



NEWSLETTER

2022, ISSUE 2

May 2022

Editor's Notes

It is good to see lectures back in full swing, and it was pleasing to hear a fellow Horton dog walker say how good Stewart's talk on the Horton Light Railway had been. I have heard May and July's talks elsewhere and can recommend them. June's talk will be by Carolynne Cotton, the wife of our President Jon, and is also to be looked forward to.

Corrections

There is a number 2 on the conventional even numbered side of Plough Road, West Ewell, but it had been hidden behind overgrown bushes at the time of writing.

The 1921 census does give the number of rooms, but in a box only about 1/4" square, as opposed to about 2" by 3/4" for the 1911 census.

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Lecture Diary

May 4th	Springs and Waterways of Carshalton : Peter Wakeham
June 1st	Bentall's: Kingston's department store since 1867 : Carolynne Cotton
July 6th	Nonsuch Park : John Phillips

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, includes refreshments.

Memory Lane - a journey through street names: Jeremy Harte

Jeff Cousins

The Speaker for the February meeting was unable to attend so Jeremy Harte kindly stepped in and gave an enjoyable and interesting talk on 'Memory Lane'.

There are a number of questions to ask - not just the origin of a name, but why was it chosen and who chose it?

Many place names are simply derived from nature, for example Ewell is derived from an Old English word for a spring. Some places are named after people, such as Chessington, which meant Cissa's hill. It used to be thought that in such cases the person named was the founder of the settlement, but it is now thought that that the name used to change to reflect the leading inhabitant of the time, but was frozen when scribes started writing it down.

The name of a road could be very parochial - literally. The road from Ewell to Cheam is called Cheam Road when within Ewell, as from the point of view of someone in Ewell it is the road to Cheam, but it suddenly changes to Ewell Road when it enters Cheam, as from the point of view of someone in Cheam it is the road to Ewell. Similarly, Chessington Road is the road from Ewell to Chessington until it reaches the parish boundary.



A road in open countryside was referred to as a 'lane'; where London Road runs alongside Nonsuch Park it was originally called Elm Lane. The name Beggars Rowe (now Spring Street) might imply that its soil was poor leading to poor inhabitants. Robert Street (now Chessington Road) might be derived from Robber Street, a derogatory remark about the nature of its inhabitants.

Some names may be transferred from elsewhere, such as when the lord of Ruxley Manor near Foots Cray in Kent bought Shawford - the 'shallow ford' later known as the Ruxley Splash - at the far end of Ewell.

Maps do not necessarily reflect the names used by the common people - the locals mostly referred to the Hogsmill as "The Willows". The name Hogsmill may derive from a John Hog having a mill near the Kingston end of the river in the 12th century. Names relating to the mouth end of a river seem to take precedence over names relating to the source end. A mediaeval name for the Hogsmill was 'Lurtebourne', a somewhat contradictory name as Lurte meant dirty and Bourne meant a clear chalk stream - maybe it reflected the river being dirty by the time it reached Kingston, due to industry on the way.

Bridge Road in West Ewell was renamed Crosslands Road after Epsom and Ewell merged in 1933 to avoid confusion with Bridge Road in Epsom.

St. Francis church which used to stand on Ruxley Lane, and St. John's church in Stoneleigh, may have got their names from the local developer having had sons called Francis and John. Carters Road in the south of Epsom was built by a Mr. Carter.

Some names were chosen to imply remoteness, such as Gibraltar for the far end of West Street, Ewell.

If a large house was demolished by a developer and an estate built on its site and grounds, then the house's name was often transferred to the new road. Danetree Cottage made way for the entrance to Danetree Road. Though how did Danetree Cottage get its name? Danetree seems to have been how the natives of Daventry pronounced their town's name.

These days street names are usually imposed by the local council. Jasmin and Lavender Roads, near Ruxley Lane, were so named as they were built on the site of a plant nursery. Roads on the Watersedge estate were named after rivers such as Wey and Mole, whereas roads on the Longmead estate were named after racehorses such as Blenheim and Sefton.

There are multiple pubs around the country called the Bones Gate. Hanging up a little wicket gate was a cheap way of making a pub sign. Legends then grew up later, such as that a pit of bones had been found. Our local example was renamed the 'William Bourne'.



NOT War Memorials

Jeff Cousins



Howard Memorial Fountain,
Ashtead

Cheam Gate Memorial Fountain

Ewell Gate Memorial Fountain

These three monuments pictured are commonly thought to be War Memorials, indeed it seems that half of the pictures of the Ashtead memorial posted on the web say that it is.

But they were all actually memorial fountains erected in memory of individuals.

The first was the Howard Memorial in Ashtead, erected in memory of Mary Greville Howard, 1785-1877, in 1879. She and her mother had both been wealthy heiresses, the Howard family owning most of Ashtead, so upon marriage their husbands took their wives' surname of Howard. Mary inherited in 1818, and lived at Ashtead Park, now the City of London Freemen's School. She had no children of her own, but had the St Giles' Church of England Infant school built in 1852 and later donated it to the rector. She paid for many improvements to St. Giles's Church, such as the ornate roof, and the 6 bells there were recast as an 8 in her honour in 1873. She also extended the Almshouses, which had been built by one of her ancestors. It was recalled that during the Depression vagrants would stop at the fountain for a drink whilst walking between the 'Spike's (night hostels for the homeless) at Epsom and Guildford. These days the large drinking bowl is only filled when it rains.

The actual war memorial for Ashtead is by St. George's church, and the Peace Memorial Hall, where the Surrey Archaeological Society holds its annual symposia, is a form of war memorial.

Nonsuch Park has two memorial fountains, both of which ceased working long ago, one at the Cheam Gate (once also known as the Bell Gate) and the other at the Ewell Gate (also known as the Red Gate, though I haven't seen any colour photos to confirm that it was actually red). When walkers say "Meet you at the monument car park" they usually seem to mean the car park by the Ewell Gate, which I find very confusing as both gates have a car park near a monument.

The fountain by the Cheam Gate was erected in memory of William Francis Gamul Farmer, 1812-60, of the Nonsuch Mansion House, by his children, rather belatedly in 1895. It has a small drinking bowl on each side. It was demolished by a car crash in 2013, but subsequently rebuilt. The lodge by the Cheam Gate was demolished in 1938, only the year after a consortium of local councils had bought Nonsuch Park. The Cheam War Memorial is in the little park by the library.

The fountain by the Ewell Gate was erected by 1910 in memory of William's daughter-in-law Charlotte Maria Farmer, 1837-1906, known as a temperance supporter. It had a drinking trough, but this has now gone, though some vandalised pipework can still be seen. The lodge by the Ewell Gate survived until 1955. The main Ewell War Memorial, as you probably know, is in St. Mary's churchyard. The dead of WW1 also appear on an older memorial at the Dipping Place by the Dog Gate of Bourne Hall; this had originally been mounted on the Watch House.

The Horton Light Railway: a talk by Stewart Cocker

Paul Howard Lang

Stewart Cocker is the Countryside Manager at Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, and a former countryside ranger at Horton Country Park and Epsom Common. He gave a very detailed account of the route which the Horton Light Railway took around the five large psychiatric asylums at Horton. He then showed us black and white photos of the line and the trains and ended with comparison photos which showed the same scene but as it is today.

He first showed us a 1890s Ordnance Survey map of the area, and pointed out how rural Horton would have been at this period. He then went on to show us an OS map from 1911 to see how things had changed.

Stewart told us about the first guided walk in 1990 which he had organised in the park in which around a hundred people had come along. A Mr Davenport had produced photos of the rolling stock and railway engines and then it transpired that a Mr Roberts had another set of photos, showing the line as it was in 1943 so his interest grew in trying to piece together the history of the light railway.

The London County Council purchased the Horton Estate in 1896, but it was not until 1899/1900 that Horton Asylum was built. The people of Epsom were getting fed up with the disruption, especially to roads that this building project was causing. The asylums were to become the largest cluster of such buildings in Europe. Consequently In 1905 a strip of land was purchased by the contractors (Forster and Dicksee) building Long Grove Hospital and the Ewell & Long Grove railway was constructed to help construct the hospital and reduce disruption on the roads. This was an earlier railway system than the later one and covered a shorter distance. However in 1907 the track was dismantled all the way back to the

exchange sidings near Ewell West station.

It was not until 1909 that the decision was made to build a more extensive light railway system to in large part carry coal to the newly constructed power station called Sherwood and the power plant in Long Grove Hospital.

The Horton Light Railway opened in April 1913, it followed the line of the former Ewell & Long Grove Light Railway along Chessington Road, but then deviated, and an underpass was made as previously a lady had been killed in a fatal accident when a train hit her. There was a branch line to Long Grove and to the asylum power station. The line ran alongside West Ewell main line and Stewart showed us a photo of this. After the First World War the line was extended to help construct and then supply West Park Hospital.

Stewart explained that the railway was only ever used to bring coal and building materials and was never a passenger line. Of course it may have been used during World War Two to transport war supplies, but not much is known about this period.

Stewart also told us about the trees in the old photographs, if they had survived, and the history of the old sheds and bridges along the line. He also told us about a flying bomb which landed at the edge of Butchers Grove in July 1944. It was thought that the Luftwaffe may have used the asylums as a landmark to navigate during air raids on London, so anti-aircraft guns were installed on rolling stock to shoot down enemy planes. The line was bombed during the war, and Stewart explained that the repaired parts can be spotted as concrete sleepers were used to repair the damage. It was also suspected that some unexploded bombs may have fallen in the area, but hopefully not!

Stewart then showed us photos of the actual trains, 'Crossness' and 'Hendon', and he also showed us an unusual photo from the 1920s of huge boilers that had been transported to the West Park Hospital site during construction c1920.



Stewart brought leaflets and a display board along regarding the railway and guided walks, which included a 'Days of Steam Walk' on Sunday 20th November 2022. Meet at 1.00pm at the Information Centre. For more information call 01372 732000 or email contact@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Forthcoming Events

Esher District Local History Society: The Folklore of Surrey

Saturday 21st May 2022 at 2:30pm, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Church Road, Claygate KT10 0JP. A talk by Matthew Alexander about his new book of the same title. £3 for non-members.

Surbiton and District Historical Society: Agent Zigzag

Tuesday 7th June 2022 at 7pm for 7:30pm, The CornerHOUSE Arts Centre, 116 Douglas Rd, Surbiton, KT6 7SB. A talk by Peter Stammers. £2 for visitors.

Friends of Kingston Museum: Corinthian Casuals, Tolworth and Brazil

Thursday 16th June 2022 at 6:30pm for 7pm, Kingston Museum Art Gallery. A talk by Jarek Zuba and Dominic Bliss. This football club still plays in Tolworth, and back in the 1880s the majority of England players were Corinthians.

Surrey Archaeological Society: Excavations at Cocks Farm Abinger

Sunday 3rd - Tuesday 5th July, Friday 8th - Tuesday 12th July, Friday 15th - Tuesday 19th July, Monday 25th - Tuesday 26th July & Thursday 28th July - Tuesday 2nd August 2022. If you are interested in taking part please contact romanstudiesgroup@btinternet.com

Surbiton and District Historical Society: The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists

Monday 4th July 2022 at 7pm for 7:30pm, The CornerHOUSE Arts Centre, 116 Douglas Rd, Surbiton, KT6 7SB. A talk by Jeremy Thorn. £2 for visitors.

Surbiton and District Historical Society: The Palaces of Richmond and Kew

Tuesday 2nd August 2022 at 7pm for 7:30pm, The CornerHOUSE Arts Centre, 116 Douglas Rd, Surbiton, KT6 7SB. A talk by Susan Rhodes. £2 for visitors.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

We are sad to announce the death of Leonard Foster, a member for many years.

We welcome the following new members:

Mrs R Savage, Mrs J Downs, Vicky Rowley, Mr D Matthews

We thank for their kind donations:

Mrs A Shaw, Mr G Shaxton

If any of you are wondering why your subscription cheques haven't yet been paid in, this is because the society was going through the tortuous process of changing banks to avoid the 40p per cheque paying-in fee that HSBC now disgracefully charges charities.

For those paying by standing order, our new bank details are:

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

2022 Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 2022 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:

2022 Subscriptions

I (we) wish to renew membership for 2022

Amount enclosed.....

Name and address.....

.....

.....

E-mail address.....

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

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Please send copy for the next newsletter to the Newsletter Editor by 12 June 2022.

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 May
www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk

Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society



Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 9.15pm on 6th April 2022

Present:

Treasurer Jane Pedler

A total of 30 members attended.

Following Stewart Cocker's lecture on the Horton Light Railway, the President welcomed members to the AGM. He apologised for the delay in holding the meeting which had originally been set for the 2nd March but which he had had to postpone due to family commitments. He was happy to deliver the President's lecture later in the meetings programme, as and when time could be made available.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** Rosemary Burleigh, Jeff Cousins, Nikki Cowlard, Jeremy Harte, David Hartley, Eileen Hopper, Jenny Jacobs, Sue Merchant, Frank Pemberton, Hugh Ricketts.
 - 2. Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd March 2021 (by Zoom)**

The Minutes had been circulated with the April 2021 Newsletter. Adoption of the Minutes was agreed unanimously by those present.

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

None.

4. Annual report for 2021

The Report had been circulated with the February 2022 Newsletter. Nikki Cowlard had noted the severe curtailment of the Society's activities due to COVID-19, although a presence had been maintained via Zoom and through the website. The Society also had a stall at the Ewell History Day in September to help raise awareness of EEHAS and the history and archaeology of the Borough. The Committee had continued to meet regularly via Zoom too.

The President didn't propose to go through the report in any great detail, although there were one or two issues that needed to be highlighted.

Frank Pemberton had continued work on his backlog sites in Church Meadow and Norman Nail's work at Bourne Hall. The late Steve Nelson had already drafted a report on the latter and had also been in the process of writing up the Carpenter's Bakery site. Frank had recently published a re-assessment of A W G Lowther's work at Purberry Shot, copies of which it was hoped would be available for sale to members at future meetings. The President noted the importance of this site, whose original publication had been carried out under wartime conditions.

The President reported that work was progressing on the Hatch Furlong finds. Geraldine Missig was studying the animal bones; Surrey AARG were currently engaged in cataloguing the pottery from the first two seasons (he and Nikki were due to meet them shortly to hear of progress); and Ian Betts had recently assessed the building material and would be commissioned to write a report. Furthermore, the President had assessed the first two seasons' worth of struck flint (over 700 pieces and counting) which comprised a broad range of material

possibly dating from the Late Upper Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age.

The President noted that David Hartley had taken over as Conservation Officer in November 2021, and that he was liaising with Nikki Cowlard to smooth the handover.

The President also noted the production of five Newsletters during 2021, and paid tribute to the work of Jeff Cousins in putting them together, and Doreen Tilbury for organising their distribution. Jeff was always on the lookout for further contributions!

Adoption of the Annual Report was proposed by Paul Hart, seconded by Gay Keeble.

5. Treasurer's report

Jane Pedler noted that 2021 had been a particularly tricky year to navigate and that small societies such as EEHAS have suffered from loss of income due to being unable to hold live events – though it had been possible to make savings elsewhere (e.g. hire of the hall). The accounts have been prepared and examined by Rod Clarke, to whom many thanks are due.

It was no surprise that EEHAS had made a loss this year through allowing a ‘subscription holiday’, although thanks were due to those who had turned their standing order payments into donations. Donations in memory of Steve Nelson would be used to provide a fitting memorial to his memory.

HSBC’s decision to charge charities for looking after their money had led the Committee to transfer their accounts to MetroBank, who are currently administering charity accounts free of charge. As a result, EEHAS now has an online facility for payment of invoices. The whole process has taken a great deal of time and effort to achieve but should save time and money in the future.

The President paid tribute to Jane’s perseverance in bringing this change about and commended the accounts to the meeting.

Adoption of the Treasurer’s Report was proposed by Mike Teasdale and seconded by Eileen Dann.

6. Election of Officers

The following were unanimously elected en bloc:

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

Independent examiner Rod Clarke was also elected unanimously.

The President noted that the Chair of Committee was organised on a meeting by meeting basis. He also thanked Hugh Ricketts who has volunteered to act as Programme Secretary on a trial basis. Help with EEHAS affairs from members was always very welcome!

7. Open Forum

Paul Lang suggested instituting a Stephen Nelson Memorial Lecture, which was greeted with unanimous approval. Jane Pedler noted that this was something that had been discussed by the Committee too.

8. Any other business

Nikki Cowlard had asked members to be notified of a project re: ritual activity in prehistoric and Roman Ewell, which was being coordinated by Rebecca Haslam, one of the co-authors of the NESCOT report, in collaboration with SyAS. There was also the possibility of future test pitting in the gardens around Purberry Shot, with a view to ascertaining the extent of the Iron Age and Roman activity recorded in the late 1930s.

9. Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 9.43pm.