



NEWSLETTER

2013, Issue 3

June 2013

Welcome to New Member

Jenny Jacob

Chairman's Notes

As many of you will know Peggy Bedwell suffered a stroke in March and has been in hospital since then. However, she is surprisingly well and has recovered her mobility but not yet her speech which is frustrating her greatly. She has now moved to Sheffield where her niece is able to look after her and organise more speech therapy. With Peggy out of action, we hope not permanently, we have realised how much we rely on her, particularly in organising the monthly lectures.

Our grateful thanks go to Fran Taylor who has very nobly offered to help with arranging speakers for the meetings. In Peggy's absence this is a very welcome offer. I am sure Fran would be grateful for any suggestions of topics or names of speakers who we might approach. At the last AGM there was some discussion over what members might like to hear. While there was no overall consensus, there seemed a wish for more local history topics and perhaps talks on the history of neighbouring areas.

Inside this issue:

April meeting : Bee - keeping

2

The Glyn Hall, Ewell

2

Artefact of the Month

3

John Marshall obituary

4

Emily Davison

5

Chile and Easter Island

6

Delftware tiles

7

Lecture Diary

July 3rd Nonsuch Palace A Reflection: Steve Nelson

August 7th Members' Evening

September 4th These sherds belong to you and me: an account of the Time Cheam Project 2010-2012: Clive Orton

October 2nd Rudyard Kipling - His Life and Remarkable Story: Gary Endstone

November 6th An Introduction to the Carshalton Water Tower John Freeman

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

April Meeting - The Story of Beekeeping—Liz Knee

Isobel Cross

Bees evolved in Africa into two main species – the ones who nested in the open and the ones who nested in cavities. The latter could protect themselves from the elements and so were able to spread out into other climates in Asia and Europe. These, the apis mellifera, are the only true domesticated bees. They had to be introduced into America (1622), Australia (1810) and New Zealand (1839).



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Hunter gatherers in prehistory and today simply raid nests to get at the honey. Early on people knew they could subdue bees with smoke. Egyptian paintings show this. Bees collect propolis, a resin from various trees, and the Egyptians, Roman, Greeks and people right up to modern times realised the antibacterial properties of this and all parts of the honey making process. Honey healed wounds before antibiotics and is used for burns even now.

Raiding not being the pleasantest thing meant that early on hives were made, like the Egyptian terracotta ones shown in their paintings. In England from Anglo-Saxon times wicker baskets were used, called *skeps* from the AS word for basket. They were light weight and could be used to catch swarms. We saw a model of one. They do not protect bees from the elements so stone housing or cavities built into walls (beeboles) were also used. The problem with all of this was that methods of collecting honey mainly killed the bees. Sometimes another skep was put on top of the main one since bees instinctively put honey above the nest, but the most efficient way was to design the modern hive with frames that can be removed. These frames are put a 'bee space' apart. Bees operate in spaces of 1 cm between their combs. The queen and the brood are kept safe in the hive by a device called a queen excluder which she is too big to get through, while the smaller workers make honey for collection above her.

Naturalists and scientists in the early modern period gradually worked out that the queen was female, the drones male and the workers female. Apis mellifera is not the only bee species. Brother Adam, 1898 -1996, a monk at Buckfast Abbey researched bee breeding. He imported bees from Italy and came up with the Buckfast bee which is rare now. There was once a native bee, the British Black bee, wiped out by disease a century ago but which might survive in Northern England. Basically it is difficult to breed a pure bee species unless you inseminate the queens. They are wild animals, the drones pursue the queens in the open, anything can happen, bees are mostly mongrels.

Liz Knee belongs to the Epsom Division of the Surrey Beekeepers Association. The apiary site behind Upper Mill was established in the 1940s. They have hives on site and run courses. They are inspected for diseases. They have a shop which is open 3 – 5 on Saturday afternoons, though not in winter, where you can buy local honey and related products. Let's hope for a good season after last year's rain.

GLYN HALL

For many years an informal group has been working, at Peggy Bedwell's house, on the finds from a number of sites. In dealing with the finds from Church Meadow last year the need for a larger space has become apparent. We have found The Glyn Hall which seems to fit our need. Built in 1875 and left to "the village" by Margaret Glyn, it is now run by a charitable trust. In Cheam Road next to the car park it is a little known local resource that deserves to be better known and used. It can be booked through Claire on 020 8394 1985.



Artefact of the Month

Jeremy Harte

This harness decoration was found, in 2009, near the Durdans by Mark Davison. It is an ornate piece of gilded bronze, bearing the royal arms of the Stuart dynasty. How did it come to be found on the outskirts of Epsom?

A clue is found in two famous diaries of the period. John Evelyn wrote, 1st September 1662: 'Being by my Lord George Berkeley invited, I went to Durdens, where dined his Majestie, the Queene, Duke, Dutchesse, Prince Rupert, prince Edward, and abundance of Noblemen'. And Samuel Pepys, on the same day, wrote that he had set out to visit the Duke of York in London, 'but when we come, we found him going out by coach with his Duchess, and he told us he was to go abroad with the Queen to-day (to Durdans, it seems, to dine with my Lord Barkely)'

George the 1st Earl of Berkeley was a trusted friend of Charles II. It was he who in 1660 had sailed to Holland and invited the exiled prince to take over his kingdom. As a reward, he received the lucrative post of Keeper at Nonsuch Park, which meant that he spent more time in the family's old country house at Durdans. In the 1680s this Elizabethan mansion was demolished and rebuilt in a more palatial style – itself now replaced by a later building.

The royal entourage would have come by coach (a very exclusive means of travel in those days) with well-matched horses gleaming with brass and gilt fittings. They came through the rustic hamlet of Woodcote, and entered the Durdans estate through the tree-lined alley that led off Chalk Lane. It was there that one of the harness mounts fell off, to remain hidden for centuries as a memory of that day of splendour in 1662.

The mount was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme where full details are recorded and made available on their website. This scheme was introduced after the Treasure Act in 1996 and has been particularly successful in enabling a full record of casual finds to be made available to everyone. It is hoped that the mount might eventually be put on display in BH Museum.



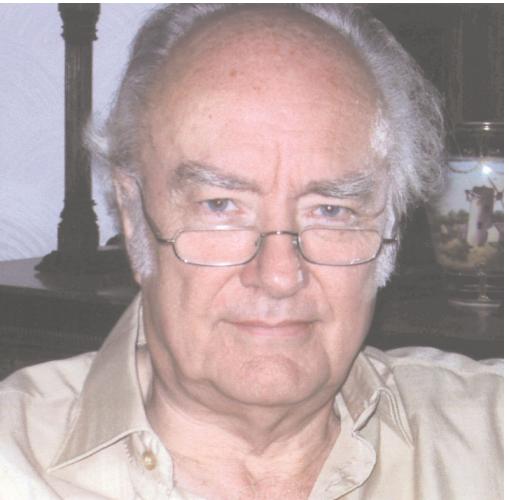
Painting of the Durdans by Jacob Knyff dated 1679.



Obituary - John Marshall

David Brooks

John Marshall, popular stamp dealer in Waterloo Road for the best part of 30 years, died on 19th March after a 20-year battle with leukaemia. Beginning his business in the back of a tobacconist's and sweet shop in Upper High Street, John built up his stock over the years, along with a reputation for honesty, and branched out into coins, medals and many other types of collectables. He would always pay a fair price for items. One day two old ladies came in the shop. 'Do you buy medals?', one asked. 'Yes', replied John. They produced a box from a shopping basket, and as soon as this was opened, it was clear that they were not medals but the insignia of Imperial Russian orders. 'Do you want to buy them?'. 'I would', said John, 'but I can't afford them. Wherever did you get them?'. They were our grandfather's – he was a Count in Russia and brought them out of the country during the Revolution'. John did his homework, found the right sale room, and they made over £10,000!



John loved local history and, with Graham Cockman, wrote *Old Views of Epsom Town*, drawing on the collection of photographs, postcards and posters he had made over the years. When it was published in 1988 it filled a gap in the market: there hadn't been a book like it for years, and through the interest it created, many more pictures were brought to his shop.

Through the shop, John purchased many local items, photographs and postcards – as well as two chairs and letterboxes which had been saved from Horton Hospital. He would always offer any items first to Bourne Hall Museum, often selling them below the full retail price because he would rather let many people see something than have it disappear forever in a private collection. He was always happy for the Museum to copy any pictures he did not want to part with. John singlehandedly saved more printed local history from the dustbin and the rubbish dump than any other person, and without his interest local history studies would be much the poorer. He retired from his shop in 2005 but still carried on with his contacts with the Museum. The wartime years had always been his great love and he was present at World War 2 events, helping visitors with his expertise. John was always popping in with something he had taken home because it interested him. He spent much of the beginning of this year in hospital and only a week before his death he appeared at the Museum, barely able to breathe, holding what I had always called my print. It was a rare print of Epsom produced in 1911, one which had hung over his fireplace, and which I had always wanted for the Museum!



Church Meadow Ewell – Excavation July 2013

Just a reminder that the second season of excavation in Church Meadow, Ewell begins on 3rd July, Wednesday - Sunday 10am - 4pm for three weeks. An Open Day will be take place during the Ewell Village Fair on 13th July, 10.30am - 3.30pm.

100th Anniversary of the Death of a Suffragette at the Epsom Derby

Nikki Cowlard

A number of events have been organised in the Borough to commemorate the death of Emily Wilding Davison, a suffragette who died under the hooves of the King's horse at the Derby in 1913.



It is a time to recognise the massive debt we, as a nation, owe Emily Davison and her suffragette comrades whose campaigning led to votes for women. Because of them women in this country can not only vote but can expect equal opportunities in the areas of education, employment and politics, to name but a few.

By the time you read this the Derby will be over and the unveiling of a plaque and associated events on the Downs will already have taken place. A tree is to also be planted at the Old Cottage Hospital where Emily Wilding Davison was taken after the accident, and died a few days later from her injuries.

Since 7th May an exhibition has been running at Bourne Hall. The exhibition was officially opened on 20th May, and as part of this event a meeting of Soroptimists took place that evening. *Soroptimism International* is a society of women working for the benefit of other women and girls throughout the world. Their values include: human rights for all; global peace and international goodwill; advancing women's potential; integrity and democratic decision making; volunteering, diversity and friendship. If you haven't yet visited the Suffragette exhibition it is on until the beginning of July, so do go along.

A number of artists competed to create a memorial on the Downs. The entries were on show first in the Ebbisham Centre then at the Town Hall, and visitors were able to vote for their preferred option. The winner was announced on 4th June at the Bourne Hall Exhibition.

If you are interested in reading more on the subject there are a number of new books being published over the next few months. They are:

Emily Wilding Davison – a Suffragette's Family Album
by Maureen Howes

In the Thick of the Fight: The writing of Emily Wilding Davison, Militant Suffragette by Carolyn P. Collette

The Suffragette Derby by Michael R. Tanner

Burning to Vote – Suffragettes in Buckinghamshire by
Colin Cartwright.



A local meeting of Suffragettes in
Wimbledon

Chile and Easter Island

Jeff Cousins

The Atacama desert in the north of Chile is the driest place on the planet and consequently has few inhabitants, mostly copper and nitrate miners. Yet it contains much of interest. Geoglyphs are figures in the landscape created by arranging dark coloured rocks and/or clearing sun-baked rocks to reveal the lighter coloured rock underneath. Most are of llamas, but other creatures are also featured, and many are of humans looking rather like space invaders from the early computer game, or like stickle-brick men. Few hard facts are known about them; dating evidence gives an imprecise 400 – 1200 AD. The Atacama giant is the largest prehistoric depiction of a human being in the world, being almost 400' high. Petroglyphs are of similar subjects but created by engraving into the rock and are not on such a massive scale. The Chinchorro mummies are 7000 years old, older than those of Egypt. Techniques varied considerably, but typically they were coated in clay, and sometimes internal organs were replaced by straw and limbs strengthened with sticks.

Easter Island is of course most famous for its statues. It is also the most remote inhabited place on Earth. The island is roughly a triangle with 12 mile long sides and a large volcano at each corner with lake-filled craters. Around 900 statues were carved. Most were carved out of a relatively soft and light rock called tuff, formed from volcanic ash, quarried from the rim of a crater in the east of the island. The statues are from the waist up, and are thought to represent important ancestors. The later and more important ones wore hats of a red stone quarried from a hill in the west. The statues looked upwards with eyes of white coral with pupils of the red stone or black obsidian. The eyes were probably only inserted to bring the statues to life at special occasions, the coral and/or bones being kept on top of the hats in the meantime. Statues were erected on platforms, most of which were on the coast, about every half mile, with the statues facing inland, not out to sea.

Only about quarter of the statues were moved to and erected at platforms, half of them never made it beyond the quarry. The biggest to be erected weighed 82 tons and was 33' high. The largest to be carved – up to 270 tons – still lie flat on the ground where they were carved. From a distance they look like steps going up the hillside. Many people think that the standing statues at the quarry are just giant heads, but they do begin at the waist just like the ones on platforms, their lower halves being buried in pits. The 40 or so statues currently standing on platforms have all been re-erected in the last 60 years. The quarry has about 45 statues that are still upright on the outside of the crater, and about a dozen on the inside.

Easter was first settled in about the 7th century, give or take 500 years! – there is fierce disagreement on this. The erecting of statues began in about 1100 and continued until the mid 17th century. Originally the island was covered by palm trees, but more and more trees were cut down for rollers for moving the statues, until no trees were left. Without trees no more statues could be moved, so the old religion and class structure collapsed, and large canoes for fishing could no longer be built, contributing to the population crashing from roughly 15000 to only 2000. Previously there must have been island-wide co-operation working on the statues, but society degenerated into warfare between clans, toppling each other's statues, with refugees hiding in caves.

A new religion arose with a single creator god Make Make, who is depicted as a face with huge eyes. The key ceremony was an annual egg race. Each clan would nominate a young man as champion who would have to climb down a sheer 1000' cliff and swim over a mile to an offshore islet. The master of the first to bring back a sooty tern egg was the winner and became "birdman" and representative of Make Make on Earth. The winner's clan had leadership for the following year. A carving was made of each birdman as a bird headed man.



Chinese Gentlemen and Wonky Windmills: The Delftware Tiles of Epsom and Ewell

Jeremy Harte

The architecture of Georgian Epsom still defines the town, despite many losses over the years, but it is much harder to understand what the interiors of these buildings were like. For three centuries occupiers have been able to gut and remodel their premises, their alterations invisible to local historians, and nothing shows this more clearly than the loss of the blue-and-white Delftware tiles which were common in local buildings between the Restoration and the beginning of the Victorian age. Fortunately Delftware tiles, though they might be unwanted in their original settings, had enough charm to appeal to collectors, and several have made their way into museums.

Bourne Hall Museum has two tiles from Woodcote End House, mounted in little frames for display. Fortunately, we also have photographs taken just before the War, at the time Willis wrote his note on Epsom buildings published in SyAS Collections for 1949. These show tiles in situ around the kitchen of the house. They were apparently taken out in the 1950s, when the house was split into two and the part with the kitchen named Queen Ann House. (See Newsletter 2013 Issue 1 for details of its latest alteration). A large collection made its way to Guildford Museum, where some of them are on display. Guildford also acquired a number of tiles from Whitmores in Dorking Road when it was pulled down in 1963. Apparently there were also tiles lining the water closet at Woodcote Park before the calamitous fire of 1935.



At Bourne Hall we also have a few polychrome tiles from the kitchen at the Cedars, along with some fragments from elsewhere – some from the Hylands or Hylands House, and others from the Green Man in Ewell. As this was originally no more than a cottage, the tiles must have been relocated from some other house in the neighbourhood.

The best collection in the Borough, though, is visible at Nonsuch Mansion House, where visitors to the kitchen wing can see a fine display in an outbuilding. For many years this was the ladies' loo, and gentlemen wishing to view the tilework had to be smuggled in while a female friend kept guard at the door. Today the building has been restored to its original appearance as a dairy and is open to all. A delightful booklet, available from the friends of Nonsuch and the Museum Shop, contains selected photographs of the tiles: there are just short of 500 overall, and they cover a surprising range of dates. There's a seventeenth-century Dutch tile of a ship, followed by landscapes and biblical scenes made in London, 1700/40. Most of the tiles, however, come from Liverpool and were made in the late 18th century: Chinese figures, animals, baskets of flowers and rural scenes predominate, along with some delightful little birds picked out in yellow. There are also a handful of 19th-century Dutch tiles made to imitate the older designs.

Another centre of production was at Bristol, and although none of the Mansion House tiles come from there, the Green Man and Cedars examples look like Bristol manufacture. The mixed history of these tiles (some of those from Whitmores are Dutch work of the 1630s) shows that even in the Georgian times they were being reset on the walls of new buildings. These endearing little scenes – children at play, Chinese and mock-Chinese sages, shepherdesses with blue sheep and rustic views with distorted windmills – were so popular that they have been prized from the time of Charles II to our own days.

Tiles are in Guildford Museum (LG 67 to 181 and G 7562 to 7601) and Bourne hall Museum (1970.017-001 to 6, 1970.008-001 and 2, 1982.083-001 and 2, 1960.165-01 to 6, and 1998.002). For Woodcote Park, see *Maryland Historical Magazine* 46 (1951) p20.



Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society

Founded 1960 Registered Charity No.259221

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

Please send copy for the next newsletter to the Secretary by Monday 12th August 2013

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You can see a colour copy of this newsletter on the Society website from mid-June.

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