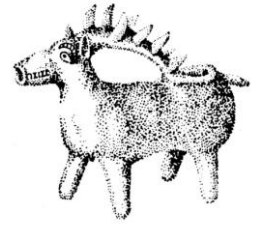


# Friends of East Surrey Museum NEWSLETTER

No. 144 Spring 2021



## From the Curator

Peter Connelly



Welcome to the Spring newsletter. Since our Autumn edition the pandemic has continued to dominate. As the infection rate fell in November, along with many other businesses we reopened to the public on 2nd December. Thanks to the support of a few socially-distanced volunteers the day before, the museum was dressed for Christmas as normal, including our vintage musical rotating Christmas tree stand. Visitor numbers in December were lower than usual, however those that did visit were very appreciative of the displays and generous with donations. But with increasing levels of infection, the museum had to shut again on 17th December and remains closed.

However, as in the previous lockdown, just because we are closed to the public does not mean the work of the museum stops. Our learning from the last closure was that, with no-one around, pests and environmental factors may put some of our more fragile artefacts at risk. In the depths of winter and with no clear view of when we may be able to reopen, we needed to take action to protect the collections. I have therefore popped in regularly to check that all was OK, and fortunately spotted the early signs of a roof leak. This seems to have been triggered by the snowfall at the end of January, and is now being addressed by Tandridge District Council. Luckily only the toilet ceiling seems to have suffered. As



additional 'early warnings', we have now invested in a variety of insect traps placed all around the museum, and have just been successful in obtaining a grant from the South East Museums Development Partnership for a set of temperature and humidity monitors (left). These will be installed as soon as possible.

Our 'virtual' visitors on Facebook and Instagram continue to grow and we are up to around 1250 followers. Some of the more popular recent posts have been vintage views of Whyteleafe, Nutfield, Godstone and Bletchingley, a set of skis originally owned by the composer Mátyás Seiber to mark Holocaust Memorial Day (see page 3), and various items from our current exhibition of St Lawrence's Hospital.

Our email has been equally active. Enquiries about the local area continue to flood in, and we have also had a variety of donations of artefacts, including the archive of Sergeant

Parker of the Coldstream Guards, who was stationed at the Guards' Depot in Caterham in the 1950s.



*Sgt Tiley's squad, Coldstream Guards, photographed at Caterham Depot in 1959. Sgt Parker is second from the right in the front row, with rolled-up sleeves.*

We have also received a local telephone directory for 1977, a WW2 naval hammock and a typewriter.

Another project that has been progressing during lockdown is our joint venture with the Bourne Society for a new Town Trail around Caterham-on-the-Hill. This has now reached final draft stage for the leaflet, with further detail in preparation. Once complete, this will be available on the websites of the museum and the Bourne Society for home printing, as well as in hardcopy in the museum. The next stage will be to produce a trail for Caterham Valley, before looking at other towns and villages in the area, so watch this space...

**BOURNE SOCIETY**

Caterham-on-the-Hill Town Trail

Start the trail at St. Lawrence's Church, Church Hill:

Find out more here:

St Lawrence's Church dates from c.1095, and is one of the oldest churches in Surrey. Originally dedicated to St. Leonard, a French hermit, the tiny church was extended in the 13th c. with the addition of the north aisle. Largely redundant after St Mary's was built in 1866, it was restored and reconsecrated in 1927.

Now cross the road, to St Mary's Church:

Find out more here:

In 1851, Caterham had only 487 residents, but with the coming of the railway in 1856, Caterham's population grew rapidly and a new church was needed. St Mary's cost £2600 in 1866, and when the north aisle was completed in 1913 the church could accommodate 550 worshippers. Many of the town's notables are buried in St Mary's Churchyard.

The infection rates in the area and across the country as a whole are currently falling, and hopefully that will continue and allow us to reopen later in 2021. In anticipation of that, we are already looking at possible subjects for future exhibitions, displays and events to welcome our visitors when they return. In the meantime, we will continue to support our community as best we can through our social media, email and website. Please stay safe, and we hope to see you in person in the near future.

Peter

## Life in Lockdown Project

Catherine Allen

Our lives have changed immeasurably over the past year. Taking daily walks, working from home, and wearing masks during the weekly shop have all become the norm. But when later generations ask, what do you think should be remembered?

East Surrey Museum needs your help to record the local experience of lockdown before it's consigned to history.

Have you taken photos of quiet local streets? Can you write a diary entry of what you've felt or seen? Did you or your family create signs or artwork in lockdown? We're looking for photos, videos, written recollections, objects - anything you can offer that conveys what you've felt and experienced over the past year.

You'll be part of a vital project that will future-proof the way lockdown and the pandemic are remembered at the museum. All contributions, regardless of age, background or ability, are very welcome!

If you'd like to share something with us, or if you have any questions, please get in touch with the curator:

Email: [eastsurreymuseum@gmail.com](mailto:eastsurreymuseum@gmail.com)

Tel: 01883 340275

*Thank you*

children. In Caterham the distribution is to people living in the civil parish as it existed in Smith's lifetime. This covered the Hill, the Valley and as far north as the future station at Whyteleafe.



*Memorial to Henry Smith in All Saints Church, Wandsworth.*

## The Henry Smith Charity

Rod Stead

Henry Smith was a London businessman who was born in Wandsworth (then in Surrey) in 1549 and died in 1628. He was a member of the Salters livery company and an alderman in the City. He appears to have made his fortune in dealing in and loaning money on land. On his death with no immediate offspring a charity was created and he left a detailed will specifying donations to various groups. These included retired clergy and English sailors who had been kidnapped and sold into slavery by Barbary pirates.

He also left part of his estate to the poor in some 150 specified parishes. Many of these were in Surrey which was one of the most deprived counties in the Kingdom at that time due to the limited agricultural productivity of the area. The ancient parish of Caterham was one of those lucky communities. Other local villages which still receive assistance include Bletchingley, Chaldon, Merstham, Reigate, Godstone, Oxted, Tandridge and Warlingham.

The bequest was intended for 'sick, aged and impotent persons' and those not able to provide adequately for their

Tandridge District Council is the vehicle through which this legacy is distributed in the local area, supervised by local trustees. In 2019 the allocation to Caterham was £2,000. Individuals to receive grants are identified with the assistance of bodies such as the Caterham and Warlingham Citizens Advice Bureau and Surrey County Council (Adult Social Care).

After Smith's death his trustees invested some £2,000 in market gardens to the west of London. These became the valuable suburbs of Kensington and Chelsea. The estate was sold recently for £280 million. As a result of this fortuitous investment the charity remains well provided for. In 2019 the charity made grants of £31 million nationally and so is still a very active funder of the charity sector.

Henry Smith was commemorated as a philanthropist with a monument in All Saints Church in Wandsworth. His biography was published in 2015 as *Henry Smith, His Life and Legacy* by Lucy Lethbridge and Tim Wales. There is a copy available in the museum library if you want to learn more about this remarkable Elizabethan.

The author was a local trustee of the charity from 2010 to 2018.



## Mátyás Seiber's Skis

Museum staff

Mátyás Seiber was born in Budapest in 1905. In addition to studying the cello, Seiber studied composition with Zoltán Kodály in Budapest. He initially made his living teaching at a private music school, then for a short time worked on a transatlantic liner, playing cello in the ship's orchestra. From 1928 he was a lecturer at the Hoch Konservatorium in Frankfurt am Main, teaching jazz. He left Frankfurt in 1933, fleeing from Nazi persecution, and worked for a while in the USSR. By 1936, Seiber had settled in the UK where he married ballet dancer Lilla Bauer and lived in Caterham at 51 Stafford Road. He worked for Schott music publishers, played in ensembles and worked as a composer and arranger. His many compositions include orchestral, chamber and vocal music and scores for films such as *Animal Farm* (1954). From 1942 Seiber taught composition at Morley College, London. He was killed in a car accident in 1960 while on a lecture tour in South Africa.

Seiber's skis were made by Reidar Amundsen & Co. in Oslo and retailed by Sporthaus Bauer in Frankfurt. The Amundsen



factory, named for the polar explorer Roald Amundsen, opened in 1925 and made high quality wooden skiing equipment. Their products were exported around the world until the company assets were sold in 1932. It seems likely that Seiber bought the skis while he was working in Frankfurt. Though we assume they were later donated to the museum by his family, we're not exactly sure how or when they became part of our collection.

## Friends of East Surrey Museum

**Membership subscriptions** are due on 1st April. If you have not already paid, please send your payment of **£10.00** to:

**The Curator  
East Surrey Museum  
1 Stafford Road,  
Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6JG**

Please make your cheque payable to **East Surrey Museum**. You can also pay your subs by standing order. Membership and standing order forms can be obtained from the museum or downloaded from our website:

[www.eastsurreymuseum.org.uk/friends.html](http://www.eastsurreymuseum.org.uk/friends.html)

*Thank you!*

## The Endeavour

Mark Wiles

The 1st Godstone Scout Group was founded on the 16th March 1908 with 11 boys and 2 scouters, but they didn't register with the Scout Association until 1911. The group has some photos and documents from 1908 to 1910 in the archives which indicates that the scouts were operational in the village at this time.

Their headquarters building, the Endeavour, goes even further back in time. The group originally met in the White Hart Barn in the village. The Endeavour building was constructed by the Rover Scouts between the years 1937 and 1938, but the materials used came from much older buildings, including a barn in West Sussex dating back to the sixteenth century. The result was that the building, even though new at the time, looked like one of Godstone's oldest structures.

The framework came from the barn and much of the cladding and fixtures from the many Tudor cottages being demolished at the time. Some of the timbering has been traced back to the old house where Dick Turpin's mother was reputed to have lived, the Old Haunted House of Hornchurch, and some say the ghost came too.....



*The Endeavour under construction*

The headquarters are entered through a fine old Tudor door into the lobby of the building, which is paved with 12th century Purbeck stones from a church floor in the Avon area. The carvings around the ceiling were done by the boys and the ship's bell was presented to the group by Mr C. Nicholson who was the designer of the racing yacht *Endeavour*. Above the lobby there is a minstrels' gallery.

The crest outside over the main door was unveiled by Lord Baden-Powell (the son of the founder of the Scout movement) and all group members wear this crest on their neckers. It is a mason's mark and was last seen on old London Bridge House which was destroyed by fire in 1820.

The Troop Room is constructed on the lines of an old Tudor banqueting hall. The timbers on the floor came from the underneath of train carriages. Leading off the main hall is what used to be the scouters' den but is now a fairly up-to-date kitchen.

The walls are built with genuine old Tudor bricks mixed with other 'historic' stones. These include a little piece of

Waterloo Bridge, a stone from the Houses of Parliament, and stones brought back from the 1937 jamboree in Holland and troop camp sites in Ireland, Stonebarrow in Dorset and Mont St Eloi. The Rover Scouts came back with stones from the Mountains of Mourne.

When one considers that this remarkable building was the work of amateurs it was an incredible achievement and the result could not have been better if it had been constructed by professional craftsmen. A local architect, Mr Williams of Oxted, drew up plans for the building after studying nearly a thousand examples of Tudor craftsmanship. The Rover Scouts translated those plans at a recorded cost of £460 into a building that stands to this day and is a pride of the village.

In the group's extensive archives we have kept all the worksheets drawn up by the Rover Scouts at the time of construction; they recorded over 3,500 man-hours of work. To stimulate enthusiasm the group prepared a fascinating log as the work progressed. Photographs were taken each week showing the scouts at work and the general growth of the building. These photographs are still held in the archives and it is still interesting to see how much work and skill was involved in the construction of the building.



*The façade of the building in 2006*

The person we have to thank for this fine building is the scout leader at that time who was none other than Horace Fairall, who founded the present firm of Fairalls in the village, still going strong today.

Shortly after the Endeavour was completed the Second World War intervened. During this time the Endeavour was used as a school. In 1947 a new headquarters building for the Cub Pack, called the Bounty, was erected further along Godstone Green in the shape of a Tudor dovecote. Both buildings stand today as an example of 1st Godstone Scouts' fine heritage.

## East Surrey Museum

Temporarily closed (usual opening hours  
Wed & Thu 10.00am – 5.00pm, Sat 10.30am – 4.00pm)

1 Stafford Road, Caterham CR3 6JG  
01883 340275  
eastsurreymuseum@gmail.com  
www.eastsurreymuseum.org.uk  
facebook.com/EastSurreyMuseum

***Covid-19 restrictions permitting,***

**The East Surrey Museum**

## Annual General Meeting

***will be held on***

**Friday 30th July 2021  
at 11.00 a.m.**

**at the Soper Hall  
Harestone Valley Road  
Caterham CR3 6HY**

***to be followed by***



## ***\* A Party \****

**To celebrate the museum's 40th birthday (deferred from last year). We would love to see everyone who has been associated with the museum over the last forty-one years, so please come and join us!**

### **Management Committee**

Nominations for the museum's Management Committee should be received by the secretary, c/o the museum, no later than 30th June 2021.

## From the Editor

**Raymond Butler**



I hope you have enjoyed this issue of the newsletter. As always I need material for the next one, so so if you have been able to do any historical research during the lockdown, or you have any reminiscences or local history that you would like to share, do write and let us know. Thanks to all who have helped with this edition, especially Peter, Catherine, Rod, Mark and Ray H.

## Friends of East Surrey Museum Newsletter

c/o East Surrey Museum  
1 Stafford Road, Caterham CR3 6JG  
foesm.newsletter@gmail.com

### **COPY DEADLINE**

for items to be included in the next issue:  
**28th JUNE 2021**

*The editor reserves the right to edit as appropriate or shorten contributions according to the space available.*