



# NEWSLETTER

2016, Issue 5

November 2016

## We welcome as new members

Mr S Whittmore

## Chairman's Notes

We were sad to hear of the death of Mike Bruce recently. Mike was a regular attender at the monthly meetings and also, with his old friend Bob Schofield who sadly died in 2014, a stalwart of the Ewell Tower Preservation Society.

Those who are members of Surrey Archaeological Society will have had the latest Collections which lists all archaeological interventions in 2015 across the county. This came at the same time as the equivalent list for London in the London Archaeologist. The total for Surrey (excluding the London Boroughs) is 176 and that for Greater London is 435. While a percentage of these were negative evidence, i.e. nothing there, this is still a huge amount of archaeological activity and one which will have generated an equally huge archive in terms of records and finds. The implication for storage is that it all accumulates at an ever increasing rate year on year. One can understand the problems facing museums as the proper repository of all of this. Equally, for archaeologists, is keeping track of it all!

We announce two new Occasional papers; "Food and Drink in Roman Ewell" has now been published (see p. 9) as OP55, and we hope to print OP56, "Report on the Star, Ewell" shortly.

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## Lecture Diary

- December 7th Christmas Meeting  
 January 4th Restoration of Ewell Court House, Sandeep Kumar (TBC)  
 February 1st Temperate House at Kew, Sue Rhodes

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

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

## Carting Faggots for Christmas - A Scene at “Chessington near Epsom”

Found on eBay by Jeremy Harte of Bourne Hall Museum. The accompanying story says that it was sketched on the property of J. Humphry, who with a little searching (SHC K84/9/73) turns out to be John Humphrey of Copt Gilders Farm. Likely it's looking southwest towards the church .



### CARTING FAGGOTS

DURING the most severe frosts this description of work gives employment to many who at this season of year would otherwise be folding their arms in idleness. The operation of cutting the wood that has accumulated in the hedgerows of the fields, also lopping the lower branches of trees that extend too far over the ground, tying the wood in faggots, and carting it to the homestead, are looked forward to by many of our agricultural labourers as a never failing occupation when the face of nature is wrapped in frost and snow.

The scene represented in the Engraving on the first page is on the farm of J. Humphry, Esq., Chessington, Surrey, a small and pretty hamlet situated between Epsom and Kingston-on-Thames. The Church of Chessington is old and picturesque, and in good preservation. It stands on an eminence overlooking the downs of Epsom and Banstead.

## September Meeting – Magna Carta through Time - Claire Kennan

**Nikki Cowlard**

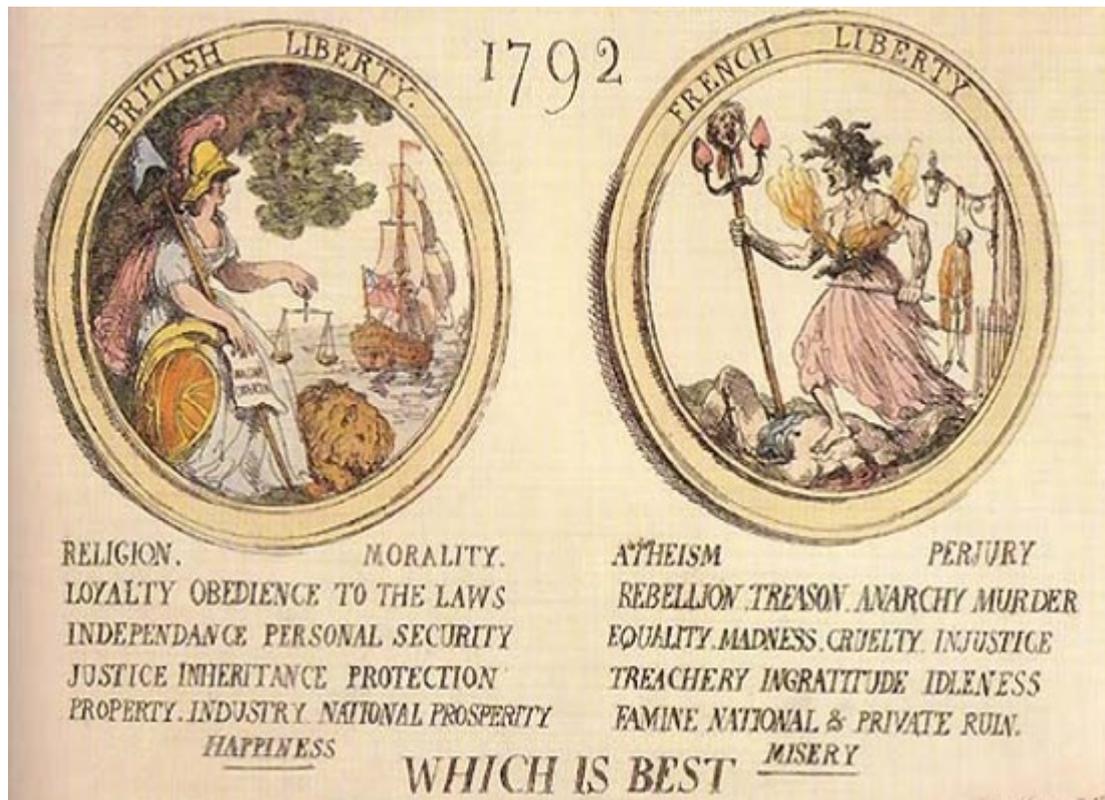
Claire Kennan is a medieval historian and Royal Holloway's Magna Carta project assistant at Community Action, where student volunteers have worked with the community to encourage them to think about what Magna Carta means to them.

Claire started by setting the scene, describing how John has been portrayed in history as a schemer, in comparison to his elder brother, Richard, who is depicted in history as a model of medieval chivalry and brave Christian kingship. Both Richard and their father, Henry, acted just as cruelly to their subjects, both used the law for their own ends and profits, and Richard extracted vast sums from England to pay for crusades with little benefit to the country. However, it was John who was reviled for he was seen as a loser, and thought responsible for the murder of Prince Arthur of Brittany, and the princes in the Tower. After John lost most of the lands in France in a war for which he had extorted vast sums of money from his Barons, they rebelled and in May 1215 renounced their allegiance to John, marching on London, which opened its gates to them.

Negotiations commenced at Runnymede and resulted in the Article of Barons which was authorised by King John on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1215. It was no bill of rights or constitution but a list of redresses for grievances, most of which dealt with the property rights of the elite. This failed to secure peace, and was annulled by the Pope. After John's death, the government of his son, Henry III, reissued the charter in 1216, and in 1217 it formed part of a peace treaty and was given the name of Magna Carta or Great Charter to differentiate it from the Charter of the Forest issued at the same time. The Magna Carta thus started its illustrious career as a totem, a talisman and idol of liberty, rule of law and the limit of executive power. By the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century it had become part of England's statute law.

Claire highlighted how the view of the Magna Carta changed through time from the Tudor period where it did not fit the Tudor narrative, but a King who stood up to the Pope did (Shakespeare omits to mention it in his play *King John*), to its use by Cromwell for his own agenda. In the American War of Independence, it was adopted by colonials against the mother country. Many further instances of the use of the Charter were cited such as 18<sup>th</sup> century parliamentary reform, justification for empire, the suffragette argument and the Chagos Island Dispute 2000-2012. A hugely symbolic event took place with the US Air Force at Runnymede in 1944 which highlighted the shared Anglo-American heritage, identifying what the Allies stood for on the eve of liberating Europe. Although it has been manipulated throughout its history the Magna Carta still provides an important symbol of liberty and law.

In the poster on the next page, Britannia is shown holding a copy of the Magna Carta as a symbol of good things.



## October Meeting - A-Z of Life in Wartime – Amy Graham

Nikki Cowlard

Amy is a Local History Officer at Kingston History Centre, now based at the Guildhall in Kingston. Her talk on how WWII impacted on Kingston, Surbiton, the Maldens and Coombe is based on the recorded memories of local people.

- A - Aviation** – Sopwith aviation industry started in Kingston in 1912. Its factories were targeted by the Luftwaffe; during the war 13,000 personnel built 14,500 aircraft.
- B – Bombing raids** – civilians were provided first with public air raid shelters in recreation grounds, schools, etc. and then in individual households, to protect against flying bombs, doodle bugs and V2 bombs.
- C – Civil Defence** – a programme started in 1935 to ensure each borough had a civil defence unit. Kingston had 350 wardens over 16 districts.
- D – Dunkirk** – 100 little ships from the area joined Operation Dynamo to rescue troops from the Dunkirk beaches between 26 May and 4 June 1940. Harry Hastings, skipper of Tigress 1, was responsible for saving 900 men over five trips. He lost his boat and had to borrow money to get back to Kingston.
- E – Evacuation** – Initially only Kingston hospital patients were evacuated as it was thought to be a safe area. In July 1944 some children were evacuated to miss the V2 rockets.
- F – Food supply** – propaganda ensured maximum production of produce from gardens and allotments, food was collected and fed to pigs, civic cafes opened to provide cheap hot meals for war workers.
- G – Gas attack** – Gas masks were distributed and were expected to be carried at all

times. In June 1941 Kingston carried out a teargas attack around the Hawker factory, catching members of the public who had left their gasmasks at home.

- H – Homeguard** – 53 Surrey Battalion was set up in May 1940 and was joined by 64<sup>th</sup> Surrey Guard in 1942. They trained in Bushy Park.
- I – Industries of War** – an all-female voluntary staff at Perrings furniture store made armature coils used in communication. The Kingston-based company WH Gaze received an Admiralty contract for the construction of assault craft, water ambulances and other vessels destined for the great invasions of Sicily and Normandy. Between 1942 and early 1945, Gaze's secret task force built more than 900 boats.
- J- Jerries** – a Junkers 88 plane crashed at the Hogsmill and the two crew were lynched although the official report was that they died on impact.
- K – HMS Kingston**, pennant no. F64 was launched at East Cowes on 9 January 1939 and named by the Mayoress of Kingston. She joined the 5th Destroyer Flotilla, Home Fleet, for convoy defence and anti-submarine duties in the North Sea.
- L – Local Heroes** – Malden and Coombe had two VC recipients, Ian Bazalgette and Cyril Barton, both Royal Air Force pilots.
- M – Malden and Coombe** – more died here as a result of bombing than in Kingston or Surbiton.
- N - New Malden station** - The first attack took place on 18 September 1940, killing about 50 people and damaging about 1,300 homes. After dropping approximately 150 bombs, German pilots reportedly flew over the railway station at low altitude and machine-gunned passengers as they exited a train that had just arrived at the railway station.
- O – Owens, Arthur** – A M15 double agent, codenamed Snow. He was a Welsh nationalist who ran a battery factory, recruited by the Abwehr before the war, and working for the British from 1939. His primary interest was making money.
- P- Pacifism** – local pacifists were often imprisoned and some were not released until 1947. They were frequently made to work the land.
- Q – Queues** – queueing was a way of life.
- R – Rationing** – food shortages were dealt with by rationing. Ration books were issued and people had to register at chosen shops.
- S – Surbiton** – a bombing raid in 1940 hit St. Mark's church.
- T – Telegraph Cottage** on Coombe Hill was the main residence of General Dwight D. Eisenhower in the months leading up to D-Day
- U – US armed forces** – HQ at Bushy Park.
- V – Victory celebrations** – initially there were no organised municipal celebrations on VE Day in Kingston, and many travelled up to London instead.
- W – Women's Voluntary Service** - set up in 1938, each WVS centre had its own Salvage Officer and Food Leader. Its members ran hostels, rest centres, knitting and sewing parties, collected swill and paper and organised educational campaigns, amongst other things.
- X – Kiss** – War led to romance. In Kingston, for example, numbers of marriages increased and illegitimate births doubled.
- Y- Young people** – a diary extract from Cynthia Chandler illustrated the dichotomy of normal life amongst the bombing.
- Z – Zoo** – Chessington Zoo was closed during the war but three died during bombing, a polar bear was hurt and animals escaped. A camel being measured for a gas mask was used in a public information campaign.



P for Perrings

T for Telegraph Cottage

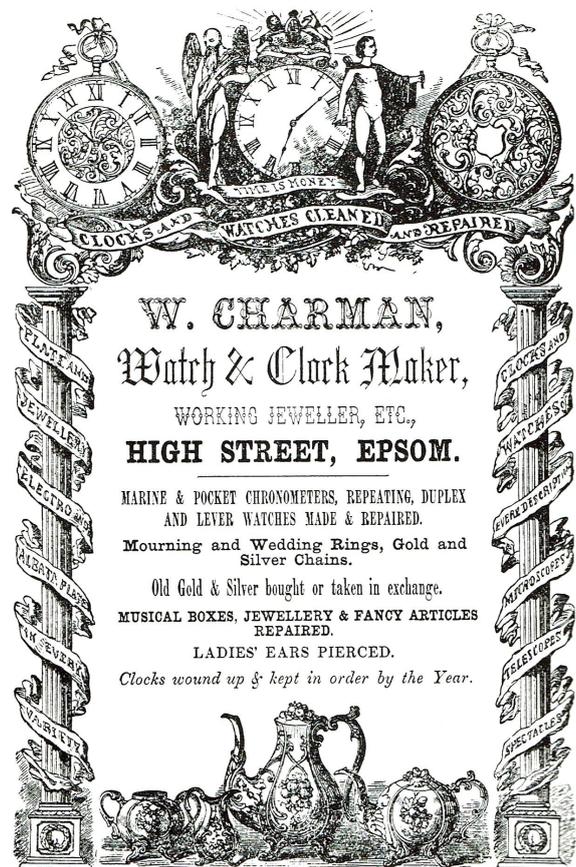


Z for Zoo



## NEW AT THE MUSEUM

Thanks to Jeremy Harte of Bourne Hall Museum for this information.



The Museum has recently acquired a clock from a business in Victorian Epsom. It is a French mantel clock in an alabaster case with pedestal and scroll handles, surmounted by a two-handled shallow cup, all features picked out by gilding. It has an eight-day movement striking on a bell via an outside count wheel and a dial with gilt Roman numerals inscribed "Charman, Epsom". The clock is stamped with a French mark to the back plate and its style suggests a date of 1870.

William Charman was for many years a watch and clock maker in Epsom High Street. He was born in February 1821 at Dorking and in December 1844 he married Elizabeth Frith at the church in Stratford-le-Bow, where he may have finished his training, for the next year he was in business at Epsom. William remarried twice, to Eleanor in 1848 and to Marion after 1856.

His business was at 75/77 High Street, now the Cancer Research charity shop just before the Spread Eagle corner. When he advertised in the 1860 *Hand-Book of Epsom*, he was also buying and selling gold, and repairing jewellery. William continued at work there until his death in 1903.

The mantel clock is very similar in design to others of the same time, and no doubt William imported the cases and workings. Some other clocks from his shop have been sold in recent years, including a double fusee wall clock in mahogany with a window to show the pendulum, dated 1882.

## LOCAL FINDS

Thanks to Jeremy Harte of Bourne Hall Museum for this information.

Beech Walk, just west of Reigate Road on the outskirts of the village, lies between Stane Street and the old drove roads up onto the Downs. Some investigations have been made by Mike Ellingham while gardening at no. 14, and he has kindly let us have a look at the finds. There are three Roman sherds (Alice Holt) but otherwise the material is all late medieval through to Victorian: an orange sandy sherd of Earlswood type, Kingston type white ware, border ware, a Raeren stoneware sherd from a German tankard, a sherd from a bellarmine, and another from an English beer tankard of the eighteenth century, together with pieces of Staffordshire slipware and various post-medieval red wares. A great deal of roof tile was also found. Beech Walk was part of the old Woghfurlong division of the common fields until the nineteenth century, and the material may have been deposited during period clear-outs of midden heaps and waste from the village.

### **Forthcoming Events**

#### **West Surrey Family History Society Open Day & Family History Fair**

Saturday 5th November 2016, Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking.

More information can be found at <http://wsfhs.co.uk/pages/openday.php>

#### **Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society: Were There Celts in Britain ?**

Thursday 10th November 2016, at 8pm, Surbiton Library Halls, Ewell Road, Surbiton.

#### **The Battle of the Somme Film Screening and Talk**

Friday 11th November 2016, Cobham Village Hall. Tickets £5 and available by post from CCHT, PO Box 335, Cobham, KT11 9AY (please enclose SAE) or from The Cobham Bookshop.

#### **Leatherhead & District Local History Society: The 70th Anniversary of the foundation of the Society**

Friday 18th November 2016, at 7:30pm for 8pm, Letherhead Institute, 67 High Street, Leatherhead.

#### **Reflections on the Somme**

Saturday 19th November 2016, Dorking. Tickets £25 (includes lunch & refreshment breaks). Email: [info@eyewitnesstours.com](mailto:info@eyewitnesstours.com) for more details and to book.

#### **Surrey Archaeological Society: Research Revisited**

Saturday 26th November 2016, start 9:30am, Leatherhead Institute, 67 High Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8AH. Tickets £10 for members in advance, £12 for non-members or on the day, £8 for students under 25.

## EEHAS Christmas Meeting 2016

This year's special Christmas meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th December at 7.45 for 8.00 pm in St Mary's Church Hall. The anticipated format is:

- A quiz;
- A short talk by Brenda Allen on Hidden Rome;
- A quiz on Ian West's unusual objects;
- Mince pies, a glass of mulled wine and tea/coffee;
- Raffle.

## Food and Drink in Roman Ewell

**Nikki Cowlard**

*Food and Drink in Roman Ewell* by Jeremy Harte is the latest Occasional Paper published by EEHAS. Published in September 2016, OP55 is written in Jeremy's easy-to-read style, is well researched and referenced, and gives the reader a real flavour of how Ewell's Romano-British inhabitants and its visitors sourced, prepared and enjoyed their food. Based on evidence from excavations in Ewell since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Jeremy has brought to life the everyday fare one would expect to consume; chapters are divided into: bread and beer (arable crops); beef and bacon (livestock); fur and feather (wild food); herbs and honey (horticulture); and oils and oysters (imports). The text is illustrated in colour, both by photographs of local finds and of more widely sourced mosaics, painted plaster and friezes representing food-related activities.

*Food and Drink in Roman Ewell* **OP55** is available at EEHAS meetings and from Bourne Hall Museum shop at a cost of £3.50.

## 2017 Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 2017 become 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. A slip is provided below:

## 2017 Subscriptions

I (we) wish to renew membership for 2017 Amount enclosed.....

Name and address.....

.....

.....

E-mail address.....

*Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society*

*Founded 1960 Registered Charity No.259221*

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**Treasurer:** Jane Pedler

**Archaeology Officer:** Frank Pemberton

**Conservation Officer:** Nikki Cowlard (see details above)

**Membership Secretary:** Doreen Tilbury

**Newsletter Editor:** Jeff Cousins

**Programme Secretary:** Vacant

If you are interested in this post please contact the Secretary.

**If you wish to contact any of the committee please e-mail [info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**

**Please send copy for the next newsletter to the Newsletter Editor by 12 January 2017**

**Visit our website**

**[www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk](http://www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**

**Gift Aid**

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**\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: For new or renewing members, there is a new Gift Aid form \*\*\***

You can see a colour copy of this newsletter on the Society website from mid November  
**[www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk](http://www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**