



NEWSLETTER

2024, ISSUE 2

April 2024

Secretary's Notes

If you were at the AGM you will have heard of a rare archaeological find in Epsom uncovered at the beginning of 2023. The skeleton of an Aurochs, a type of extinct cattle standing up to 1.8m high at the shoulder, was found during preliminary excavations at a local racing stable. The bones will be on display at Bourne Hall Museum in time for the Festival of Archaeology and we will be hearing a talk on the subject in May. If you would like to learn more in the meantime follow the link: (<https://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/strange-bones-recent-discoveries-in-epsom/>).

This discovery is an example of why it is important to have archaeological monitoring conditions – you never know what you may find! Although it is impractical to follow up every building permission there are rules which hopefully ensure as little as possible is missed. Any site over 0.4 hectares (approx. 1 acre) should automatically get archaeological intervention from a commercial archaeological unit. Smaller developments such as house or shop extensions warrant an archaeological watching brief if they are in an Area of High Archaeological Potential (AHAP), such as the historic centres of Epsom and Ewell, in areas of previous archaeological finds or within the curtilage of a listed building. This means

(Continued under Membership Matters)

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Lecture Diary

May 1st The mysterious discovery of the Epsom
aurochs : Gillian King

June 5th The History of the UCA in Epsom : Felicity
Croydon. **Note: 7:30 start.**

July 3rd The History of Local Health: Ross
MacFarlane

Meetings are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at St. Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell, KT17 2AY.

Doors open 7.45 for 8pm start. Members free, visitors £4,

From Industry to Homes: the Valley of the Wandle : a talk by Mick Taylor, Wandle Industrial Museum

Nikki Cowlard

Mick's talk highlighted how the River Wandle has changed from a place of industry to somewhere that people aspire to live. The River Wandle was reported in 1804 to be the hardest working river in the world. Being a fast-flowing river, it powered many mills with their water wheels. As a chalk stream it is a rare habitat, with most of the world's classified chalk streams being found in England.

Sites that had changed from industrial use to housing

The Young's Brewery site in Wandsworth – the Ram Inn nearby had been a public house since 1550 and now houses the Sly Beast Brewery. Young and Bainbridge took over the brewery here in 1831 and ran it until it closed in 2006. The site has now been developed with blocks of flats. The old stable block was retained but a use of it has not yet been found. The Pump House also remains and is now the home of Sambrook's Brewery, continuing the tradition of brewing on the site. The Wandle frontage is attractive with a new footbridge to the Triangle, bought by Young's to stop it being built on.



Young's Brewery

The Culver's – a large house on the Culver's Estate in Carshalton which was the home to the Reynolds family who owned a calico printing works. The house was built in 1790 and demolished in 1940s. The calico printing work was home to the largest bleaching fields in the country, with over 55 acres in use. They sat on the southern part of an island formed by two channels of the Wandle.

Merton Place - the talk then took a diversion to this house in South Wimbledon (formerly part of Merton) which was the home of Lord Nelson. The lake in the grounds was named the Nile by Lady Hamilton celebrating Nelson's victory there and was fed by water from the Wandle. The house was built in 1750 and demolished in 1823. All that remains today of the house and estate is a plaque on the wall of a block of flats.

Industrial buildings which had been converted to housing

Connolly Leather Works in Colliers Wood – there was a mill on the site can be dated back to the Domesday Book of 1086. The site had three mills: Merton Mill, Milton Bridge Mill and the Paxton Leather Works. Connolly's moved in in 1990 and left in 1994; it produces leather for many high-end cars and seats in House of Lords (red) and Commons' (green) chambers, and is still in business today, albeit elsewhere. The site was turned over to housing development with one building remains, under which the mill cut can still be seen.



Mill Cottages, Mitcham Bridge

Mitcham Bridge – four mills were known in the vicinity, of which three are shown in a photograph of pre-1907: Glover's Snuff Mill, Crown Mill and Grove Mill, which burnt down in 1907. It was rebuilt and continued to be used as an industrial building until the late 1990s, when it was converted into housing. Crown Mill burnt down in 1965 and was replaced by a block of flats in the same style as the old mill building. Plumber' Mill (nicknamed Rayleigh's Mill) produced snuff and was demolished in the 1950s.



Mills at Mitcham Bridge

Ravensbury Mill, Morden – it is hoped that this building will be the new home of the Wandle Industrial Museum and still contain two water wheels. It was built in 1800 and produced snuff from 1820's onwards. The site was closed on the mid 1980s and much was allowed to fall into disrepair.

Beddington Mill – on the site of a Domesday manorial mill. From 1780 the site housed Lambert's Snuff Mill but reverted to corn milling in 1878. The current building was built in 1891-2 for J&HT Wallis for use as a flourmill and bakery. It is now called Wandle Mill, having been converted to flats.

Buildings surviving from the industrial use of the river

Wandle Villa – can be found in Phipps Bridge Road in Mitcham. It was built by John Rucker in 1750s. Within its grounds Rucker ran his calico works. William Asprey (of the jeweller's dynasty) founded his silk printing business here in 1781, and Francis Nixon who invented copperplate printing also worked here. The Hatfield family who are mentioned later (see Morden Cottage) lived here for a short time when they moved from Norfolk. The house was left empty in 1976 and fell into disrepair. It was saved and restored in 1980 and is now rented out through the National Trust.

Workers' cottages in Phipps Bridge Road – just down from Wandle Villa, they may have occupied by workers from the Calico Works at Wandle Villa or the Littler's Print works at Merton Abbey. Built about 1825 they are now run by the NT. A flint folly can be found at the end of the terrace, built in 1870 to stop the end cottage subsiding into the river.

Cottages in Wandle Bank, Collier's Wood – built in mid-1800s, they were mainly occupied by workers from the Morris & Co. Works on Merton High Street. They are now listed and sit alongside the mill cut to the former Connolly's Leather works opposite.

Mount Pleasant Cottages – these listed homes were built in 1884 and are reached via a small bridge over the mill cut to Beddington Mill. In 1966 they were bought by Angela Douglas, wife of the actor Kenneth Moore.

Cottages in Watermead Lane - off Goat Road on the border of Mitcham and Carshalton. They were built around the 1850s, but the brickwork has been much changed. They would have housed workers either from the mills of Goatsbridge or the tannery that stood next door. It would have been smelly!

Victorian cottages in Coppermill Lane – off Plough Lane, Wimbledon. They housed workers from Wimbledon Mill which was formerly a copper mill which supplied copper vats used by Young's to brew its beer. They were built in the 1880s.

Mill Cottages, Mitcham Bridge – some of these homes were built in 1755 and others in 1851. They straddle a cut on the Wandle and are known locally as the Fisheries Cottages.

Gone and Replaced

Bennett's Mill - just south of Merton Abbey Mills alongside Bennett's Ditch, a tributary of Pickle Ditch which is itself a tributary of the Wandle. It was built in 1832, rebuilt in 1960s and again in 1980s. The site now houses a series of blocks of flats known as Bennett's Courtyard.

The works of Merton Abbey – taken over by William Morris in 1885 (not to be confused with the Liberty Printworks). Dating from 1752 the buildings survived until 1940 when the works were closed, and the site bombed soon after. They were demolished in 1980s. Today the Trellis House Care Home, named after a Morris design, sits on the west bank part of where the Morris works were located.

Chuter's Manager's House – at the end of Copper Mill Lane this was the home of the manager for Wimbledon Mill, when it was in use by Chuter's who produced chamois leather. The house was often flooded and was demolished in 1970. Today it is the site of an electrical substation.

From homes to industrial use

‘Riverside’, house on Acorn trading estate off Budge Lane, Mitcham – a Grade II-listed building now used as offices on an industrial site, which once housed three separate mills.

Honeywood Museum, Carshalton Ponds – it was originally known as ‘Wandle Cottage’ until the original Honeywood house was demolished. It dates to the 17th century and was lived in until 1939. The local council bought it and used it as offices until the 1980s when it was restored and opened as a museum.

Strawberry Lodge, Carshalton – it was built c.1685 for Joshua Dewey (or Dewye), owner of the nearby gunpowder mill, and after being used as a conference centre this Grade II-listed building is now a sixth form campus.

Morden Cottage – built in 1750 and situated in the grounds of Morden Hall Park. This weatherboarded house was the home of Alexander Hatfield and his family after they moved from Wandle Villa and before the son Gilliat Edward moved to Morden Hall in 1867. The Hatfields owned the snuff mills and were one of the most important tobacco manufacturers in the country. When Gilliat, a bachelor, took over the family business following his father’s death in 1902 he returned to Morden Cottage and following his death in 1941 the estate was left to the NT. At one time it was a registry office but is at present a school.

Morden Hall - built in 1770s by the Garth family who owned most of the land around Morden, it has variously been used as a convalescent home, a Beefeater restaurant and is now a wedding venue.

Finally, we were shown a slide of the view towards Wandsworth High Street with housing on both banks of the Wandle. Now the closest one can get to this view is looking down Buckhold Road with the Southside Shopping Centre to the right and offices to the left. He finished by asking which view the audience preferred!

If you would like to see the slides from Mick Taylor’s talk you can view them on YouTube but beware the auto-generated text transcript which leaves a little to be desired.

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=fcNEqv6gr9I&feature=shared>

Wandle Industrial Museum - <https://www.wandle.org/>



View towards Wandsworth High Street, then and now

Frail Monuments: A Journey Round St. Mary's Churchyard : a talk by Jeremy Harte

Jeff Cousins

Our advertised speaker was unable to attend, but we were delighted that Jeremy Harte of Bourne Hall Museum was able to stand in and talk on the gravestones of St. Mary's Ewell. His talk was attended by Rob Geleit, the Mayor of Epsom & Ewell.

St. Mary's has four churchyards. The oldest, Number One, is around the old church, Number Two around the 'new' (1848) church, Number Three is the strip of land in-between, containing the War Memorial, and Number Four is the newest, across the road. Even after the opening of Number Two churchyard, Number One continued to be used for some time, the space where the old church used to stand being sought after. The orientation of the graves in the first two churchyards is fairly higgledy-piggledy, graves being squeezed in wherever there was space. Only the last two churchyards are systematically arranged, Number Three churchyard from the 1900s then Number Four from the 1930s.

The view today of the church is little changed from that on a postcard of 100 years ago, just the largest monument having been laid on the ground 15-20 years ago. Railings were removed during the WW2 quest for scrap metal.



The gravestones in Number Two churchyard include memorials to several men killed by explosions in the gunpowder mills.



In 1949 an anonymous lady recorded the inscriptions on nearly all of gravestones in Number One churchyard; having seen the damage caused by WW2 she was concerned that they may be lost. Her records were lodged with the Society of Genealogists. Number Two churchyard was recorded in the 1970s by members of our society.

Only one of the gravestones that she recorded features a portrait of the deceased: Jane Challoner, who died in 1769. She was the miller at the Upper Mill, and she successfully objected to canalising the Hogsmill as that would have damaged her business.

Currently many of the gravestones to the south of the church carry warning triangles as they are leaning. Contrary to expectations, the gravestones that remain upright are often the older ones, as they extend about half as far under the ground as they stand above.

Later gravestones often just stand on a plinth or are attached by metal dowels that have rusted. The oldest gravestone is that of Mary Heard, who died in 1733. This was of limestone and is still in surprisingly good condition.

Older gravestones typically had a decorated area at the top, displaying features such as a hour glass, a skull, bat wings and trumpets. Children's graves would have an angels's head rather than a skull, though from the mid-18th century this became common for adults too.

Many gravestones were originally painted, not bare stone, though in black and white, not colour. The decorated area at the top would have had white features, such as a skull, on a black background, but the main body would have had the inscription picked out in black on a white background.



Older gravestones tend to be of limestone, but this is prone to cracking and the inscriptions gradually fade. By the early 19th century sandstone became more popular, cheaper but the surface can flake off, losing parts of the inscription forever and not recoverable by clever photography.



Gravestones also became more mass produced, to standard shapes, with just the inscription being added locally. The Lempriere graves in Number One churchyard (shown left) all have the same shape.

Originally inscriptions were on the west facing side of the headstone, to be read looking from head to foot, but by 1850 they were usually on the east facing side, to be read looking from foot to head.

The higher status graves tended to be to the south of the church, followed by west, east, then lastly north. The northern corner of Number Two churchyard, pointing towards London, remains relatively sparsely populated to this day.

Inscriptions would sometimes include an amusing rhyme, though they seem to be from a stock range of rhymes used across the country, rather than special to Ewell. Inscriptions became more overtly Christian from about 1820, and increasingly a standard range of Biblical quotations were used.

Forthcoming Events

Carshalton And District History & Archaeology Society: National Trust property Smallhythe

Saturday 6th April 2024 at 2.30pm, Milton Hall, Cooper Crescent, Nightingale Road, Carshalton, SM5 2DL. A talk by Nathalie Cohen. £3 for visitors.

Surrey Archaeological Society: Surrey Industrial History Group: Sir Barnes Wallis

Thursday 11th April 2024 at 10am. A zoom talk by Bill McNaught.

Esher District Local History Society: The Victorian Head Gardeners

Saturday 13th April 2024 at 2:30pm, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Church Road, Claygate KT10 0JP. A talk by Dr Judith Hill. £3 for non-members.

Surbiton and District Historical Society: Gertrude Jekyll

Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 7 for 7:30pm, The cornerHOUSE Arts Centre, 116 Douglas Rd, Surbiton, KT6 7SB. A talk by Julian Pooley. £4 for visitors.

Carshalton And District History & Archaeology Society: Carshalton Lavender

Saturday 11th May 2024 at 2.30pm, Milton Hall, Cooper Crescent, Nightingale Road, Carshalton, SM5 2DL. A talk by Paula Bailey. £3 for visitors.

Esher District Local History Society: Digging Up Surrey's Past

Saturday 11th May 2024 at 2:30pm, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Church Road, Claygate KT10 0JP. A talk by Mark Davison. £3 for non-members.

Carshalton And District History & Archaeology Society: Cruise along the Wey and Arun Canal

Tuesday 4th June 2024. The coach will leave Shotfield Wallington at 10:30 am, Ruskin Road Carshalton at 10:40am and The Quadrant Sutton at 10:50am. £58 per person, which includes coach, cruise and cream tea. The organiser is Brenda Allen phone 01737354690.

Surbiton and District Historical Society: Dick Turpin

Tuesday 4th June 2024 at 7 for 7:30pm, The cornerHOUSE Arts Centre, 116 Douglas Rd, Surbiton, KT6 7SB. A talk by Jonathan Oates. £4 for visitors.

Editor's Notes on 'From Industry to Homes'

I used to live near the Wandle in the 1980s so I know some of the places mentioned. It has been hoped to turn Ravensbury Mill into a museum for at least 40 years!

In-between Wandle Villa and the workers' cottages, all along Phipps Bridge Road, stands 'The Coach House'. This is a fairly attractive building, painted yellow and boasting crenellations. The National Trust website says that it had been derelict when the National Trust acquired the Morden Hall Park estate in 1941, but reconstructed (very poorly) in 1982. I used to walk past this most days. It was actually razed to the ground then rebuilt to identical external appearance during the winter of 1987-88.

The folly propping up the end of the workers' cottages is an interesting sham castle.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS Secretary's Notes (continued):

someone appointed by SCC Archaeological Planning Officer watches the digging of foundations or at least checks them before they are covered with concrete. Evidence can be found for previous buildings, buried surfaces, wells, pits, ditches and other archaeological features. Pottery and finds can help date features or show areas of past occupation. Currently this is a role I undertake as well as checking planning applications for conservation and potential impact on archaeology. If you want to see the AHAPs you can find them on the SCC interactive map at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/interactive-map>; launch the interactive map, click on Layer List (one of the icons top right) and tick the AHAP box before zooming in to Epsom and Ewell. An example of the archaeological planning process in action is that together with the planning permission granted to Glyn Hall in the middle of Roman and Medieval Ewell comes a condition for the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This will ensure that any archaeological remains will be recorded, adding to the story of Ewell's past.

Members making payment of their subscription please note our change of bank details:

Metro Bank (Epsom Branch), One Southampton Row, London, WC1B 5HA
 Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society
 Sort code 23-05-80 Account no 44508680

Please make sure you use your surname as the reference.

Standing Order members must remember to cancel their payment to the former bank HSBC. Members who pay by standing order can get a form from the Membership Secretary, details on back page.

2024 Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 2024 became due on 1st January. Subscriptions can be paid at the monthly meetings, or by post to the Treasurer, Jane Pedler, or the Membership Secretary, Doreen Tilbury. Subs are £15 for ordinary membership, £22 for family membership, £6 for student, or £22 for corporate and school memberships. Please make cheques payable to Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society. If payment is by cash please bring along the correct money. A slip is provided below:

2024 Subscriptions

I (we) wish to renew membership for 2024 Amount enclosed.....

Name and address.....

.....

.....

E-mail address.....

Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society
Founded 1960 Registered Charity No. 259221

Useful contact details

To contact any of the committee please e-mail epsomewellhistory@btinternet.com

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Newsletter Editor: Jeff Cousins

Please send copy for the next newsletter to the Newsletter Editor by 12 May 2024.

Visit our website

www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk

Gift Aid

Just a further reminder that if you pay tax EEHAS, as a charity, can claim Gift Aid on your subscription or donations, at no cost to yourself. In order for us to do this you need to sign a Gift Aid Declaration form which is available at meetings and can also be found on the Society website on the Membership page.

You can see a colour copy of this newsletter on the Society website from mid April
www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk

Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 9.20 pm on 6th March 2024 at Ewell Hall, Ewell



Present:

President	Jon Cotton
Vice-President	Frank Pemberton
Secretary	Nikki Cowlard
Treasurer	Jane Pedler

A total of 30 members attended.

The President welcomed members to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: Elizabeth Bennett, Rosemary Burleigh, Rod Clarke, Chris Harris, Gay Harris, Jenny Jacob, Ian West.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 1st March 2023

The minutes had been circulated with the April 2023 newsletter. Adoption of the minutes was agreed unanimously by members present.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes not otherwise covered in the agenda

The memorial lecture for Steve Nelson took place in April 2023 and was very successful. A future lecture is being considered. Hugh Ricketts is now embedded as talks coordinator and has arranged a diverse range of talks which have been well received.

4. Annual report for 2023

The report had been circulated with the February 2024 Newsletter. Nikki Cowlard reported that membership remained stable during 2023 but that we have lost several older members in recent months. David Hartley, who was a long-term member and trustee of the Society has resigned to concentrate on his health. His contribution to the Society has been much appreciated and he will be missed. Peter Reed, EEHAS member and webmaster of the Epsom and Ewell History Explorer, died last Autumn. His contribution to local history, in disseminating information through the website, cannot be underestimated.

Frank Pemberton, Vice-President and Archaeology Officer, told the meeting that he had completed all back excavation reports 1997-2003 and plans were in progress to ensure their publication. Frank, together with two colleagues, had worked on finds from the Bourne Hall excavation for at least six months to complete the report by the late Steve Nelson. The Hatch Furlong Roman pottery is being catalogued by the SyAS Roman pottery group and is nearing completion. A small group was working on the finds from Church Meadow Ewell (2021-2014) and FP has completed the small finds catalogue. Coins found in Bourne Hall Lake during dredging have been catalogued and will be put online; further work is needed to put together a site report.

Jeremy Harte, Curator at Bourne Hall Museum thanked FP and his colleagues for all the work they had carried out to complete outstanding excavation reports. He reported that it is hoped to have the Bourne Hall excavation report published in time for the Festival of Archaeology in July. He asked members for help in arranging excavation archives for deposition, starting with reorganising the pottery from King William IV into fabric and

context order; this will take a group of 4-5 volunteers a day. Checking the Bourne Hall finds will involve one or two people for a day a week over a few weeks and writing up the Walls and Lowther material will require one person systematically working on the material. FP encouraged members to step up and volunteer as there is a lot to be done and the chance for volunteers to learn more about archaeology locally. Jeremy also asked for a volunteer to scan EEHAS bulletins which could be done at home if one had a suitable scanner. They can then be put on the EEHAS website. Jeremy concluded by telling the meeting that Roger Lunt is working on the report for Banstead Churchyard (excavated in 1974 by Steve Nelson).

Both Jeremy and FP were thanked for their work and the President then thanked the committee for all they did to keep EEHAS functioning. The rotating of the role of Chair has worked well but other positions remain vacant. Members are needed for the refreshments' rota, which is a minimal commitment but a valuable one. Nikki Cowlard will take over again as Conservation Officer given the retirement of David Hartley but if anyone has an interest in conservation and wishes to take on the role training can be given.

Adoption of the Annual Report was accepted unanimously by the meeting.

5. Treasurer's report

Jane Pedler reported that this has been another year of improvement after Covid with a full programme of lectures resulting in more income. The Gift Aid for 2021 and 2022 together realised £206.46 which helped as well. Once again, the accounts have been prepared and examined by Rod Clarke to whom many thanks. These were disseminated in the February newsletter together with his report which gives the Society a clean bill of health.

The changeover over to Metro Bank is now fully completed but there are still a small number of subs turning up in the CME account instead of the Society Account. Whether this is due to members not changing their Standing Orders from HSBC to Metro is not known. However, she asked that members check they are using the correct account number and even more important the correct bank.

The loss this year is down substantially on 2022 which is good news even if you take into account the extra Gift Aid. Meeting expenses were down but that may be because Jane has only just received the last Hall Hire invoice for December.

Jane's final comment on expenditure was that the Newsletters keep coming thanks to Jeff Cousins (and Doreen Tilbury) but this is a vital part of our membership communications so well worth the cost. Regarding Gift Aid Jane reported that we received £165.61 in January this year which will obviously appear in next year's accounts. This means that subscriptions are back to pre-Covid levels.

Adoption of the Treasurer's Report was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

6. Election of Officers

The following were unanimously elected by the meeting:

President	Jonathan Cotton
Vice-President	Frank Pemberton
Secretary	Nikki Cowlard
Treasurer	Jane Pedler
Committee Members	Rosemary Burleigh, Ian West.

Independent examiner Rod Clarke

Trustees – the meeting agreed unanimously that Jon Cotton should be included as a Trustee with the Charity Commission. Trustees are now as follows: Rosemary Burleigh, Jon Cotton, Jeff Cousins, Nikki Cowlard, Jane Pedler, Doreen Tilbury, Ian West.

7. Open Forum

No written questions had been submitted.

8. Any other business

8.1. The meeting was told that an Aurochs (a prehistoric bovine standing 1.8m to the shoulder) was found during exploratory archaeological work at a local racing stable. Radiocarbon dating showed that it was dated to the Middle Bronze Age, nearly 4,000 years old. The osteoarchaeologist involved will be giving us a talk in the next few months and the skeleton will be on display at Bourne Hall Museum. It will be the centrepiece at the Festival of Archaeology at Bourne Hall in July.

8.2. As well as talks arranged by Hugh Ricketts a visit has been arranged to The Durdans on the evening of 7th August at 6pm which will replace the August meeting. Ian West has arranged this visit with the new owners of The Durdans. The visit will be open only to members of the Society (no guests) and places must be booked due to a limit on numbers. A list will be available at future meetings, but if it is oversubscribed another visit will be arranged to ensure all members can be accommodated.

8.3. Nikki asked for volunteers to man a table at the Festival of Archaeology in July to ensure the Society has a presence.

8.4. Surrey Archaeological Society's symposium will take place on Saturday 9th March and the LAMAS conference on 23rd March.

8.5. Jeff Cousins asked members to consider whether they would be willing to pay more for a colour version of the newsletter. More contributions to the newsletter would be warmly welcomed as would a willingness to offer to write up a talk occasionally. This would reduce the pressure on the small number of current contributors.

A vote of thanks was led by Angela Clifford.

9. **Close of Meeting** – there being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.50 pm.

NC 8.3.2024