

Forthcoming Events

LOVE MOLESEY

Saturday April 6th, 2:00 pm – 4.00 pm

Molesey History Family Fun Afternoon

St Mary's East Molesey, St Mary's Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0ST

Free! – Please drop in

Come and join us at St. Mary's Church for some local history family fun. You will be able to do the Bell Road picture trail and a quiz on what to look at in St. Mary's Church. Volunteers from Molesey Local History Society will be on hand to tell you about the old village.

All materials provided.

Children must be accompanied by an adult, please.

The café will be open for refreshments.

Thursday 16 May 2019, 8 pm

Hampton Court Pleasure Palace

A Story of Two Palaces – Tudor and Baroque

Talk by Siobhan Clarke

Clare Centre, Hampton Court Palace, KT8 9AU

The story of two palaces: a Tudor palace made magnificent by Henry VIII, alongside a Baroque palace built by William & Mary. Its buildings, grounds and artefacts express the image of a magnificent monarch. Yet, dig a little deeper and you will find hidden stories covering five hundred years of royal history.

We anticipate high demand for this meeting and numbers are limited. Details for booking are given at the end of this newsletter. Booking will initially be open to members only, but it may be possible to accommodate guests if all places are not taken. We will let you know nearer the date if there are spaces available.

Tuesday 16 July 2019, 8 pm

Brooklands into its Second Century

Talk by Tim Morris

St Lawrence School, Church Road, KT8 9DR

Tim Morris, Head Administrator of the Brooklands Trust, will be giving a talk on the history of Brooklands. In the twentieth century Brooklands was the birthplace of British Motorsport and the most prolific aircraft site in Europe. Racing took place at Brooklands from 1907 to 1939, and aviation developed at the site from 1907 to 1989. Brooklands Museum opened in 1991 to keep those twin histories alive and preserve the inventiveness, expertise and spirit of adventure which are Brooklands' real legacy.

Thursday 1 July and Thursday 5 September

Summer Stroll – Brooklands

Brooklands Rd, Weybridge KT13 0SL

Our Summer Stroll this year will be a tour of Brooklands. There is a charge of £20.50 per person (£19.50 over 60s), which includes a 90 minute guided tour, a cream tea and a voucher to buy a half price souvenir brochure. After the tour, you will be free to explore further (excluding Concorde). The final date for booking is Tuesday 16 July, the date of the Brooklands talk. If you wish to reserve a place (payment required in advance), please contact Claire Annable - claireannable@hotmail.com, tel: 07940 434156.

Meeting Reports

Thursday 31 January 2019

Annual General Meeting

by Paula Day

The Society held its 12th Annual General Meeting at St Lawrence School on Thursday 31 January. 66 members attended, with apologies from 14 others. The business part of the meeting took about half an hour, and was due to be followed by a talk about 'The Golden Age of Postcards', but inclement weather prevented our speaker from coming, so our members watched 'Surrey on Film' – more about that elsewhere in the newsletter.

The minutes of the previous year's AGM were approved, as was the Financial Report; the election of officers and committee was very straightforward, as all members of the 2018/19 committee were willing to restand, with Dave Jupp taking on the role of Treasurer. No formal motions had been received.

In her Chairman's Report, Jenny Wood reported that membership at the end of December 2018 stood at 247, slightly lower than the previous year, but slightly greater than 2016. At the 2018 AGM last February, she had given a talk about the preparation of the 'Molesey - Then and Now' book. Over 1100 copies sold and only a few remain. The surplus from the sales of these books would be used for further publications, with two currently being planned, one entitled 'Missing Molesey', and covering buildings in Molesey that are no longer in existence, and the other about the bridges of Hampton Court, based on the Society's 2013 research project. She asked that if anyone was interested in getting involved in either of these to please let a committee member know.

Jenny then listed the other Society events of 2018: David Hassard's talk in March on 'Sopwith Aviation and the Great War'; Eleri Lynn, Curator at Hampton Court Palace, on Tudor Fashion; visits to Imber Court Museum; a talk by ex-dredger master Malcolm Head on his archaeological finds in the Thames; David Taylor, chair of the Surrey History Trust, on the Weybridge Diggers; and the Society's researched project, '1968 and All That – A History of Flooding in Molesey'. Jenny thanked the sub-committee for the Floods evening, and assured members that we would try to ensure that future meetings did not overrun. As members did not have time to view all the displays, there would be an event in the Methodist Church in Manor Road on 22 and 23 March where members and guests could view all the displays, and chat to some of the speakers and others with personal memories of the 1968 floods. Refreshments will be served there, and Jenny asked for volunteers to help man this event.

In addition to the seven events in 2018, the Society also had a presence at Molesey Carnival, and at Magical Molesey, in estate agents Tudor & Co, where some of the Floods displays were shown.

The Society's next researched event, in November, will look at the aftermath of the flooding, and the flood alleviation scheme. If anyone has photographs of subsequent floods, the Society would love to be able to scan them for the displays. Jenny then explained that the Society was planning to do research on Molesey Architects, for an event in 2020, and she'd like to hear from any members interested in helping with this.

Three newsletters were produced during the year, and Jenny thanked Jill Wilkins for all her work on them. Any contributions from members would be gratefully received. Jenny thanked Dave Jupp, Anthony Barnes and Laurence Shafe for maintaining the website, which will shortly be undergoing a complete update, enabling the Society to upload content. It will also display better on mobile phones. Any suggestions on what members would like to see on the new website would be gratefully received. Jenny thanked Laurence for all his help with the Society's website over the last ten years.

The Society receives a number of queries through the website, many regarding the 'Then and Now' book, but also interesting emails from past residents. A few of these have, or will be, included in our newsletter, including one from Robin Gambrell, now living in New Zealand, of his memories of Molesey; one from Kevin Crossfield, a former employee of Nielson's, asking for memories of other employees for a book he is preparing – and our thanks to Julia Nielson for contacting him; and John Humble, the son of Dr Humble, enquiring about his parents' home in Palace Road.

In regard to storage, there had as yet been no progress.

Jenny went on to thank John Hutton for continuing to look after the Society's finances, and all the members of the committee for their continued support.

2019/2020 Committee:

Officers: Chair: Jenny Wood, Secretary: Paula Day, Treasurer: Dave Jupp

Committee: Claire Annable, Anthony Barnes, Doreen Freeman, Lynda McCarter, Norma Millard, Jill Wilkins.

Thursday 31 January 2019

Surrey on Film

by Claire Annable

Unfortunately, due to the prospect of snow, our speaker Michael Miller was unable to join us to give his talk on The Golden Age of the Postcard. Instead, we were treated to a film show entitled 'Surrey on Film'. This delightful snapshot of Surrey life covered the years 1911 to 1953 and featured numerous and various events captured by amateur film makers.

In 1911 Surrey women war workers were seen ploughing fields and raising money for an ambulance to be sent to the western front. This vein continued in a clip of 1916 with women taking on the roles of men who were away fighting.

1926 and 1935 showed a lighter side of Surrey before the storm which was to become WWII broke. There were scenes of carnivals, Empire Day and a lively street party in Hersham to celebrate King George V and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee.

Many clips filmed during WWII showed Surrey Land Girls working in fields and 'Start a Land Club' where families were encouraged to help out on farms at weekends and holidays organised by a central team. Doodlebugs, damaged houses and The Civil Defence League were a sobering side of 'Surrey on Film'.

Finally, 1953 scenes showed post war austerity fading with festivities, fetes, baby shows and a soap box derby to commemorate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

A fascinating view of times past in Surrey.

Suffragists, Suffragettes and Antis: Women's Road to the Vote in Surrey

Wednesday 13th March 2019

by Anthony Barnes

We welcomed Holly Parsons from 'The March of the Women: Surrey's Road to the Vote' project who came to talk to us about the achievements of the project which finishes at the end of March. Fittingly, the meeting was held at Hurst Park Primary School, just a stone's throw from where suffragettes burned down the racecourse Grandstand in June 1913, a few days after Emily Wilding Davison sustained her fatal injuries at the Epsom Derby.

Holly has been project officer for this Heritage Lottery Fund project which celebrates 100 years since some women gained the vote in 1918. (You had to be over the age of 30 and meet a property qualification). After explaining to us the difference between suffragists (non-militant, non-party) and suffragettes ('Deeds not Words'), she talked about leading figures from Surrey on all sides of the debate. They included Ethel Smyth of Woking (composer of the 'March of the Women' anthem), the Pethick-Lawrences of Holmwood (provided financial, journalistic and organisational skills to the suffragette movement) and Bertha Broadwood of Capel, near Dorking (anti-suffrage campaigner). In 1914, at the outbreak of War, the campaigns were mostly suspended.

Holly highlighted some of the key achievements of the project, particularly in bringing to light new information about forgotten figures of the women's movement in Surrey, which has enabled us to appraise their contribution and reputation afresh. She also spoke about the programme of events over the last year which included a radio play written and performed by students, a travelling exhibition and a series of talks, one of which was by Mary Branson who created the 'New Dawn' light sculpture in Westminster Hall.

I followed on from Holly with a talk about local people, places and events associated with women's suffrage. I explained that I wanted people to see familiar sights in a new light when they walked past them! Hillersden (22 Church Road), for example, was the home of Sir Julius Vogel, ex-Prime Minister of New Zealand, who wrote a sci-fi novel in 1889 called 'Anno Domini 2000 or Woman's Destiny' in which women had political equality with men and the USA was led by a female president.

Mrs. Agnes Garland, Hon. Sec. of the East and West Molesey branch of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, lived at what is now 20 Spencer Road. Mrs. Ada Burton, the first secretary of the Esher and East Molesey Branch of the London Society of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) lived at 22 Spencer Road. We have to imagine whether they talked convivially over the back garden fence!



Miss Milly Martineau of Littleworth in Esher later took over as the local NUWSS organiser. Outdoor meetings were held by the Jubilee Fountain in Bridge Road (photo) on Thursdays at 8pm in the summer of 1911. In November of that year, Milly spoke at a meeting held at the Conservative Hall. A report says that there was a large attendance of women, her earnest address was listened to with great interest and they only charged 1d. admission as most of the women were of the working class.

The NUWSS organised a great pilgrimage in the summer of 1913, when volunteers joined eight routes from all over the country converging on Hyde Park for a mass rally. The suffragists from Portsmouth held meetings at many places en route including Esher Green and outside Kingston Station. I like to think that supporters from the Moleseys turned out to cheer them on and give them refreshments. We know the banner of the Esher and East Molesey branch was paraded at Kingston Station, but where is it now?

Princess Catherine Duleep-Singh was a supporter of the suffragists and a member of the Esher and East Molesey Branch; but her more famous sister, Princess Sophia, was a suffragette who sold copies of *The Suffragette* outside Hampton Court Palace. Charlotte Despard, who lived at Courtlands and then Earnshaw Cottage in Esher was also a suffragette before she left in 1907 to set up the Women's Freedom League. Next time you go past Molesey Lock, imagine Charlotte in 1909 addressing 'a small, but sympathetic knot of people' and selling literature and holding a collection which raised £1.4s.5d.

More research is needed to uncover information about local suffragette activists and events organised locally by the Kingston and Richmond branches of the Women's Social and Political Union. The most celebrated militant act by outsiders was the arson at Hurst Park by Kitty Marion and Clara Giveen (See the Society's newsletter no. 37, October 2016).

If your family history research has turned up any information about suffragists, suffragettes or antis locally, Holly and I would love to hear your stories. You can read more about 'The March of the Women: Surrey's Road to the Vote' on the project's website at <https://www.exploringsurreyspast.org.uk/themes/people/activists/road-to-the-vote/>

22/23 March 2019

Exhibition: '1968 and All That' – A History of Flooding in Molesey
Methodist Church, Manor Road

Following the talk last November about the Molesey floods, the Society was keen to allow members more time to look at all the research that had been compiled, so an exhibition was planned to display all the photographs, films and written information. Some 40 members and 200 visitors attended, 28 people joined the Society, and the comments we received were all very complimentary.



If you missed it, some of the displays will be in our tent at Molesey Carnival, and possibly again on 15th November at Imber Court, when we present a follow-up talk, 'Après le Déluge', which will look at the aftermath, the clear-up and the flood alleviation scheme and will consider whether a flood of the magnitude of the 1968 flood is likely to happen again in Molesey.

Many thanks to everyone who helped over the two days, and of course all those who have given us their memories and photographs.

60 YEARS AGO

THE MOLESEY REVIEW January 1959 –April 1959

January, February, March and April Reviews

- It seems that the state of the roads was a problem 60 years ago. In January, 'Around The Town' complained about the state of Island Farm Road and Island Farm Avenue, saying, "an employee of Clare o' Molesey cycling to work along Island Farm Road, hit one of the dangerous potholes, came off over his handlebars and suffered concussion, cuts and bruises, and was off work for a week. Island Farm Avenue is to be made-up some time this year, but I say that Island Farm Road is just as bad – it has no street lighting and is a natural death-trap for all rate-paying road users."

- The February Review reported that some frontagers had objected to the proposed making up of Island Farm Avenue, and parts of Island Farm Road and Pool Road.
- The Chamber of Commerce Newsletter in the March Review mentioned that the Secretary of the Chamber had mentioned the “shocking condition of Island Farm Road” to the Council. He considered that, “In wet weather this ‘road’ could easily be taken for a scaled down version of the Lake District – the only difference being that the Lake District probably isn’t as dangerous.” In April, the Secretary reported that the Council had replied saying that it was not their responsibility – no work would be done until the road was officially taken over by the local authority.

January Review

- Petula Clark had left Molesey to live in a flat in Kensington.
- W.R.W. Engineering Co. Ltd, which was originally set up in Molesey in 1953 but which had moved to Stoke D’Abernon by 1959, was marketing a revolutionary idea for oil drum stands. Their stand held a five gallon oil drum at such a height that it was unnecessary to tip the drum to pour out the oil. WRW Engineering is still going and is now based in Hersham.

February Review

- Mr A. W. Smelt sold his antique business on the corner of Bridge Road, where the Emporium is now situated. The business had been run by the Smelt family since 1895 and A. W. Smelt had spent his whole life connected with the business. He bought a new property in Creek Road, which he renamed Bridge House and from which he intended to carry on business in a smaller way.
- There was an article by James Williams on East Molesey Vicarage, which was unoccupied and unlikely to be lived in again. The vicarage was on a plot on the corner of Arnison and Bridge Roads where Boleyn Court is now situated. In his will, William Hatton of East Molesey, who died in 1705 had left property consisting of a house with an orchard and garden and an adjoining cottage on trust for the use of the minister of the parish. At that time the property was considerably larger. By the mid-19th century, the property had become dilapidated and the old parsonage and other buildings on the site were demolished. In March 1858, the Minister, the Rev. W. G. Jervis, chose the orchard part of the property as the site of the new parsonage and the remaining part of the property was sold. The money available for the building of the new property was insufficient and a mortgage was raised which had to be paid off by instalments by Mr Jervis and later incumbents.

March Review

- Mr C. W. Kent died on 1st February at the age of 92. Mr Kent was a lawyer in his family business at Hampton for 40 years. “He was an Oxford blue and a hockey enthusiast, but will be best remembered for his judging, coaching and administration work in his favourite sport – rowing. He was honorary secretary of the Molesey Amateur Regatta, captain of the Molesey Boat Club, and for several years until his death was president of both; a member of the Amateur Rowing Association for more than 50 years and chairman of the Thames Amateur Rowing Council, he also stroked the Oxford crew to victory in 1891 in the University Boat Race.”
- The rates were going up 10d. to 15/8d. in the £ for the next financial year beginning in April. The Esher Urban District’s rate was still going to be the second lowest in Surrey.
- There was an article by James Williams on the Chalybeate Well. He said that Herbert Andrews in his History of Molesey published in 1893 referred to the Spring being situated in Spa Meadow near to the Esher Road and to a thatched-roofed shanty doing duty as a pump-room. Williams said, “A pipe leads from the Well into Matham Manor House where under the floor of one of the reception rooms is a solidly built brick well about 10 feet deep large enough to admit a person.”

April Review

- In March, windows were smashed in the new out-patients department at Molesey Hospital “by vindictive hooligans. Stones were thrown through the windows during the hours of darkness and broken glass lay scattered across the floor.”

- A special meeting was held at the Methodist Church in Manor Road to discuss methods of meeting the heavy expenditure required to deal with the infestation of the church and adjoining premises by woodworm. It was impossible to meet the cost from normal church income, so a special fund was opened.
- 'Around The Town' said that there was a lot of talk about the possibility of using Hurst Park Racecourse for housing development but he did not think that anything would come of it. "Can you imagine what the effect would be on Molesey if another 800 families moved in?"
- A ceremony for the consecration of the extension of the East and West Molesey Cemetery was held on 7th March.

The Impact of the Great War - 1914-1950s. Do you have a family story to tell?

*From Stephen Simmons
Volunteer, Surrey History Centre*

We are volunteers working in Surrey Heritage's project: Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers. The main project explores all aspects of the war's impact on the county; more information about this can be seen on our website <https://www.surreyinthegreatwar.org.uk/>.

The project's Oral History component has been recording people's stories about the experiences of Surrey-based families during the Great War and its aftermath. We are keen to make contact with anyone who might have a story to share with us.

We would be most grateful if you could spread information about the Oral History project across your community and we invite anyone who might be interested in talking to us, to email oralhistsgw@outlook.com with their contact details. We'll take it from there! Thank you.

Produced by:
Molesey Local History Society
historysociety1@btinternet.com
Website: moleseyhistorysociety.org
Tel: 020 8979 3465

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Thursday 16 May 2019, 8 pm
Hampton Court Pleasure Palace
A Story of Two Palaces – Tudor and Baroque
Talk by Siobhan Clarke
Clore Centre, Hampton Court Palace, KT8 9AU

IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND THIS MEETING ON 16 MAY, PLEASE SEND IN THIS SLIP (OR A NOTE) WITH YOUR REQUIREMENTS BY FRIDAY 3 MAY. ALTERNATIVELY, EMAIL historysociety1@btinternet.com. THERE WILL BE A CHARGE OF £2 ON THE DOOR FOR MEMBERS.

BOOKING IS INITIALLY FOR MLHS MEMBERS ONLY. IF SEATS ARE STILL AVAILABLE AFTER FRIDAY 3 MAY, THE EVENT WILL BE OPEN TO GUESTS AND ADVERTISED TO NON-MEMBERS.

You will not be notified, but you may assume you have a seat, unless you hear otherwise. After Friday 3 May the meeting will be open to guests and non-members (£5 charge on the door) if there are spare places.

NAME.....

Please make a reservation for me/us at the Clore Centre meeting on Thursday 16 May. Send to Membership Secretary, Molesey Local History Society, 17 Matham Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0SX.