



### Lockdown News: November/December 2020

I hope all our members are keeping safe and well as we work our way through a second lockdown. I have to admit I have found this lockdown harder to cope with than the previous one.

We de-iced our Christmas social and decided to have a speaker and dress festively for Zoom. Andrew Walker, the Deputy Principal of Rose Bruford College, has agreed to give a talk. (More details below).

Andrew has given great support to our society especially during our WW1 pageant and subsequent events, and he is also an active member of our Echo committee. Sadly he will be leaving Rose Bruford at the end of this year to take early retirement and concentrate on history research.

The Echo committee chaired by Katherine Harding has kept busy. Ken Hughes recently held a telephone meeting with Cheryl Curr, manager for the Sidcup BID team. We have been asked to provide more Sidcup High Street pictures for the hoarding surrounding the proposed library building. Town sign designs are being considered and the murals are on hold at the moment due to the current situation. You might have noticed the Christmas lights have been put up but our High Street looks very sad at the moment.

I do hope you will be able to join us on 1<sup>st</sup> December on Zoom but, if not I hope that your Christmas is a happy one.

We look forward to a more sociable 2021. Denise Baldwin, Chair, Lamorbey & Sidcup Local History.



**The next Society Meeting will be held on 1<sup>st</sup> December at 7.30p.m. on Zoom**

Andrew Walker, Vice-Principal of Rose Bruford College, will be speaking about 'Road Hogs and Motor Scorchers: Reporting the early years of motoring in Kent c 1900-1920'.



**This would have been our Christmas meeting, of course, but we are unable to celebrate in our usual way so please do wear something festive on Zoom if possible. We are also asking you to have glass of an appropriate liquid to toast Christmas, New Year and Andrew Walker's retirement. You may need to have to be a big glass!**

As last time, please would you let us know if you wish to join us on Zoom. Please email Jennifer [REDACTED]

### Stagecoaches and Turnpikes by Alan Medley, the November talk

Alan's was very well supported and thoroughly enjoyed by all. One thing he mentioned was that it is not obvious where the various toll gates were. Well, it just so happens that Denise was given some material from the Chislehurst Society that had belonged to one of their members but that was about to be thrown away. Luckily, Joanna Friel from the society very kindly offered the Sidcup material to us. I now have the items related to roads and transport. In amongst it all was this note from circa 1960/70.

### Sidcup Hill.

Prior to 1776, the main road to Maidstone went along Rectory Lane (which was also the Chislehurst boundary) but in that year Sidcup Hill was cut and improvements made in the turnpike road onwards ( a house called " Toll House" may still be seen just beyond Ruxley Corner).

As described by Elvira who remembers Sidcup over 60 years ago. Sidcup Hill was lined with huge elms and curving down to the Cray Valley between orchards of apples and plums. There was no Church Avenue then. A footpath ran from the hill which brought you out by a kissing gate on to the Green.

So there was a 'Toll House' so called. A few days later I wandered up to the Maidstone Road and, lo and behold, the house is still there, between the two Ruxley garden centres, but called 'Tollgate'. Hopefully this is a clue! At this stage it is not known whether the house, which looks fairly modern, just marks the spot or if some part of the old toll gate survives within the house or grounds. Alan is going to investigate.

Philip Willson



### **Buses and Bombs, part 2**



Last time I showed the LT-type buses lined up in Oxford Road to keep them away from the potential factory targets in Footscray. Well, this time we are outside the bus garage itself after a busy shift has finished in October 1943. The workers from Kolster-Brandes Ltd., Standard Telephone Co. Ltd. and the Army Pay Record Offices are waiting for their transport home. The queue for the 241 is pretty long and I wonder whether there were extra buses put on at this time to cope with the rush. The 241 was all single decker due to the low bridge at Sidcup Station and run using the underfloor-engine Q-type vehicles. Note the white markings applied so that there was a chance of seeing the

buses at night during the blackout. The 21 and 21A buses are picking up from the stop in front of the 241.

Philip Willson

*Photo from the LT Museum Collection and is a low resolution sample. Full resolution copies are available by ordering from the website. Just doing a search using 'Sidcup' as the key word will produce many interesting images.*