

Welcome to our newsletter. At this time of year, thoughts turn to Remembrance Day, especially this year as it marks 100 years since the end of “the war to end all wars.” Byfleet’s Remembrance Day Parade will be on Sunday 11th November, with the parade assembling outside Byfleet Village Hall at 10.30am. Tea and coffee will be available at the Village Hall after the service. Also, the new edition of “Byfleet and the Great War” by Jim Allen is coming very soon—details below.

Enjoy this edition and we hope to see you at a meeting or drop-in very soon.

FORTHCOMING
EVENTS 2018



All talks are held at St Mary’s Centre for the Community, Stream Close, Byfleet and will begin at 8.15pm.

Thursday 15th November: Please note change of date. Rev Nick Aiken will speak about “Pyrford.”

Thursday 20th December: Our annual Christmas meeting, at which Mike Webber will show a collection of photographs and other items of interest that the Society has acquired during the year. Don't forget, we are always pleased to see your photographs and would love to take scans for our archive .

2019

Here are the dates for next year for your diaries

Thursday 17th January

Thursday 21st February

Thursday 21st March

Thursday 18th April

Thursday 16th May

Thursday 18th July

Thursday 19th September

Thursday 17th October

Thursday 21st November

Thursday 19th December

As usual there is no meeting in August, and for our June date we are considering having our annual boat trip to make better use of the available light—watch this space for further details.

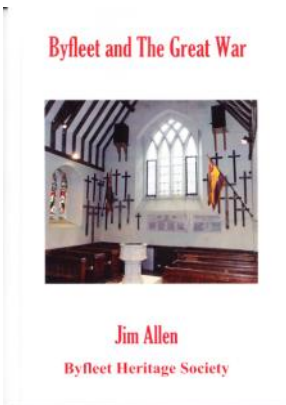
**Members free, Guests £2
Everyone very welcome!**

Don't forget—if you have a topic or an idea for a talk, please let us know.

Members might like to know that 'Byfleet and the Great War' by Jim Allen has been considerably updated since the first edition, published in 2014.

It now includes much more information on those who returned from the conflict, as well as some new chapters and the addition of several photographs.

It will be available from Remembrance Sunday, price £7, from Byfleet Community Library, or at our meetings and 'drop-ins'.



For the Record...



In August the Society took to the waters once more for another boat trip along the Wey Navigation Canal. Three boat-loads of members left from Parvis Wharf on a fine summer's evening and sailed at a leisurely pace down the canal towards Pyrford Lock, reaching as far as Pyrford Place. A blue plaque on the summerhouse next to the canal announces that Pyrford Place was the home of the poet John Donne and his wife (with whom he had eloped) between 1600-1604. Pyrford Lock was opened in 1653, and the Anchor pub next door is thought to have been founded in 1728 to serve the canal workers and travellers. The patio where people now enjoy a peaceful pint or a ploughman's lunch was once the site of the stables for the canal horses.

We hope to enjoy another trip along the canal next year.



For our first talk of the Autumn season we welcomed Cobham historian **David Taylor** who revealed to us the lives of the Lushington family and the glamorous circles in which they moved. David wrote a book on Pyports which has had a number of interesting and well known residents. An enquiry about Pyports residents in Country Life magazine led to contact with a lady who held the Lushington family archive, but they never managed to meet. A few years later, on the lady's death, David was offered the archive. David happily accepted and deposited the papers at the Surrey History Centre. David soon realised that the archive contained much of national importance as well as local interest. Furthermore, it all needed cataloguing, which led him to apply for a grant to catalogue and put the archive onto the internet. David gifted the archive to the History Centre, catalogued it and went on to do his PhD using the material, which led to many years lecturing on the Lushingtons and their famous connections.

The Lushingtons rose to wealth via the East India Company in the 18th century. The Rt Hon Stephen Lushington lived at Ockham Park with his wife Sarah and their ten children. Stephen Lushington was involved in three significant events—the anti-slavery movement, the 1832 Reform Act and, as a barrister, the trial of Queen Caroline on her divorce from King George IV. Queen Caroline also appointed Lushington as one of the executors of her will. When she died a few months after being barred from the coronation of her husband, it fell to Lushington to organise her burial in Brunswick. However, the Queen had died the day before Lushington's wedding, so the poor man not only had to rush to London to deal with arrangements, but also spent his honeymoon accompanying the Queen's body to Germany. Stephen Lushington also worked for Lady Byron on her separation from Lord Byron. Lady Byron's daughter went on to marry Lord Lovelace who owned East Horsley Place and Ockham Park; because of Stephen's work for Lady Byron, Ockham Park was offered to the Lushington family. Here "he collected around him the cleverest folk of the day", including William Rossetti (Dante Gabriel's brother) who was invited to Ockham by Stephen's twin sons, Vernon and Godfrey. Vernon and Rossetti would later visit Robert and Elizabeth Browning in Italy. William Holman Hunt came to paint Stephen Lushington (and complained that his subject wouldn't sit still), and it was Stephen's links to the anti-slavery movement that led to Ockham Schools (established by Lord Lovelace) becoming the refuge of William and Ellen Craft, two escaped slaves from the United States who became powerful anti-slavery speakers.



Stephen's son, Vernon, attended Cambridge University, where he became interested in Christian Socialism, and served on the Council of the Working Men's College with John Ruskin and Dante Gabriel Rossetti. It was here that Vernon introduced Edward Burne-Jones to Rossetti, thus kick-starting the second phase of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. Vernon also offered to work for Thomas Carlyle as a voluntary editor—an offer Carlyle accepted. Vernon married Jane Mowatt and the couple lived first in Pyrford, and then at Pyports in Cobham. Here they were visited by such figures as Walt Whitman, Ford Maddox Brown, Thomas Hardy, and Charles Darwin, for whom Mrs Lushington played the piano.

Vernon and Jane had three daughters—Katherine (or Kitty), Margaret and Susan. The girls were all musical, and tutored by Sir Hubert Parry (who wrote the hymn *Jerusalem*). Kitty formed a friendship with Virginia Woolf and made an appearance in two of Woolf's novels. Kitty became engaged to Leopold Maxse, a journalist and political writer, at a summer house party at Talland House in Cornwall; these parties featured in Woolf's novel *To The Lighthouse*; Kitty was also the model for Woolf's character Mrs Dalloway. Susan became a close friend of Ralph Vaughan Williams, although she never married. Margaret married Stephen Massingberd and moved to Lincolnshire where the couple organised music festivals.

David's book, *Under the Cedar: The Lushingtons of Pyports*, has a foreword by Julian Fellowes, writer of *Downton Abbey*, whose wife has Lushington blood. It was very interesting to hear about such a well connected family on our doorstep.



Home Quartet—Mrs Vernon Lushington and her daughters, 1882 by Arthur Hughes

For our October meeting our members took the floor for a series of short talks.

The first item was the showing of a YouTube video made by Fullbrook School for the BBC's School Report scheme, where students report on a topic and present short videos. The Fullbrook students had invited Sir Douglas Lowe to answer questions on his career and experiences. When asked about his most difficult decision, Sir Douglas spoke about his wartime experiences flying bombers. With the lives of six other crew in your hands, you were severely tempted to turn back, and the biggest decision was to keep on going. Not only that, but it was a decision you had to take every time you flew out. When asked his views on war now, he answered that it was very different to what he knew, both in terms of equipment and technology. A Spitfire would have cost about five thousand pounds, whereas a modern Typhoon was over two million. If you are on-line and would like to see the whole video (which is about seven minutes long), it can be found here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GZnhDtAraU>



Yvonne Heard and Dick Alder were next with an update on St Mary's churchyard and the renovation of the copse there. The copse was planted in 1937 on the suggestion of W G Tarrant, in order to screen the church from the new houses which were to be built in Church Road. Mr Tarrant and other parishioners contributed the trees, but over the years the copse had become neglected and overgrown. Yvonne, recently retired, volunteered to help in the churchyard and suggested opening up the copse and, before she knew it, a grant had been applied for in her name, the money was obtained and planning began. Surrey Wildlife Trust came in to help create a 'living churchyard', maintaining a network of churches with land around them as a haven for wildlife. The team applied to the Woodland Trust who gave them 400 small trees, and Dick won a picnic table in a Christmas raffle which he donated to the copse and which is well used by visitors. There is also a log pile to encourage bugs and a bench made by Dr Bewes.

In Spring the churchyard is beautiful with wild flowers, but they do not last long, so you have to choose the right moment to visit. When the overgrown copse was cleared, many flowers came up the next Spring which had been previously buried including Yellow archangel, Bluebells and Greater Stitchwort. New bushes were planted this year, but the weather, with the harsh winter followed by the long, dry summer, has made it difficult for them to establish, but Surrey Wildlife Trust have completed a management plan to help maintain and develop the area.



Dick explained the history of the churchyard, which was originally quite small. It was extended in 1871, 1893 and finally to Sanway in 1919. It was closed for burials in 1977. Dick and the team have permission to work in the churchyard but cannot use power tools. The team mark out areas of bluebells and wild flowers so that Serco do not mow them while the flowers are growing or seeding. A lot of work has been done to prevent graves being lost due to ground build-up. This has led to some interesting discoveries. Under a mass of brambles near the bus-stop Dick uncovered two walls about 20 x 6 ft long. This stands just outside the original churchyard but inside the 1871 extension. Of great help in saving graves has been a churchyard plan by Tarrant. This was produced for a church court case against Rev Cheverton in the 1930s when he moved a lot of gravestones without consultation. Using the plan led Dick to rediscover 6 graves under a large yew; the graves have been uncovered and the names recorded. Two of these graves date from 1724 and 1702, which is from before church burial records began in 1738.

Finally Pat Andrews told us about her experience at the Oberammergau Passion Play. This has been performed every ten years since 1634 when the village recovered from the plague. All performers have to come from the village, and everyone in the village has to be involved in some way. Pat and her party were assigned a hotel outside the village and before the play, a local Methodist minister had arranged discussion groups which helped visitors prepare for the play and brought the scenes to life. The group moved to Oberammergau on Thursday ready for the performance on Friday. Visitors can't stay more than two nights in the village while the play is on. Performances take place five times a week for 20 weeks, by which time half a million people will have attended. All visitors are allocated hotel places and specific restaurants to use.

Spectators had to be in place by 8.30am and the performance was from 9-11.30, a break for two lunch sittings, and then from 2-5.30. The play is spoken and sung in German with an English translation booklet provided. Tableaux from the Bible were shown, all varying in character—the entry into Jerusalem was loud and joyful, the Last Supper very peaceful. The audience felt included in the scenes, which brought new meaning to the story. After the play Pat and her party walked through the village spotting members of the cast now back in their everyday lives.

We all enjoyed an interesting evening of varied topics.

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We received a query from Hazel Gilmore, who has found out that her great grandparents, John and Jane Shorter, used to live at Hollick Farm. Although originally from Maidstone, they are shown as living at Hollick Farm in the 1891 census. Their two youngest children were born there in 1887 and 1890, and they had four older siblings aged between 9 and 13 years old. The family had moved back to Kent by the 1901 census, but Hazel would like to know more about Hollick Farm, and which school the children would have attended while in the area.

Hollick Farm was located within Brooklands Track in the area of what is now the track at Mercedes Benz World. Would the children have walked to St Mary's School in Byfleet?

If anyone knows more about the farm, or how the family might have lived, please let us know—Society contact details are on the back page. Many thanks!

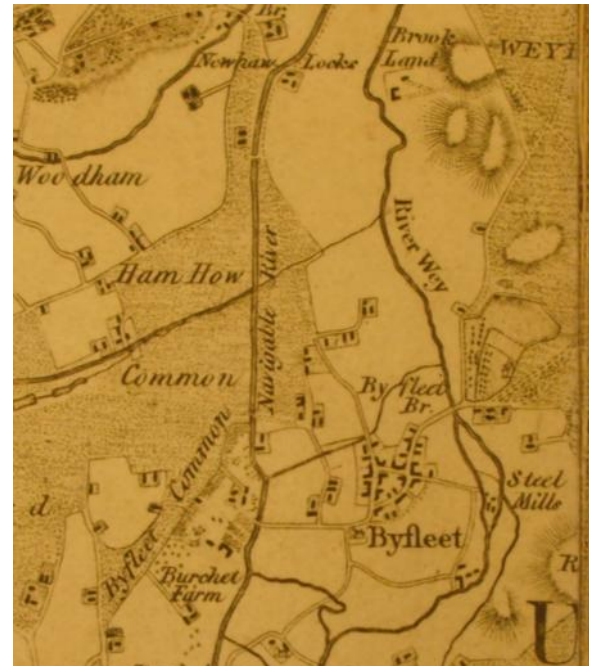
At our September drop-in we had an interesting visitor who was enquiring about the location of Byfleet Common. He told us that in 1756 five companies of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, accompanied by the company of miners, marched from the Tower of London and encamped at Byfleet from July until October. *The History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery Volume 1* by Captain Francis Duncan lists the numbers of soldiers in the train: 29 officers, 61 non-commissioned officers, 57 gunners, 330 matrosses (an artillery soldier one rank below a gunner), 80 miners, 7 fifers and 12 drummers. The Master General of the Ordnance himself was present, who was none other than the Duke of Malborough. The Duke marched at the head of the train and stayed in the Byfleet camp. He also oversaw some experiments in mining as well as putting the men through their paces with the guns and mortars.

The artillery in the train was also impressive, including 550 24-pounders, 700 12-pounders and 2,000 6-pounders, among others. Discipline in the camp was very strict. No-one could go more than a mile from camp without a pass, officers had to appear in uniform at all times, and lights-out was ten o'clock. The supplies of gunpowder were to be aired during any periods of fine weather.

Given that Byfleet in 1756 must have been a tiny place, this camp must have been an extraordinary sight. Many questions arise—how was it supplied with enough food and water? Did the soldiers and the villagers mix much? Was the Duke of Malborough entertained by the local gentry, perhaps at the Manor House or West Hall?

We have copies of three maps of Byfleet which have an area labelled Byfleet Common. The 1729 map shows Byfleet Common to the north of the village between the canal and the River Wey (roughly where Chertsey Road and Oyster Lane are now). However, both Rocques map of Surrey from 1792, and a map from 1808 seem to show the area on the other side of the canal from the village, more in the area surrounding West Hall.

Does anyone have any more information about the location of Byfleet Common? Or do you know anything about the large army camp of 1756? If so, we would love to hear from you.



Byfleet maps:
left 1808, right 1729

SOCIETY NEWS,
AND QUERIES



As part of Surrey Libraries Crime Festival month, Jim Allen will be giving a talk on:
'Byfleet Murders'
in the Byfleet Community Library
at 4pm

on Wednesday 28th November.
All are welcome - admission free.

Byfleet's annual Christmas Fair will be on **Saturday 17th November** at **Byfleet Village Hall**, 10am—1pm.



The Society will be there with copies of our 2019 calendar, which this year features Byfleet on Wheels.

Come along and get into the Christmas spirit—by then there'll only be 38 shopping days till Christmas!

Mystery photo—can you help?

We have this unlabelled photo in our archive and wondered if anyone recognised the location.

It was found among David Chapman's collection of local photos, so it is possibly Byfleet, West Byfleet, Pyrford or perhaps Ripley.

If you think you can Name That Bar, then we would love to hear from you.



Clare McCann, Curator of Ripley Museum, sent us news about their new exhibition which members might be interested in. **Ripley and Send—Reflections on the "War to end all Wars"** will be open from October 2018 to the end of January 2019 every Saturday between 10-12.30 at Ripley Museum (next to Ripley Village Hall).

Clare says, "We are very excited that this exhibition has, in the main, been created by The Surrey Infantry Museum and contains some background on the Queens' regiment, the local men from Send and Ripley who served, as well as a look forward to the future of the Surrey Infantry Museum. In particular we are hoping that Surrey people, whose families have connections to the regiment will come along and share those memories." The curators will also be happy to open the museum by arrangement for small groups

RIPLEY AND SEND
Reflections on the
'War to end all wars'

at
RIPLEY MUSEUM
Presented by
The Surrey Infantry Museum

FROM OCTOBER
TO
END OF JANUARY
2019
EVERY SATURDAY
10—12.30
Next to Ripley Village Hall
01932 351559

If you need to contact the Society, we can be reached in the following ways:
Leave a note at Byfleet Library, email us at info@byfleetheritage.org.uk or ring our Secretary, Tessa Westlake on 01932 351559