

The Newsletter

January 2015

VOL. 31 No. 2

COVER PICTURE



This is No. 1 Heath Road once called '*The Firs*' because there were once two larch trees in the front garden. On the 25th of January 1990 a narrow shaft of wind shot through our town at about 90 to 100 mph from Baker Street to the top of Hawkshead Road (i.e. SW to NE). This was too much for this final tree that blew across the roadway. The 'pine cones' from the tree can be seen on the roadway and the last section of the tree trunk is in the centre of the picture. (Picture by Terry Goulding)

ADDITIONAL COVER PICTURE



Again on 25/1/1990 a Scots pine tree was blown onto the roof on No. 10 Heath Road. The tree had to be lifted off and supported before it was cut for removal.

(Picture by Terry Goulding)

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

To all our Members.

The Committee and I hope you had a happy Christmas and we wish you all a Happy New Year. Welcome back to a new year with our Society.

On looking through my photography logbooks I found the result of a wind and rain storm on the 25th of January 1990, hence the front cover and the above picture. I then remembered that all the old boys who have gone before used to say about warmer seasons – ‘You’ll pay for it later.’ In writing this in early December during a warm period, and after 25 years, what are our chances now of the ‘sky falling in’ as Henny Penny said? (Look up ‘Chicken Little’)

Our New Year Society meeting on Friday the 23rd of January 2015, is perhaps spring-like with a talk by Dr. David Gompertz entitled ‘*A Walk in the Woods*’. I hope to see you all then.

Terry Goulding

MEMBERS’ NEWS

OCCASIONAL PAPERS - No.1



The LZ1 Zeppelin at Northholz

THE POTTERS BAR ZEPPELIN
1st OCTOBER 1916

BY J E BENNETT

Mabel Hammett

The Potters Bar Historical Society committee has asked John Bennett to accept an Honorary membership as a thank you for the sales we have achieved in selling his book *The Potters Bar Zeppelin* 1st October 1916. [We are still selling over 30 copies of this booklet each year. *Ed.*]

Many thanks John, folks have read it from the north to the south of our country and requests have been posted all over the world.

NEW MEMBERS

We should like to welcome Frank and Linda Jeffs, and Mrs. Ita Flach on joining the Society. We hope they will come to our lectures and occasional outings that are part of our yearly programme, and will take an active part in our Society.

Richard Lee

OBITUARIES

Jean Foster (1928-2014)

Jean joined the Society in 1994/95 and soon became a member of the Committee. The following year she accepted the vacant post of Chairman and remained until 2001. During that time she established a welcome tea-break in Committee meetings, as the Wylllyotts' Cafe had not long been open.

Joan Charlton (1919-13/11/2014)

Joan was a quiet, competent person with a sense of humour, who taught history. She was the widow of Revd. Charlton, St. Mary's Potters Bar, and they had three daughters. Perhaps this was why she became interested in the Guide Movement to become an Assistant County Commissioner.

Joan had been a member of the Society for over twenty years and in recent years, along with Eileen Field, they would hire a taxi to attend the monthly meetings. When Eileen still drove they would go to shop at Tesco's, on Wednesday each week. They were good friends and neighbours.

Joan was a wise erudite person who showed great wisdom in many ways.

Gordon Eve (1914-2014)

It is with regret to record that Gordon died eight days short of a hundredth birthday.

Gordon was born at 56 Oakfield Road, Southgate, an only child. He first attended Franklin House and subsequently was a pupil at Merchant Taylors' School, Charterhouse Square (1927-33), leaving the year before the school moved to its present location at Moor Park, Hertfordshire. Gordon caught the 29 bus at the Cherry Tree to Palmers Green station, for the 8.03 a.m. double quad-art train. This journey resulted in a lifelong interest in railways and our first publication *The Railway Through Potters Bar* (1986).

Gordon worked in the Continental Tours Department, Pickfords Ltd, until he was commissioned in the Royal Artillery, in April 1940. He served in North Africa until he was captured at Tobruk and spent three years in five P.O.W. camps. As he could speak German and Italian his job was to keep the guards talking while others dug the escape tunnels. Gordon said that he was imprisoned with many talented people, so they had an orchestra, drama production, lectures and experts on road tunnelling. Col. David Stirling, founder of the S.A.S. and Freddie Brown, later England's cricket captain were imprisoned with him. He was released from Oflag 79 when the Americans captured Brunswick in April 1945.

In 1947 he became Hotel Sales manager of Trust House Forte, Drury Lane. Later he married Phyllis Dubery and lived at 30 Oakfield Road, till they moved to 34 Hatherleigh Gardens in 1978. They had one daughter, Pauline, and his wife predeceased him.

Gordon and his wife soon joined the Society and he made numerous useful contributions, including as a Committee member in 1991-94. Gordon was a gentleman from another era.

Brian Warren

Gerry Twyman (1930-2014)

Gerry started life in a flat above the pub next door to his father's garage (once the Regent garage) in the High Street, Potters Bar. The family moved into a house in Southgate Road and survived the V2 rocket. Gerry followed in his father's footsteps into the motor trade, first as an engineer. Later he carried on to run Twyman's garage, with Peter his brother (who died about two years ago). Gerry looked after the practical side of the business while Peter was responsible for the administration and accounts. Gerry usually had a project on the go in the small workshop by the fuel pumps. In the latter years he had moved on to an old aeroplane.

At home his garage/workshop was full of bicycles, projects and runners. His cars were kept at a friend's farm, i.e. at least three Bentleys and a (?) Stanley Steamer made up the collection. Gerry was a cheerful man and an inspiration to his family.

Andrew Lewis

The Society was represented at all the funerals. The committee and members send their condolences and sympathy to the families and friends of the above.

SPRING LECTURES

Friday January 23rd 2015

A Walk in the Woods, by Dr. David Gompertz

David Gompertz has been the volunteer warden of Fir & Pond Woods Nature Reserve for the last 11 years. This Reserve is one of the last remaining parts of Enfield Chase and is managed by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

The reserve consists of semi-natural ancient woodland, a mediaeval fish pond and a rare unimproved acid meadow. David will take you for a photographic walk through the Reserve talking about its history, ecology and its current management.

David is a retired medical scientist. He has lived in Potters Bar since 1963.

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

OTHER SPRING LECTURE PROGRAMME

| | | | |
|----------|----------|------------------|--|
| Tuesday | February | 17 th | <i>The Roman Bones of Old Enfield</i> by Mr. Neil Pinchbeck |
| Friday | March | 20 th | <i>The Rose Discovered & The Rose Revealed</i> by Mr. Harvey Sheldon |
| Thursday | April | 16 th | Annual General Meeting, followed by <i>Potters Bar in 1911</i> by Chris Cook |
| Thursday | May | 21 st | <i>Northaw in World War I</i> by Christine Ruge-Cope |

Colin Field

POTTERS BAR MUSEUM MUSEUM STEWARDS

Several members have had a little panic when the alarm keeps going after they have opened up the museum. If this happens just enter [entry code] again to cancel. Then re-enter [entry code] again to start again.

When receiving objects for the Museum, please only accept objects of a local nature. We continue to be short of space and cannot store anything not for display.

Mabel Hammett

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2014/15

The subscription year runs from April 1st to March 31st at a cost of £3 for individual adults, and £5 for a family or group.

If you have not yet paid, please would you contact Mrs. Chris Ruge-Cope, at 21 Chace Avenue, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 5LX. You can check your current membership status by phoning her on 01707 653221.

RECORDER GROUP

The last meeting was held on 8th December 2014.

Recently the Recorder Group had been relaunched but following the unfortunate retirement of Sarah Bulling, due to ill health, further reforming took place. A new member to the Society, Frank Jeffs, was welcomed to the Group and was willing to undertake the recording of Area One. The members present covered all the areas, in particular, noting the proposed development of the site of the *Strafford Arms* and *The Green Man*, the latter being one of the best surviving timber-framed buildings in the district. It is a listed building.

The group would welcome other members as recorders; when commenced in 1984 there were ten recorders, now there are five. Please contact Brian Warren if you are interested on 01707 875617.

Brian Warren

THE ARCHIVIST'S REPORT

I have received the following two requests and would be grateful to have any further information concerning the sites.

There was a WW2 Transmitter Out-Station of the R.A.F. Hendon. It was located at the bottom of Brockley Hill. It could possibly have been sited in a caravan or vehicle.

Secondly, there was a Radio Direction-Finding Station in the centre of Copthall field, Mill Hill. Perhaps it was mounted on a brick and concrete base hexagonal in layout.

Does anyone remember seeing any evidence of these two sites?

Brian Warren

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.

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------|
| Tuesdays | 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Ian Cumming on | 01707 642296 |
| Wednesdays | 2.30 - 4.30pm, contact Arnold Davey on | 01707 654179 |
| Saturdays | 11.00am – 1.00pm, contact Chris Ruge-Cope on | 01707 653221 |

THE POPPIES AT THE TOWER OF LONDON

These were to remind people of the memories of the First World War.

There were 888,246 ceramic poppies planted in the moat at the Tower of London to commemorate British and Commonwealth fatalities during the First World War.

Member Mick Cox is helping where they are *planted*.



WHAT A SIGHT TO REMEMBER

Mabel Hammett

COMPARING THE CENTURIES

The following section of the booklet *Comparing the Centuries* appeared when it was written by Arnold Lynch and first published in 2001.

The danger of infectious disease

Now to one of these perils in more detail. The human population is now about 6000 million and still growing. Nearly 200 years ago, Malthus predicted that eventually we should starve because the population would grow faster than its food supplies. So far this hasn't happened, but I think there may be a worse danger arising in another way. In the 20th century the growth has been chiefly in the great cities – London used to be the biggest city in the world but there are about ten now with bigger populations although perhaps no bigger in area – they're just packed more closely. These are places where an infectious disease could spread very fast. Either an old disease might reappear, or an entirely new one might arrive as an accidental mutant of something much less dangerous. Small-pox must have come from somewhere – perhaps, by what we now call jumping, from one species to another, although we know that these jumps are rare. Could it jump again by the same route? If it did, it would spread very rapidly, for in a few years' time there'll be nobody who has ever been vaccinated, and no doctors who have ever seen a case of small-pox. There are some African fevers (Lassa and Ebola, for example) which are thought to be even more dangerous. A few infected people have travelled to Britain, and fortunately they have been isolated before the infection spread, but a doctor might not recognise so rare a disease in time. If these diseases appear in a city even more crowded than London, they might spread like infections of influenza, and go all round the world before they could be checked.

Well, here we are in 2014 and the Ebola epidemic has happened!

Mabel Hammett

LOCAL TIMBER-FRAMES BUILDINGS (Part 5)

Part 4 was in the Newsletter January 2012.

THE VICARAGE, BLANCHE LANE, SOUTH MIMMS



Note the two wings.

An enlargement of a photograph of old vicarage
c. A.D. 1927 from Dr. Brittain's South Mimms Album.
The Parish volume 2 p.40.

When Andrew Butcher, a former member of the Society, purchased the vicarage he kindly showed me the evidence of a timber-framed structure he had uncovered in the centre of the building. On a visit to Lambeth Palace Library I saw the results of a survey which took place in 1890, included was a detailed plan of the right wing above showing the timbers (Footnote 1).

Before 1926 the Revd. Allen Hay, vicar of South Mimms, complained about ominous cracks and bulging walls of the building thought to be about 250 years old. The winter of 1925/26 there had been at least three feet of water in the cellar and the place was horribly cold and damp. In May 1927 the architect was very alarmed at the cracks in the walls and bulging walls made part of the building dangerous. He noted that half the building needed to be pulled down and rebuilt. By August 1928 the work had commenced, the entire old front was demolished and the architect, Mr. A. Blomfield Jackson was in charge. At the end of the month extensive cellars were discovered under the building and thought to be part of an earlier building. All drainage pipes had to be relaid round the house. In April 1929 the vicarage restoration had been completed.

As a large wall fronts the present vicarage it is not possible to obtain a comparable photograph to the one above.

Sources: Dr. F. Brittain's Newspaper Cuttings May 1923 to April 1929
(Cuttings from The Barnet Press).

Footnote 1: Unfortunately I could not locate my plastic folder with my notes from the Lambeth Palace Library to provide any greater detail.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING 2014

On Tuesday December 9th was the Christmas Social Evening. What a lovely evening we had.

The room looked very festive with the table decorations made by Wendy Davey. Ian Cumming and Richard Lee served everyone with a drink as they entered and 32 members enjoyed the quiz set by Terry Goulding, who also arranged for entertaining poems to be read by members:

Stan Stanbrook – *The Lion and Albert*, and *The Return of Albert*

Sarah Bulling – *Goodwill to Men*, *Give us your Money*

Liz Strudwick – *I have a List of People ...*

Margaret Antill – *Oranges at Christmas Time*

Marion Cant – *Invasion Exercises in the Poultry Farm* (John Betjeman)

Heather Rae – *Owl and the Pussycat*, and *The Head* (Pam Ayres)

David Davies – *At the Pantomime*

Brian Kolbert – *Roman Centurion's song*



Stan Stanbrook, Marion Cant and Heather Rae
reading their entertaining poems



Sue and David Connatty
organising the Raffle

David and Sue Connatty ran the raffle and then we all enjoyed a light supper prepared by Mabel Hammett but with a lot of help from other members. The home-made mince pies that followed were made by June Parks and coffee and tea was served by Liz Strudwick and Heather Rae.

We all enjoyed the evening and with help from everyone we had a quick clear up, to be out of the hall by a little after after 10 o' clock.

Mabel Hammett, pictures by Bruce Chanter

English - as it is spoken

The Roman Conquest of Britain

Lesson 1

In 55BC Caesar came and went.

In 54BC Caesar came and went again.

In the late spring of AD43, nearly two hundred years later, the Romans re-appeared invaded Britain, landing at either Richborough in east Kent, or, Chichester in Sussex, or both.

There is some evidence for a possible Roman presence at both sites although the evidence may be a little further at Chichester i.e. Fishbourne Palace, from which there is the likelihood of some trading and development in the near future.

The invasion force consisted of four legions plus four auxiliary regiments, amounting to the sum of 40,000 soldiers. A recent text records that the channel crossing (or crossing) was made in three divisions, to (2) landing in Kent and the third in Hampshire.

End of first lesson

Provided by Brian Kolbert

The PB&DHS Newsletter is produced in September, January & May of every 'season'. Richard Lee prints and produces the copies, and Andrew Hardy 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.

Regd. Charity No.299475

POTTERS BAR & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The 56th Annual General Meeting is to be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday 16th April 2015 at the Sixty Plus Room, Wyllyotts Centre. The Society would like to invite anybody wishing to become a Committee Member to fill in the form below, with a Proposer and Seconder's signatures. Completed forms need to be returned to the Hon. Secretary by Thursday 5th March 2014. (Andrew Hardy, 10 Heath Drive, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 1EH).

The positions available:

Chairman
Vice-Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Archivist
6 Committee members

After the AGM has been completed, committee member Chris Cook will present *Potters Bar in 1911*.



Potters Bar & District Historical Society

NOMINATION FORM

Annual General Meeting 16 April 2014

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| I propose | |
| For the office of | |
| Proposed by | |
| Seconded by | |
| Candidate's Signature | |