

### Membership Renewals

Next year's programme includes a talk by Tracy Borman about her recently published book on Thomas Cromwell, as well as 'Cameras and Corsets', a talk by Jane Lewis about dating historic photographs from clothing styles and other visual clues. We hope you will find something to interest you in the new programme and will wish to renew your subscription which becomes due on 1 April. Your renewal is enclosed with this Newsletter or is being sent to you via email. As usual, you will be able to renew your subscription at the AGM on Wednesday 29 April.

### Committee

John Hutton, who has been Treasurer for the Society since its inauguration, is standing down from the Committee and we are looking for a volunteer to take his place. Committee meetings are held about six times a year and we conduct as much business as possible via email, which saves a lot of time. We would like to hear from anyone who is interested in joining the Committee and, in particular, from any member who would be willing to take on the role of Treasurer. John would be happy to explain what is involved. The committee would like to thank John for his enormous contribution in helping to establish the Society over the past eight years.

### Meeting Reports

#### How the East Surreys went to war in 1914 - Talk by Ian Chatfield Tuesday 11 November, 2014

The meeting at Imber Court on Remembrance Day was well attended. Ian Chatfield, curator of the Surrey Infantry Museum, began his talk by giving some background about the museum itself - following the closure of Regimental Headquarters and Museum in the Keep at Kings Road in Kingston, the artefacts had to be put into store. However, agreement was reached with the National Trust for the use of rooms in the basement at Clandon Park and the museum opened in 1981. After merging with the Museum of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and Queen's Regiment in July 2011, the museum was renamed **The Surrey Infantry Museum**.

The East Surrey Regiment was formed in 1881 by amalgamating the 31<sup>st</sup> (Huntingdonshire) Regiment and the 70<sup>th</sup> (Surrey) Regiment; the idea behind the amalgamation was to save money by halving the depots needed and the officer corps. The 31<sup>st</sup> regiment became the first battalion of the East Surrey Regiment and the 70<sup>th</sup> regiment became the second battalion of the East Surreys. Each battalion had about 1,000 men. The Brigade Depot for the Regiment was established in Kings Road, Kingston.

Richard Haldane, the Secretary of State for War between 1905 and 1912 was forced to cut back on army expenditure but he implemented a wide-ranging series of reforms of the Army aimed at preparing it for war; one of these reforms was the establishment of the British Expeditionary Force. At the beginning of 1914 the British Army was the only professional army; it consisted entirely of volunteers whereas the continental armies were conscript armies. According to Ian, the British Army only had 120,000 men whereas the German army had nearly two million men, the Russian army about 1,400,000 and the French army almost 1,300,000. In June 1914 reservists started returning to the Army.



When war broke out on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014 the 1<sup>st</sup> East Surrey battalion was based in Dublin. Eleven days later the battalion was in France and was involved at the Battle of Mons on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1914. One of the members of the East Surreys captured by the Germans during this battle was a Captain Robert Campbell, who was sent to a prisoner of war camp in Germany. When he received news that his mother was dying he wrote to the Kaiser

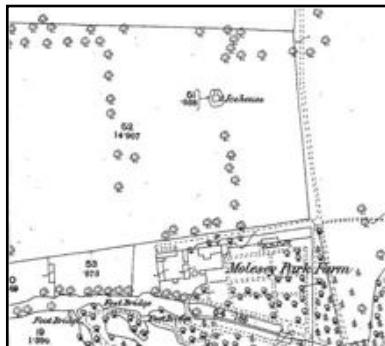
begging to be allowed to go and see his mother. The Kaiser agreed on condition that Campbell gave his word that he would return. Campbell returned to Britain and spent a week with his mother before returning to Germany. It seems that no other British prisoners of war were given compassionate leave after Britain blocked a similar request from a German prisoner. When he returned to Germany Campbell and several other prisoners managed to escape but he was recaptured on the Dutch border and sent back to the prisoner of war camp where he remained until the end of the war.

At the beginning of the First World War the 2<sup>nd</sup> East Surrey battalion was in India. It returned immediately but did not arrive in France until January 1915, where it was soon in action to the south of Ypres, where it lost many men, some by poison gas.

During the First World War the East Surrey Regiment raised a total of 24 Battalions, 21 of which saw active service. The Regiment continued to serve in France until the Armistice in November 1918; some battalions also served in Italy, Macedonia, Mesopotamia and Egypt. During the war the Regiment lost 6,223 men.

In 1959 the East Surrey Regiment amalgamated with the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey), to form The Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment.

**Thursday 5 February 2015, 8 pm**  
**Maps for Local History**  
**Talk by Carole Garrard**  
**Hurst Park Primary School, Hurst Road KT8 1QW**



Maps are fascinating, never more so than when they reveal the story of your house, your family or the area where you live. That was the topic of our latest local history evening at Hurst Park school on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February. Over 60 members came to hear Carole Garrard, local studies librarian at Surrey History Centre (SHC), tell us about the amazing maps we can access in Surrey to illuminate the story of Molesey and its inhabitants. Carole showed us the changes to East Molesey Park on different maps.

On this OS map dated 1880 we can still see the 18th century brick ice house, although the big house itself had been demolished four years earlier.

Carole outlined the main types of maps that can be useful to us, including:

- manuscript maps, e.g. the earliest made in Surrey is a map of Chertsey Abbey dated 1432
- printed small-scale historic county maps, e.g. John Morgan's map of 1596 showing E and W Mowfey; John Roque's map of 1762 showing Green Lane, the old drovers' road; and Joseph Lindley's 1789 map showing East and West Molesey spelt in the modern way
- manorial maps, e.g. the 1781 map of Molesey Matham Manor which is available on CD-ROM from SHC
- enclosure maps, e.g. the 1821 enclosure map of East and West Molesey is also available on CD-ROM from SHC
- Ordnance Survey series, e.g. the 1 inch to 1 mile map of this area published in 1816; the 6 inch to 1 mile maps of East and West Molesey published in 1868, 1896-7, 1912-14 and 1932
- annotated and working maps, e.g. the land valuation maps produced under Lloyd George's 1909-10 Finance Act
- building control maps, e.g. the 1859 plans and elevations for East Molesey Board School in School Road
- estate maps, e.g. the sale of waste land, Dunstable and East Mousley Commons, for the erection of villas
- leisure maps, e.g. a 1937 map of Hurst Park racecourse and grandstand.

We learnt that there are no tithe maps (produced at the time of the Tithe Commutation Act, 1836) for East and West Molesey on account of the local Enclosure Act of 1815. Carole also talked to us about map-making and the fascinating changes in surveying techniques from the earliest theodolites to modern satellite surveying. She also shared lots of useful tips on how to read old OS maps. Taking maps online calls for new cartographic skills but it would be a shame if the next generation lost the skill and the pleasure of reading a printed map. It is for this reason that Surrey History Centre invested in hard copies of the 1:10,000 OS series in 2009.

If you would like to know more about this fascinating topic, Carole left us a very useful bibliography on Surrey maps and map-making. If you would like a copy, contact [people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org](mailto:people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org).

## Forthcoming Meetings

**Wednesday 29 April 2015, 8 pm**

**AGM**

**Garrick's Temple and Villa**

**Talk by Bill Weisblatt**

***St Lawrence School, Church Road, KT8 9DR***



GARRICK'S Temple of Shakespeare & Church at Hampton 1759

Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare on the Riverside at Hampton was built by the great 18th century actor-manager David Garrick in 1756 to celebrate the genius of William Shakespeare. On the Hampton riverside, it is part of the Molesey landscape and we have all enjoyed the beautiful view of the Temple and St Mary's Church across the Thames. Bill Weisblatt, trustee of the Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust, will be talking to us about the history of the Temple following the business of the AGM, which we anticipate will be brief.

Refreshments will be available and you will have the opportunity to renew your membership. Members £1, Guests £3 on the door.

**Thursday 4 June 2015**

**Doors open 7.30, Talk at 8 pm**

**Thomas Cromwell**

**Talk by Tracy Borman**

***Clore Centre, Hampton Court Palace***

Tracy is the joint Chief Curator for Historic Royal Palaces and is also the Chief Executive of the Heritage Education Trust, a charity that encourages children to visit and learn from historic properties. Tracy will be talking to us about Thomas Cromwell, the subject of her most recent book published in September 2014 and released in paperback in January this year. Hilary Mantel has presented us with a fictional account of Cromwell in her best-selling novels, *Wolf Hall* and *Bring Up The Bodies*. But do her novels present an accurate picture of Cromwell? Tracy has researched widely in order to explore Cromwell's life and personality and she will tell us what she thinks he was really like. The Independent's review of Tracy's biography of Cromwell describes it as "deeply researched and grippingly written" and says that it "brings Cromwell to life, probing into his complex personality and exposes the Henrician court in all its brutal, glittering splendour." Tracy will also explain how Hampton Court Palace played an important part in Cromwell's career.

Numbers are limited at the Clore Centre, however we are not asking members to book their seats, as we have done in previous years. The meeting will not be advertised to the general public and open only to subscribed members and their guests. There will be a limit of 20 on the number of guests, whose places must be booked in advance. If you wish to bring a guest, please let us know by email or telephone so that we can do our best to ensure that we are not overcrowded on the evening.

Refreshments will be available before the talk. There will be a charge to members of £2, payable on the door. There is a charge of £5 for guests, who must book in advance.

### **People & Buildings Special Interest Group**

The People and Buildings Group met on 28th January. Among the topics discussed were an earthquake in Molesey in 1750, the East Molesey Fair of 1553 mentioned in the opening chapter of Baroness Orczy's 'Tangled Skein' and the death of the actress Pauline Yates who lived for a while in East Molesey. The main research effort of the group at the moment is the history of schools in Molesey. At the next meeting at 8pm on 25th March at the Royal British Legion the subject will be the archaeological finds at Hurst Park in 1994 and members will continue to share what they have found out about local schools. At the following meeting on 27 May Alex Beard from Kingston Museum will be giving a talk about the history of Bentalls. New members are always welcome.

We have had a request for information about Gordon Terrace in Beauchamp Road. Please get in touch if you can shed any light on exactly where it was ([people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org](mailto:people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org)).

## 60 YEARS AGO

### THE MOLESEY REVIEW

In November 1954 the Molesey Review reported two new arrivals in Molesey, both of which are still with us today. Mr T. H. Collison had recently opened a new branch of his optician's business in a new building on the corner of Kent Road and Walton Road and Esher Council had decided to erect a traffic mirror at the junction of Summer Road and Esher Road as they thought that it would be of "great assistance, particularly to motorists emerging from Summer Road into Esher Road." The Council had turned down an application to build a garage and filling station with offices and flats above on the land at the junction of Bridge Road and Wolsey Road as they thought that the proposed development would be prejudicial to public safety, having regard to existing traffic conditions.

November 1954's Review contained a profile of Mr James Williams, the head teacher of the boys' school in Park Road from February 1927 until his retirement in August 1943. He was known by his pupils as 'Jasper', this being their interpretation of his signature, 'Jas. Williams'. In his retirement Mr Williams became hampered by increasing physical immobility and he spent much time researching and writing about various local history topics. An article by Mr Williams on a local history topic had appeared in each edition of the Molesey Review since it was first published in May 1953. November 1954's article was about 'Old Records of West Molesey' including a medical report dated 14th December 1892 which stated that there was at that time no system of sewerage or drainage for West Molesey parish. "Most houses have uncemented privy cess-pits, many in a dilapidated condition. Cherry Orchard cottages have earth closets, but in only one was earth being used. Sink drainage exists in only a few houses; the slops are thrown on to the garden."

The editorial of the December 1954 Review suggested that 1954 promised to be the happiest Christmas since the first war Christmas of 1939, as twelve months before family ration books had been necessary to buy Christmas food. The Review reported that expert calculations suggested that the nation's expenditure on food and consumer goods during December would be about £1,200,000,000, which would be £200,000,000 more than the previous year.

At the end of November 1954 work had begun on the erection of the new East Molesey Cricket Club pavilion. The pavilion was being built by George Wimpey and Company at a cost of between £6,000 and £6,500. The foundation stone of the new pavilion was to be laid in February 1955 and it was to be officially opened on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1955. In February 1955 the Review reported that the foundation stone of the new pavilion had been laid on 29<sup>th</sup> January by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Rt. Hon. R. G. Menzies.



The December 1954 Review contained a report on Clare o' Molesey Limited, a local firm of printers established in 1945 in Walton Road but by 1954 based at 79 Bridge Road. The Managing Director of the company, Sidney Clare, decided to start the Molesey Review in 1953 as a free publication relying on advertisements as its sole source of income. The report detailed the various stages of production required to produce the Review and was illustrated by several photos showing the premises and equipment of the company.

In December 1954 the W.V.S. had recently moved from Esher to new headquarters at 144 Walton Road, near Woolworth's, which they used as a clothing depot and information centre. In January 1955 the Review reported that the W.V.S. was anxious to increase its membership as help was needed with clerical work during office hours, with the work of issuing and keeping records of clothing, with the sewing party and with the "cutting out" party.

The January 1955 Review contained a report on the Phoenix Club, described in the editorial as one of Molesey's "successful organisations", other successful organisations, according to the editor, being the Townswomen's Guild, the Olde Tyme Dance Club, the Welcome Club and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. The Phoenix Club was established by three former members of the Molesey Youth Club of 1941-44, who, after the end of the Second World War, decided to organise an over-18 club offering similar activities to the 1944 Youth Club. The Phoenix Club was established in April 1947 and soon expanded its activities. By 1955 the Club had its own premises and was open from 7.30 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday as well as for special occasions on other days. The Club also organised outings and produced plays and variety shows. By January 1955 the Club had been the matchmaker for over 20 couples who met in the Club for the first time.

The February 1955 review mentioned that half a dozen roads and the grounds of the Hospital had recently been flooded and reported that, "A larger and new area to suffer the menace this time was an area between Lower Green Road, Esher, Weston Green, and the Imber Court Sports Ground; houses in 15 or more roads were affected." The Review also contained an article by James Williams on previous floods in Molesey.

Some snippets from the January and February 1955 Reviews,

- 1,407 people had attended a mass radiography session at St Francis Church Hall, West Molesey, between 21<sup>st</sup> October 1954 and 5<sup>th</sup> November 1955. Only one active case of tuberculosis had been found in this group.
- Reported as "Good news for local young lovers", Esher Council had agreed to spend over £3,000 on a tubular steel pre-fabricated footbridge to replace the existing Tanners Bridge.
- 'Around the Town' written by "Old Timer" complained that it was illogical to have two dairies in East Molesey and none in West Molesey and that there were no banks in Molesey, other than in Bridge Road.
- A complaint, which may resonate with us today, was made in a letter from P. Beaulieu of Langton Road who complained about the noise from aircraft flying at night from a 'R.A.F. or Yank airfield'.
- Richard Yeend, the 9 year old son of the Rev. Yeend, had been awarded a place in the Canterbury Cathedral Choir.
- Esher Council had agreed to name various blocks of flats after former residents.
  - A block of 9 flats fronting Down Street was named 'Dudley Hill House' after Major General Sir Dudley Hill, who fought in various campaigns in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the Peninsular War, and was Lieutenant Governor of St Lucia from 1834 to 1837. He lived at Hurst House, West Molesey, and was a churchwarden of West Molesey Church.
  - A block of 18 flats fronting Down Street was named 'Berkeley House' after Admiral Sir George Berkeley, another former resident of Hurst House, who is buried in West Molesey Church.
  - A block of 9 flats fronting Eastcote Avenue was named Plyman House after Reginald P. Plyman, who was a headmaster of West Molesey School.

Jenny Wood

### **Local Events**

**Surrey History Centre  
Military Ancestry Roadshow  
Saturday 18 April 2015 10.30am - 4.00pm**

Tickets, including refreshments, £5. Please [Book Online](#). Tickets can also be bought in person from Surrey History Centre or any Surrey Library. Credit card bookings can be made by telephone on 01483 543599, a small handling charge may apply.

Do you have medals, items of uniform, photos, letters or other ephemera from your family's military past? A panel of experts will help you identify them, guide you to further information sources and reveal what these items say about your relative's military history. No financial valuations will be given. Emphasis will be placed on the historical value of the items. Items from any military period are welcome, with the exception of live ammunition.

This event is part of Surrey Libraries' War and Words programme of commemorative events for the First World War Centenary.

Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6ND

*There is also an [online exhibition](#), which accompanies this display.*

Civic Centre, off High Street, Esher KT10 9SD

**The Party: 500 years of Hampton Court Palace  
3, 4, 5 April 2015 (Easter weekend)  
6.30pm-9.00pm**

Celebrate Hampton Court Palace's 500 years with a spectacular Son et Lumière show on the south façade with fireworks. Explore 500 years of music and food, with a programme of music and pop-up bars.