p.10 and January 2009 p.10)

Following my reference (Newsletter January 2009 p.10) to Armholt being a wood owned by the monks of Charterhouse, I received a letter from Dr. Joan Thirsk, a distinguished agrarian historian. She wrote, "You seem to be on the right track with Armholt and the monks of Charterhouse. Holt may have something to do with 'wood' as 'Holz' is German for wood."

When consulting the Barnet Manor Court Book in the British Library, I noted three further references. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1320 it was stated that *lying in a place called Armeshote between Armshotestrete*. Then on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1397 Armolesfeld was noted with five other fields. Much later in 1611, *there were three crofts called Axmiholt land*. These three records apply to the field in Rubi Galili's book *Arnos Grove and the Walker family*.

### LOST IN TRAINING (Newsletter January 2009 p.10)

This was the book I reviewed in the last Newsletter by Harry Green. In his Appendix 1: Position of Witnesses on p.155 he shows a map of the speculated final flight path of Lancaster L7575 and records the approximate position of where the aircraft was hit by friendly Ack-Ack fire west of Potters Bar.

I would be pleased to hear from any member who can recollect the position of an anti-aircraft battery or searchlight between Potters Bar and Boreham Wood. Terry Goulding has already mentioned one to me.

*Brian Warren*

## VISIT TO THE BRITISH SCHOOLS MUSEUM, HITCHIN

In conjunction with the lecture on *The British Schools Museum, Hitchin* by Kenneth Burton on Friday October 30<sup>th</sup>, Colin Field and Mabel Hammett are planning a visit to the Museum on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. A coach is being organised and there are expected to be places for 29 people.

Provisional arrangements are:

- 3 hour tour including Masters House, Museum, Gift Shop.
- Light refreshments.
- Leave 60+ Centre at 12.30, return at 5.30.
- Cost £13 each.



### **1 The Girls' & Infants' School 1857**

Put on a bonnet and pinafore or a cap and collar, and set out on the Discovery Trail to learn what it was like going to school in the 1800's. The café and shop are here too.

### **2 The Galleried Classroom 1853**

A full gallery like this is very rare indeed. It was built on the recommendation of a great Victorian poet. Here you can try writing with dip pens, ink wells and blotting paper.

### **3 The Lancasterian Schoolroom 1837**

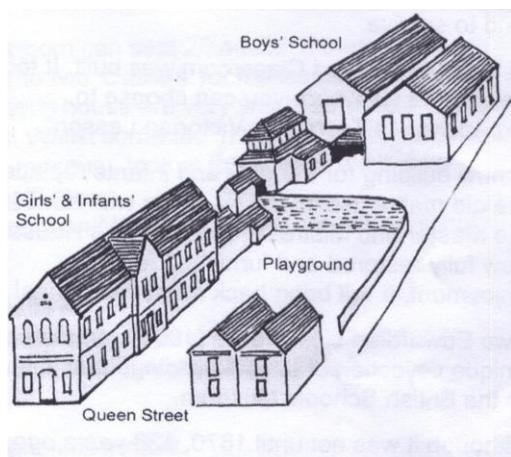
The only known complete example now remaining in the world, as designed by Joseph Lancaster. Find out how one master taught 330 pupils in one schoolroom.

### **4 The Edwardian Classrooms 1905**

Look inside the historic desks in our collection in the pre-war and World War II classrooms.

### **5 The Master's House 1857**

The home of William J. Fitch. The house is restored and furnished in the style of 1880-1890.



To Mr. Colin Field, 6 Inglefield, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 1HD. ☎ 01707 857297.

The British Schools Museum, Hitchin visit Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

I enclose £ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ ticket(s) (Cheques to be made payable to Potters Bar and District Historical Society.)

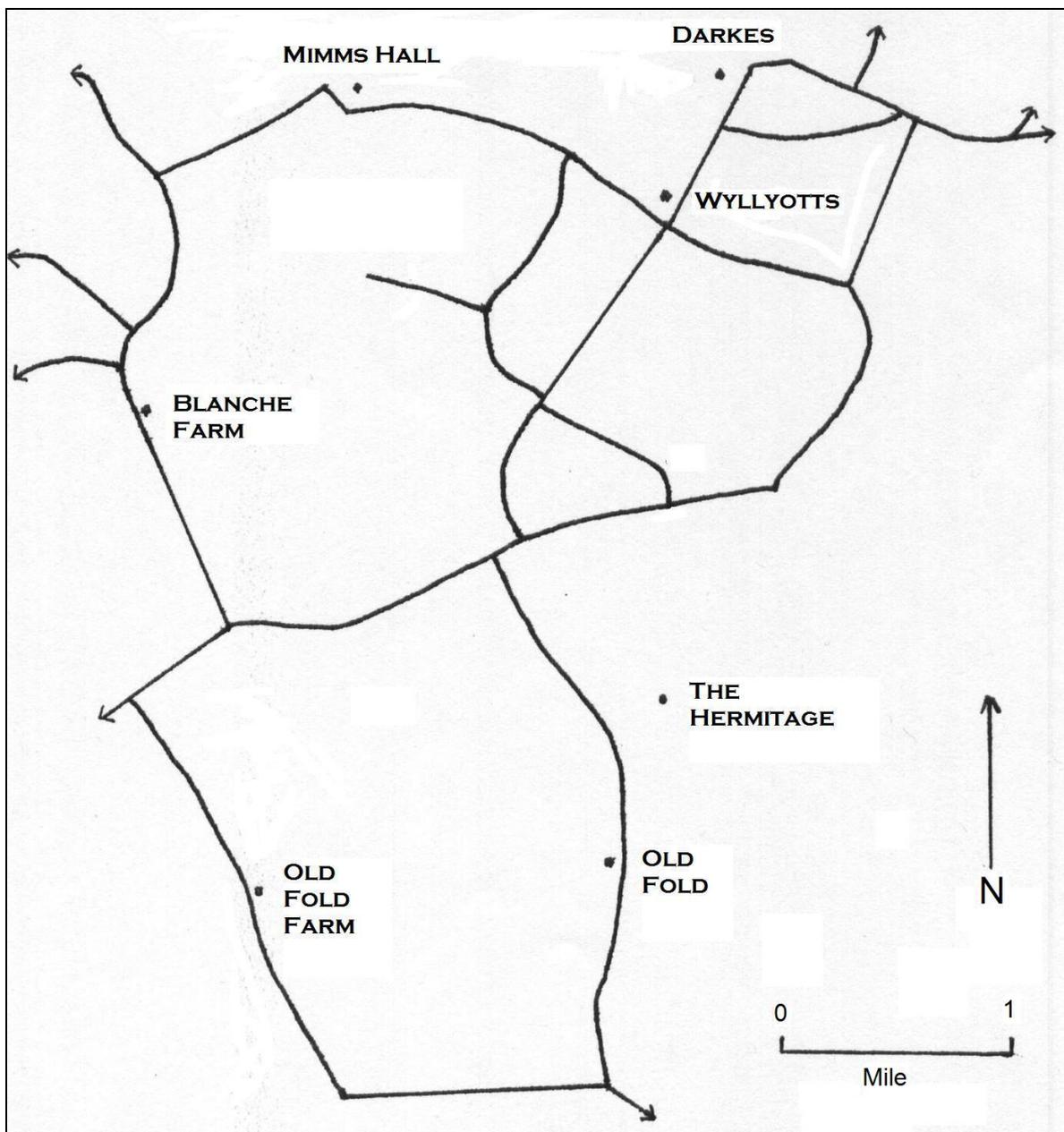
Name	_____
Address	_____
Phone	_____

## LOCAL MOATED SITES (Part 1)

It is not easy to define a moat because of the great variety of size, location, associated features and the reason for its construction. Generally they are formed of broad ditches enclosing a raised platform, which may contain one or more buildings or none. The majority of moats are single and square or rectangular in shape less than four acres in area. Though, like church yards, the majority were just one acre. The reasons for building moats vary according to the needs but the main contenders were defence, drainage, water supply and using the moat as a fishpond.

The earliest moats were built primarily for defence in the 11<sup>th</sup> to mid-12<sup>th</sup> centuries. An innovatory phase followed from 1150-1200, then a period of expansion occurred till 1325. During those phases defence declined as the main reason for constructing moats, because of increased wealth. Also there was a change in social aspirations and a moat became a capital investment. The next phase to 1500 saw a rapid decline in the construction of moats and finally after 1500 the destruction and revision of moats.

### THE LOCATION OF POSSIBLE LOCAL MOATS



In December 1984 I attended a weekend course at Rewley House, Oxford, on *Medieval Moated Sites*, where most of the then leading authorities on the subject lectured. The first meeting of the Hertfordshire Archaeological Council's Moated Sites' Research Group took place at Letchworth, on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1986. Twelve people attended and as Odsey Hundred had more moats than anywhere else in Hertfordshire, it was decided to use it as the area for the Group to learn how to record different types of moats. There were seventeen parishes in Odsey Hundred of which thirteen contained forty-five moated sites. Other members of the Group took responsibility for their local area. I said that I would cover for South Mimms.

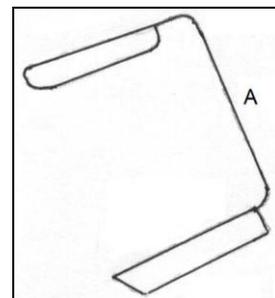
Between that meeting and the last one on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1989 the Group met at irregular intervals and took part in field trips to Ashwell, Sandon, Rushden and Therfield. Standard Field Cards were issued to all members, on which to record their work.

In the Spring 1991 edition of *Hertfordshire's Past* No. 30 Elizabeth Hunter and S. M. Fletcher wrote about their work with David Smith in the parishes of Hinxworth, Caldecote, Ashwell, Newnham and Bygrave in Odsey Hundred.

## LOCAL MOATS

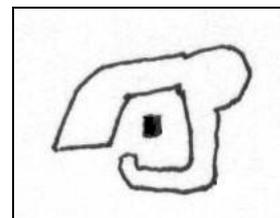
### **BLANCHE FARM (SMR 2944) TL2205 0012)**

As the plan shows, the NW and SE sides of the moat was the line marked. 'A' an indication of a missing, linking part of the two arms? In 1911 the two arms were only extant but undoubtedly the remains of a moat (VCH Vol.2 10). In 1937 The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments stated the moat surrounded the house but the East and West arms had been filled in. When I was annually surveying the local footpaths for the Southern Area of the Ramblers' Association I remember seeing the water filled arms. However, c.1963, the two arms were filled in and five years later nothing remained.



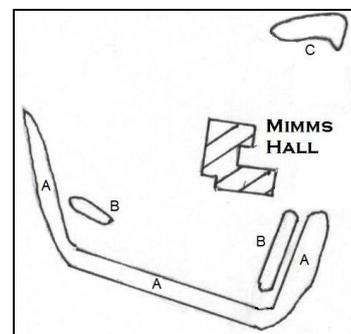
### **THE HERMITAGE, WROTHAM PARK**

The plan shows the most likely original form of the moat in 1780/81 (PBDHS *The Journal* No. 11, 1-8). At that time the building in the middle was recorded as a cottage belonging to the Earl of Salisbury but the original building was built to commemorate the dead from the Battle of Barnet, in 1471. Between 1848 and the first Ordnance Survey map, surveyed 1866-77, the building disappeared but the single Eastern arm still remains today.



### **MIMMS HALL (SMR 4266) TL2326 0196**

In 1937 The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments recorded that the moat seemed to have formerly surrounded the house but only fragments remained. Today the most physical feature is the bank 'A', within which there was once a moat, part of which once occurred at 'B'. The water at 'C' was noted as a large pond in the mid-Nineteenth Century, perhaps having some connection with the moat or another associated feature, but this is only a suggestion.



The present Mimms Hall was an H-Hall type house dating to the mid- or late-Sixteenth Century to which an addition was made to the southern cross-wing in the Seventeenth Century. There can be little doubt there was an earlier manor house on the site within the moat.

*(To be concluded in the next Newsletter)*

Brian Warren

## A POLISH PRISONER OF WAR

Shortly after writing the last piece for *The Newsletter* I discovered the following in The Barnet Press for the 24<sup>th</sup> February 1961.

### Memorial School

**T**HREE two photographs are from Poland. **ABOVE:** Polish children, wearing their neat school uniform, watching the stone-laying ceremony of their school which is being built as a memorial to thousands of Polish officers who lost their lives while prisoners of war in Oflag 11 C, Woldenberg, Pomerania. **RIGHT:** The foundation stone being laid.

The Barnet link with these photographs — as previously mentioned in these columns — is that, headed by a Polish officer who survived the rigours of the prison camp for five years and is now living in Barnet, a Barnet committee aim to raise £1,000 to pay for one of the classrooms.

Latest news in the determined Anglo-Polish effort being made in Barnet is that more than £400 has been subscribed, and the target figure of £1,000 is likely to be exceeded as a result of an event in London towards the end of next month organised by Barnet people. The school is to be opened in August next.

Treasurer of the Barnet fund is Mr. F. W. McPherson, of Challacombe, Wellhouse Lane, Barnet, and the secretary Miss J. L. Roberts, of 56, Connaught Road, Barnet.



Since then I have visited the Polish Embassy at 47 Portland Place, where I saw two Embassy officials. They were unable to be of direct assistance but referred me to The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum at 20 Princes Gate. If I can obtain the name of the person then they suggested that I visited the Ministry of Defence, APC Polish Enquiries, RAF Northolt.

*Brian Warren*

**NEW PUBLICATION**



**REAPPRAISAL OF  
THE BATTLE  
OF BARNET 1471**



HADLEY HIGHSTONE: THE MONUMENT TO THE BATTLE OF 1471

By B Warren

Brian Warren has just written this booklet which queries whether the generally accepted location of the Battle of Barnet in 1471 is accurate. Since publishing the booklet, we have heard that English Heritage has accepted the 'new' location.

It is available from the Health Food Shop in Darkes Lane, Brays in the High Street, or the Potters Bar Museum in the Wyllyotts Centre.

It can also be obtained by post from Mabel Hammett, 4 Heath Cottages, Heath Road, Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 1LS.

The booklet costs £2, with post and packing, if necessary, £3.

**The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season'. Mabel Hammett looks after photocopying and collation, and Michael Cawrey organises, with volunteers, the distribution of The Newsletter**

**If you wish to submit an item for inclusion (preferably of a 'local-history' nature), please phone the Editor, Richard Lee (01707 652975) 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.**