



Horley Local History Society NEWS

OCTOBER 2008

Meetings Calendar

The Society meets at Strawson Hall, 156 Albert Road, Horley, Surrey, at 7:30pm for 8:00 unless stated below.

Monday 27 October 2008 “*Betchworth Castle*” by Martin Higgins.

Monday 24 November 2008 “*Churches in Sussex & Surrey*” by Fred Asbury

Monday 15 December 2008 “*Our Christmas Gathering*” 7:30 pm in the Foyer of Archway Theatre (Please bring Nibbles, and a short Xmas story, or poem)

Monday 26 January 2009 (Details later)

Monday 23 February 2009 *AGM*

Monday 23 March 2009 (Details later)

Condolences

It is with great sadness that we report the loss of one of our very staunch members, Sylvia McFarlane. The Society has expressed its sympathy to John and family and has extended its offer of help in any way possible.

Our Revamped Website

The Society has recently taken the opportunity to revise its website and Peter Cox (01293 774607) has kindly

taken over its management. The address remains the same as below, but should you wish to add anything to the website will you kindly contact Peter.

This is hoped to be the last Newsletter to be posted to **ALL** members. In future it will be incorporated within the website. For those who do not have the facility to access the web, a separate Newsletter will be posted to them. For those who wish this, will they kindly contact Brian Buss (01293 782231). In this way, the Society can reduce the distribution costs involved.

The Future of Strawson Hall

At the recent AGM of the Management Committee for the Hall the serious options for its future were discussed. One was for its complete refurbishment to meet present requirements that would involve almost all voluntary labour, est. cost £11k. The other was for a new hall est. cost £140k that also included much internal voluntary work.

As the Society is one of the largest users of the Hall it would look to it for much voluntary work/fund raising. **THE SOCIETY MUST THEREFORE SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ITS POSITION AND WHAT IT IS PREPARED TO DO IF WE WISH TO CONTINUE USING IT FOR OUR MEETINGS.** All comments please asap to our Committee Representative, Betty Woodburn (01293 784668). One suggestion is to immediately set up a small committee to assess what the Society can/should do. Any member interested in joining this committee please ring Betty.

The Future of the Society's Archives

An extensive archive of Horley local historical material has been built up over the years in John McFarlane's house. He has not only created it but along with the help of several lady members, has also continued to grow and maintain it; a credit to all concerned. John like other committee members has over past years tried to plan where it might be placed in the future. Correspondence and discussions have taken place with appropriate members at County, Borough and Town Council level without reaching any definite decisions/plans. Inclusion within a new library in Horley was once envisaged, but this could now be many light years away. The need to seriously consider this could be fast approaching and ideas from members would be most welcomed. Please contact either John Mac (01293 784279) or Peter Gwynne (01293 773026).

Surrey Village Study Group

Some years ago the Surrey Archaeology Society (of which we are members) approached our Society to invite Horley to participate in the study of its early historical geography. Eventually the SAS wanted to see how Surrey evolved as it had no means of its own to achieve this without local input.

The Society agreed as it was seen as a great opportunity to undertake this in a structured manner and Peter Gwynne has been slowly leading this project and attending regular Group meetings. Because Horley is unlike most other Surrey villages it is extremely complex to find early documentation and arrive at conclusions. Peter would welcome help and if any member is interested in being involved please contact him. This is a fine opportunity in getting to grips with early documents, maps, terms and meeting those from other villages who are involved.

Several villages have already published their first results, including, Shere, Thorpe and Ewell and copies of these are in Horley library.

Iron Age Sites in Horley

The first indication of what could become a most fascinating phase in Horley's early history is being suggested in the initial assessments of the archaeology work undertaken in the northeast of Horley beyond the Langshott estate.

The recent briefing note concludes:-

"Therefore, the initial assessment of the remains in this area are that we have two foci of native

settlement, probably from the late iron age to the Romano British period, which consists of roundhouses, stock enclosures and some small scale industrial processes. The northern focus has a structure which may be of higher status. The majority of the structures appear to have been built a number of times in roughly the same area, possibly suggesting seasonal or intermittent utilisation of the area. Such types of seasonal settlement, reflecting perhaps a transhumant pastoral economy are increasingly being located on what would have been more marginal areas of land in later prehistory and the early Roman period. Unfortunately bone does not appear to be surviving in acidic soil which would have allowed us to clarify the types of animal being bred."

This is the first time that evidence has been established that some form of early settlement took place in our area on Wealden Clay. Perhaps the findings of the British sepulchral urn, flint arrow heads and bronze Roman coins during the construction of the railway close to Horleylands farm, might conceivably be linked to these new finds? This along with the Middle Stone Age flints being excavated by Maureen Hart and Roger Ellaby in the Haroldslea area, is increasing our knowledge of the early history of Horley at a totally unexpected rate.

The Origins of the Name "Horley" at last?

A question repeatedly asked by many. Roger Ellaby, one of our recent members, is about to publish a paper from the research he has undertaken and his conclusions are extremely interesting. We hope to include a summary of his findings shortly on our website. This along with the last item begs the question, who says the history of Horley is stuffy?

Yattendon Down Under

David Hall has found with the help of his grand-daughter in Australia, that the name of "Yattendon" is perhaps more widely used there than in the UK. A road near Sydney by this name was built on an old racecourse where once it is thought an owner raced a very famous horse named Yattendon. One of his employees named Thomas Hicks was a horse breaker from Yattendon in Berks who was transported to New South Wales for his part in the Swing Riots of 1830. At Coolah, north of Sydney, is another Yattendon Road, not far from a racehorse stud farm. (Perhaps its name was also influenced by the famous racehorse?)